

Strategic Plan - Action Plan Year End Performance Report April 2014 to March 2015

Colchester Borough Council (CBC) has set out an overarching vision for the borough in The Strategic Plan 2012-2015:

Colchester, the place to live, learn, work and visit

Within this, there are a number of broad aims:

Colchester as a vibrant borough with a bright future wants to be known for:

- Leading for the future
- Creating opportunities for all its residents
- Inspiring and innovating
- Being cleaner and greener
- Listening and responding.

This Strategic Plan 2012-2015 also has a number of priority areas and outcomes to be achieved in two categories as below:

Leading our communities	Delivering high quality, accessible services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure • Improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail • Giving local people the chance to improve their skills • Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion • Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities • Supporting tourism, heritage and the arts • Bringing investment to the borough • Working in partnerships to help tackle health and crime issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering an efficient benefits service • Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste • Providing more affordable homes across the borough • Improving our streets and local environment • Tackling anti-social behaviour and using enforcement to support priorities • Enabling local communities to help themselves • Supporting more vulnerable groups • Providing sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality green spaces and play areas • Engaging with the voluntary sector

The actions in this Action Plan were approved by Scrutiny Panel on 8 July and Cabinet on 30 July 2014.

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Delivering high quality, accessible services

The priorities in this section of our action plan are about actual delivery of direct services either through our own Council resources or using others to provide services.

Delivery of an efficient benefits service

Key performance measures and actions include efficient benefit processing services and effective implementation of Universal Customer Contact FSR leading to improved customer journeys and increased online take up.

Streamline customer journeys

New online self-service was implemented in March enabling residents to manage their housing benefit accounts online. Improved online services in one place are easier for customers to use, enabling them to view their benefit details such as how much benefit they are entitled to and when payments have been made.

Housing benefit claimants can now make their whole new benefit application online - they can also now upload their supporting claim information using their phones, tablets and PCs.

New online enquiry forms have been developed to replace open email enquiries which has resulted in quicker resolution of enquiries. Landlords can now download details of payments made through the new online self-service.

Improve outgoing customer contact to reduce customers using our in-person and telephony channels

We have promoted the new online services via letters and bills, telephony and online channels.

We have used our customer insight to target communications and trained advisors in behaviour change techniques to encourage and help customers use our online channels at the Library and Community hub. An encouraging example of the success of this work is shown in the initial results from our project which enabled customers to upload their supporting claim information. Since implementing this project we have shifted 701 out of 1348 people to digital uploading (a 52% increase).

Improve web content and increase the uptake on other online services for benefits

A total review of our website (including all council tax and benefits pages), reducing 4000 pages to 1500 has enabled easy access to our website and digital transactions. This result has been an increase in online transactions (not including payments) from 617 at 1 September 2014, to 1166 at 1 March 2015 (an 89% increase). A further review of the Revenues and Benefits areas of the web in March has also led to a 71% increase in transactions in that area.

We have been working with communities across the borough to enable digital skills and encourage people to go online through training, supporting our 'Online Champions', and providing 'surgeries' for customers and digital events.

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Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste

Key actions here include plans for the Service to provide improvement, income, efficiencies and partnership working opportunities for the future along with implementation of recycling educational activities, and the introduction of plastic recycling collections from flats.

Develop a new Waste Strategy for Colchester -

The Waste Task and Finish Group, established by the Cabinet, have been meeting to consider options for the future collection methodology of the waste service. The group has considered and seen up to date reports on different types of waste collection, frequencies and materials to be collected alongside considering the methods being used by high performing authorities. The group is developing plans for a public consultation on waste, to take place in the summer, the results of which will be reviewed and presented as part of the group's recommendations to the Cabinet.

Plastic collections and Food Waste service from flats introduced where locations can be agreed -

15 flat locations have been identified by working in partnership with CBH who have funded the infrastructure to secure the bins. Plastic's recycling bins will be rolled out by the end of April and food waste recycling will be rolled out between May and June at the same locations. Monitoring will take place over the following three months after installation, on participation and contamination rates and use of CBH's resident feedback forums will be made to ensure we receive comments from as many participants as possible.

Proactive work with local residents to encourage reductions in household waste and increases in recycling -

Zone Teams continue to promote recycling to residents in their communities. This may be by way of an ad hoc recycling container collection point, advertised locally, or at a community meeting where we are able to promote corporate messages.

