

Strategic Plan Action Plan - Half Year Report covering 1 April – 30 September 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	Half Year update
Work with development partners to bring exciting new retail and leisure to the eastern part of Colchester town centre.	Curzon cinema: Awaiting the exchange of legal documents to complete the deal. Work expected to begin on site during October. The rest of the former bus depot/station site is under negotiation with lawyers; with design work on a new hotel, student accommodation and restaurant / café uses continuing. Vineyard Gate: The Council's purchase of land previously owned by Caddick in Osborne Street is completed, alongside other smaller purchases of properties in Osborne St.
Support communities to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans.	Colchester has the first two neighbourhood plans in Essex to pass the referendum stage. Boxted and Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plans were subject to independent examination earlier in the year. Both plans passed their respective referendums held on 15 September and will now be adopted by the Council at its meeting on 8 December. Work is ongoing to support Wivenhoe, West Bergholt, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Stanway and Tiptree. Officers have also attended meetings with other Parish councils to discuss preparation of neighbourhood plans.
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 good examples of Community Enabling are emerging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter Warriors – residents organisations and individuals coming forward volunteering to keep their streets and areas clean by removing litter with CBC provided litter clearance kits. • Goodgym – independent organisation encouraging local residents to participate in regular exercise whilst providing some community beneficial work as part of their organised run. Weekly runs start from Colchester Leisure World and group runs to a location to carry out a joint community activity such as cleaning, decorating weed and litter removal. Close working with Park Run. Befriending arrangements are also part of the Goodgym delivery which is still to be delivered with referral arrangements being managed by CCVS. Set up funds provided by CBC Community Enabling Fund.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester in Bloom activity days arranged with local residents to improve dilapidated areas and to carry out riverside maintenance. River Colne and Middleboro drinking fountain are examples. Also maintenance of High Street planters, barrier planters and hanging baskets. • Big Garden at High Woods Country Park – horticultural therapy project funded from Community Enabling. Encouraging volunteers working with less able members of the community to improve their life opportunities by improving their health, mental and social skills. • The Recreation Ground Community Café project – working with Go4 to provide new facilities within the Recreation Ground at Old Heath Road creating a new hub/focus for community use and interest. <p>Assisting customers to self-serve and 'Go-Online' initiatives continue to help people do more for themselves. Community digital events and surgeries are expanding with nine local areas (including rural communities) now included as well as Essex County Council's mobile library. This has enabled 90 people to have one to one support to go online since April. In addition community events have enabled a further 80 people help in accessing online services. Local groups such as C CVS, Signpost and Beacon house have been trained to provide support and act as 'Online Champions'. Our Digital Skills For Life Course (DS4L) course run by Signpost, using our model, trains an average of ten people a month in basic digital skills. This includes assisting minority groups, digitally isolated younger people and older people to go online. This involved over 90 participants.</p> <p>A participatory appraisal exercise (community engagement method) was undertaken in the Library and Community Hub to allow residents to co-design the space on the ground floor.</p> <p>£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.</p>
<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>	<p>Ongoing activities include grants to Arts organisations and Festivals, the provision of Visitor Information Services, core promotional marketing, the heritage building maintenance programme and a refreshed Visitor Information Website.</p> <p>In addition, the Council has also invested £100,000 into promoting Colchester which has included campaigns that showcase the great heritage in the Borough, including the I-spy campaign, new poster and wider marketing campaigns.</p> <p>A further £60,000 investment into Castle attractions and £33,000 additional investment into the Roman Circus is being realised during 2016. A project to highlight the location of the Roman Gates is underway along with the recent lighting of Balcerne Gate and planned lighting of part of the Roman Wall in Priory Street Car Park.</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 existing Local Plan allocates sufficient land in the borough for housing and employment up to 2023. The emerging Local Plan will identify land for the period to 2033. Public consultation on Preferred Options for achieving this took place between July and September 2016 and approximately 2200 responses were received. These are now being logged and analysed to inform the Local Plan to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in 2017.