

Cabinet Meeting

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ
Wednesday, 07 September 2016 at 18:00**

The Cabinet deals with the implementation of all Council services, putting into effect the policies agreed by Full Council and making recommendations to Full Council on policy issues and the budget.

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COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Cabinet
Wednesday, 07 September 2016 at 18:00

Members:

Leader and Chairman Councillor Paul Smith (Liberal Democrats)
 Councillor Tina Bourne (Labour)
 Councillor Mark Cory (Liberal Democrats)
 Councillor Annie Feltham (Liberal Democrats)
 Councillor Dominic Graham (Liberal Democrats)
 Councillor Mike Lilley (Labour)
 Councillor Beverley Oxford (The Highwoods Group)
 Councillor Tim Young (Labour)

AGENDA - Part A
(open to the public including the press)

Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally brief.

1 Welcome and Announcements

- a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.
- (b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:
- action in the event of an emergency;
 - mobile phones switched to silent;
 - the audio-recording of meetings;
 - location of toilets;
 - introduction of members of the meeting.

2 Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent, to give reasons for the urgency and to indicate where in the order of business the item will be considered.

3 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any interests they may have in the items on the agenda. Councillors should consult Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 for full guidance on the registration and declaration of interests. However Councillors

may wish to note the following:-

- Where a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, other pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the authority and he/she is present at a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, the Councillor must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest, whether or not such interest is registered on his/her register of Interests or if he/she has made a pending notification.
- If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting, he/she must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter at the meeting. The Councillor must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Where a Councillor has another pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting and where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest, the Councillor must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Failure to comply with the arrangements regarding disclosable pecuniary interests without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence, with a penalty of up to £5,000 and disqualification from office for up to 5 years.

4 Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016

13-07-16

7 - 14

5 Have Your Say!

a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter relating to the terms of reference of the Committee/Panel not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter relating to the terms of reference of the Committee/Panel not on this agenda.

- 6 Call-In Procedure**
To consider any items referred by the Scrutiny Panel under the call-in procedure. At the time of the publication of this agenda, there were none.
- 7 Resources**
- 7(i) **2016/17 and 2017/18 Budget Update** 15 - 28
See report of Assistant Chief Executive
- 8 Culture and Regeneration**
- 8(i) **Disposal of Museum Resource Centre** 29 - 32
See report by the Chief Operating Officer
- 8(ii) **Year End Performance Report Including Progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan** 33 - 68
See report by the Assistant Chief Executive
- 9 Customers**
- 9(i) **Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review 2015/16** 69 - 74
See report by the Monitoring Officer
- 10 Housing and Public Protection**
- 10(i) **Governance and Audit Committee Minute Reference - 26 July 2016** 75 - 82
See Governance and Audit Minute reference for recommendation to Cabinet.
- 11 General**
- 11(i) **Progress of Responses to the Public** 83 - 84
To note the contents of the Progress Sheet
- 12 Exclusion of the Public (Cabinet)**
In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive

Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Part B

(not open to the public including the press)

CABINET 13 July 2016

Present: - Councillor Smith (Chairman)
Councillors Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham, Lilley, B. Oxford and T. Young

Also in attendance: - Councillors Barlow, G. Oxford, J. Scott-Boutell, L. Scott-Boutell and Willetts

89. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 25 May 2016 and 8 June 2016 be approved as a correct record, subject to the deletion of Councillor Frame from the list of attendees at the meeting on 8 June 2016.

90. Have Your Say!

Councillor J. Scott-Boutell addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) about the proposed closure of the Lexden Heath Delivery Office on London Road, Stanway. This was an important facility in Stanway and its employees played an important role in the community. It was scheduled for closure in September and employees would be transferred to the facility at Eastgates. In addition postal collections would also need to be made from Eastgates, which was a considerable distance away and had inadequate parking. This would contribute further to congestion. A petition had been raised against the closure which had already raised 500 signatures and she called on the administration to monitor the position.

Councillor Paul Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, and Councillor Tim Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration, indicated that they supported the campaign against the closure.

Lee Parker addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to explain problems he had experienced in securing appropriate accommodation for his family. In particular he was distressed that he had been deemed to have made his family intentionally homeless, which was not an accurate reflection of events, and believed that Colchester Borough Homes was not fulfilling its duty to house his family. The difficulties families in his position faced were exacerbated by the fact that private landlords were unwilling to take on tenants on housing benefit.

Councillor Tina Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection, responded. Whilst it would not be appropriate to comment in detail on Mr Parker's individual circumstances given a pending court hearing, every effort had been made to support his family and they had also had independent advice from housing charities such as Shelter. Whilst the Council did have a number of large properties, these were currently all occupied. The Council could not build new housing due to changes in government policy and the Council was exploring other options which would increase the housing stock available through the private sector.

Miss Autumn Parker addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). Following the EU Referendum campaign in which there had not been a platform for teenagers to give their views, she had developed a campaign called TeenSpeech. The principles of the campaign were:-

- Compulsory and unbiased political education in secondary schools across the UK.
- With adequate education, the voting age could be lowered to 16.
- Under 18s should be taken into consideration and have a voice when there is an important vote/referendum/political situation.
- Children should be taught essential life skills that include but not limited to: financial management, interest rates, credit cards, mortgages, pay day loans and the impact they may have; consumer rights, employment law, domestic skills, family dynamics and other important things that are not currently taught to prepare for adult life.
- Compulsory first aid training should be in secondary schools, including refresher sessions annually.
- There should be better understanding and inclusion of teenage mental health problems. Also recognising and looking to solving the current issues and shortfalls within the NHS.

They had been invited to the Houses of Parliament by Angela Rayner, MP, Shadow Secretary for Education, Women & Equalities to explain more about the campaign.

Members of the Cabinet thanked Autumn for speaking so well and stressed the importance of young people taking an active part in democratic politics. The importance of schools ensuring all young people had a voice was stressed and it was suggested that it would be useful for the campaign to speak to Essex County Council as they had responsibility for education. It would also be useful for her to get involved with the Youth Strategy Group. Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council, invited Autumn to address the meeting of Full Council on 27 July about the campaign

91. EU Referendum Impact

The Chief Executive submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Willetts attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet. He had not voted in the EU Referendum as he did not consider he had sufficient information. However, the result had been clear, both nationally and in Colchester, and

the Council was obliged to follow this. The report did not reflect the optimism that many felt about the outcome of the referendum. There were opportunities for businesses to expand and find wider markets. The ability to control the UK's borders would reduce immigration and the pressure on housing and this issue was not explored in the report. Cabinet needed to look again at the assumptions in the Local Plan as these were unrealistic in the light of the vote to leave the European Union.

In response Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy highlighted that 75% of new build housing was sold to those who already lived here and that the EU referendum vote would only impact on immigration from the European Union. He stressed that the Council wanted to continue to build Council housing but was unable to do so, due to the restrictions on borrowing imposed by the Government.

In discussion, members of the Cabinet indicated that there were opportunities arising from the vote to leave the European Union. For instance the fall in the value of the pound may encourage tourism. However, there was considerable uncertainty as a consequence of the outcome of the referendum. For example the University of Essex had strong links with Europe which could possibly be threatened and there was concern about the potential impact on community cohesion. It was important that the Council continued to monitor the position so that any issues that arose were identified at an early stage.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Cabinet considered the potential impact, increased risks, possible mitigation of these risks and the business confidence as a result of the outcome of the referendum on the decision to leave the European Union.
- (b) The potential impact on the Borough and the Council of the decision to leave the EU be noted the effects be monitored as they become clearer.

REASONS

It is clear that there will be a number of impacts and increased risks as a result of the outcome of the referendum and the decision to leave the European Union.

While these impacts and risks are still emerging and it will be some time before we know exactly what will happen we need to start considering how we can help a number of our communities, businesses and partners to mitigate potential risks. We also need to consider the potential impact on business confidence in the Borough, together with the Council itself as a business and its funding.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It is still unclear how the decision will affect business, communities and the Council and the alternative option is to defer any planning, however that could increase our risks further.

92. 2017-18 Budget Strategy, Medium Term Financial Forecast and Budget Timetable

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Willetts attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet. He expressed concern about the underspend of £791,000. This could have been spent on important public services and he called on Cabinet to be firmer in its approach in future. Concern was also expressed about the Medium Term Financial Forecast. He considered that a new approach was needed as the policy of balancing the books through efficiency savings could not be sustained for more than a further two years. He welcomed the reduction in the use of New Homes Bonus into the base budget, but did not believe that Colchester's infrastructure had been improved despite the levels of New Homes Bonus received.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources responded. The underspend had been caused by increased levels of income. There had been considerable investment in new projects, particularly through the Borough Investment for All scheme. Residents had been benefitted through investment in the Mercury Theatre, the Big Choice scheme, festivals and increased investment in the Town Walls. The Medium Term Financial Forecast was prudent and reflected the uncertainty caused by the vote to leave the European Union and reduction in government grants. He was confident that the budget gap would be closed over the course of the financial year. A review of the outturn position would be carried out to identify potential underspends or areas of increased income.

Councilor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, stressed that the Council had been received increased income as a consequence of the Council's policy of supporting growth in the borough's economy. The Council continued to protect front line services and maintain reserves at a prudent level.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The pre-audit outturn position for the financial year 2015/16 be noted.
- (b) The funding from balances for projects set out at paragraph 3.4 of the Assistant Chief Executive's report be released,
- (c) The budget forecast, approach and timetable for the preparation of the 2017/18 budget and updated position in respect of balances be noted.
- (d) The updated Medium Term Financial Forecast as set out at Appendix B of the Assistant Chief Executive's report be noted.
- (e) The latest position in respect of the Capital Programme be noted and the additional funding for the Priory Street car park scheme set out in section 7 of the Assistant Chief Executive's report be noted.

REASONS

The Council is required to approve a financial strategy and timetable in respect of the financial year 2017/18, and a Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) for the two subsequent financial years.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were proposed.

93. Member Development Group: Annual Report to Cabinet 2015-16

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced the report and highlighted the work of the Group, particularly the work in preparing for the new Council following the whole Council elections in May 2016. Going forward, the Group would be looking to work with individual Councillors to look at their training needs and the overall training and development needs of the Council. Whilst the budget had been underspent in 2015-16, it was anticipated that there would be a greater level of expenditure this year. He was pleased to report that the Council had successfully passed its interim reassessment for Charter Status for Elected Member Development.

RESOLVED that

- (a) The report of the Member Development Group Annual Report 2015-16 on the work of the Group in the 2015-16 municipal year.
- (b) The Cabinet's thanks to Councillors Cory, Harris, Higgins, J. Maclean and G. Oxford be formally recorded.

REASONS

The Member Development Group's Terms of Reference include a requirement to report to Cabinet on an annual basis. This provides Cabinet with an opportunity to review the work of the Group.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options are proposed.

94. North Essex Parking Partnership – Lead Authority

The Head of Operational Services submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Licensing, introduced the report and highlighted the success of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), with Colchester acting as the lead authority. In particular the work in turning a deficit of £600,000 into a significant surplus was commended. The NEPP was an excellent example of partnership working.

It was highlighted that the Tall Trees scheme mentioned in Appendix 1 of the Head of Operational Services report had not been agreed by the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The Council confirms its willingness to act as lead authority for the NEPP if a further four-year extension to the Joint Agreement is offered by ECC. This would extend the agreement until March 2022.
- (b) The Council develops, as lead authority, a separate agreement for off-street NEPP services with its partner authorities.

REASONS

To ensure that the Council's position on lead authority of the NEPP is clear when the proposed new agreement from ECC is received.

To ensure that the costs of the off-street service are fairly allocated according to usage and need.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The Council indicates that it no longer wishes to act as lead authority.

95. Request for Delegated Authority in Connection with the Health and Fitness Refurbishment at Leisure World, Colchester

The Head of Operational Services submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member

Councillor Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Business, Leisure and Opportunities, introduced the report and indicated that delegating authority to appoint the contractor will ensure that an order can be placed with the successful contractor in accordance with the project timetable.

RESOLVED that authority to agree and accept the tender for the Health and Fitness refurbishment project at Leisure World Colchester (LWC) be delegated to the Head of Operational Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business, Leisure and Opportunities.

REASONS

The building project to extend and remodel the Health and Fitness facilities at LWC in accordance with the Sport and Leisure Business Case agreed by Cabinet on 14 October 2015 is currently at the design and planning stage. Tenders are expected to be over £500,000 which would normally require a Cabinet decision to proceed.

In order that the project can be completed in accordance with the programme, the works need to commence in November 2016 and so the decision to award the contract to the successful tenderer will need to be made between the Cabinet Meetings planned for 12 October and 30 November.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The alternative option is to seek Cabinet approval at its November meeting but this will put the project at least 4 weeks behind schedule and will mean that the targets for generating additional income as outlined within the Business Case could not be met.

96. Progress of Responses to the Public

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a progress sheet a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Progress Sheet be noted.

REASONS

The progress sheet was a mechanism by which the Cabinet could ensure that public statements and questions were responded to appropriately and promptly.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

97. Minutes – Not for Publication Extract

RESOLVED that the not for publication extract from the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Sean Plummer
Title	2016/17 and 2017/18 Budget Update		☎ 282347
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the 2017/18 Revenue Budget forecast, Government funding issues and changes to the Council's treasury management strategy

1. Decisions Required

1.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the following items:

- i) Agree to reallocate funding as set out in paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4.
- ii) Note the updated 2017/18 budget forecast as set out at paragraph 6.2 shows a current gap of £625k and that progress has been made to identify savings to assist with the delivery of the budget strategy.
- iii) To agree to “apply to accept” the Government’s 4 year funding settlement with the publication of a required efficiency statement delegated to Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.
- iv) Note the assumption that the Essex business rates pool will continue in 2017/18 and that an updated position will be reported to the next Cabinet meeting.
- v) To agree that the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources will reply to the Government consultation on 100% localisation of business rates.
- vi) To agree the changes to the treasury management strategy sets out in section 8 including the change to the MRP policy.