For all new developments, planners continue to consider adequacy of bin storage areas for refuse and recycling, the distances and routes that materials will need to be carried on collection days and accessibility for dustcarts in order to maximise resident take up of recycling and achieve optimum collection efficiency.

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Providing more affordable homes across the borough

Key actions here include the use of our land and assets to facilitate building of new affordable housing. We also aim to ensure the Housing Trajectory demonstrates a 15-year supply of housing sites, including a 5-year supply of deliverable sites.

400 new affordable homes to be built over three years

496 affordable homes have been delivered, exceeding the challenging target set. Delivery on a year by year basis is set out below: 2012/13 a total of 133 homes; 2013/14 a total of 103 homes; 2014/15 a total of 260 homes.

Qualifying sites¹ achieve the percentage of affordable housing, as stated in Planning Policy or through a viability study for each site

Seven qualifying sites had agreements settled which specified the affordable housing contribution due. The Council's Planning Policy changed in 2014 reducing the affordable housing contribution required from 35% to 20% of homes provided on qualifying sites. Therefore, sites April-June 2014 were subject to the 35% contribution and sites after that subject to the 20% contribution. The affordable housing contributions secured were:

Total number of homes on the 2 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 35% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured	Commuted sum to provide affordable homes offsite in lieu of on-site for these 2 sites
119	42	10	£194,260
Total number of homes 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 in lieu of on-site for these 5 sites
1654	476	250*	£653,415

* This number could increase as at least one site is subject to reviews as the site is built which can only increase the percentage achieved

To update the housing trajectory and ensure an adequate supply of housing land.

Based on provisional data, 721 new homes were built in the Borough between April 2014 and March 2015. House building has been suppressed nationally for a variety of reasons including issues with bank lending and a lack of resources in the building sector.

The Council has an up to date five year housing land supply as required by national planning policy and continues to work with developers and landowners in order to make residential sites deliverable and as a result contribute towards sustainable growth in the Borough.

¹ Qualifying sites means sites of 10 units or more in Colchester, Stanway, Tiptree, Mersea and Wivenhoe or 5 units elsewhere. In November 2014 the Government published a ministerial statement and updated the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) in respect of the use of planning obligations on small sites. Since that date 'qualifying sites' mean **more than** 10 units in Colchester, Stanway, Tiptree, Mersea, Wivenhoe, Marks Tey and West Bergholt or **more than** 5 units elsewhere.

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Improving our streets and local environment

Improved street cleanliness and shifting resources to increase responsiveness to environmental and cleanliness issues is a key action here along with Enabling Community Ownership to facilitate communities taking an active role in keeping their local environment clean, tidy and loved. Developing and maintaining strategic partnerships (Essex County Council [ECC], Bus and Rail operators) to help deliver improvements in air quality and sustainable transport infrastructure is an important action to improve our local environment.

In partnership with ECC we will produce a Final Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy. The plan will set out what the Borough and County Councils intend to do to further improve air quality within Air Quality Management Areas

Interim Air Quality Action Plan submitted and accepted by DEFRA. Model review of air quality in the borough completed. Additional modelling currently taking place (to be complete by end of April) including scenarios to determine whether the introduction of a low emission zone would achieve the required National and European air quality objectives.

Produce a Low Emission Strategy (LES) for the Borough to identify and implement measures that will reduce transport emissions of NO₂, whilst also reducing emissions of particulates, noise and CO₂

Utilised DEFRA Air Quality Grant Funding to develop a LES which sets out an integrated approach across the Council to influence the reduction of road transport emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), particulates and greenhouse gases, including the strengthening of public private partnerships to achieve shared aims.

The strategy identified buses as a significant contributor to the excess levels of Nitrogen Dioxide within the town centre. This information was used to support the Council's application to the Clean Vehicle Technology Fund in July 2014. The bid, made in partnership with First Essex Bus Group, was successful, resulting in £194,000 to deliver the project. First Essex are fitting technology to reduce emissions by 80%. The upgraded EURO 3 standard buses will be in service and operating within the town centre by July 2015.

To undertake a consultation with members of the public, and key stakeholders for the LES and Air Quality Action Plan

Scenario modelling is taking place and will be included in the draft Low Emission Strategy to go out to consultation early in 2015/16. The strategy has been developed in partnership with bus and taxi operators, CBC fleet management, planning and procurement.

