

Strategic Plan Action Plan – Half-Year Report 1 April – 30 September 2017

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	Half Year Report
Work with development partners to bring exciting new retail and leisure to the eastern part of Colchester town centre.	Work continues with Curzon cinemas who are nearing completion of the conversion of Roman House. The demolition of St James House on Queen Street is underway.
Support communities to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans.	Ongoing support is being provided to several Parish Councils. In particular, support is being provided to West Mersea and Stanway Parish Council to develop their Neighbourhood Plan resident surveys.
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.	Some great examples of Community Enabling have taken place. These range from small neighbourhood initiatives to improve the local environment through to health and wellbeing projects such as Goodgym which combines running with good deeds in the community. Assisting customers to self-serve and 'Go-Online' initiatives continue to help people do more for themselves and more volunteering opportunities have been created and taken up across the borough. £200k was invested into The Big Choice funding scheme that gave residents the say in who received significant amounts of money for local projects and that called for communities to demonstrate their commitment to enabling and doing more for themselves. Additional Digital Access Points are being introduced at Leisure World and Old Heath. In addition to securing new digital partnerships with HSBC, our Digital Community Access Support Officer has been advertising events across the borough and attending multiple group meetings throughout the community to help people access our online services.

Make more of our culture and heritage with initiatives such as the Friends of the Colchester Roman Wall and by attracting Heritage grants.	The Priory Street Car Park refurbishment has highlighted and lit the Roman Wall that runs alongside the car park. An interpretation board was installed for the wall in partnership with Friends of Roman Wall and an additional Panel is planned.
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.	The Local Plan has been published and subject to consultation. It is due to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October with examination starting early 2018. The plan identifies sufficient land to provide homes, jobs and infrastructure for the period to 2033 and beyond.
Co-ordinate partners and funding streams in the Northern Gateway and the Hythe to generate a wide range of jobs and facilities.	The Turnstone application received a resolution to approve and has not been called in by the Secretary of State so negotiations on the S106 have commenced. A Masterplan for the land to the East of Via Urbis Romana has been completed. This aims to deliver comprehensive employment and housing development. Work on a detailed planning application for some sports facilities to the North of the A12 ongoing with the application due to be submitted in January 2018. Stakeholder meetings underway and funders meetings ongoing. Bids submitted to Highways England and DCLG and the Local Enterprise Partnership for infrastructure at Northern Gateway. Negotiations continue with the Legacy Foundation in respect of key sites at Breakers and Coldoc in the Hythe. Funding bid to DCLG under Housing and Infrastructure Fund submitted in September for Legacy development proposals.
Create more independent business opportunities by providing trading units in new large developments across the borough.	37 Queen Street redevelopment completed and opened in January 2017 – all 40 units let prior to occupation. Feasibility work ongoing with ECC to explore grow on space opportunities across the Borough.
Colchester & Ipswich Museums will work with Arts partners to improve the cultural offer.	CIMS is working in long-term partnership with Firstsite to mount a <i>Wunderkammer</i> (<i>Cabinet of Curiosities</i>) exhibition in Firstsite which will be periodically refreshed with fascinating items from the Borough collection. CIMS Manager meets regularly with arts partners in Colchester to discuss joint programming and develop future partnership projects.

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	Half Year Report
Deliver an inward investment campaign in key employment sectors.	The initial part of the Inward Investment campaign has been fully delivered. The setting up of a website, LinkedIn Page and re-branding of Twitter, allowed for more scope to deliver key messages about Colchester and its ambitions to business stakeholders. Each element has seen growth with almost 500 twitter followers, and over 1200 unique website visits per month. The most popular pages being our news pages, Commercial property and our Blogs which in addition get a lot of traction on LinkedIn. Blogs are written by both internal and external contributors, all of which are positively received. In Autumn a Colchester Supplement to Tech News UK will be published supporting over 50 tech and creative businesses within the Borough. This is a national publication which it is hoped will add positively to the suite of information already held to support the inward investment campaign.
Review the Better Colchester Town Centre website to promote Colchester.	The Better Town Centre website has now been replaced by the Ultra Ready Colchester Inward investment site
Secure increased funding and support for skills initiatives particularly in growth or emerging sectors.	We have supported the South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) Local Enterprise Network group to obtain funding for business support. A final round application has now been submitted.
Provide local economic data to education providers to help ensure that the skills that Colchester businesses need are provided.	There are two active projects running currently: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Supporting the development and introduction of a fibre engineering module at Colchester Institute. This is a direct response to the provision of data, and direct experience about the lack of engineers trained nationally to undertake installation of fibre infrastructure.2. This is working with Colchester Institute and the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to encourage and support more people to gain work in construction. An event is being held in October to promote the scheme.