2. Reasons for Decisions

- 2.1 The Council is required to approve a budget strategy and timetable in respect of the year 2017/18.
- 2.2 This report relates to the budget update, review of the current year’s budget allocations, the Government’s 4 year settlement offer and revisions to the treasury management strategy.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 There are different options that could be considered and as the budget progresses changes and further proposals will be made and considered by Cabinet and in turn Full Council.
- 3.2 The Council could choose not to accept the Government's 4 year settlement offer, however, this would not provide the certainty in respect of future funding and may result in lower grant funding in the coming three years.

4. Background

- 4.1 A timetable for the 2017/18 budget process (see Appendix A) was agreed at Cabinet on 13 July 2016.
- 4.2 At this stage in the budget process it is important to consider progress on the budget and any in year issues. Detailed budgets are currently being produced with the aim to complete this task by December. Work is currently progressing well and is in line with the budget timetable.
- 4.3 This report also includes an update on Government funding and arrangements in respect of business rates pooling and the consultation in respect of the proposal to localise 100% of business rate income.
- 4.4 The report also provides a review of changes proposed to the treasury management strategy.

5. Budget 2016/17 - Review

- 5.1. The Governance and Audit Committee will review the budget position for the current year including outturn projections on 13 September 2016. The total position reported, at what is an early stage, shows that the outturn is currently expected to be broadly in line with the budget.
- 5.2. Scrutiny Panel will receive a report on the half year position on 8 November 2016 and this will in turn be reported to Cabinet when any impact on balances will be assessed.
- 5.3. A review of allocations of one-off funding has been carried out to ensure that these are all still required and it is now proposed that the following sums could be reallocated to other projects:-

Scheme	Funding Source	£'000	Comments / Questions
Winter Wonderland	Borough Investment for All (BIFA)	15	Funding allocated not required.
Lighting the walls	Allocation from funding set aside for street lights.	20	Feasibility work has been undertaken into possible schemes and costs for lighting the Walls and Key Heritage Sites and the estimates range from £50,000 up to a total of £250,000. This project cannot proceed as such larger budgets would be required.
New Homes Bonus (NHB) Strategic Plan Priorities - Unallocated	NHB – 15/16	159	£388k of the original budget of £547k has been allocated to various projects. The remaining balance of £159k is therefore available to support other projects and is included here.
		194	

5.4. Cabinet members have considered emerging issues for using this funding and it is proposed to allocate it to the following projects:-

Proposal	Cost £'000	Description / supporting information
Grant Funding allocation	100	A grant funding pot of £100k similar to the Big Choice scheme to enable Community Groups and Projects to do more in their local areas. The public will have a say in who gets the money again this year but the approach will include the opportunity to bid for smaller amounts of funding, opening up the grants to smaller organisations and aimed at those who may not usually apply for public funds.
Events	40	Allocation of £40k for a range of events and activities in or around the Town Centre over the next twelve to eighteen months aimed at increasing footfall and visitors alongside supporting the vibrancy and economy of the Town.
Rent deposit guarantee scheme	30	Establishment of a rent deposit scheme to be used to provide a rent deposit/advance for new private sector tenancies for around 25 families who present as homeless, and so reduce the use of temporary accommodation. Scheme to be administered via the Credit Union so it can be returned at the end of the tenancy and “re cycled” to benefit new families.
Establish funding for homeless families for new home start up.	24	Fund to support approximately 50 families who are rehoused as homeless and are having to establish a new home on very low levels of income. Fund will provide essential furnishing and appliances (e.g. cooker, fridge, bed) in partnership with Colchester furniture projects to reduce recourse to high-cost loans.
Total	194	

6. Summary of 2017/18 Budget Forecast

- 6.1. Cabinet considered the 2017/18 budget position and strategy on 13 July 2016. At this stage a budget gap for 2017/18 of £766k was reported. The following sets out work under the way and one specific change to the forecast.
- 6.2. The following table shows the previous budget forecast and revised position which now shows a reduced budget gap of £625k

	Reported in July	Updated Position
	2017/18	2017/18
	£'000	£'000
Base Budget	23,959	23,959
Adjustment for c/f items (one off items)	(111)	(111)
Cost Pressures (net of one off changes)	956	956
Growth Items (net of one off changes)	156	15
Savings	(1,300)	(1,300)
Forecast Base Budget	23,660	23,519
<i>Funded By:</i>		
Revenue Support Grant	(920)	(920)
Business Rates Baseline	(4,038)	(4,038)
<i>Settlement funding</i>	<i>(4,958)</i>	<i>(4,958)</i>
Increase in NNDR / taxbase above baseline	(900)	(900)
New Homes Bonus	(5,754)	(5,754)
Total Gov't grants	(11,612)	(11,612)
Council Tax	(11,010)	(11,010)
Use of Reserves	(272)	(272)
Total Funding	(22,894)	(22,894)
Budget gap	766	625

- 6.3. The change relates to the removal of £141k growth item in respect of the food waste service. The cost of the food waste service has been funded from a specific Government and the pressure reflected the residual cost as the grant is all used. We expect there to be sufficient grant to fund the cost of the food waste service in 2017/18 and therefore the budget pressure has been removed.
- 6.4. In the last two years reviews of the outturn position have been carried out to identify where budgets should be adjusted to reflect where they are not fully spent, or where we receive more income. A further outturn review has been carried out as part of the 17/18 budget strategy and includes consideration of some income budgets such as planning and car parking where income has exceeded budgeted sums. Details of this will review be presented to Cabinet later in the year but it is expected that this will provide the opportunity to reduce the budget gap.
- 6.5. Further items that are currently being reviewed include:-

Local Authority Carbon Management – energy savings

- 6.6. The Council agreed funding for a number of projects and these are expected to deliver costs savings. These will be reviewed alongside energy budgets in October when new energy prices will be confirmed.

Interest Budget

- 6.7. Changes to the Council's treasury management strategy are set out later in this report. There are a number of potential budgetary implications relating to the Council's treasury management activities including:-
- a reduction in investment income following the change in Bank Rate from 0.5% to 0.25%.
 - any cost arising from any new borrowing
 - any additional borrowing cost arising from capital programme funding such as the Northern Gateway North sports hub proposals considered by Cabinet in March 2016.
 - The revenue impact of changes to the Minimum Revenue Provision referred to later in this report.
- 6.8. Currently no provision is included in the budget forecast for costs or savings related to these factors and this will need to be assessed in future budget updates.

7. Government Grants / Funding

- 7.1. The 2016/17 Finance Settlement included the announcement of an “offer” of a four year funding settlement. The key points to note are:-
- In return for accepting the offer councils are required to publish an “efficiency plan”
 - There will still be an annual settlement which will include changes to take account of final business rate multipliers.
 - There may also be changes such as transfer of functions to or between local authorities or any unforeseen events.
- 7.2. Councils have until 14th October 2016 to decide whether to “apply to accept” this offer. No real guidance has been provided on what should be included in the efficiency plan, explaining that it should be locally owned and locally driven. It has to cover the four year period and be “open and transparent about the benefits” this will bring to the Council and community. A copy of the letter from the then Secretary of State is available as a background paper
- 7.3. The 4 year settlement includes 3 grants as shown below:-

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	1,978	920	275	(446)
Transition grant	88	87	-	-
Rural Services grant	-	-	-	-
Total	2,066	1,007	275	(446)
<i>Cumulative reduction over period</i>		1,059	1,791	2,512

- 7.4. In 2019/20 the 4 year settlement indicates that Colchester will pay the Government £446k via an increased business rate “tariff” payment.

7.5. As 2016/17 grant figures are already being paid the offer only really relates to 2017/18 and 2018/19 and the *negative* RSG in 2019/20. In total these changes amount to a reduction in grant of £2.5million in the next three years.

7.6. Following correspondence with a Government representative they have confirmed that:-

- the offer includes the negative RSG and they responded as follows
- this is a minimum offer that the Government intend to build on over the course of the parliament and that nobody will ever be worse off for accepting the offer.
- There are still a significant number of decisions to make ahead of 19/20, particularly on the introduction of 100% business rates retention and the fair funding review. Both are out for consultation/discussion at the moment and will be worked up with the sector so we cannot predict the outcome.

7.7. The Local Government Association (LGA) has summarised the offer as follows:-

<u>Upside</u>	<u>Downside</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A step in the direction of what we have been asking for. • An incentive to plan longer term and drive through risky change • A 'nudge' towards best practice • An opportunity to take greater risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount guaranteed is really quite small for many councils. • Year 5 is probably the most uncertain

The Efficiency Plan

7.8. As stated no real formal guidance exists on what this should include. Appendix B sets out a draft summary of the main areas that will be included in the plan. This reflects some advice from CIPFA / LGA and the general intention is that it tries to bring together information in existing plans and policies. It is proposed that the publication of the final document is delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

New Homes Bonus

7.9. The Government's consultation on "sharpening the incentive" of the New Homes Bonus closed on 10 March 2016. To date the Government has not issued any response to the consultation and therefore the level of grant for 2017/18 remains uncertain.

Business Rates

7.10. There are two specific issues in respect of business rates to consider in this report.

Business Rates Pooling

7.11. For 2015/16 and 2016/17 the Council has been part of an Essex business rate "pool". The rationale for this is that the pool provides an opportunity to keep a greater share of NNDR income above the baseline. Based on figures provided as part of the 2015/16 closure of accounts there is an estimated gain of £0.2m, however, this is subject to change and final business rates figures which will be finalised for all pool members by October. The estimated £0.2million additional income kept in Colchester is as a result of the decision to join the Essex pool. This money would otherwise have been paid over to Government.

- 7.12. It is too early to estimate any additional income that we might achieve from the pool arrangement in 2016/17; any such gain would not be known until 2017/18. It is unlikely that we will be able to estimate this as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process as it not only relates to our own figures which are subject to a degree of risk and variation but also figures of partner authorities in the pool.
- 7.13. No guidance has been issued by Government yet on business rates pooling in 2017/18 and therefore the assumption is that existing arrangements will remain unchanged.
- 7.14. The Essex pool agreement stays in place for 2017/18 unless there are new members who wish to join the pool or there are any existing pool members who wish to leave the pool. In either case, under existing arrangements it will be necessary to make a new submission to Government by 31st October to express an interest in creating a 'new' pool.
- 7.15. Pool members and other Essex authorities are currently considering their position and a further update will be reported to Cabinet in October.

Business Rates Consultation

- 7.16. Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation on 'Self-sufficient local government: 100% Business Rates Retention', was published in July. Alongside this consultation a discussion paper on 'Fair Funding Review: Call for evidence on Needs and Redistribution' was published. Both documents are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/self-sufficient-local-government-100-business-rates-retention>.
- 7.17. The proposals in the consultation set out that by the end of this Parliament, local government will retain 100 per cent of taxes raised locally. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, councils will gain new responsibilities, and some Whitehall grants will be phased out.
- 7.18. To achieve such radical reform, the Government wants councils, business and people to take the initiative and shape the design of the new system. This consultation is therefore deliberately open and seeks views and ideas across all aspects of the reforms.
- 7.19. It identifies some of the issues that the Government thinks should be kept in mind in designing of the reforms. This includes how the reformed system recognises the diversity of different areas and the changing pattern of local governance arrangements. The system need not work in the same way across the country.
- 7.20. It also considers how the design of the new system can provide the right level of incentive and reward to those councils (particularly those working closely with local businesses and together as Combined Authorities) that pursue policies that drive additional growth in their areas.
- 7.21. It also welcomes views on how business rates income might be shared across different tiers of local government, including how the system should recognise areas which have moved to reformed models of governance. There is a balance to be struck between providing a strong incentive for growth in local areas and considering the distribution of funding between local authorities.

- 7.22. The Government is clear that the reformed system should ensure that authorities are able to manage and share risk to an acceptable level, and that they are insulated from undue shocks or significant reductions in their income.
- 7.23. The deadline for responses is 26 September 2016 and consideration is being given an Essex wide response.
- 7.24. It is recommended that a reply on behalf of this Council is delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

8 Treasury Management Strategy

- 8.1. This report proposes a number of changes to the 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) that was approved by Council on 17 February 2016. These changes are as a result of changes to borrowing rates, credit ratings and interest rate forecasts following the outcome of the EU referendum on 23 June 2016, which includes the Monetary Policy Committee cutting the bank rate from 0.50% to 0.25% on 4 August. They are as follows:

Interest rate forecast

- 8.2. The table below compares our treasury adviser's latest interest rate forecasts with those that were included in the TMSS. Economic forecasting remains difficult, however the overall longer run trend is for rates to rise gently, albeit with the overall balance of risks remaining to the downside.

		Q3 2016	Q1 2017	Q1 2018	Q1 2019
Bank Rate	TMSS	0.75%	1.00%	1.75%	2.00%
	Now	0.25%	0.10%	0.10%	0.25%
PWLB 5 year	TMSS	2.70%	2.80%	3.30%	3.60%
	Now	1.00%	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%
PWLB 10 year	TMSS	3.20%	3.40%	3.80%	4.10%
	Now	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%
PWLB 25 year	TMSS	3.90%	4.10%	4.30%	4.50%
	Now	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%
PWLB 50 year	TMSS	3.80%	4.00%	4.20%	4.40%
	Now	2.10%	2.10%	2.20%	2.30%

- 8.3. Our treasury adviser's latest advice is that as yields are at historic lows borrowing should be considered if appropriate to the strategy. As the outlook is uncertain, it is suggested that any borrowing is taken in tranches so as to benefit from the current rates, but also provide some flexibility if rates fall further.

Borrowing Strategy

- 8.4. The TMSS states that the Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk is relatively high. This means that there would be a cost of carry to any new borrowing which causes an increase in investments, as this will incur a revenue loss between borrowing costs and investment returns.