Support Essex-wide Litter Campaign in Colchester -

Ten areas were targeted for this campaign which included raising awareness and behaviour change messaging. In seven areas there was a decrease in litter of 27%. In the other areas there was an increase in litter. The increase in these areas was thought to be linked to the timing of the campaign and monitoring period with school holidays and increased visitors being a factor. Overall smoking related litter was the most common with it being 68% of all litter collected. The findings have helped focus on priorities to be targeted in the future. A number of new campaigns are being undertaken such as 'We Are Watching You', a dog fouling campaign in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy and 'Litter Warriors' where we can enable the local community to help in their areas.

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Tackling anti-social behaviour and using enforcement to support priorities

To work in partnership with the Tactical Operations Group and continue with the Noise from Licensed Premises Project

The Tactical Operations Group (now called Licensing Enforcement Group) has met regularly to target enforcement of identified premises. The noise from Licensed Premises Project has continued. The Environmental Protection Team and the Health & Safety Officer have carried out a number of inspections of premises where notices have been served on them in relation to noise and one is in the process of being prosecuted.

To carry out a review of enforcement activity undertaken by the Weekend Noise/Environmental Health Service to include associated policies and procedures to ensure robust and effective action is taken against non compliant premises

The Weekend Noise Service (WNS) has responded to 235 noise complaints and undertaken 401 monitoring visits, (up 58% on 2013/14). The majority of the monitoring involves town centre business/licensed premises.

Evidence obtained by the WNS formed a key part of our first Environmental Protection review of a Licensed Premises, and was key to obtaining the UK's first Public Space Protection Order relating to Turner Rise Retail Park.

Introduce a planned programme of enforcement in the Town Centre to support local retail, regeneration and night time economy

A 'Town Centre Enforcement' rota has been in place since 2014, where Wardens from other areas patrol the Town Centre with a specific duty to enforce. This has helped issues such as A Boards, Parking, illegal Waste Carriers, Business Duty of Care and has also seen a rise in FPN's for litter, specifically cigarette butts. This rota also allows all Wardens to maintain their skills for difficult conversation, conflict management and the legislation necessary.

Licensing Risk Assessments

23 licensing risk assessments have been carried out. The assessments have been effective in highlighting issues at licensed premises. Some premises have not been up to standard, and as a result the licence holders have been given advice by officers and the Police about how they need to resolve the issues. The premises are then checked to ensure compliance.

Work in partnership with the Police and others to co-ordinate and contribute to a regular tactical operations meeting to share premises related intelligence and agree actions to direct and enforce the management of licensed premises

The monthly meeting between the Licensing Authority, Police, Fire Authority, Trading Standards, Child Protection, Environmental Health and Planning has continued since 2014. 41 premises have been scrutinised, and we are engaged in joint enforcement with 10 premises, with a further 7 are on a watch list. The day of action in Berechurch resulted in several licensing follow up actions.

Develop and implement a Night Time Improvement Plan and retain Purple Flag Accreditation –

Colchester town centre was accredited with Purple Flag status in 2013. 2014 saw the town go through a 'light touch' reassessment and Colchester was re-accredited with Purple Flag status in February 2015. Summer 2015 will see the town go through a full reassessment with a report due in early 2016.

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Enabling local communities to help themselves

Continued use of S106 Funding for community developments –

Total amount of £30,000 of building works grant paid to four groups to keep their buildings in good order to deliver borough wide services to residents. Combined s106 contribution for borough wide and ward work of £410k. In addition a new community centre has been agreed for Stanway to be built in 2016 through a section 106 agreement.

Development of a borough-wide sports strategy in conjunction with Sport England in order to plan for new sport and leisure facilities and activities in North Colchester and elsewhere in the borough and to get greater benefit from existing facilities

Draft study completed expected to be finalised shortly.

Community Services to work collectively to develop, support and enable community-led activities and clubs, and to encourage a supportive local environment for community activities

Zone teams have continued to support and enable community events throughout the year. Activities range between events that encourage a sense of community and social engagement through to encouraging changing behaviour around litter or anti-social behaviour. These are activities where the community are a key part of the overall sustainability of the project and include setting up youth clubs, assistance with neighbourhood watch schemes, dance classes, school holiday activities and attempting to work together with communities to reduce instances of dog fouling.