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 continues to have a demonstrable supply of residential planning permissions and allocations to fulfil its requirement to maintain a five-year supply of housing. The publication of the Local Plan will ensure this continues over the longer term.						
Deliver 205 new affordable homes in the borough by 2018. Additional stretch target now 255 homes in total by 2018.	As at the end of September 2017, 88 new affordable homes had been delivered. Along with the 206 homes built in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, this means Colchester is well on target to deliver 255 homes by 2018.						
Seek 20% of new homes on qualifying sites to be affordable homes.	<p>During April 2016 to September 2017, a total of 3 qualifying sites had legal agreements settled which specified the affordable housing contribution to be built. The total affordable housing contributions are set out below and show that all three sites will deliver 20% of the homes as affordable housing, in line with our policy.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites</th> <th>Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied</th> <th>Number of affordable homes actually secured</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>98</td> <td>19</td> <td>19</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured	98	19	19
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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.	We have successfully worked with Colchester Borough Homes on the delivery of the Enoch House refurbishment project that completed in July 2017. The Capital Investment Programme continues to make improvement to tenants' homes that includes energy efficient technologies where appropriate. We are currently exploring the use of a Ground Source Heat Pump at one of our sheltered schemes.						
Work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.	<p>We have appointed two rough-sleeper co-ordinators (one for Colchester and one for Tendring) to provide a co-ordinated response to rough sleeping across both local authority areas to support and prevent homelessness for this group using Department of Communities and Local Government rough sleeper funding.</p> <p>Funded Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge to support 67 households experiencing domestic abuse either in the community or in the Refuge, across Colchester, Tendring, Braintree and Maldon. Of these households, 58 were from hard to reach groups who would not normally seek or access support and nine were from Gypsy and Roma Traveller Communities. Funding was provided via our successful bid</p>						

	<p>to Government for funding to support domestic abuse victims from hard to reach groups.</p> <p>Colchester Borough Homes and voluntary sector partners have prevented homelessness for 572 households from April 2017 to September 2017.</p> <p>CHASUP (Colchester Homeless Service Users Panel) is currently working with 25 single homeless clients. The multi-agency panel uses a person-centred approach to support vulnerable homeless clients often with mental health and/or chaotic lifestyles into accommodation.</p>
Articulate Colchester's transport needs to influence the development of new infrastructure by the Highway Authority and developers.	Transportation Policies have been drafted and were subject to consultation as part of the Local Plan Process in July and August. The information from the Local Plan modelling work has been incorporated into the Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan which was published, along with the transport modelling report as Local Plan evidence base material. Local Plan Transport position paper presented to August Local Plan Committee. Continue to input and shape the Garden Community project to incorporate sustainable transport including walking cycling and rapid transit. Senior members have met with Essex County Council members to develop Colchester transport strategy and input on schemes.
Support the delivery of improvements to the strategic road and rail network.	Members and officers continue to attend fora on the development of the A120 and A12 schemes. Meetings held with Network Rail to understand their potential improvement programme and to understand the opportunities for, and impact on, the rail network of the Garden Communities. Liaison with Network Rail on closures of a number of level crossings.
Allocate developer funding to sustainable transport projects in the borough which improve the balance between different modes of transport.	Developed Heads of Terms for provision of a bus service to serve Colchester Northern Gateway to be included within a section 106 agreement for the Turnstone Cinema and Leisure development.
Improve the walking and cycling links between Colchester North Station and the town centre through initiatives such as 'Fixing the Link' (FTL).	Fixing the Link designers have reported ideas for consideration for inclusion in phase two. Developed Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) expression of interest for Fixing the Link for improvements along North Station road. Meeting held with HLF and given further direction. All outstanding permission's have been sought to allow the "base camp" Middleborough improvements to be undertaken in October.