- 8.5. At 31 March 2016 the Council's Capital Financing Requirement was £153.5m and, net of finance lease liabilities, the underlying borrowing requirement was £150.3m. The Council's external borrowing totalled £136.1m, which meant under-borrowing was £14.2m, of which £3.4m relates to the HRA. This means that the Council could borrow £14.2m in respect of its current borrowing need.
- 8.6. On the basis of the above forecasts, if the Council borrowed to its current CFR for 50 years (2.10%), the annual interest cost would be £300k. This would be mitigated by around £36k if this were invested for the duration of the year (based on the latest budgeted investment rate of 0.25%), meaning that the annual cost of carry would be £264k. This is not currently budgeted for, so should be considered as a potential cost pressure.
- 8.7. Against the above, the long term saving resulting from borrowing at very low rates should be considered. Assuming current rates increase in accordance with the above forecast, the annual interest cost would only increase by £27k p.a. if borrowing were delayed until the beginning of 2019. However, this would lead to the cost of borrowing being significantly higher over the life of a 50 year loan.

Investments - Country Limits

- 8.8. The TMSS states that the Council will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA-, based on the lowest available rating. Subsequent to the EU referendum decision, the following action has been taken by the ratings agencies regarding the UK sovereign rating:

Fitch

- Sovereign rating downgraded by one notch, from AA+ to AA.
- Outlook lowered to Negative, from Stable.

Moody's

- Sovereign rating affirmed, at Aa1 (equivalent to AA+ from Fitch / S&P).
- Outlook lowered to Negative, from Stable.

Standard & Poor's (S&P)

- Sovereign rating downgraded by two notches, from AAA to AA.
- Remains on Negative Outlook.

- 8.9. It is proposed that whilst our minimum sovereign debt limit is now in line with Capita's recommendation, this section should be amended to state that this policy excludes the UK. This will take account of any further deterioration in the UK's credit rating.

Investment Strategy

- 8.10. The Investment Strategy in the TMSS assumed that the Bank Rate would remain unchanged at 0.5% before starting to rise from quarter 2 of 2016. On this basis the suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to 100 days during the year was 0.90%.

- 8.11. The current forecast suggests that budgeted investment earnings for 2016/17 should be amended to 0.25%. This is likely to have an adverse impact on the Central Loans and Investment Account.

LOBO Loans

- 8.12. Unrelated to the referendum vote, Barclays Bank contacted the Council on 20 June 2016 to state that they had decided to waive their right to change the applicable interest rate of the Council's two Lender Option/Borrower Option (LOBO) loans in the future. As a result the two loans, which total £9 million, effectively become fixed rate loans at their current investment rates with their stated maturities.
- 8.13. The Council's LOBO loans are subject to six monthly calls, and the maturity profile is shown as the next call date, and as such they are accounted for as short-term loans. The financial impact of the change is that these loans will in future periods be shown as long-term market debt, which will have an impact on prudential indicators relating to the maturity profile of debt.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

- 8.14. For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, the MRP policy currently follows the existing practice outlined in former CLG regulations, which provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year on a reducing balance basis.
- 8.15. It is now the view of the Council's external Auditors (Ernst & Young) that there is no obligation to repay on this basis. Instead this historic element of MRP can now be paid on an equal instalment basis over a period of 50 years. This change would have the benefits of reducing the amount payable by the Council over the next 17 years, introducing a consistent level of charge, and ensuring that this element is eventually completely repaid.
- 8.16. In 16/17 this change of approach would reduce this element of the MRP charge from £186,684 to a standard amount of £93,342.

9. Proposals

- 9.1 It is proposed that:-

- The funding shown in paragraph 5.3. be reallocated to the schemes shown at paragraph 5.4.
- Note the updated budget forecast for 2017/18 and commentary on work in progress.
- To agree to "apply to accept" the Government's 4 year settlement and delegate the approval of the required efficiency statement to the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.
- To note that it is assumed that the Essex Business Rates Pool will continue in 2017/18 and that an update will be reported to the next Cabinet meeting.
- To note the Government's business rates consultation and that a response will be made by the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

- To agree the changes in the treasury management strategy set out in section 8 including the MRP policy.

10. Strategic Plan References

- 10.1. The 2017/18 budget and the Medium Term Financial Forecast will be underpinned by the Strategic Plan priorities and will seek to preserve and shift resources where needed to these priorities.

11. Consultation

- 11.1. The Council is required to consult on its budget proposals. A consultation exercise took place as part of the production of the Strategic Plan agreed by Council in February 2015.
- 11.2. The budget strategy and timetable aims to ensure that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members on proposals in the process. The aim is that detailed information will be available prior to the final budget report being submitted to Cabinet and approval by Council in February.
- 11.3. As has been the case in previous years the opportunity remains open for the leader of the opposition to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 11.4. Furthermore, we will continue with the statutory consultation with business ratepayers and will meet with parish councils in respect of grant funding.

12. Financial implications

- 12.1 As set out in the report

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 13.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

14. Risk Management Implications

- 14.1. The strategic risks of the authority will be considered in developing the 2017/18 budget and all forecast savings/new income options will be risk assessed as part of the budget process. This report sets out some of the key risks / variables at this stage in the budget process and as stated earlier this will be refined during the year.

15. Other Standard References

- 15.1 There are no specific Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications at this stage.

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet 17 July 2016

Letter from Secretary of State in respect of 4 Year Settlement

2017/18 Budget Timetable	
Budget Strategy	
March – June (SMT and Budget Group)	Budget Group Meetings Agreed Update MTFF /Budget Strategy Review potential cost pressures, growth and risks Consider approach to budget Initial budget reviews started
Cabinet – 13 July 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 15/16 outturn • Report on updated budget strategy / MTFF • Timetable approved
Scrutiny Panel – 19 July 16	Review Cabinet report
Detailed Budget preparation and Budget Setting Consultation	
Budget Group / Leadership Team regular sessions on progress / budget options now - December	Review budget tasks Consider delivery of existing budget savings Complete outturn review
Cabinet – 7 September 16 and /or 12 October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Update • Consider “4 year settlement” • Review of capital resources / programme
Cabinet – 30 November 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget update • Reserves and balances • Agree fees and charges / budget changes • Government Finance settlement (if available) • Review in year budget position
Scrutiny Panel – 31 January 17	Budget position (Detailed proposals)
Cabinet – 1 February 17	Revenue and Capital budgets recommended to Council
Council – 22 February 17	Budget agreed / capital programme agreed / Council Tax set

Leadership Team to review budget progress during year.

Draft Outline Efficiency Plan

Introduction / Background

Headlines on the Council's performance in recent years on delivering savings / income.

Comment from auditors on value for money opinion.

Links to Council's Strategic Plan

The budget position / MTFF

Summary of current MTFF

The approach to managing budgets gaps and deliver a balanced budget

Include savings / income built into plans:-

- Digital challenge (including partnership working)
- Commercial income / savings (role of the Revolving Investment Fund)

Approach to closing remaining budget gaps:-

- Outturn review
- Targeted budget reviews
- Carbon management
- Other partnerships / joint working opportunities & other commercial opportunities
- Business rate assumptions
- Housing development

The above will touch on themes of:-

- Demand management / how customers contact us
- Delivering new / more income through commercial activities
- Delivering economic growth through RIF projects

Risks and reserves

Comments on key risks / reserves / balances

Links to other documents

Strategic Plan

HRA

Statement of Accounts

Report of	Chief Operating Officer	Author	Ann Hedges
Title	Disposal of Museum Resource Centre		282202
Wards affected	Castle		

This report concerns the disposal of the Museum Resource Centre, 14 Ryegate Road

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the disposal of the Museum Resource Centre (MRC), 14 Ryegate Road.
- 1.2 To approve the use of the capital receipt from this sale for the extension of the Museum Store at Heckworth Close to allow the move of the service
- 1.3 To delegate to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration the decision on the sale.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The MRC houses a range of functions for the Museum Service but is no longer fit for purpose. Significant spend would be required to bring the building up to a standard for the service.
- 2.2 We have looked at a range of options for an alternative location for the services working in the building and have identified that our Museum Store at Heckworth Close can be extended at a reasonable cost to accommodate these and providing more modern working conditions for our staff.
- 2.2 The building is in a very sought after location next to the park and has views over the Castle, making it attractive to developers.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 To not sell the building, however the building will be surplus to operational requirements
- 3.2 To keep the building and redevelop ourselves. While this option could be delivered it has been agreed that the capital receipt from the sale will be available for the relocation of the services currently in the building and this would then be unaffordable
- 3.3 The capital receipt could be used for a range of other purposes however this would mean the move would not be possible

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The MRC houses a number of Museum functions as well as providing storage for some of our collections. The building now needs significant work to bring it up to standard

- 4.2 Previous bids for external funding to help us to move out have not been successful and we have been looking for an alternative solution to enable the move but all have proved to be much more expensive
- 4.3 There are a number of challenges as the building houses a number of Museum functions, storage for some of our collections and limited access for the public to view items. However, having identified a solution the MRC becomes surplus to operational requirements.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The proposals are to extend our current storage facility at Heckworth Close to provide modern office accommodation for the Museum's staff. In order to fund this we will move out of and dispose of the MRC.
- 5.2 At the same time we are looking at our collections and undertaking some rationalisation and intend to move some of our archaeological material that is almost never accessed to deep store in salt mines in Cheshire. It is common practise amongst Local Authorities to take this approach. This provides cost effective and environmentally safe storage for items we have a duty to retain but are rarely accessed. Access is available with twenty four hour notice
- 5.3 This will then allow us to reconfigure the storage at Heckworth Close to accommodate collections currently held at the MRC. This helps to consolidate collections that are not currently on display into a single place making it easier to manage and for the public to access, for example for research students
- 5.4 A competitive tendering exercise will be undertaken to identify an agent to market the building
- 5.5 Colchester Borough Homes has agreed to take on the project management role in the design and build of the expansion of Heckworth Close, with the construction company to be appointed by competitive tender. This will enable us to keep the cost of the works to a realistic minimum.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The proposals support a number of strategic plan priorities:
- Make more of Colchester's great heritage and culture so that more people can enjoy them
 - Promote Colchester to attract further inward investment

7. Consultation

- 7.1 N/A

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 There is likely to be public interest in the sale of the building and press releases will be made at appropriate points of the sale.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 The capital receipt from the sale will be used to pay for the extension of Heckworth Close. If this is above the cost needed for the extension then the excess will be returned to the Capital Programme. A sum from the New Homes Bonus has also been allocated to the extension of Heckworth Close
- 9.2 Disposing of the MRC will mean no ongoing revenue costs and will mean the maintenance costs will not be incurred.
- 9.3 There will be a small cost to the deep salt mine storage but this will be covered by the revenue saving from the disposal. Overall we expect the changes to be revenue neutral at worst and possibly deliver a small saving.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 10.1 The MRC is not fully accessible and the extension to Heckworth Close will comply with all appropriate (Disability) regulations.
- 10.2 No other implications have been identified at this stage

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 N/A

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 N/A.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 N/A

Background Papers

N/A

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Matthew Sterling 📞 282577
Title	Year End Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report covers performance against the Council's key performance measures and the Strategic Plan Action Plan for 2015/16 year end; and new targets for 2016/17.

1. Action required

The Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the performance update for the Council's key performance measures for the year ending 31 March 2016, and to agree the set of indicators proposed for 2016/17 (both shown in Appendix 1). A progress update of the Strategic Plan Action Plan for the year ending 31 March 2016 is shown in Appendix 2.

The Scrutiny Panel reviewed the year end report on 19 July 2016, and Cabinet is also asked to consider any comments from that scrutiny.

2. Background information

The Council has agreed a number of key performance measures which it uses to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides an update on our indicators and a review of progress against our Strategic Plan Action Plan along with proposals for 2016/17 indicators.

3. Performance Summary

- At the end of 2015/16, the overall position was that 12 (86%) of our measures were achieved (or 'green') and 2 (14%) did not meet the target in full ('red').
- The actions within our Strategic Plan Action Plan show that there is a considerable amount of positive activity being undertaken across the Council and with our partners to achieve our strategic priorities.
- The Council has also received a number of awards and accreditations highlighted at the end of Appendix 1.

4. Strategic Plan references

This report provides an update of progress against the Strategic Plan Action Plan, developed to support the delivery of the Council's agreed Strategic Plan priorities.

5. Consultation

The report's contents do not have any direct implications with regard to consultation. However, the Strategic Plan and priorities were agreed following public consultation.

6. Publicity considerations

The performance report contains measures for our key performance indicators and our Strategic Plan Action Plan. These are used to monitor the performance of our services, and as such these may be of public interest. The report and related information is published on the [Performance and Improvement](#) section of the Council's website.

7. Financial implications

The financial implications of the action plans to deliver the indicators form part of the budget setting process.

8. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

Progress and improvement of these and many of the actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan support our aims of improving both services and the lives of everyone in the borough. Where required, specific Equality Impact Assessments exist for policies and activities rather than for individual performance indicators or actions. Progress on the Council's Equality Objectives are included within the Strategic Plan Action Plan Update.

9. Community Safety implications

There are performance measures and actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan which aim to improve community safety and as such this report provides progress updates in this area.

10. Health and Safety implications

This report has no direct implications with regard to Health and Safety.

11. Risk Management implications

We aim to deliver achieve performance targets and the Strategic Plan Action Plan Actions, as both form a key part of our performance framework. Individual services and projects have their own risk management plans.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments

Planning Key Indicators

KI P1 Processing of planning applications	Majors 88%	75%	G	88%	Application decision numbers went up by 1.8% to 1,577 determined applications for the year. This increase on last year's applications was smaller than in previous years
	Minors 86%	85%	G	90%	
	Others 95%	90%	G	96%	
KI P2 Planning appeals allowed against our decision to refuse	29.7% (not accounting for a now quashed decision that we challenged)	30% maximum	G	27.9%	Target achieved. There were 43 appeals this year compared to 41 last year, and although the target has been achieved, decisions at appeal continue to be difficult to predict.