Zone Teams have particularly good relationships with Parish and Town Councils and have directly supported the rural inclusion scheme. This is where mobile devices are available in community facilities and the Zone Teams help people learn how to go online and what services are available to them. They also have good relationships with several Primary Schools and now have 7 Junior Warden Schemes up and running.

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Supporting more vulnerable groups

Deliver ‘Crucial Crew’ programme to Year 6 pupils across the borough and a further ‘Crucial Crew’ for older people

Crucial Crew for young people was delivered between 2 - 13 June 2014 at the Weston Homes Stadium. 63 schools attended bringing 1968 year 6 pupils from across the borough. Each child was educated on seven Community Safety scenario: Road Safety, Rail Safety, Fire Safety, Recycling, Internet Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour and Smoking Awareness. This was a multi-agency event supported by Essex County Council, Essex County Fire & Rescue, Essex Police, Anglian Community Enterprise, British Transport Police, Colchester Borough Homes and The Council's Zone Team. The 2015 event will take place during the first two weeks of June at the Community Stadium with over 2000 children in attendance. This year will also see some new scenarios including Knife Crime Awareness lead by Only Cowards Carry and B Safe B Cool lead by ECC.

Deliver “Crucial Crew for Older People”

This was delivered in partnership with the Essex Fire Service on Friday 27th March in St.Botolph's Church and funded by Essex Community Foundation. Over 140 invited older people attended and short sessions on personal safety were delivered by eight organisations, who were also available for further questions. These agencies were: Police, Fire, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Gas Safety, Zone Wardens, Red Cross ,Helpline and students from Year 10 of Stanway School who also served refreshments and a buffet lunch..

Meet the Council's ‘Equality Objectives’

‘Supporting more vulnerable groups’ has been one of the Council's Equality Objectives to 31 March 2015 as required by the “specific duties” contained within the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010. The Council has continued to meet this objective through a wide range of initiatives which particularly benefit vulnerable groups within the Equality Act's “protected characteristics”. These initiatives are detailed in the Council's Equality and diversity annual update report published on the Council's website and approved by the Governance Committee on January 2015. The Diversity Steering Group continues to meet quarterly to further embed Equality and Diversity into the Council's day-to-day business.

Update CBC's Safeguarding training records and complete audits in line with the requirements of the ESCB and ESAB

The proportion of staff having successfully completed “Level 1” Safeguarding training (or equivalent) has continued to increase, and “face to face”, external, training has been delivered to the majority of staff who work “predominantly” with children or with vulnerable adults. Designated Safeguarding Officers have continued to meet at quarterly meetings to help refine procedures and processes. Remote (online) Section 11 audits were submitted to the Safeguarding Boards in January 2015.

Award of Welfare Grant Programme funding to key Voluntary Sector Partners supporting the delivery of CBC's priorities

A total of £210,558 awarded by the Voluntary Welfare Grant programme to a wide range of organisations that meet the strategic plan objectives.

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Providing sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality green spaces and play

Continue and increase participation in the parkrun event in Colchester as part of the national initiative

The Colchester Castle weekly parkrun will celebrate its 2nd anniversary in April 2015. As of 25 March 2015 there have been a total of 102 runs (including runs on Christmas Day and New Year's Day) with participation by 17,561 people. Average weekly attendance is now 172.

Continue to work with Colchester School of Gymnastics to realise their extended facility following the upsurge of interest brought on by the London Olympics. This includes using CBC's S106 funding

Extension project was completed on time and to budget with grand opening held on 3 August 2014.

Chair the Active Colchester Network and ensure the agreed action plan is delivered

The Business Development Team Leader chairs the Active Colchester Network quarterly, with the Chair also attending Active Essex Network county wide meetings.

New funding applications have been submitted to apply for parkour sessions at Leisure World Highwoods and the promotion of Active+ sessions at Leisure World Colchester. Active Colchester Network has also applied for funding to enable "Inter-Community" Games project in Colchester, which will link with CBC Community Initiatives and Zone Teams.