</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>The Northern Gateway project aims to create an exciting leisure and sporting destination with a mixture of commercial leisure and community and club sports. Sites to the south of the A12 and close to the Stadium are coming forward with new leisure proposals; David Lloyd Leisure is about to open and sites adjoining the stadium are undergoing planning assessment for a regional cinema, refreshments and indoor leisure activity uses. The Mill Road rugby club site will be re-developed to create a major community open space, family and specialist housing with employment uses close to the Northern Approach Road.</p> <p>The sports and leisure uses currently at Mill Road will relocate to the northern side of the A12, funded in large part by the new residential development. The sports complex will provide modern and expanded facilities for most traditional sports, and particularly for rugby, indoor cricket, badminton and table tennis. It will have a specialist cyclo gym and large cafe with viewing area. A regional cycling centre will be created to include a 1.6km racetrack and BMX course.</p> <p>In August, Members endorsed the revised Master Plan that structures the development of this area with a central pedestrian and cycle-only boulevard as its linking east/west feature. A public realm strategy recommending an approach to landscape and design of the public areas is nearing completion.</p> <p>The Business model has been developed and was endorsed by Cabinet in March 2016. Cabinet will receive a report in November, identifying how the scheme will be funded, and the financial implications for the council, procurement options and with a recommendation for the management of the complex. The project is supported in principle by the clubs and sports governing bodies including Sport England and British Cycling. Once the planning application is submitted in early 2017 the funding application process can be progressed. Additional funding is sought from other external sources including central government.</p>
<p>Create more independent business opportunities by providing trading units in new large developments across the borough.</p>	<p>42 units have been provided in the new creative business centre. Opportunities are being sought to incorporate into plans coming forward in north Colchester and where appropriate in the town centre.</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	Half Year update
Deliver an inward investment campaign in key employment sectors.	An Inward investment website is in development, due to complete the Autumn of 2016. Also for imminent release are an Annual Economic Report 2015/16 and an Inward investment guide.
Work with the Town Team and other partners to promote Colchester to attract inward investment.	A partnership has been established with Invest Essex and UKTI. Enquiries have been received and proposals developed for relocating companies. Invest Essex is featuring Colchester on social media and arrangements have been agreed for business-sector visits.
Review the Better Colchester Town Centre website to promote Colchester. (Please note this website is for the promotion of the Town Centre projects).	<p>Much work on the town centre has taken place over this year to identify what action needs to be taken in the town centre using the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a Town Centre Mystery Shopping Benchmarking Research comparing the experience of Colchester with Chelmsford and Ipswich. • Facilitating a workshop with members of the Town Centre Steering Group to consider the results of the Mystery Shopping research and adding new items to it. • Presenting these results and developing a draft action plan which included short, medium and long term actions. <p>The next steps will be to prioritise these actions prior to the Town Centre Steering Group reviewing the website.</p>
Secure increased funding and support for skills initiatives particularly in growth or emerging sectors.	<p>Funding has enabled an increase in apprenticeships in Colchester from 1,430 in 2013/14 to 1,580 in 2014/15. A high proportion of these apprenticeships were in growth sectors such as Health, Retail, Business Administration, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies.</p> <p>Colchester Borough Council allocated funding of £20,000 to be used to encourage new entrants into the Construction sector working on local projects in partnership with industry. Meetings scheduled with Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), Essex County Council Skills Representative and local construction companies to ascertain level of match funding and agreed joint initiatives to take forward – this would likely include a Schools Engagement Programme for the sector.</p> <p>Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service successfully secured £222,000 annually for three years to</p>

	develop a Training Museum initiative that is in its second year. It has included skills development of the workforce, a schools programme for Children and created traineeship posts within the service for young people to gain new skills.								
Provide local economic data to education providers to help ensure that the skills that Colchester businesses need are provided.	'Colchester Skills Report 2016' was provided to local education providers in July 2016. The report gives details and data on employment, education and skills needs. Providers include 10 secondary schools, one General Further Education College, one Sixth Form College and one Higher Education Institution based in the Borough. In terms of post- 16 education and skills participation 13,340 Colchester residents were participating in further education and skills provision in 2013/14 (excluding those attending School Sixth Forms). 8,900 of these were aged 19 or over.								