Benefits Key Indicators

KI B1 Time to process housing benefit new claims and changes	14.56 days	13 days Housing Benefit	G	10 days	The target has been exceeded for processing new HB and LCTS claims as well as processing changes to claims. The Benefits service has taken on new ways of working in the last quarter of the year and sustained a good performance in this area of work.
		16 days LCTS		14 days	

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments

Housing Key Indicators

KI H1 Net additional homes provided	943	830	G	933	Despite a fall in new housing delivery <i>this year</i> , performance against the longer-term cumulative Local Plan target (since 2001) remains strong and is above target by over 1,500 dwellings. Looking forward the Council has a full five year housing land supply and the emerging new Local Plan will allocate additional land for development thus ensuring an optimistic outlook for new housing delivery in Colchester in the coming years.
KI H2 Affordable homes delivered (gross)	496 delivered over three years	205 delivered over three years	G	106	This is the first of the three years we have to achieve this target. A total of 106 new affordable homes were delivered in 2015/2016, which is over half of the homes we need to achieve the target by 2018. This is excellent news for Colchester residents in housing need. However, future delivery in the next two years looks more uncertain, with significant changes to national housing policy which will see the introduction of starter homes for private sale replacing affordable rented homes on new developments and Homes and Communities Agency Grant only available for shared ownership homes.

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments

Housing Key Indicators delivered by Colchester Borough Homes (CBH)

KI H3 Homelessness cases prevented	607	45%	G	58%	489 applicants were supported to remain in their home or supported into alternative accommodation to prevent homelessness.
KI H4 Rent Collected	98.6%	98%	G	98.85%	Rent collection levels continue to achieve the target despite the difficult economic climate.
KI H5 Average time to re-let council homes	General 17.3 days	17 days	G	16.81 days	During the last quarter performance has improved to bring the overall position to within target. This improvement was due to a concerted effort to quicken re-let times and the very low numbers of empty properties during this period.

Waste and Recycling Key Indicators

KI W1 Residual household waste per household	403 kg	400 kg	R	415 kg	At the 6 month report it was highlighted that this is a challenging target and the amount of residual waste tends to increase around quarter 3. This proved to be the case and at year end residual waste collected overall was 985 tonnes higher than 14/15. The indication from other authorities in Essex is that they have experienced increases and therefore their end of year results will show this although these are not available at this time. In response to this the Zones teams undertook 499 visits to properties identified as putting out large amounts of black sacks every week. Unfortunately, the reaction of most households visited is not positive and these residents do not see the community and environmental benefits of recycling
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Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments
					<p>their waste. A number indicated that they think this is the Council's role to sort out the recycling.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the Zone teams deliver recycling equipment to all new build properties in the Borough.</p>
KI W2 Household waste reused, recycled and composted	46.26%	48%	R	45.19%	<p>Tonnages of recycling overall were down by 241 tonnes compared with 14/15. As mentioned in the 6 month report garden waste was lower and this ended the year 217 tonnes down on 14/15. Food waste was also down by 76 tonnes, but glass, plastic and cans were slightly higher. The overall figure showed that each household in Colchester recycled an average of 10kgs less than 14/15.</p> <p>Garden waste tonnage is seasonal and is heavily impacted by growing conditions. Last year was very dry and therefore there was a sizeable reduction in the amount of grass cuttings put out by residents which impacted on the overall figures. It should be noted that these figures do not include the significant amounts of green waste that are taken to the Recycling Centres operated by Veolia on behalf of Essex County Council.</p> <p>The reduction in food waste tonnages is a common occurrence at this stage of a scheme as residents are likely to have reduced the amount of food they purchase as they would have been alerted to how much they are throwing away. This is demonstrated in the tonnage collected, but also anecdotal evidence that bins are put out less frequently. A comparison with other Districts and Boroughs will be undertaken to see if this performance is reflected across Essex when these figures are available. However, it is the increase in residual waste collected that impacts on the recycling rate as well.</p>

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments
KI W3 Number of weekly missed collections	94 a week	104 a week	G	82 a week	Total target for year: No more than 5304. Total missed bins reported: 4158. Result is averaged over 51 week collection period. This is an extremely good result – 12% lower than target as it is an area where the customer’s perception of the service is magnified.

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Performance April 2015 – March 2016					
Indicator	Result 2014/15	Target 2015/16	RAG	Year End Result 2015/16	Comments

Resources and Organisational Key Indicators

KI R1 Council Tax collected	97.4%	97.5%	G	97.6%	The target has been exceeded and the performance has improved compared to 2014/15. The tax base has increased by £1.8m from the previous year, meaning that there has also been an increase in the level of income to collect. Several service process changes have been made to offer more proactive assistance for customers.
KI R2 Business Rates (NNDR) collected	97.5%	97.7%	G	98.3%	The collection rate has increased by 0.8% compared to the previous year and has exceeded the target. Similarly to Council Tax, the tax base has grown by £1.4 million from the previous year. Improvements put in place include to the way accounts are administered and by introducing more proactive engagement with businesses
KI R3 Sickness rate in working days	8.84 days	7.5 days	G	6.86 days	Target achieved. The sickness rate in working days has been reduced by over 20% compared to 2015/16. This has been achieved through a combination of a more robust approach to the management of persistent sickness absence and a number of wellbeing and training activities.

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Proposed Targets for 2016 - 2017					
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2015/16	RAG	Proposed Target 2016/17	Comments from Head of Service

Planning Key Indicators

KI P1 Processing of planning applications	Majors 88%	75%	G	80%	<p>Recommendation that we keep the targets for both Minors and Others at the same level. It is recognised that we have achieved above this level in the previous year but given the level of change in the planning system and the economic uncertainty in the market leading up to the referendum in June it is felt prudent to leave the target at the same level.</p> <p>In respect of the Majors, we have consistently achieved above the target and it would be possible to introduce a little stretch in the target, accepting the situation described above.</p>
	Minors 90%	85%	G	85%	
	Others 96%	90%	G	90%	
KI P2 Planning appeals allowed against our decision to refuse	27.9%	30% maximum	G	30%	It is recommended to keep the target at the same level which is nationally accepted as a level which represents healthy decision making. We have seen a shift in the Planning Inspectorate decision-making over the last year which adds a level of uncertainty around appeal outcomes currently.

Benefits Key Indicators

KI B1 Time to process housing benefit new claims and changes	10	13 days Housing Benefit	G	13	<p>Recommendation to keep the same target as last year. The service has improved from the previous year, however, the target is a stretching one and to achieve it is a very good outcome.</p>
	14	16 days LCTS		16	

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Proposed Targets for 2016 - 2017					
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2015/16	RAG	Proposed Target 2016/17	Comments from Head of Service

Housing Key Indicators

KI H1 Net additional homes provided	943	830	G	830	The figure of 933 net new homes at year end exceeds the target set in the Core Strategy. The Council has an up to date five year housing land supply as required by national planning policy and the emerging new Local Plan will allocate additional land for development thus ensuring an optimistic outlook for new housing delivery in Colchester in the coming years. Target remains 830.
KI H2 Affordable homes delivered (gross)	119	205 delivered over three years	G	205 delivered over three years	Recommend we keep the target as it is a three year target. Although national changes have made the delivery of truly affordable housing almost impossible, Starter Homes are now included in the definition of affordable housing and so can be counted in this PI. (We may wish/choose in the future to separate out the numbers of "traditional affordable" from starter homes in commentary for this PI).

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Proposed Targets for 2016 - 2017					
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2015/16	RAG	Proposed Target 2016/17	Comments from Head of Service

Housing Key Indicators delivered by Colchester Borough Homes (CBH)

KI H3 Homelessness cases prevented	58%	45%	G	45%	The target was achieved last year but finding alternative solutions for our customers remains a stretching target for this year.
KI H4 Rent Collected	98.85%	98%	G	98%	The collection remains high and has improved from the previous year, however, the target is a stretching one and to achieve it is a very good outcome.
KI H5 Average time to re-let council homes	General 16.81 days	17 days	G	28.5 days 17 days	This indicator has changed from last years and measures the overall time period between the last day of a previous tenancy, inclusive of notice, and the first day of a new tenancy. It now includes both standard relets and relets where there is a capital works elements (which used to be excluded). Days spent in capital works are included in the calculation. It is calculated in conformance with the HouseMark definition, which allows the exclusion of some days for specific reasons. As a means of comparison for this year, we will also continue to report on previous methodology, using 17 days as the target to be achieved.

Waste and Recycling Key Indicators

KI W1 Residual household waste per household	415 kg	400 kg	R	400kg	Although the target was not achieved last year it is proposed that the target remains the same and actions will be taken to persuade households who place out a large number of black sacks to recycle more waste.
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Corporate Indicator Set Year End Proposed Targets for 2016 - 2017					
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2015/16	RAG	Proposed Target 2016/17	Comments from Head of Service
KI W2 Household waste reused, recycled and composted	45.19%	48%	R	48%	Whilst the collection system used by the Council is out to consultation with the public this target remains unchanged from last year. This can be reviewed following the results of the consultation and the action that the Council decides to undertake.
KI W3 Number of weekly missed collections	82 a week	104 a week	G	95 a week	After the excellent result last year the target has been reduced to reflect the improved performance by the refuse and recycling crews.

Corporate Indicator Set Year End Proposed Targets for 2016 - 2017					
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2015/16	RAG	Proposed Target 2016/17	Comments from Head of Service

Resources and Organisational Key Indicators

KI R1 Council Tax collected	97.6%	97.5%	G	97.5%	<p>Recommendation to keep the same target for this year. Council Tax collection target for 2015/16 was 97.5%. This reflected an increase from 97.4% in 2014/15.</p> <p>Actual Council Tax collection for 2015/16 was 97.58%. Intensive proactive intervention was applied to outstanding balances during the final quarter of 2015/16 in an attempt to shift a hardening collection position.</p> <p>Essex wide deprivation mapping identifies Colchester as a Borough with significant challenges and as such collection is predicted to remain demanding especially in the context of residents managing further reforms to the national benefit framework.</p>
KI R2 Business Rates (NNDR) collected	98.3%	97.7%	G	97.8%	<p>Recommendation to slightly increase the target for this year. This will be the second year running that the target has been increased as performance has improved over the past year and should be sustained for 2016/17. There has been a modest temporary increase in resource for administering and collecting Business Rate income.</p>
KI R3 Sickness rate in working days	6.86 days	7.5 days	G	7.5 days	<p>Recommendation to keep the same target for this year. We have achieved the target this year for the first time in several years, and need to embed this success.</p>

Strategic Plan Action Plan – Year End Report 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016

Vibrant

- Enhance the diverse retail and leisure mix supporting independent business opportunities valued by residents and visitors
- Develop a strong sense of community across the Borough by enabling people and groups to take more ownership and responsibility for their quality of life
- Make more of the great culture and heritage in Colchester so that more visitors can enjoy the history and passion of Colchester
- Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure

Action	Year-end update
Work with development partners to bring exciting new retail and leisure to the eastern part of Colchester town centre	Agreement for lease signed with Curzon and planning application to be submitted in May. Heads of Terms agreed by Cabinet and legals instructed for Building Partnerships scheme to deliver new student homes; and for new 86 bed hotel and restaurants on land adjacent to Firstsite. Worked with Greyfriars developer to bring forward new high quality 26 bed hotel.
Launch the new High Street Charter Market and develop the offer with themed or extra market events	New 'Charter Market' has now had its first birthday having launched successfully in the spring of 2015. Overall the market has had a good first year. Occupancy rates are steady at an average of 54% which is above the national average of 46%. The remainder is taken up by casual traders and new traders. Trader satisfaction is high and income close to expected levels despite 4 stalls being removed at the mid-year review stage to ease the traffic issues at the top of the High Street. Some successful extensions to the market took place ('Light and Shades' evening market & 'Heritage Themed' market).
Support communities to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans	Examinations started for Myland and Braiswick, and Boxted Neighbourhood Plans in March 2016. The remaining Neighbourhood Plans being prepared for Copford & Easthorpe, Marks Tey, Eight Ash Green, Stanway, Tiptree and Wivenhoe have reached various stages of development including gathering evidence, holding public consultations and selecting development sites. The Wivenhoe Plan is on course to progress to examination during late summer/early autumn 2016.
Work with our residents, the third sector and other service providers to implement the Community Enabling Strategy to enable communities to influence, own or co-design services	The new enabling approach is at the heart of both transformational change and smaller, but no less important community projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester's Big Choice gave power to the people to vote for their favourite projects to receive a share of £200,000 of grant funding. • The Council has redesigned several services to customers, enabling 24/7 access to services. Targets to encourage electronic transactions have been achieved and web contact has increased by almost 500% since April 2014. Work to change behaviour is also an important element of the enabling strategy, recycling continues to increase and