Increase participation & income in line with FSR objectives by improving the capacity for customers to book activities online, capacity for customers to self-serve at Leisure World Colchester and introducing 'My Leisure World' card

Between April 2014 to March 2015:

- Over 10,000 transactions which would previously have been made over the counter or over the phone (6944 online payments for bookings made by Leisure Card holders; 232 Join@home subscription payments for Lifestyle memberships made since the July 2014 launch and 3108 self-service Kiosk payments made by Leisure Card holders).
- Over 185,000 self-serve transactions (average of 500 per business day)
- 2261 people have downloaded our mobile phone app.
- 31,074 Leisure Card holders as at 31 March 2015.

Continue to investigate opportunities and Improvement work with our parks and open spaces, including the new outdoor gym in Castle Park and agreed use of Open Space S106 funding

A new outdoor gym has been installed and is proving extremely successful. Due to the reaction and interest that this facility has generated, outdoor gyms have been installed at Old Heath Recreation Ground and Greenstead. Opportunities are being explored with developers of new residential areas to incorporate such features within the original layouts. Open space sport and recreational facility funding from S106 agreements is being allocated to projects to support Borough Council, Parish, Town and Community Council projects and improvements.

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Engaging with the voluntary sector

- **Award of agreed Welfare Grant Programme funding to key Voluntary Sector Partners supporting the delivery of CBC's priorities -**

The grant was distributed after negotiating service level agreements to:- Age UK,£11,083, Citizens Advice Bureau £101,791,CCVS £45,000,CTWR (core running cost) £7,738,CTWR (outreach) £21,528, Nightshelter £8,948,Grassroots £1,366,Rural Community Council of Essex £685, SHAKE £12,419 a total amount of £210,558 awarded.

- **Transfer the management of assets and services to the voluntary sector where this can achieve improved services and efficiencies-**

The Community Halls in Partnership consortium are continuing to successfully run Abbots Activity Centre since its transfer to them in 2013. The tennis pavilion at Old Heath Recreation ground is to be converted into a community café during the winter of 2015 to be opened and managed by GO4, a local social enterprise, in the spring of 2016. The new tenant was selected through a competitive expression interest application round. The Garrison Gym project is scheduled to commence in summer 2015.

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Leading our communities

This section of the action plan is about influencing others in a range of functions where the Council does not have direct responsibility for delivery, but knows that these things are vital to the future of the borough and its residents.

Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure

Sheepen Road feasibility

New Homes Bonus funding was granted and used for a feasibility study on the office development of the site. A business case was approved by the RIF in November. Heads of Terms with the pre let tenant have been agreed and legal documents are under negotiation.

New funding bids through SELEP, TSB and EU

The Business Broadband project was approved by the SELEP in March 2015. SELEP also awarded £15m from Single Local Growth Fund to Colchester transport schemes. We have also secured 100% EU funding for heat mapping and masterplanning at Northern Gateway and at the Hythe with the University.

Continue to support the delivery of Greyfriars Hotel and East Hill House conversion

Refurbishment works at both properties will shortly complete and the Town Centre Steering Group continue to monitor progress.

Development of the first Phase of the Severalls site

Phase 1 is well advanced with 70 units completed (of 248). Opening of NAR3 phase 3 (Via Urbis Romanae) now means that Crest will soon be closing the Mill Road access to general traffic. Units are reportedly selling well. Issues arising around diversion of Footpath 69.

Progress the delivery of a Masterplan for the Northern Gateway to deliver new leisure facilities and jobs including development of a hotel, health and fitness centre and associated retail

The Masterplan second phase draft was completed and went to public consultation. Heads of terms formally signed off for David Lloyd scheme and legal negotiations underway. Cabinet approval also gained for the sale of 2.5 acre site to Lookers on Axial Way for a new dealership. Surveys for sports land to the north are now complete and with Sport England for review.

Consider approval of a planning application for North Growth Area Urban Extension

Outline application approved and first reserved matters application approved. Work commenced on site.

Progress negotiations with developers for Phase 2 (Severalls) to include planning consent, sign development agreement

Advanced discussion underway with potential purchasers the original bidder having backed out. Major Development Service working with development consortium, ECC, HCA and Health Trust to facilitate development. Sale may occur in Spring 2015. (subject to due diligence).

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Improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail

Facilitate collaborative working between COLBEA (Colchester Business Enterprise Agency) and the Colchester Enterprise Hub to help increase the number and survival rates of new business start ups in the borough

COLBEA are working with the Colchester Enterprise Hub to provide new entrepreneurs with 'try before you buy' hot desks and free access to their business network events.