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 maintain a 5 supply of developable and deliverable housing sites. This is reviewed on an annual basis. The emerging Local Plan will identify additional sites to ensure there is adequate supply for the period to 2033.								
Deliver 205 new affordable homes in the borough by 2018.	As at the end of September 2016, 28 new affordable homes had been delivered. Along with the 106 homes built in 2015/2016, this means Colchester is well on target to deliver 205 homes by 2018.								
Seek 20% of new homes on qualifying sites to be affordable homes.	<p>During April 2016 to September 2016, 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 are set to deliver more than the 20% affordable housing required by our Planning Policy. Over the 3 sites, 30% of the total homes being built will be affordable homes.</p> <table><tr><td>Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites</td><td>Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied</td><td>Number of affordable homes actually secured</td></tr><tr><td>93</td><td>19</td><td>28</td></tr></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	93	19	28
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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.	The revenue and capital programme of works continue, they are on course and in line with the budget. Work on our major refurbishment of Enoch House is now in phase three and four. The tenants that have moved into their new homes in the first two phases have expressed high levels of satisfaction. Energy Efficient technology has been used at Enoch House and some grant funding obtained, although grants for energy efficiency have been reduced across the sector we continue to apply for those that remain. CBH continue to monitor the introduction and progression of new technologies.
Work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.	The Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan contains actions to continue to prevent homelessness in Colchester and these will be updated at year end. The Homelessness Strategy Progress report for 2015/2016, which sets out actions undertaken and progress on preventing homelessness and rough sleeping in 2015/2016, has also been completed. The Delivery Plan and Evidence base have also been updated.
Articulate Colchester's transport needs to influence the development of new infrastructure by the Highway Authority and developers.	Transport modelling work has been undertaken and published as part of the Local Plan consultation. Further work is underway to develop the mitigation and infrastructure package for the Plan. Local information has been supplied for the Essex Growth Infrastructure Framework. A specific piece of work has been undertaken on Rapid Transit to support potential growth in east Colchester. As part of the principals of Garden Communities, accommodate growth in east Colchester, link together the Garden Community, the University, the Town Centre and station the study shows that there are considerable benefits in investing in a rapid transit system. The Council has responded to various ECC consultations such as Lexden Road; Parking Standards, and Development Management policies. Officers continue to work closely with ECC to develop proposals for future investment in road and public transport operation in Colchester.
Support the delivery of improvements to the strategic road and rail network.	Colchester has representation at various levels on the A120/A12 Member, Community, Economic and Environment fora being led by ECC and Highways England. Essex County Council, Highways England and Network Rail are involved in the development of the Local Plan. The award of the new Greater Anglia franchise includes investment and changes to services such as better quality, more capacity, faster trains and improved connectivity which CBC requested in response to the franchise process and the regional campaign.
Allocate developer funding to sustainable transport projects in the borough which improve the balance between different modes of transport.	Requests are made at Development Team and in response to applications to ensure new developments are well served by sustainable transport modes. A travel Planning 'App' for the University and Maltings student accommodation was launched at the October Freshers Fayre. Funding has been secured from Sainsbury's to fund an extended 61 bus service and service to Greenstead.

	<p>A Community Bus service to Tollgate is being developed using developer funding. Funding has been secured from the University to develop improvements to the bridge over the rail-line and to make improvements to internal cycle routes.</p> <p>Improvements for walking, cycling and public transport have been secured by conditions attached to applications including for the Cowdray Centre, Magdalen Street Student accommodation and Curzon Cinema.</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>Events have included cycle training for all, community walks, a health referral programmes, and organised local cycle rides. Additionally, a "Best Foot Forward" travel planning programme was launched in Mile End in late May.</p> <p>Work is underway with the Fixing the Link partners to enhance the initiative. The first tranche of work included improving the Middleborough area but had to wait whilst ECC completed the work for the changes to allow for the Park and Ride bus stop. The original feasibility study included ideas for the Albert Roundabout area which is a "gap" in the Fixing the Link Route. Design consultants will shortly be appointed.</p> <p>CBC has approved the ECC planning application to widen the bridge over Balkerne Hill to allow cycling and walking to the west side of the town.</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	Half Year update
Provide positive experiences for visitors and residents by promoting Colchester's key leisure, visitor attractions and events venues.	Purple Flag accreditation has been re-secured for Colchester's evening and night time economy. New hotels opening have brought additional bed spaces enabling the Borough to be promoted as a short break destination. New arrangements to make it easier for coaches to pick up/drop off have been introduced to welcome coach visitors from September 2016. £100k additional funding for promotion of Colchester and £33k investment into the Roman Circus have been secured. The Council has organised or supported a number of events promoting the town including the Big Screen in Castle Park; a Heritage Open Weekend, the Cricket Festival, Food Festival, Slow Food Festival and a host of other more local community celebrations.