	<p>pilot activities on reducing littering have proved successful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Days of Action and 'Make a Difference' days have seen services working with communities to focus on things that communities want to see change in their neighbourhoods. • Neighbourhood planning is being encouraged and supported across the Borough. • Grant awards have focussed on 'enabling' as a theme. • The Litter Warriors scheme has empowered community groups to tackle their own litter problems. <p>Our 'Go Online' work has been very successful. Over the last year we have helped with over than 400 customers in the Library and Community Hub receiving help to get online. We now have 45 volunteers acting as Online champions assisting residents with their digital skills and enabling them to access our online services. Our basic digital skills course has taught 46 residents who had poor digital skills to access the internet, set up and send email, learn about online safety and access our services online. More than 80 customers have also been given help at our Go Online events ('Digital Bazaars').</p> <p>We have empowered our residents to feedback on the web services we provide, allowing us to continually improve our online services to residents. Research was conducted with planning professionals and residents to help redesign the planning section of the website focusing on the user journey and making a clear distinction between Resident content and Business content.</p>
Work with the Colchester Community Voluntary Service (CCVS) and other local voluntary sector organisations to promote volunteering	<p>CBC grant funding has supported Colchester Community Voluntary Services (CCVS) to expand volunteering opportunities. Information presented by CCVS confirms that 48 volunteers in total will have been deployed by end May 2016. This will be backed up by a formal report from CCVS in June. Communications have given support to CCVS to develop their 'One Colchester' communications and marketing campaign. The project has supplied volunteer online Champions for events such as 'Greenstead Go online' and they will be taking part in this years 'Older Persons Crucial Crew'. The support that volunteers are providing to vulnerable people through CBC 'Helpline' is ongoing and the number of people wishing to befriend is increasing. CCVS volunteers also supported the 'Light and Shades' family fun day and will be providing additional stewards at the 'Slide Rider' event.</p>
Make more of our culture and heritage with initiatives such as the Friends of the Colchester Roman Wall and by attracting Heritage grants	<p>The Council's investment into our heritage assets over the last five years includes the castle redevelopment and repairs to parts of the 'Roman Wall'. In addition to this around £900,000 has been spent on repairs and maintenance of its listed buildings and heritage assets. There is annual investment in the Castle to maintain it as a leading visitor attraction, including updates to its 'app'; £33k into the 'Roman Circus' in partnership with Colchester Archaeological Trust and</p>

	<p>£25k has been spent to light Balkerne Gate with further funding set aside to improve heritage lighting. £100,000 has also been set aside to help promote our heritage and increase visitor numbers. The Alleyways BIFA project will highlight the historic significance of these forgotten medieval routes south from the High Street and provide interpretation of their history in a traditional format that draws on the town's rich craft traditions. The features and interpretation should be installed this summer as part of the on-going public realm enhancement works funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Fund. The Town Hall was also the focus of a unique 3D projection show as part of the 'Light & Shades' event and the 'Celebrate Heritage' fun day assisted in the promotion of the national 'Heritage Open Days' scheme.</p>
<p>Ensure sufficient land is allocated in the right places to attract and retain businesses, supply homes and identify the infrastructure that is needed by developing a Local Plan for the borough</p>	<p>The Council retains a five year supply of housing land. Work is ongoing to update the Local Plan evidence base and a 'Preferred Options' document is due to be considered by local plan committee in June ahead of full public consultation. The committee approved draft development management policies at its meeting on 4 April.</p>
<p>Co-ordinate partners and funding streams in the Northern Gateway and the Hythe to generate a wide range of jobs and facilities</p>	<p>Heads of Terms were agreed with Turnstone for commercial leisure development at Northern Gateway. Completion of the 'David Lloyd' lease to provide new jobs for the Borough and a commercial revenue stream to the Council. Contracts were exchanged for sale of site at Axial Way to Lookers which has retained jobs in the borough. The Council has worked with potential funding partners such as Sport England and British cycling to bring forward a sports-led scheme for land north of the A12. The scheme which has a vision to promote participation, performance and health involves the relocation of Colchester Rugby Club as well as the creation of new sports facilities for cycling, cricket, archery, and American football with discussions ongoing with a number of other local clubs and national sporting bodies. Funding has been secured from the Department of Energy and Climate Change for feasibility studies looking at Energy Centres for the Hythe and Northern Gateway which would provide low carbon heat supplies to new employment sites and housing.</p>
<p>Create more independent business opportunities by providing trading units in new large developments across the borough.</p>	<p>The Creative Business Centre with over 40 units for small creative/digital businesses is on site with completion due September 2016.</p>

Prosperous

- Promote Colchester to attract further inward investment and business relocation, providing greater and more diverse employment opportunities
- Support people to develop the skills needed by employers in the future to take advantage of higher paid jobs being created
- Provide opportunities to increase the number of homes available including those that are affordable for local people and to build (& renovate) our own Council houses for people in significant need
- Ensure transport infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth the keep the Borough moving

Action	Year-end update
Deliver an inward investment campaign in key employment sectors	Colchester's first 'Inward Investment Guide' is currently in production. It will showcase a variety of business opportunities in the borough. A new inward investment website is under development to be launched late 2016. Work in collaboration with Invest Essex has resulted in new inward investment leads which are being actively progressed.
Work with the Town Team and other partners to promote Colchester to attract inward investment	'Inward investment' leads will be introduced to the Town Team (now 'Colchester Presents') as appropriate. This group were also part of the planning for the 'Celebrate Heritage and Light & Shades' events. Partnership working with town centre businesses and taxi operators has been undertaken to achieve the Purple Flag re-accreditation.
Review the Better Colchester Town Centre website to promote Colchester	A review is currently being undertaken as part of the 'Better Town Centre' improvement programme. Feedback from the town centre improvements exhibition will also be used.
Secure increased funding and support for skills initiatives particularly in growth or emerging sectors	Funding has been secured for the delivery of ultrafast broadband infrastructure in the town centre including the Creative Business Centre. Funding has also been secured from the Department for Energy & Climate Change for feasibility studies on heating schemes for homes and businesses at Northern and East Colchester. The Council supported 'Walking With The Wounded' with a reception for their 'Walk of Britain' which aimed to raise the profile of this charity that invests in resettling wounded ex-service personnel and helping them to find new civilian employment opportunities.
Provide local economic data to education providers to help ensure that the skills that Colchester businesses need are provided	The Colchester Economic Growth Strategy evidence base and the Essex Skills Board data updates are on the website and are being disseminated to education providers.
Ensure there is an ongoing five-year supply of housing sites and the provision of sufficient numbers, types and tenure of housing to meet local need	The council has maintained a five year supply of housing sites. Further sites are available for the medium term. The new Local Plan will ensure there continues to be adequate land available to provide a range of house types and tenures.

Deliver 205 new affordable homes in the borough by 2018	A total of 106 new affordable homes were delivered in 2015/2016. This is 52% of the target we need to achieve by 2018.								
Seek 20% of new homes on qualifying sites to be affordable homes	<p>During 2015/2016, a total of 5 qualifying sites had legal agreements settled which specified the affordable housing contribution to be built. The total affordable housing contributions are set out below:</p> <table><tr><th>Total number of homes due on the 5 qualifying sites</th><th>Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied</th><th>Number of affordable homes actually secured</th><th>Commuted sum to provide affordable homes offsite Instead of on-site for these 5 sites</th></tr><tr><td>567</td><td>113</td><td>83</td><td>£493,000</td></tr></table>	Total number of homes due on the 5 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured	Commuted sum to provide affordable homes offsite Instead of on-site for these 5 sites	567	113	83	£493,000
Total number of homes due on the 5 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured	Commuted sum to provide affordable homes offsite Instead of on-site for these 5 sites						
567	113	83	£493,000						
Work with Colchester Borough Homes to increase the quality of council housing by refurbishing these properties and using new technologies to ensure they are energy efficient	Another year of the Housing Investment Programme has been completed that has seen a capital investment of more than £13.1 made in the Council's housing stock. Contractors have completed the works on budget and to a high level of customer satisfaction. Refurbishment work at Enoch House is well under way; Phase 1 has been completed and the first tranche of residents moved into their new flats, while the demolition and rebuild of the wing in Phase 2 is on programme. In partnership, we were able to ramp up the installation of solar PV systems before the Government's cut in the 'Feed In Tariff' came into effect at the end of December 2015, bringing this total to just over 2,670 systems on our housing stock; these will provide our tenants with significant savings on their energy costs.								
Work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough	<p>CBC continues to work with partners to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping through actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our ALMO, Colchester Borough Homes and our voluntary sector partners prevented 489 households from becoming homeless in 2015/2016• Funding to Beacon House - to provide outreach for entrenched rough sleepers• CBC funding to Anglia Care Trust - to provide early intervention for prison leavers, a package of intensive support to prevent homelessness and accommodation with support for single people who are homeless• Multi-agency approach to tackling rough sleepers which focuses on current and potential rough sleepers to understand and co-ordinate support								

<p>Articulate Colchester's transport needs to influence the development of new infrastructure by the Highway Authority and developers</p>	<p>As part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan, transport modelling work has been undertaken on future development scenarios to gain a better understanding of associated infrastructure needs. A specific piece of work has been undertaken on Rapid Transit to support potential growth in east Colchester.</p> <p>The Council responded to the ECC consultation on the Bus Service Review and Cycle Strategy, making suggestions to either retain or improve services, along with improvements to the strategy.</p>
<p>Support the delivery of improvements to the strategic road and rail network</p>	<p>The third and final part of the Northern Approaches Road opened in April 2015.</p> <p>Colchester's 'Park and Ride' service opened in April 2015 and launched in June 2015. An extra stop at Middleborough was added to the route following lobbying.</p> <p>Colchester has been represented at the 'A120' Member and Community Forum to progress the development of an improved A120 between the A12 and Braintree. Input has been made on the scheme to widen the A12, providing information on current and potential future growth to Highways England.</p> <p>Network Rail have been included in the Garden Communities Transport Working Group to ensure they are aware of the potential growth issues from the next Local Plan and how this aligns with the outputs of the Anglia Rail Study.</p> <p>Colchester responded to the March 2016 Lower Thames Crossing consultation supporting investment in this strategic link and making suggestions on how the options can be improved.</p> <p>A feasibility study into gateway signage in and around the Colchester borough has been undertaken as part of the BIFA programme.</p>
<p>Allocate developer funding to sustainable transport projects in the borough which improve the balance between different modes of transport</p>	<p>Requests are made at Development Team and in response to applications to ensure new development are well served by sustainable transport modes. A new path opened as part of the Brook Street development linking to the Wivenhoe Trail. Officers are working with the University and Maltings Student accommodation unit on a Travel Planning 'App'.</p> <p>Officers worked with developers on sites including Severalls, Cowdray Avenue and Sainsbury's to ensure better permeability for walking and cycling and provision for bus services.</p>
<p>Improve the walking and cycling links between Colchester North Station and the town centre through initiatives such as 'Fixing the Link'</p>	<p>LEP Local Growth Fund monies are to be invested on projects promoted by Colchester including improving the alleyways in the town centre and improving links between 'Park and Ride' stops and the town centre core.</p> <p>Cycle parking on the south side of Colchester station has been doubled and a new secure parking unit was launched in September. New bike racks were installed in the High Street in December.</p> <p>Phase one of the 'Fixing the Link' project was delivered and successfully launched in March 2016 with support from Abellio Greater Anglia (AGA) and ECC.</p>

Thriving

- Provide Colchester's heritage and wide ranging tourism attractions to enhance our reputation as a destination
- Be recognised as a centre of learning with excellent schools and educational opportunities for young people to make the most of their potential
- Be clear about the major opportunities to work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve more for Colchester than we could on our own
- Cultivate Colchester's green space and opportunities for health, wellbeing and the enjoyment of all

Action	Year-end update	
Provide positive experiences for visitors and residents by promoting Colchester's key leisure, visitor attractions and events venues	<p>Promotional activity has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a monthly e-magazine 'What's On' has been very successful with over 6,000 subscribers. • CBC has been supporting the 'Visit Colchester' marketing activity on a local and regional basis. • Creation of the monthly Colchester Calendar to promote events in the Town Centre. CBC is represented on the Town Centre marketing team, {Colchester Presents} and has helped with the promotion of the Christmas Light switch on campaign and Winter Wonderland. • The revamp of the Visit Colchester Website has been launched and social media promotion has increased, with positive feedback on venues and activities/special events. • A new 'Tourism' video was developed during the year and received good feedback. • A new town centre Christmas Lighting scheme was installed for Christmas 2015 as year one of a three year contract. • Work is underway to significantly improve the skate park facilities at Colchester Leisure World following investment from Section 106 funding. Customers of this facility were also actively engaged in the design process. 	
Support and help market a range of cultural festivals for local people and visitors	CBC has undertaken successful promotion of a range of events this year both on social media, the website and with marketing materials. These include, Summer Screen, Heritage Open Days, Light & Shades, Christmas Light switch on, and Winter Wonderland.	
Enhance Colchester's heritage attractions with initiatives such as integrating attractions, identifying trails around the town, and lighting the Roman walls	<p>Further development of a digital app trail focusing on the Roman and Norman heritage of the town is underway. This will be launched in June 2016. Three panels for the trail around the Roman Wall are in preparation in conjunction with the Friends of the Roman Wall, as is a panel for Mersea Barrow.</p> <p>Additional investment into heritage assets include new lighting; Castle spend; Fenwick Treasure;</p>	

	VIC website update; maintenance to Hollytrees, Walls; NH Museum and Town Hall. The Council has worked with Arts partners and town centre businesses on joint events and attractions throughout the year. Balcerne Gate will be permanently lit as part of the long-term plans to light historic sites around the town and Holy Trinity Church is also being considered as part of this programme. St Peter's Church on North Hill is now permanently illuminated at night as part of the Fixing the Link trail.
Promote what Colchester has to offer to residents, visitors, and new businesses	<p>Colchester was awarded Purple Flag status for its well-managed town centre after dark in February 2016. October 2015 saw the town join in a celebration of its Purple Flag status over Purple Flag weekend. This event was well supported by many of our partner organisations. Jumbo, the Castle and the Town Hall were lit in purple, a taxi was wrapped in Purple Flag livery and town centre licensed premises and taxi drivers joined-in to promote the flag and raise money for and awareness of the SOS Bus.</p> <p>A new and improved version of the official tourism website VisitColchester.com was launched in March 2016. This new site has a fresh look and feel; includes new functionality for the user and improved visibility to search engines. More than 500,000 users viewed VisitColchester.com in 2015.</p> <p>A new Tourism Video was launched in the Spring showcasing Colchester's finest tourist attractions and a further £100,000 investment into tourism and visitor marketing has been approved for 2016/17.</p>
Establish an effective apprenticeship programme to provide career and learning opportunities for young people	An apprenticeship scheme launched in March 2016 will provide Enterprise NVQ 3 qualification to young people with work placements in at least 2 local Small to Medium Size companies – based on a very successful scheme now operating in Norfolk. Construction apprentices employed initially on the Creative Business Centre as part of the contract with Phelan Construction.
Work with the third sector to deliver Colchester's Environmental Sustainability Strategy	<p>CBC has developed a network with community groups and third sector organisations with a joint aim to support work in environmental sustainability and to support communities to build resilience. By working with third sector partners, the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised the profile of rural skills training, by supporting external grant funding applications; encouraging a partnership approach to fill gaps in the provision, and actively promoted new rural skills training courses at CBC led events. • Promoted energy efficiency, during Big Energy Week to promote key information from the Energy Savings Trust on how to reduce household energy use and costs. • Reduced fuel poverty, by promoting the Big Community Switch project information to registered social housing providers. In 2015/2016, Colchester's residents saved £70,279 on their fuel bills by using the Big Community Switch to change to a cheaper energy supplier. On average they saved £218.