Completion of refreshed Colchester Economic Growth Strategy

Following consultation with public and private sector partners the Colchester Economic Growth Strategy 2015-21 is due to be approved by Cabinet in September 2015.

Promote and encourage SMEs to use the energy switching service linked to the Big Community Switch

We promoted a new energy brokerage facility which is available through the Council's Big Community Switch webpage to help local businesses reduce energy costs. CBC encouraged businesses to review their current energy tariff through direct contact with businesses.

Progress plans for development of a Creative Incubator providing circa 22 workspace units for start up businesses

£1.5m secured from ECC ICS Fund for development of phase 1 of the scheme. Detailed design ongoing in preparation of a planning, some mobilisation works completed and brief for operator is with ECC for comment.

Progress development agreement and planning consent for Vineyard Gate Shopping centre

Negotiations ongoing with Vineyard Gate developers regarding the new retail development.

Continue to work with the independent retail sector to deliver partner-based local initiatives

The Colchester Town Team group commissioned research to seek the opinions of the town centre business community on closer working and how this could take place. Four sub groups have been established as a result which are working on plans to deliver on the issues identified.

Progress delivery of superfast broadband and 4G mobile connectivity by the end of 2014 –

Town Centre 4G Wi Fi now operational. £200,000 from SELEP secured to help build superfast broadband on Colchester Business Parks.

Increase the number of partnership links relating to business, employment and skills initiatives

Agreement reached with ECC to formalise a range of skills funding to increase the number of apprentices and address skills shortages.

Work with 'Colchester Works' to increase the promotion and take up of employment and skills initiatives to local residents and businesses

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Recent success was the launch of MotorV8 using funding secured from the Department of Work & Pensions to assist local residents currently on incapacity benefit to secure employment.

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Giving local people the chance to improve their skills

Work with Colchester NEET Group (including ECC) to deliver work/training initiatives that will benefit the Colchester NEET group and help to reduce the cohort numbers.

The Colchester NEET Group which included ECC, Colchester Institute and local secondary schools has been disbanded, projects to reduce the numbers of young people not in employment, education or training will be led by 'Colchester Works'. We are working with Signpost and the "Building your Future" course aimed at 14-16 year olds who are struggling with school and taking place at Stanway Federation Learning Centre for a one day a week six week period.

Work with Job Centre Plus and other partners to maintain work clubs and continue our customer support team initiative

We continue to facilitate four Work Clubs in New Town, Shrub End, Highwoods and Stanway all run by volunteer helpers and we support two other Clubs in the Town Centre and run by Fresh Beginnings and at Greenstead managed by Signpost. Clubs average 5/6 a week at each session and the average for those finding work is one month.

Work with the Adult Community College to increase the number of residents with skills for work by providing extra courses at community venues

We ran a joint information session in February 2015 with JCP and the Adult College for Lone Parents who will be transferring to Jobseekers Allowance when their youngest children reach the age of five. These parents are taking up career advice and training opportunities to prepare themselves for the world of work.. A similar session is booked for April 2015.

Colchester Institute are also working with the wives of the Afghan Translators to provide support for volunteer English tutors and we are planning to offer a certificated English class in New Town as soon as there are eight ladies available to attend, anticipated to be this Summer.

Deliver Job and Volunteers' Fairs

Skills and Employment Fairs were delivered in March and September 2014 with 380 and 420 residents attending.

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Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion

Develop a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Colchester

The strategy for 2015-2020 was adopted by Cabinet in January and the delivery of the strategy is now being implemented across services and in the community. The delivery plan sets out actions including reviewing the Council's Carbon Management Programme; making further commitments to reducing CBC's CO2 emissions with a new target of 40% by 2020; working more closely with communities so they can become more resilient to climate change; and working to reduce the environmental impact from Council buildings, services and operations.

Work to support environmental sustainability has been taking place; this included a sustainability event called 'Leading Landlords of Colchester' which took place at the Weston Homes Stadium on the 9th October 2014. Over 60 delegates took part in finding out about making homes more energy efficient, and the wider benefits for tenants of installing energy efficiency measures. In March 2015 we held a 'Community Energy' event at the Weston Homes Stadium to support the development of local energy generating projects. 70 delegates attended from community buildings, schools, clubs and town/parish councils.