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	Half Year Report
Provide positive experiences for visitors and residents by promoting Colchester's key leisure, visitor attractions and events venues.	Leisure World and Aqua Springs promoted within Colchester area and up to the North Norfolk coast. Annual ongoing promotions for the Leisure Pool, Aqua Springs spa and memberships (locally only). A wide communications mix including billboard/bus stop, back of bus campaigns, Sky Smart Ad (TV), direct mail, print/online advertising and social media.
Support and help market a range of cultural festivals for local people and visitors.	The Festival Support Fund 2017/18 has awarded grants totalling £25,350 to 20 diverse events taking place across the Borough including the Roman River Music Festival, The Colchester Comedy and Film Festivals, Wivenhoe ArtSeaMusic and the Tiptree Little Scarlett Music Festival. Support in marketing these provided by the VIC team through the Visit Colchester website, social media feeds and e-newsletter.
Enhance Colchester's heritage attractions with initiatives such as integrating attractions, identifying trails around the town, and lighting the Roman walls.	The popular Heritage Open Days in the Borough have involved 36 buildings and events. An upgraded Ancient Colchester App has been produced with additional content. New Historic Colchester Guide Book published and on sale through the VIC and Castle from August 2017. Town Centre Heritage Recording Project advanced with data collection as precursor to publication. Community Archaeology Project launched by GPR investigation at former bus station Queen St/St Botolphs as a precursor to involving public in wider site investigation.
Promote what Colchester has to offer to residents, visitors, and new businesses.	#IfOurWallsCouldTalk national tourism campaign launched in July 2017 engaging visitors and residents. Leisure World (Colchester, Highwoods, Tiptree and Tennis Centre) and Aqua Springs promote all facilities (including memberships) within the Borough for residents and promotional advertising for the spa and Leisure pool for further afield visitors to Colchester. A wide communications mix including billboard/bus stop, back of bus campaigns, Sky Smart Ad (TV), direct mail, print/online advertising and social media.

	<p>Council Car Parks promoted to residents and visitors so customers can choose the most suitable car park for their journey and the best value tariff. A communications mix including website, press releases, banner ad on Visit Colchester website, social media and cross marketing in other campaigns as appropriate, e.g. Christmas and tourism.</p> <p>Continued work with late night economy providers to ensure the town continues to offer varied experiences in a well-managed environment, working together to promote the town as a whole rather than individually.</p>
Colchester & Ipswich Museum is an award winning service.	<p>Recent Awards include Essex Mum's Best Museum in Essex to Colchester Castle. Colchester Castle Guide Book was awarded the UK's Best Guide Book award by The Association of Cultural Enterprise (ACE).</p> <p>Colchester Castle was shortlisted in the UK's Most Popular Castle competition.</p>
Establish an effective apprenticeship programme to provide career and learning opportunities for young people.	<p>The introduction of the government levy provided an opportunity for services to consider appointing apprentices. Apprentice positions were advertised on the National Government website and training providers selected. Assessment days took place in July and final selection interviews conducted and 13 apprentices were recruited in this cohort. In the last 12 months CBC has recruited 18 apprentices in total.</p> <p>A comprehensive programme has been developed for the apprentices' first 12 months, which will supplement their qualification and on the job training. This will involve bringing the apprentices together for regular workshops. Plans are also in place with VineHR to facilitate a Boost programme aimed at young people starting out in their career.</p> <p>Waste Services have decided to recruit 4 apprentices and Colchester Institute are identifying a relevant apprenticeship qualification. Early indications are that it will be a customer service qualification tailored specifically to waste services. A second apprenticeship programme for a new cohort starting in January 2018 is being planned.</p>
Prepare for an externally funded Trainee programme at Colchester & Ipswich Museums.	CIMS has achieved a Stage One pass for the Heritage Lottery Fund Skills for the Future programme. This will see 12 Trainees over three years supported in CIMS' venues.
Colchester & Ipswich Museum has applied to Arts Council England to become a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) 2018-22.	CIMS has been awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status from 2018-22. This will see approx. £200k pa awarded to CIMS from Arts Council England to enhance its programme.

Work with the third sector to deliver Colchester's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.	<p>A new 'Reaching Communities' project started in September 2017 and has started work with 25 organisations delivering projects and services closely connected to environmental sustainability.</p> <p>The local organisations and groups are from third, public and commercial sectors including representatives from local hospitals, training and education providers, and grassroots volunteer led projects.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to achieve a more joined up way of working together, to achieve an accessible route to sharing experience, knowledge and resources including volunteers.</p>
Make the most of our parks and open spaces by managing them well and offering a range of activities and events.	Green Flags have been awarded to High Woods Country Park and Castle Park.