<p>Make the most of our parks and open spaces by managing them well and offering a range of activities and events</p>	<p>Work to procure a new grounds maintenance contract has resulted in The Landscape Group taking on provision of the contract from April 2016. The Council continues to expand the opportunities for a variety of events and festivals in parks and open spaces and a new Festivals Grant of £40,000 was made available in March. Commercial and charity events are catered for at a wide range of locations offering excitement, education and entertainment for all ages. Improvements have been made to offer a wide range of helpful on-line information to prospective event organisers. Investment into floral displays in and around the town centre has also taken place in the last year.</p>
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Welcoming

- Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses with a friendly feel that embraces tolerance and diversity
- Improve the cleanliness and health of the place by supporting events that promote fun and wellbeing
- Create a business friendly environment, encouraging business start-ups, support to small and medium sized enterprise and offer development in the right locations
- Make Colchester confident about its own abilities, to compete with the best of the towns in the region to generate a sense of pride

Action	Year-end update
Work with partners to fund and deliver streetscape improvements to support economic vitality	£5m has been secured from the LEP with ECC to deliver strategic town centre improvements which include upgrading of key pedestrian routes, including the High St Alleyways (St Nicholas Passage, Pelhams Lane, and Bank Passage). The Fixing the link creative wayfinding system is a new initiative that will be installed in Spring 2016. This will guide visitors to Colchester from the railway station to the town centre.
Work with partners in the Safer Colchester Partnership to deliver support, promotion and regulation in order to make Colchester even safer and for it to feel safer	The Council has invested £11,000 in raising awareness of the town's Purple Flag accreditation in 2015. The aim of this is to change perceptions of the town centre after dark and encourage more people to come into town to enjoy the many new places to eat, drink and socialise. The Licensing Enforcement Group has continued to meet and to work to target problem premises and agree joint partner actions to ensure compliance. Over the course of the past year The Council has dealt with 59 premises. There are currently 14 live cases. Licenced premises are increasingly willing to engage to help prevent problems arising. The Safer Colchester Partnership has reviewed its governance structure and Terms of Reference this year to ensure it is fit for purpose into the future. There is an annual partnership plan setting out the work of the partnership to address crime and disorder for the period and this is regularly monitored to ensure targets are being achieved.
Improve the information available to new residents	The Customer Demand and Research team are planning the development of a new 'app' for residents to act as a single point of contact with the Council when they first move to the Borough. The team are in the process of planning for the next steps for the development of the app, ensuring it is in line with future website development and aligned to any new software packages we need to integrate with.
Improve street cleansing and enforcement in Colchester town centre, and in Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea, and Wivenhoe	In the High Street, the pavements have been given a deep clean to remove engrained chewing gum, and a protective layer has been added to the York stone. The Council has invested over £100k in a new 'Hot Wash' machine for the town centre and appropriate areas around the Borough. Enforcement has increased by approximately 2000-2500 extra enforcement hours each

	<p>month. A rota was also produced for each zone to send their wardens in to town with the specific task of tackling litter. The 'We are Watching You' dog Fouling campaign has been very successful in the ten targeted areas and a 2016 Litter Campaign is now planned. Seven of these ten areas saw a reduction in dog fouling during the campaign period. Officers have been issued with new and more consistent hi-vis clothing to make them more identifiable to the public. We are fast approaching 200 'Litter Warriors' (volunteers who litter pick their communities with equipment supplied by the Council). The three R's project has been trialled in one primary school to educate young people on the 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' principle. Further to this we have five new Junior Warden schemes running where young people learn about the community they live in and are encouraged to take pride in their areas.</p>
<p>Work with health partners to contribute towards delivering effective outcomes for individuals and their families, with particular focus on prevention and intervention to improve health outcomes and to tackle health inequalities</p>	<p>A new Public Health Improvement Coordinator post in partnership with Essex County Council Public Health Team and Tendring District Council has been recruited.</p> <p>A new Housing and Health working group has been established jointly with North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This will co design schemes to avoid hospital admissions and co-ordinate our housing work with hospital discharge.</p> <p>The Council worked with the CCG to integrate CBC services into an admissions avoidance 'app' used by GPs in North Essex.</p>
<p>Lead and develop the Active Colchester Network to co-ordinate programmes and activities to increase participation</p>	<p>A CBC Sport & Leisure Officer Chairs the Active Colchester Community Sports Network, which is attended by representatives from Colchester Borough Council, University of Essex, Colchester Institute, Colchester Garrison, Essex FA, Essex County Cricket Club, Colchester Community Volunteer Services, Active Essex and Colchester United Football in the Community.</p> <p>Active Colchester successfully applied for funding to stage a number of activities/events in 2015/16 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocated an 'Active Essex' apprentice placement to increase resource in order to help deliver sporting projects in Colchester • Inter Community Games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Older people's event at Leisure World Colchester ○ Free Sports Festival at Leisure World Highwoods ○ Tiptree Community Games ○ Boccia Training Sessions • Parkour at Leisure World Highwoods • Ladies Only Group Swimming Lessons at Leisure World Colchester • Junior ParkRun • Funding workshop for sports clubs

Work with Colchester Borough Homes, housing providers, private landlords, residents and partners to create cleaner, greener and safer communities	<p>The borough's Air Quality Action Plan 2016-202 was launched. The plan aims to tackle areas of the borough with high pollution levels. Additionally the Low Emission Strategy supports the plan and aims to address traffic emissions in more detail. Initiatives already launched include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new air quality health alert service delivered in partnership with AirText. Alerts are based on local air quality monitoring sites and national weather forecasting. • Using £194,000 of Department for Transport funding to fit emissions reduction technology to ten buses operating in the borough. The initiative undertaken in partnership with First Essex reduces emissions by over 80%, eliminates most of the harmful particulate matter and improves fuel efficiency. <p>The Council has undertaken over 700 dwelling inspections across the borough, mitigating or removing 438 'category 1' or significant 'category 2' hazards from homes including the removal of 83 families from fuel poverty through interventions such as property improvements. The Council continues to work in partnership with Colchester Borough Homes to deliver a supported Disabled Facilities Grant Service to adapt homes to enable residents to live independently in their own home for longer.</p>
Enhance the offer from Colchester Business Enterprise Agency to deliver a 'one-stop-shop' for business start-ups and survival	The Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) has secured funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership to provide additional support services to help new businesses to start and prosper in Colchester.
Deliver the Creative Business Centre in the town centre to support fledgling businesses	The construction of the Creative Business Centre is underway with completion due September 2016.
Launch a new destination marketing campaign to raise Colchester's profile and to encourage pride in the borough	The Council produced a 'tourism' video and joined up marketing for events and activities throughout the summer. A further £100,000 was agreed for 2016/17 which will include a Colchester Treasure campaign and additional resourcing for joint marketing with 'Visit Britain', 'Visit Essex' and more local advertising along with efforts to increase day trips and overnight stays in Colchester.

Additional Strategic Plan Actions

During 2015-16 the Cabinet allocated extra funding to achieve the Strategic Plan. As a result new initiatives have been developed during the year which will be added to the Strategic Plan Action Plan for 2016-17. These include:

Action	Year-end update
Locating the Roman Gates	This project will highlight the locations of historic gates in the Roman Wall. A budget for this project was approved in January 2016. Scoping work has commenced, building on the successful completion of Phase One of the Fixing the Link project. From April there will be further development with an implementation date anticipated in autumn 2016.
Increase Tourism / visitor numbers to Colchester	Approved work will include a 'Colchester Treasure' campaign and additional resourcing for joint marketing with Visit Britain, Visit Essex and more local advertising along with efforts to increase day trips and overnight stays in Colchester.
Discovering Colchester Historic Buildings	This project will bring together heritage organisations, for example, the Colchester Historic Buildings Forum, and recognised specialists, to identify, record, understand and promote Colchester's rich assemblage of surviving medieval and early post-medieval buildings. The project will add to our understanding of the development of our historic town, our understanding of historic buildings across the town and their survival, and enable us to assess and identify buildings at risk. It is also expected that an online gazetteer will enable the statutory lists for Colchester to be enhanced. The project will be completed in March 2017.
Community Archaeology Project	This project is to facilitate an archaeological evaluation of the Queen Street Bus Depot. Assuming archaeological remains are encountered, an external funding bid will be made, with local heritage organisations, to undertake a community archaeology project giving volunteers the opportunity to participate and be trained in the techniques of archaeological investigation by a professional archaeological team. Colchester Archaeological Trust has been commissioned to undertake the evaluation.
Colchester Heritage Explorer Website	The project will deliver a web portal to enable online publication of the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database. This will provide access to records detailing Colchester's rich heritage from early prehistory to the present day. The website will be designed to be user-friendly and responsive. It will link to other online resources for Colchester's residents and for visitors to the area. A heritage consultant has been appointed to deliver this project, and the project will be completed – and the website launched - in November 2016.

Heritage Guide for Colchester	This project will produce a new heritage guidebook on Colchester, providing visitors with a tour of significant heritage attractions and a brief history of this important Roman and Medieval Town. The new guide will be launched in October 2016.
Construction Skills Centre	Working with Phelan Construction, Essex County Council and Colchester Institute, this project will establish a construction training facility for apprenticeships, upskilling & site accreditation and construction sector 'taster' days for Years 10 -13.

Other performance news

- **Awards and accreditations**

The highlights are summarised here and are also shown on www.colchester.gov.uk in the [achievements](#) section

Achieved April 2015 to March 2016:	
TPAS Awards	CBH's 'Respect Difference' Equality and Diversity Training Programme was shortlisted in the Equality and Diversity category of the TPAS awards which showcase compelling and inspirational stories of tenants, landlords and contractors working together.
Local Government Association (LGA) best practice	CBC has been selected as a case study on the LGA's website for our behaviour change programme. This includes a 'transforming CBC through behaviour change' summary , using text messaging for influencing behaviour, and managing demand through improved letter writing . There are also Youtube videos from Adrian Pritchard on the approach Colchester has taken to managing demand and the use of behavioural insights and from Mandy Jones on how CBC's approach to demand management has developed and broadened from applying behavioural insights to encompass other approaches, including digital inclusion.
National Land Information Service (NLIS)	CBC is in the top ten best performing NLIS level 3 local authorities in the country, in the 'silver medal' position behind the overall winner. Judges use NLIS Hub data to evaluate this award and look for evidence of the highest number of NLIS electronic searches during the period, and the fastest electronic turnaround time (ie the time it takes to return the search to the customer). Local Land Charges is an essential part of the conveyancing process and is a statutory function for local authorities.
British Parking Awards	The North Essex Parking Partnership was shortlisted as finalists in the 'team of the year' category. In its entry, the NEPP included examples of its commitment to positive change, team building and staff development through focus groups, internal communications and professional development opportunities. Also submitted were examples of customer compliments and testimonials, media coverage and its use of social media to educate and engage with local motorists.
Purple Flag	Colchester has retained the prestigious Purple Flag status for its evening and night-time economy. Purple Flag is a national accreditation for well-managed town and city centres after dark.
Living Wage Foundation	CBC is now an accredited Living Wage Employer . This means that as well as paying the Living Wage to all directly employed staff, a phased plan for third party contracted staff is in place as relevant contracts come up for renewal.
Investors in People (IIP) CBC	CBC's reassessment against the IIP standard was successful . The independent assessor's report noted that "great strides had been made in developing the culture necessary for staff to think about and approach their responsibilities in a more flexible, skilled and engaged way, and that a range of activities had been initiated to continue to boost staff engagement in future strategies for the organisation and the community". IIP is the national standard awarded to organisations that demonstrate a commitment to supporting the training and development needs of their staff to achieve their business goals.