Prepare an overarching Transportation Summary Document as evidence base to inform the review of the Local Plan

Transportation and Accessibility section included in Local Plan Issues and Options Document. Have worked with ECC, Highways Agency, Network Rail and Abellio Greater Anglia to understand demands on the network. Analysed and published 2011 Census Travel to Work data.

To improve access to the town centre for sustainable transport and in the town centre to improve the environment for people by reducing traffic, seek funding to improve streetscape and access for sustainable transport

CBC representation on traffic reduction in the town centre monitoring group. Successful bid made to the DfT for improving the air quality from 10 buses passing through the town centre. Grant and agreement signed with First buses. Preliminary designs developed to improve parts of the town centre street scape and shared with ECC for inclusion as part of the Local Growth Fund measures.

Support the delivery of a Park and Ride service from North Colchester to the Town Centre by releasing the land for construction and work with Essex County Council, local businesses and organisations to maximise the use of Park and Ride

CBC granted ECC permission to commence construction of Park and Ride site to allow for opening of service which has now happened. 40year lease negotiated with ECC. Considered and responded to the ECC traffic regulation orders for Park and Ride. NAR 3 completed.

Work with the public transport operators, bus and rail to improve services in Colchester

Worked with First Group on a successful Cleaner Vehicle Technology submission. CBC continue to fund the role of Bus Station Supervisor. The relevant Portfolio Holder will sit on ECC's Bus Strategy Board. Worked with partners to promote "plus bus" integrated bus and rail season ticket offer. Working with Abellio Greater Anglia on the designs for increasing the cycle parking facilities on the south of the station and making improvements to the north side. Fixing the Link project commissioned with Abellio Greater Anglia and ECC.

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Continue to work with and provide leadership to public and private sector organisations to develop Travel Change Behaviour programmes to help address congestion, air quality and personal health issues.

Worked with Colchester Travel Plan Club members to continue Travel Change Behaviour Programmes. Working with the University on a range of travel planning measures. Worked with the Police on a Bike Wise security campaign to reduce cycle theft. 'Loveur Car' share bays introduced into town centre car parks with 200 permits issued. Rapid electric vehicle charging post introduced at the Community Stadium.

Develop strategies to increase the level of investment in sustainable transport and infrastructure to help deliver sustainable development, including transportation in economic, environmental, land use strategies

Study undertaken to investigate providing shared use bridges across the A12 to link developments and provide sustainable access.

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Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities

Work with Probation Service to enable Community Payback scheme to continue

Zones have utilised and worked with the probation service regularly throughout the year. We have had a great response to group work that we have used to repaint children's play areas, clean and repaint garage areas on housing land and some grounds clearances. We have also had three individual placements who have successfully completed their time with us.

Consider Equality and Diversity and promote tolerance and the diverse needs of our residents

'Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities' has been one of the Council's 'Equality Objectives' to 31 March 2015, as required by the "specific duties" contained within the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010. The Council has continued to meet this objective through a wide range of initiatives which particularly benefit vulnerable groups within the Equality Act's "protected characteristics". These initiatives are detailed in the Council's Equality and Diversity 'annual update report' published on the Council's website and approved by the Governance Committee in January 2015. The Diversity Steering Group continues to meet quarterly to further embed Equality and Diversity into the Council's day-to-day business.

Continue to operate Zone working principles with a focus on local needs

Zone working has been running since October 2011. The main principle of being able to respond to the needs of a smaller community is now embedded and works well. The model has provided a more efficient and response way of working. It has been reviewed and endorsed by Executive Board and a Scrutiny Panel over the last year. We will continue to develop the model to ensure the customer is at the forefront of everything we do, as well as improving our response to issues.

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Supporting tourism, heritage and the arts

To increase trips to the borough and spending while here

The latest tourism statistics (covering 2013) show that tourism is growing in its significance to the local economy:

- The value of visitor spend to Colchester borough has risen by 308% from £63.1 million in 1993 to **£258 million in 2013**.
- There was an **additional £65.5m** generated in local businesses supplying tourism businesses with goods and services
- Colchester attracted over **5.1 million trips** from visitors in 2013 (up 75% on the 1993 figure of 2.8 million).
- Tourism supports **5767 actual jobs** (up 114% on the 1993 figure of 2,685)

Colchester Castle received **105,096 visitors** in 2014/15 since its re-opening on 2 May 2014, against a target of 100,000 visitors. Total Castle income was **£578,154** - 29% above target. 76% of respondents on Tripadvisor have rated their visit as very good or excellent.

