

Item 10 Appendix B. 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 2020 to March 2021 – full-year report	
Working Well award	The Council has achieved level 3 of this accreditation from Provide , in supporting staff with health and wellbeing issues. This is the top level , which recognises that the organisation “demonstrates long term, sustained commitment and creative development and engagement of staff”. March 2021
Town Deal Fund	Colchester was selected as one of 101 towns across the country that could apply. The bid was submitted by ‘ We Are Colchester ’, a partnership involving public, private and voluntary organisations, formed in January 2020. These ambitious and dynamic plans to help deliver long-term economic growth for Colchester are a step closer, following the award of £18.2m from the government’s Town Deal Fund . March 2021
"We're good to go" Visit Britain/Visit England	We received recognition under this scheme that our venues follow government and industry COVID-19 guidelines. This includes Colchester Castle and Natural History Museum, and events held by Amphora Trading, the Council’s events company. February 2021
Customer Service Excellence standard	<p>The Council’s Contact and Support team were awarded the Customer Service Excellence standard for the third year in a row, following a rigorous assessment day.</p> <p>Customer Service Excellence is a government-backed industry standard that tests in depth those areas that research has shown are a priority to customers, with a particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Achieving the standard gives us formal recognition of our commitment to, and delivery of, customer service. This helps confirm to our residents, current and potential customers and staff both the quality of the service and the support they will receive should they contact Colchester Borough Council. February 2021</p>
Driving Innovation – Environmental Sustainability	<p>The Council was featured in the 2020 Environmental sustainability report from Microsoft, a testament to the work which the organisation is achieving on Dynamics, ICT Strategy and our focus on commitment to climate change.</p> <p><i>“Colchester Borough Council provides services to 192,500 residents, from licensing to recycling. The Council is using Dynamics 365 to unify its data, like the recycling tracking system that provides reporting via Power BI, showing data like heatmaps of problem spots for collections or where residents need more encouragement to recycle. The insights derived from Power BI close the loop for development, providing KPIs that help the Borough improve both the app and recycling services to improve landfill diversion rates”. (page 52). February 2021</i></p>

Covid-19 support	The Council was ranked third best in the country for the distribution of Covid-19 Discretionary Business Support Grants, in data released by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The data showed that Colchester had distributed 92% of the amount of Discretionary Grants allocated. January 2021
UK IT Industry Awards	The Digital Access Support Team were finalists for Best Public Sector IT Project. It was a real achievement to be in this national shortlist – fellow finalists included DVSA, DEFRA and DWP, with the award going to HMRC. November 2020
LGC awards	<p>Colchester won the Entrepreneurial Council category of the LGC Awards 2020.</p> <p>The LGC awards are dubbed the ‘biggest celebration of excellence in local government’, and this year’s competition saw a record number of entries.</p> <p>The Entrepreneurial Council award showcases the work of the Council’s wholly-owned commercial companies Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd (CATL), Colchester Amphora Energy Ltd (CAEL) and Colchester Amphora Homes Ltd (CAHL) since their formation in 2018.</p> <p>Colchester was also shortlisted in two other categories: Driving Growth and Digital Impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Driving Growth entry highlights the Council’s key role, alongside its wholly-owned commercial companies Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd (CATL), Colchester Amphora Energy Ltd (CAEL) and Colchester Amphora Homes Ltd (CAHL), in helping to create strong foundations to boost economic development and prosperity in the borough. • Colchester Amphora Trading’s entry in the Digital Impact category follows its work to deliver the new ultrafast broadband network currently being rolled out to businesses and homeowners in the town centre. October 2020.
Park Mark Plus - British Parking Association (BPA)	The Council’s Priory Street Car Park is only the second car park in the country to receive Park Mark Plus status. Building on the BPA’s Safer Parking scheme, the new Park Mark Plus award recognises only the highest-quality car parks. The award assesses a range of criteria, including services, operations, design and build. To qualify for the award, car parks must already have the BPA’s Park Mark award and meet the Disability Parking Accreditation criteria. October 2020
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park, High Woods Country Park and Colchester’s Cemetery and Crematorium have received Green Flag Awards. Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and they promote the community value of green spaces. As well as receiving its 18th Green Flag award, Castle Park has also once again been awarded Green Heritage Site status, which recognises its work to promote its historic surroundings. October 2020