<u>Investors in People (IIP)</u> CBH	CBH has achieved the Silver IIP standard. The IIP framework is a standard of best practice, awarded to organisations that demonstrate and meet key criteria in areas such as personal learning and development, leadership skills and recognition and reward.
<u>East Anglia Residents' Awards</u>	CBH won the 'Best Tenant Training Programme' in recognition of the work that CBH does with its tenants. Throughout the year CBH runs a series of free training and development courses for its tenants and leaseholders to help them seek new employment and develop new skills.
<u>Britain in Bloom</u>	Silver Gilt for Colchester - small city category. One of 70 finalists chosen from more than 1,000 groups.
<u>Anglia in Bloom</u>	Gold award for Colchester, Castle Park and High Woods Country Park. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Park took the prize for the best public open space, and its drought garden was judged the best drought, or sustainable, garden in the east of England. • High Woods Country Park also won the award for best conservation project and a special award for the best new entry. Silver Gilt award for the Cemetery and Crematorium. Gold award for 2 Charles Smith House residents for Best individual/Community Floral Display (CBH).
<u>Carbon Action Network Awards 2015</u> HECA East - winner	The Strategic Housing Team won for two projects that support Carbon Action Network objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team supported the Big Energy Saving Network (BESN) project by assisting with an application for DECC funding to deliver a project to support vulnerable people to switch energy suppliers. For the last two years, this project has run alongside the Council's Big Community Switch (BCS), which is only available online. The BESN project enabled the BCS to be digitally inclusive by supporting vulnerable people in Colchester to successfully switch energy supplier. • Through partnership working with En-form, the team also supported the first Colchester Green Open Homes event. This was so successful that the project has been extended to the whole of Essex, and to community buildings and businesses as well as homes, with energy efficiency measures at work and open to the public throughout September 2015.
<u>Park Mark - the safer parking scheme</u>	Twenty of the Council's car parks across the borough were given the nationally recognised Park Mark award following independent assessment including a Police inspection. The annual award is given in recognition of investment to keep the car parks to a high standard, ensure the safety of customers and their vehicles, and where there are low instances of crime.
<u>Green Flag Awards</u>	Castle Park has received its thirteenth consecutive Green Flag, with High Woods receiving its twelfth. Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and promotes the community value of green spaces.
<u>GeoPlace</u> – national Exemplar Gold award	Gold Performance Award for Address Data - for consistently maintaining the highest level of data quality. The Exemplar Awards recognise excellence in local authority business-critical data creation of Address data, known as a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Street data, known as a Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). Only ten authorities in the east of England achieved this Gold standard.
<u>LEXCEL</u>	Legal Services achieved the Law Society's practice management standard – a Centre of Excellence.
<u>Essex Digital Awards</u>	Now in its second year, the Essex Digital Awards look to reward innovation and progressive thinking by businesses. CBC won in the Best mobile App category for Leisure World's MyLeisure App.

- **Other performance news for April 2015 to March 2016**

Open and transparent data – making information about our performance clear and accessible to everyone

- Colchester has been selected in a new scheme to create a register of derelict/underused or “brownfield” land which is available locally for housing. Following a competitive bid, the Council will receive a £10,000 government funding to help set up its brownfield register as part of [this pilot project](#). The councils taking part in the brownfield pilots will inform future government policy and guidance on the operation of the brownfield registers. Registers will eventually become mandatory for all councils under proposals going through Parliament in the Housing and Planning Bill.
- The Open Data Institute/LGA have developed three e-learning modules with practical guidance about publishing open data and using standards. This is underpinned by nine local authority examples, including Colchester. We feature in '[making standards work for you](#)' for our work on developing the [Datashare](#) resource on the Council's website. Datashare makes it possible for anyone to view and download a range of council databases and information required under the statutory Transparency Code, along with other information such as Planning applications database, NNDR database, performance statistics, Council spending and parking data. This work has also helped the Council to access the £10,000 funding shown above. The case study is summarised in italics below:

The benefits of publishing to standard schemas: local authority examples

Publishing against standard schemas can save your authority time and money. The results can also make your data more attractive to developers and other users. The following examples show how some authorities around the UK are already using standard schemas to their advantage.

Starting small: Colchester Borough Council

When Colchester Borough Council came to publish open data under the transparency code they were faced with a choice. The council could either spend time and resources developing its own schemas or use an existing one. Calling upon the online open data resources assembled by the LGA, Colchester was able to access the full range of schemas for transparency code datasets, ensuring its results would be clean, simple and compatible with the data of neighbouring authorities. The result is [Datashare](#).

- **Annual reports** – the Council produces a number of annual reports on its performance. These have been brought into one place on the website [here](#) for ease of reference, so that it is easier for the public to see which annual reports are available.
- [Single Data List- current list for districts](#) - DCLG has just published the SDL for 2016-17. It contains the entirety of central government departments' data requirements from local government, which means that councils know exactly what information Government will ask for over the course of the year. Councils do not have to provide anything that is not on the list, unless extra funding is provided.

SCRUTINY PANEL MINUTE EXTRACT 19 JULY 2016

77. Year End 2015/16 Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan

Councillor Davies (in respect of being employed by the Rural Community Council of Essex) declared a non-pecuniary interest pursuant to the provision of Meetings General Procedure Rule 9(5).

Matthew Sterling, Assistant Chief Executive, introduced the report which requested that the Panel consider the performance of the authority for 2015/16 and whether the proposed targets for next year are sufficiently realistic and ambitious. The report will then be sent to Cabinet for further consideration and comment.

Matthew Sterling highlighted that the report includes 14 different key performance indicators, with twelve of the KPI's achieving the target set. Two key performance indicators were categorised as red; amount of residual household waste per household and the amount of household waste reused, recycled and composted both missed the targets set.

Matthew Sterling also highlighted particular successes for the Council, this included the net additional homes provided reaching 933 with an original target of 830, and achieving the target for the sickness rate in working days. With regard to future years targets these will be tougher or similar to those that are existing for the current year.

The third part of the report includes all of the actions taken throughout the year to reach the objectives in the Strategic Plan Action Plan. Matthew Sterling highlighted the new Charter Market which has higher than average occupancy rates and the fixing the link scheme which provides guidance for visitors walking from the railway station to the Town Centre. Matt Sterling also highlighted the local festivals that had taken place in Colchester, and the aim to have a cleaner town centre with the use of the hot wash machine.

Councillor raised the following issues;

- Councillor Coleman – Are there any plans for a Winter Wonderland in 2016?
- Councillor Arnold – Is there an indication of the split between those applications that were rejected following an officer recommendation to refuse and those that were rejected when Councillors went against the recommendation from officers? Requested that the information be included in future reports. Also questioned why the houses built target was included as Colchester Borough Council does not build the properties.

- Councillor Arnold – Questioned the reasons behind the increase in residual waste per household, and asked for the number of households in the Borough that do not recycle.
- Councillor Davies – Questioned whether there had been a high number of residents reporting missed collections as a number of comments through the Gazette highlighted issues of missed collections and not being provided with recycling facilities. Councillor Davies also highlighted recycling from flats and the need for this to be improved.
- Councillor Coleman – Are there any plans for further roll out of education through schools, residents or press?
- Councillor Higgins – Highlighted issues with recycling at flats due to the space available and the need to increase students awareness of recycling at the end of University terms.
- Councillor Arnold – Questioned whether the application for the digital trail focusing on the Roman and Norman heritage of the town had been officially launched as it is on the application stores but does not included much information.

In response to issues raised by Councillors, Matthew Young and Cllr Tim Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration provided the following responses;

- In response to Councillor Coleman, Councillor Tim Young stated that there will not be a Winter Wonderland taking place for 2016. There is an aim to hold an event during 2017 as there is demand for an event of this type to take place. There will still be a number of events taking place in 2016 in Colchester.
- In response to Councillor Arnold's query on Planning Applications, Matthew Sterling stated for the year so far, 33.3% of decisions taken by Officers have been successfully appealed, but there have been none so far in this quarter from Councillor decisions. For the last financial year, there were 38 appeals against officer decisions of which 36% were successful; there were 5 appeals against Committee decisions of which 20% were successful. With regard to the housing figures these are included at Colchester Borough Council does a significant amount of work to enable the houses to be built; the wording in the report is based on a national indicator.
- In response to Councillor Arnold's query on household waste Matthew Young, Head of Operational Services, stated that the increase in residual waste is due to households increasing the amount of waste they put out; the lower level of recycling is due to a reduction in the green waste that was collected in the previous year. Matthew Young highlighted that the trend over the past ten years in Colchester is a reduction in the amount of residual was produced by households from 63,000 to 58,000 whilst there has been an increase in the number of properties by 7,000; this is one of the best records across Essex.

With regard to the number of homes that do not recycle, or only recycle one particular material, it is estimated that this totals around 25% of households. Zone teams do visit those households who do not recycle to try and educate and encourage them to do so. Councillor Young stated that incentives may no longer be providing the stimulus necessary and enforcement may be required. Councillor Young also stated that with regard to the Waste consultation the administration will soon be analysing the results.

- In response to Councillor Davies, Matthew Young stated that he would look at the comments raised. With regard to flat recycling this is something that is being worked on. Councillor Young stated that he does not receive indication of missed collections from residents in his ward.
- In response to Councillor Coleman, the zone teams provide a lot of support for residents, alongside work with schools and the junior zone team programme. Work is also undertaken with Essex for educations around the county.
- Councillor Tim Young responded to Councillor Higgins highlighting that flat recycling is impacted by planning. Matthew Young stated that the Waste Team in partnership with Planning Services have devised a supplementary planning document to help identify the requirements for recycling facilities in flats so that the bins are accessible to the crews. Colchester Borough Homes flats have helped to create recycling areas, but further work is required with private developers and management companies to provide additional space.
- Councillor Tim Young stated that he would find out further information on the application and inform the Scrutiny Panel in due course.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Panel considered and commented on the Year End 2015/16 Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan.

Report of	Monitoring Officer	Author	Andrew Weavers ☎ 282213
Title	Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Review 2015/2016		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report request the Cabinet to note the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for 2015/2016

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 To note the contents of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2015/2016.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 To inform the Cabinet of the number of complaints received by the Local Government Ombudsman in relation to Colchester during 2015/2016.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 No alternative options are presented.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Local Government Ombudsman issues an Annual Review Letter to each local authority. The Annual Review Letter for Colchester for the year ending 31 March 2016 is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 It is worth noting that anyone can choose to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. Accordingly, the number of complaints is not an indicator of performance or level of customer service. In most instances there was no case to answer. The Local Government Ombudsman will normally insist that the Council has the opportunity to resolve the complaint locally through its own complaints procedure before commencing its own investigation.
- 4.3 The Governance and Audit Committee has an overview of Local Government Ombudsman investigations and the contents of the Annual Review will be reported to the Committee in due course.

5. Key Headlines

- 5.1 There were no findings of maladministration against the Council and no formal reports were issued.
- 5.2 In 2015 /16 the Council received 243,775 customer contacts. The Local Government Ombudsman in the same period received 25 complaints and enquires in relation to how

the Council had dealt with its customers. This is a reduction from the previous year's figure of 30.

5.3 The Local Government Ombudsman made 23 decisions. Of which:

- 12 were referred back for local resolution,
(Referred back to the Council to enable it to deal with the complaint via its own complaint procedures)
- 4 were closed after initial enquiries,
- 3 advice given,
- 2 incomplete or invalid,
- 1 not upheld,
- 1 upheld.

(The Local Government Ombudsman decided that the Council had been at fault in how it acted and the fault may or may not have caused injustice to the complainant, or where the Council accepted that it needed to remedy the complaint before the Local Government Ombudsman made a finding on fault. If the Local Government Ombudsman decided there was fault and it caused an injustice to the complainant, usually it will have recommended the Council take some action to address it).

5.4 The case which the Local Government Ombudsman upheld was in relation to a case where a landlord complained that the Council did not help them claim direct payments when their tenant was in arrears with rent. The Local Government Ombudsman found that the Council had not followed its processes and accordingly the Council was at fault. However the Council had remedied the fault by apologising to the landlord.

6. Financial Considerations

6.1 No direct implications other than mentioned in this report.

7. Strategic Plan References

7.1 The lessons learnt from complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman link in with our Strategic Plan aims to be efficient accessible, customer focused and always looking to improve. Having an effective complaints process helps us to achieve the Strategic Plan's themes of a vibrant, prosperous, thriving and welcoming Borough.

8. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

8.1 No direct implications.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 Details of the Annual Review Letter are published on the Local Government Ombudsman's website and will also be published on the Council's website.

10. Consultation, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management Implications

10.1 No direct implications.

21 July 2016

By email

Adrian Pritchard
Chief Executive
Colchester Borough Council

Dear Adrian Pritchard,

Annual Review Letter 2016

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions we made about your authority during the period. I hope that this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Last year we provided information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to council feedback, this year we are providing additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received.

We provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us. In addition, we provide a compliance rate for implementing our recommendations to remedy a fault.

I want to emphasise that these statistics comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

Effective accountability for devolved authorities

Local government is going through perhaps some of the biggest changes since the LGO was set up more than 40 years ago. The creation of combined authorities and an increase in the number of elected mayors will hugely affect the way local services are held to account. We have already started working with the early combined authorities to help develop principles for effective and accessible complaints systems.

We have also reviewed how we structure our casework teams to provide insight across the emerging combined authority structures. Responding to council feedback, this included reconfirming the Assistant Ombudsman responsible for relationship management with each authority, which we recently communicated to Link Officers through distribution of our manual for working with the LGO.

Supporting local scrutiny

Our corporate strategy is based upon the twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services. The numbers in our annual report demonstrate that we continue to improve the quality of our service in achieving swift redress.

To measure our progress against the objective to improve local services, in March we issued a survey to all councils. I was encouraged to find that 98% of respondents believed that our investigations have had an impact on improving local public services. I am confident that the continued publication of our decisions (alongside an improved facility to browse for them on our website), focus reports on key themes and the data in these annual review letters is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens.

The survey also demonstrated a significant proportion of councils are sharing the information we provide with elected members and scrutiny committees. I welcome this approach, and want to take this opportunity to encourage others to do so.

Complaint handling training

We recently refreshed our Effective Complaint Handling courses for local authorities and introduced a new course for independent care providers. We trained over 700 people last year and feedback shows a 96% increase in the number of participants who felt confident in dealing with complaints following the course. To find out more, visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Ombudsman reform

You will no doubt be aware that the government has announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something we support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

We will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining our 40 years plus experience of working with local government and our understanding its unique accountability structures.

This will also be the last time I write with your annual review. My seven-year term of office as Local Government Ombudsman comes to an end in January 2017. The LGO has gone through extensive change since I took up post in 2010, becoming a much leaner and more focused organisation, and I am confident that it is well prepared for the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
1	3	2	0	3	2	6	8	0	25

Decisions made

				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
2	3	12	4	1	1	50%	23

Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.

The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

The compliance rate is the proportion of remedied complaints where our recommendations are believed to have been implemented.