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	Half Year Report
Work with partners to fund and deliver streetscape improvements to support economic vitality.	Consultant brief provided for tendering design work for St Nicholas Square and Balkerne Square to deliver uplift in public realm. Funding streams under investigation.
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 Safer Colchester Partnership continues to work effectively together to deliver campaigns such as Crucial Crew and Community Action Days across the borough. Ongoing support is provided for a range of safety related initiatives, alongside training and awareness raising for internal and external personnel on some of the key issues facing our residents. The Partnership has agreed new priorities for 2017 onwards to address current community safety priorities. The Licensing Enforcement Group continues to achieve multi agency partnership working to ensure compliance across licensed premises.
Improve the information available to new residents.	Communications campaigns are underway to promote new residents setting up direct debits for Council Tax, creating a CBC online account and accessing our online services as well as registering to vote. Leisure World is building relationships with housing developers to include information leaflets in the 'welcome to your new home' pack they provide, focussing on memberships at Leisure World. Waste and recycling included imagery on the Council Tax bill for new residents It encourages them to self-serve by downloading a recycling calendar and finding out about their collection service online.
Improve street cleansing and enforcement in Colchester town centre, and in Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea, and Wivenhoe.	Another of our successful Nights of Action is planned for end of October 2017.
Work with health partners to contribute towards delivering effective outcomes for individuals and their families, with particular focus on prevention and	We have been successfully shortlisted by Sport England to be one of their national pilot areas. The application has been a collaboration with Active Essex, Essex County Council, Tendring and Basildon and may result in a multi-million pound investment

<p>intervention to improve health outcomes and to tackle health inequalities.</p>	<p>across the three localities to tackle inactivity amongst hard to reach groups in our most deprived areas.</p> <p>The Beat the Street project which encourages increased physical activity has been funded through the 'Startwell' programme (in addition to £80k + of secured external funding). The project launched on 20 Sept and will run until 8 Nov, with a further 'sustain phase' working with community groups, volunteers and individuals to maintain and embed as 'normal' increased levels of physical activity in the long term. In the first week over 10,000 people have participated travelling in excess of 25,000 miles.</p> <p>Making Every Contact (MECC) training has been incorporated into the induction for all new CBC staff.</p> <p>Pilot underway of a new social prescribing referral system. Teams working with vulnerable residents will use the system to link individuals/families to assets within their communities with the aim of increasing resilience and self-help.</p> <p>Development of the Livewell campaign with web site launch due in October. Livewell is a campaign funded through an ECC Public Health grant that promotes healthy messages and aims to support residents to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Private Sector Housing Officers working with colleagues from social care, community nursing and the voluntary sector are undertaking joint visits and work shadowing to provide holistic support to vulnerable individuals and families particularly where their home environment is having a negative health impact.</p> <p>£20k funding secured from Carnegie UK to deliver a project within the Library and Community Hub in partnership with Signals, a local arts & education charity and First Site. The insight project will work with 8-13 year olds to generate learning and identify local health priorities for children.</p>
<p>Lead and develop the Active Colchester Network to co-ordinate programmes and activities to increase participation.</p>	<p>£5k funding secured from Active Essex to deliver activities aimed at older people. Active Network partners delivering activity are Colchester United Football in the Community, Disability4Sport, and CBC.</p> <p>Further funding available in the second half of the year aimed at increasing participation as shown by Sport England Active Lives survey.</p>
<p>Work with Colchester Borough Homes, housing providers, private landlords, residents and partners to create cleaner, greener and safer communities.</p>	<p>Officers worked with Community 360 and CBH to deliver dementia training to 51 staff and partners. Further session planned later in 2017.</p> <p>A Crisis Housing Project developed with CBH, and funded through the Startwell Programme is set to launch in November. The project aims to remove barriers and</p>

	<p>enable practical solutions to the challenges faced by families in emergency or temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Private Sector Housing officers have undertaken 300 visits to dwellings (to end Aug), improving 29 Houses in Multiple Occupation, removing 119 hazards through enforcement or partnership working and removing 21 families/individuals from fuel poverty.</p>
Enhance the offer from Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) to deliver a 'one-stop-shop' for business start-ups and survival.	<p>Regular meetings are being set up with the new CEO from September 2017 with a view to understanding COLBEAs levels of support and partnership working going forward</p>
Launch a new destination marketing campaign to raise Colchester's profile and to encourage pride in the borough.	<p>The new tourism campaign for 2017- 2018 launched in June 2017. Entitled <i>If Our Walls Could Talk</i> the campaign focuses on Colchester's rich and vibrant history and asks what would our walls say if they could talk? It will be showcasing the heritage and culture of Britain's Oldest Recorded Town through the story of its many walls, both old and new, permanent and temporary.</p> <p>Targeted at visitors (both new and existing), Group Travel organisers, local businesses and organisations involved in the tourism trade plus Visit Britain, Visit England and Visit Essex. The campaign will demonstrate a wide marketing mix to include print, digital, social media, outdoor advertising and TV.</p>