Municipal Journal (MJ) awards 2020	<p>The Council was named 'Best Commercial Council' in one of the major events in the public sector calendar. Judges recognised the Council's vision in establishing its commercial trading companies through Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd and its three subsidiary companies: Colchester Amphora Energy Ltd; Colchester Amphora Homes Ltd, and Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd.</p> <p>Judges singled out achievements to date, which include the delivery of a nationally-significant carbon-cutting District Heat Network at Colchester Northern Gateway; a £95 million borough-wide housebuilding programme, which combines private housing with 30% council-owned homes for affordable rent; delivery of the 76-acre Colchester Northern Gateway Sports Park, and deployment of ultrafast gigabyte broadband to new homes and businesses across Colchester.</p> <p>Cezara Cosma was highly commended in the Rising Star category. Initially joining as a Housing Benefit temp, Cezara is now the Council's contact and support manager. This category is "a great way of recognising new talent which is really important for local government." With Lily Etherington's 2019 commendation, staff in the Council's Customer directorate have been finalists in two of the three years since this category's launch. October 2020</p>
Local Government Information Unit	<p>The Council features as a 'locally led place-shaping in action' case study in the LGiU's 'Power down to level up – resilient place shaping for a post-Covid world' report. October 2020</p>
District Councils' Network	<p>The Council features as case studies in these three national reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation in localities Working with integrated care systems case study about the Council's long-standing engagement with the wider health and social care sector is on page 11 of this District Council's Network/Grant Thornton report. • Case Study Report: How districts have continued to deliver during Covid-19 The Council's Covid-19 Community Response Pack is featured on page 3's "information sharing and support", with its "Support for places and High Street adaptation" contribution to business recovery on page 10. • District councils and the Private Rented Sector: Working Together to Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Tenants and the Local Economy The Council's work in "Protecting Guardians under Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Management Regulations" is shown as a case study on page 11. This case has clarified that properties occupied by guardians can fall within the definition of an HMO, the requirement to be licensed and to comply with HMO Management Regulations, and that legal action can be taken if landlords fail to address poor living conditions and a lack of adequate facilities in buildings occupied by property guardians. Autumn 2020

National Federation of ALMOs – NFA Homelessness report / Best Practice Briefing	Colchester Borough Homes features as a case study of how “highly adaptable organisations have been able to shape their services on demand” and use their “Everybody in” Covid-19 response as an opportunity to form closer working relationships with other services and develop much closer and more effective partnership working. This approach has helped to sustain the emergency accommodation with successful pathways for move-on”. September 2020
LABC - East Anglia building excellence awards 2020	The Council had three entries shortlisted as finalists - Best Partnership with a Local Authority Building Control Team - Invent Architecture and Design; LABC Construction Professional of the Year - Mike Bamberry of Mersea Homes; Best Extension or Alteration to an Existing Dwelling - Second Pits, Monks Eleigh (A partner application dealt with by Colchester). September 2020
LEXCEL	Legal Services have been re-accredited following the Lexcel standard’s annual inspection, for the 20th consecutive year. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. June 2020
GeoPlace Gold Performance Awards	These awards recognise best practice and outstanding address data management by local authorities who have consistently maintained the highest level of data quality. Land, property, street and address information is used to connect different services across the Council – giving communities and individuals a ‘property-level view’ of the services available to them. June 2020
Active Essex - one in a million award	Joanne Besant, Community Response Team Leader, received this for being a strong advocate for encouraging her Community Enabling colleagues to look after their mental health and wellbeing, by ensuring they were supported and active whilst at working at home during the pandemic. June 2020
British Parking Association (BPA)	Richard Walker, our Parking Partnership Manager has been re-elected, through a vote by its Council of representatives, as a Director (Local Authorities’ Representative) on the BPA Board. The Board develops strategy, oversees the objectives and management of the Association. April 2020
Certificate from High Sheriff of Essex	Awarded to the Council “in recognition of great and valuable services to the community during the Covid-19 Pandemic.” April 2020

Other sources of performance data

Datashare – a wide range of Council performance data is available 24/7 via the online Datashare tool on the Council’s website [here](#). Categories include spending, business rates, democracy, housing, land, parking, planning, licensing, recycling and waste. The system which sits behind Datashare is being replaced in 2021 to improve resilience and make best use of changing technology. This will help in maintaining open and accessible information for the public, businesses and other interested parties.

Annual reports – the Council produces annual reports on its performance in various areas. These are brought into one place on the Council’s website [here](#) for ease of reference, and to make it easier for the public to find which annual reports are available.

Single Data List -this is a list of all the datasets that local government must submit to central government. The list is reviewed and updated annually. Local authorities are not obliged to provide any data which is not on the list without extra funding.