Complaints Remedied

by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement	Compliance Rate
0	0	100%

**GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
MINUTE EXTRACT
26 JULY 2016**

12. Complaints in Relation to Councillor Buston

Councillor Pearson introduced Barbara Pears, Independent Person, who was attending the Committee for this item to provide advice to Committee members. Councillor Pearson stated that both members of the public and Councillors who wish to speak would be restricted to three minutes, with Councillor Bourne and Councillor Buston limited to ten minutes. In addition, only one contribution to the discussion would be permitted from each member of the Committee.

Councillor Willetts voiced concern that Councillors contributions would be limited to just one occasion on this important issue.

Andrew Weavers, Monitoring Officer, and author of the report, set out the contents of the report and the decision required. The Committee is required to make an initial assessment on whether Councillor Buston's conduct potentially amounted to a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct, and if so whether either one or both of the complaints requires no further investigation or merits further investigation. If the Committee determines that it does not require any further investigation it can take no further action or consider providing advice. If the Committee agree that further investigation is required then an external person would be appointed to conduct an investigation. The Committee were informed that the decision would need to be based on the information provided within the report and the letter that had been circulated to members from Councillor Buston regarding training that he had attended.

Andrew Weavers informed the Committee of the background of the complaints. Andrew Weavers stated that the complaints allege that Councillor Buston did not comply with the Members Code of Conduct paragraph three relating to not breaching equality enactments. The Equalities Act 2010 provides that travellers are a group of society which are afforded protected characteristics. In addition the Council, as a public authority is required by the act to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty which has due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups of people in society when carrying out functions. Councillors are required to take the Public Sector Equality Duty into account when taking decisions and when undertaking communications in relation to their role as a Councillor.

In relation to these complaints, the Committee is required to decide whether Councillor Buston's comments potentially breached part of the Public Sector Equality Duty which relates to fostering good relations between different groups. Andrew Weavers outlined that Councillor Buston had stated that he was representing the views of residents in his ward, which comes under Freedom of Expression as part of the Human Rights Act 1998. Andrew Weavers stated that this is a qualified right and is subject to restrictions prescribed by law within a democratic society, which includes the prevention of disorder or crime and protection of reputation or rights of others. If the Committee decides that the complaints merit further investigation, these issues will be looked into in greater detail.

Andrew Weavers, following a query from Councillor Willetts, clarified that travellers are a group with protected characteristics under the category of race.

Have Your Say

Terry Cheelds

Terry Cheelds attended the meeting requesting assistance from Colchester Borough Council to answer a question from his son. He stated that his son, whilst walking to school, had witnessed travellers cutting down hedges, driving four wheel drive cars on fields and leaving behind waste. His son had questioned why this was able to occur, when local residents would not be able to do the same.

Further to this, Mr Cheelds stated that the Cowdray Centre Development Site was broken into by travellers. Whilst the Police were called and were helpful, the travellers stated that if the criminal damage charge was dropped they would leave the area, which they did. Mr Cheelds believed that there should be more protection for Colchester residents and questioned why this situation can be allowed to occur.

Mike Hardy

Raised a point of clarification with the monitoring officer, as he understood that there was only protection to certain groups of travellers; Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers. Other travelling communities are not covered by the Act, and therefore do not have protected statuses.

Mike Hardy stated that the Equalities Act defends groups against discrimination and defines the types of discrimination which are protected characteristics. Mike Hardy distributed an information sheet on the types of discrimination taken from the Government website.

Mike Hardy stated that in relation to Councillor Buston, no comments were made on any protected characteristic and therefore has not breached the Equalities Act or the Members Code of Conduct.

Mike Hardy also commented on the second complaint, believing that Councillor Bourne's interpretation of Councillor Buston's intent was inaccurate.

Councillor Cope

Councillor Cope highlighted his concerns regarding the visibility of the legal processes when issues with travelling communities are raised with the Police. Councillor Cope also believed that more information should be provided to Councillors and residents to understand the processes and to prevent the perception that nothing is happening.

Councillor Cope highlighted a number of incidents that had occurred in his ward that were reported to Police, but no information then passed on to Councillors or local residents.

Councillor Cope also questioned whether this particular issue could be a diversity, ethnicity or equality issue given that the report does not contain information from the Essex Countywide Travellers Unit on who the travellers were on that particular site.

Councillor Lissimore

Councillor Lissimore stated that she was not originally intending to speak at the meeting and thanked Councillor Cope for opting to speak at the meeting.

Councillor Lissimore stated that local residents are fully in support of Councillor Buston, and that she had not been made aware of any complaints received other than that from Councillor Bourne.

Councillor Lissimore also reminded the Committee of the incidents that had originally led to Councillor Buston's letter, and that the comments within the letter were reflecting the residents' comments on the circumstances.

Councillor Lissimore requested that membership of political parties be put to one side on this issue and that Councillors look at the words used in making their decision.

Councillor Jarvis

Councillor Jarvis spoke to the Committee and protested at the limitation on length of time allotted to speak on the issue. Councillor Jarvis clarified to the Committee the circumstances behind the inclusion of his name in the original e-mail heading which related to an e-mail template displaying the shared ward information. Following receipt of the complaint Councillor Buston immediately clarified that Councillor Jarvis was not responsible for the comments, and this highlighted the conduct of Councillor Buston.

Councillor Jarvis stated that he had recently visited Hilly Fields and had spoken to a number of residents who indicated their upset at the current situation. Councillor

Jarvis also highlighted his frustration with the Police, who have the power to remove encampments without going through the courts. In this circumstance, the Police deemed it inappropriate to invoke Section 50 of the Criminal Justice Act.

The Hilly Fields site is a scheduled ancient monument, which is the highest protection given to sites under planning law. Councillor Jarvis highlighted the issues that had occurred on the site, which local residents were not permitted to do. Councillor Jarvis also questioned how much more damage to local amenities could be permitted.

Councillor Jarvis also highlighted his concern that the complaint was lodged due to party political reasons. Councillor Jarvis commented on commitment to the Human Rights Act and free speech and that Local Councillors should not be afraid of reflecting the views of their residents.

Councillor Jarvis stated that he believed the matter should not have come before the Governance and Audit Committee, and that there should be no further action taken.

Councillor Bourne

Councillor Bourne stated that part of her Portfolio relates to gypsy and traveller encampments under environmental protection section. As Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bourne regularly corresponds with the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit to discuss additional pitches and liaison sites.

Councillor Bourne stated that as Councillors it is necessary to manage expectations of local residents and to help to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not. With regard to the complaint, Councillor Bourne stated that she objected to the language used by Councillor Buston regarding the unauthorised encampment on Hilly Field. Councillor Bourne felt that the language used by Councillor Buston breached the Members Code of Conduct as it did not help to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics.

Councillor Bourne stated that she was aware that for some residents having strangers in their local area is not welcome and can be perceived as a threat, especially when local residents do not share the same characteristics. In these situations it is necessary for Councillors to tread a cautious and respectable path when dealing with these matters.

When incidents with the travelling community occur Colchester Borough Council, Essex Police, the County Council and the Essex Countywide Travellers Unit have a protocol which has been in place for a number of years. As a result of the number of complaints and conversations held with Councillors, the Council is now reviewing this protocol. Cabinet will shortly be receiving a presentation from the Essex Countywide Travellers Unit and discuss the best way forward to deal with concerns.

Councillor Bourne stated that if Councillors have concerns regarding gypsies and travellers, they can be raised with officers or with the Portfolio Holder. Unfortunately Councillor Buston did not choose either of these potential routes. Councillor Bourne stated that the initial complaint to the monitoring officer was regarding the language used by three different Councillors. Councillor Goss apologised for comments in the press and attended equality and diversity training and Councillor Jarvis had responded quickly and stated that he didn't mean to cause offense. Councillor Bourne stated that she had spoken to members of all political parties, including Labour, regarding issues around travellers and the language used, which can stigmatise communities. Whilst the comments made may seem honest, they can lead others to take more extreme actions. In each discussion with Councillors, they had understood the reason behind making contact and not reiterated the words in future articles and communications.

Councillor Bourne stated that Councillors, as community leaders have a leadership role, and if Councillors use intemperate and incautious language it can vindicate others to be more extreme in their views.

Councillor Bourne highlighted that following comments in the local newspaper regarding Syrian refugees she had spoken to the paper and had a retraction printed. Councillor Bourne also denied that this was a party political issue, and that she had not commented in the press or on social media about this particular case. As part of the Councillors role, Councillor Bourne stated that she wished that Councillor Buston would take advice on the language used, and highlighted an extreme comment that had been posted by a member of the public underneath the article which included Councillor Buston's comments.

Councillor Buston

Councillor Buston formally objected to the time limits being imposed on his speaking time when defending accusations on this matter. Councillor Buston was disappointed that this issue had been brought to the Governance and Audit Committee.

Councillor Buston commented that his response to the Monitoring Officer with regard to the original complaint remain, in addition Councillor Buston thanked a number of local residents who had contacted him providing support.

Councillor Buston stated that the comments made were solely in relation to the rule of law, in that everyone is treated equally, and reflected the views of local residents in Lexden and Prettygate. Councillor Buston provided a brief history of the issue at Hilly Fields that led to the comments, including contact with Colchester Borough Council and the Police.

With regard to complaint one, Councillor Buston stated that all statements made were truthful and reflective of residents of the previous ward he represented as part of his role of being a Councillor. Councillor Buston stated that throughout the

comments made he called for all to be treated equally before the law with no exceptions.

With regard to complaint number two, Councillor Buston stated that whilst no official advice or warning was given, no advice was required. Any comments made were not directed to whole communities or groups, only those individuals who had broken the law or treated residents with disrespect. Councillor Buston stated that had the police taken a keener interest then these charges would have been against the individual and not a group. Comments made directly refer to conversations had, and therefore Councillor Buston believed that he complied with the Members Code of Conduct.

Councillor Buston also stated with the language used, he could not see anywhere where he had unlawfully discriminated against anyone; individuals break the law and membership of a group does not entitle them to do this.

Councillor Buston also highlighted that he fully supported the Council motion to help support Syrian refugees in Colchester, and that racism, hate crime and xenophobia had no place in the UK.

Councillor Buston concluded by stating that there was not a justification for the complaint as he was fulfilling his role as an elected Councillor. No part of the e-mails or interviews could be interpreted as breaching equality law or protocol, and he was not aware that anyone other than Councillor Bourne had complained. He requested that the Committee determine that conduct did not potentially amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct. In addition Councillor Buston formally requested the total cost of each traveller site in Colchester, including the legal proceedings, clean up and repairs be furnished to full Council.

Committee Discussion

Councillor Pearson invited members of the Committee to make statements on the report and the information that had been provided.

Councillor Hazell stated that she has known Councillor Buston for a number of years and did not believe that he would stigmatise any group in the community; Councillor Buston was reflecting the views of his residents. Councillor Hazell stated that she believed that Councillor Buston had no case to answer; comments underneath the online article were views of residents who were not happy with the situation.

Councillor Chillingworth stated that the Have Your Say speakers had provided a view of how residents feel about this issue. Councillor Chillingworth did not believe that any illegal action had been undertaken by Councillor Buston, and that he would not in any way encourage any hate or racism. Councillor Chillingworth stated that Councillor Buston was highlighting the incidents that had occurred on the Hilly Fields site, and did not use extreme or unlawful language. With regard to the press article these were reflecting the views of the local residents, and not inciting fear in

residents. Councillor Chillingworth stated that he believed that no further action will be necessary. Councillor Chillingworth also suggested that the Borough should consider having a transit site as this would help to prevent these situations from occurring.

Councillor Barlow stated that it is difficult to divorce the comments regarding the complaint, from comments on the incident that happened on Hilly Fields. Councillor Barlow stated that Councillor Buston's wording led to misinterpretation, and that Councillors should take care of the language that they have used. Councillor Barlow also stated that whilst there could be a breach of the Members Code of Conduct, he was not convinced that an investigation would be in the public interest. Councillor Barlow suggested that a recommendation be made to Cabinet to hold a private meeting between Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council Councillors and Officers, Essex County Council, Essex Countywide Travellers Unit and the Police to share information and provide a greater understanding of the current situation in Colchester.

The Committee received advice from Barbara Pears, Independent Person; Barbara Pears stated that whilst the case was complex she did not believe that it warranted a further investigation as Councillor Buston was doing the best for his residents.

Councillor Pearson commented on points made by those who spoke at the meeting; Councillor Pearson highlighted that any attempt to trespass on public or private land causes immediate distress. These are matters for the Police and authorities to deal with, if the Police do not provide a suitable solution Councillors are able to take that up with the Police in different means. Councillor Pearson also highlighted that in working in the criminal justice sector, there is no evidence to suggest that members of the travelling community are any more or less likely to be prosecuted than other members of the community. Councillors have a responsibility to the community, and need to be mindful of the whole community they represent and set an example.

RESOLVED that;

- a. Both complaints merit no further investigation.
- b. *RECOMMEND* to Cabinet for consideration that a private meeting between Colchester Borough Council Councillors, Colchester Borough Officers, Essex County Council, Essex Police and the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit be held to share information and provide an update on the situation within Colchester.

PETITIONS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS

(i) Have Your Say speakers

Date of Meeting	Details of Members of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet, 13 July 2016	Lee Parker	Housing Issues	Verbal response provided at the meeting by Councillor Tina Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection	13 July 2016
Cabinet, 13 July 2016	Autumn Parker	Teenspeech Campaign	Verbal response provided at the meeting by Cabinet members and written response from the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy on 16 July 2016	19 July 2016
Council, 27 July 2016	Nick Chilvers	Colchester Market	Verbal response provided at the meeting by Councillor Tim Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Regeneration	27 July 2016

(ii) Petitions

Date petition received	Lead Petitioner	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
27 July 2016	Councillors Lesley and Jessica Scott-Boutell	Save Stanway's Lexden Heath Delivery Office	Petition forwarded to the Royal Mail by Cllr Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, asking that it taken into account in their decision making	10 August 2016