Hollytrees Museum and the Visitor Information Centre received 67,281 visitors and the Natural History Museum 25,750 visitors giving a combined total of **199,900 visitors to the museums in Colchester**.

Creative Colchester strategy / Deliver identified priorities within the Action Plan

New Creative Colchester Board and Group set up with independent chair. Terms of Reference agreed for both groups. Colchester now involved in wider Creative SELEP Group with strong focus on Business/training needs for the sector and skills development and jointly working towards EU bid for business support. Closer working relationship with ECC Skills team.

Develop and maintain delivery mechanisms for improvement and maintenance of our heritage assets across the borough

By 31 March 2015 four interpretation panels had been added to those already installed. These are at St John's Abbey Gatehouse, Gosbecks Archaeological Park, East Gate and North Gate. The latter were funded by the Friends of Colchester Roman Wall. Work has begun on the proposed panels at Scheregate and Priory Street. There is also now information available on the Colchester Castle digital app about the town's wider heritage including Balcerne Gate and St Botolph's Priory.

Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2014-2015 – year end report against agreed actions April 2014 to March 2015

Bringing investment to the borough

Secure new inward investment into the borough in excess of £2m

Investment in excess of £2m secured including Acoustica (noise minimisation products) and Albea (state of the art 'sterile' manufacturing facility).

Secure funding from Growing Places Fund, Integrated County Strategy investment fund, EU funding programmes, private sector partners and other sources for key projects

Funding secured including SELEP funding (business broadband) and from Essex County Council & University of Essex to establish a Games Hub to commercialise games and applications developed by students.

Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2014-2015 – year end report against agreed actions April 2014 to March 2015

Working in partnerships to help tackle health and crime issues

To promote the Weekend Noise/Environmental Health Service as a resource to internal and external agencies including the Police, Trading Standards and Fire Brigade. To establish joint working protocols and cross referral mechanisms to support a more effective multi-agency response to criminal activity and matters likely to give rise to negative health outcomes

The WNS/Env Health Service continues to work alongside the Police, Fire Brigade and Trading Standards via the Tactical Operational meetings. The WNS liaised with the Environment Agency to catch a known offender fly tipping wood waste in Haven Road in contravention of an existing injunction. The team continue to support Licensing, Planning, Private Sector Housing, Food & Safety, Anti-social behaviour, taxi licensing and Smoking Enforcement and CBC Zone Teams.

CBC will continue to review its approach to supporting the Health Agenda given the new Local Authority responsibilities. We will develop agreed partnership priorities and targets, where applicable, and seek funding opportunities to support a more preventative health agenda

The work of the Warm Homes Project continues to support residents to improve the energy efficiency of their properties, which in turn can have a direct impact on their health and well-being. We continue to work with external agencies to bring funding into the borough to tackle energy efficiency and fuel poverty. The Project Officer dealing with Homelessness continues to deliver a service, whereby various professionals discuss residents who may „slip through the net“ in terms of homelessness and has assisted with the creation of a website to provide information to young people to educate them on the issues of homelessness. This work can have a direct impact on health.

Encourage representation on the Safer Colchester Partnership from the new Clinical Commissioning Group

The Clinical Commissioning Group have agreed to attend the SCP meetings, however their attendance has been very limited to date. The Chair of the Partnership continues to work with the CCG to encourage their regular attendance and input.

Support the work of the Neighbourhood Action Panels

As of 1st April 2015, Neighbourhood Action Panels and Essex Police Local Community Meetings have merged. The combined meetings have been renamed Local Community Action Panels (L-CAPS). 7 L-CAPS will operate across the Borough (as per the NAP and Zone areas) and will continue meet on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis. Essex Police (Sergeant) will continue to attend the meetings and will also act as Deputy Chair and a Zone Representative is committed to each meeting.

Seek ongoing support for the SOS Bus from both the Safer Colchester Partnership and the North East Essex CCG to ensure the service is maintained and clinical cover provides access to treatment

Both the Safer Colchester Partnership and Essex CCG have funded the SOS Bus for 2014-15.