Support and help market a range of cultural festivals for local people and visitors.	The Festival Support Fund has supported 22 festivals and events across the Borough since May 2016, many of them with a cultural focus, including multi date festivals like the Roman River Music Festival, The Colchester Comedy Festival and Open Studios, and one day events like the Big Sunday, Colchester Carnival, the Little Scarlet Festival in Tiptree and the Art Sea Music Festival in Wivenhoe. These have been promoted via the Visit Colchester website and social media channels.
Enhance Colchester's heritage attractions with initiatives such as integrating attractions, identifying trails around the town, and lighting the Roman walls.	The Ancient Colchester app was re-launched in August. Previously the Castle App, and funded as part of the Castle Redevelopment project by the HLF this has been updated to provide a self-guided tour around Roman and Norman heritage sites in the town centre, including the Roman Circus. Further content covering Gosbecks, Lexden Mount and Mersea Barrow will be added by the end of the year. Recording Colchester's Heritage Project is progressing well with volunteers producing detailed analysis of early buildings in the town centre with dendro-dating revealing some interesting dates for their construction. This data will feed into an app or on-line data to enhance the experience and appreciation of the town centre.
Promote what Colchester has to offer to residents, visitors, and new businesses.	A new www.visitcolchester.com website has been launched with new functionality and capability, supported by ongoing search engine optimisation which has substantially increased traffic to the website (visitors to the website were up by 47% in Aug 2016 compared to Aug 2015).

	<p>£100k additional funding for the promotion of Colchester is being invested in a yearlong programme including to date resourcing activity such as the Treasures of Colchester poster campaign in stations and bus stops across major towns in East Anglia and in East London around school holidays; ads in the Guardian and other supplements; the I spy Colchester social media engagement campaign; reengagement with the Group Travel Industry via ads and offers the travel trade press; and engagement with local tourism businesses to encourage participation in the ispy and upcoming campaigns. The re-named Castle App, has been developed and funded by the Castle Redevelopment project and now extended to include a heritage trail around Colchester key sites.</p> <p>Familiarisation events have been held for local taxi drivers to help them promote Colchester and new arrangements making it easier for coaches to pick up/drop off have been introduced to welcome coach visitors September 2016. A number of key events took place promoting the town including Big Screen in Castle Park; Heritage Open Weekend and the Council have supported a range of key Festivals and activities this year so far, including The Cricket Festival, Food Festival, Slow Food and a host of other more local community festivals.</p>
Establish an effective apprenticeship programme to provide career and learning opportunities for young people.	<p>The number of apprenticeships in 2014/15 was 1,580 – an increase of over 9% in 2013/14. The introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in Spring 2017 will apply to companies and organisations with an annual pay bill in excess of £3m. The Council's plans to increase in own apprenticeship opportunities in response to the Levy are being developed.</p> <p>Partnerships have been developed with the business community, education providers and Essex County Council to ensure Apprenticeship Levy and training funding is channelled to Colchester's growth sectors (see Colchester Skills Report 2016).</p> <p>New apprenticeships such as a rotational health apprenticeship (exposure to a broad range of sector skills) and Advanced Digital Skills will scheduled to commence in 2016.</p> <p>New apprenticeship opportunities are advertised daily on the Colchester Institute website.</p>
Work with the third sector to deliver Colchester's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.	<p>CBC continues to work with and develop its network of community groups and third sector organisations. These partnerships are formed on the basis of a joint aim to support work in environmental sustainability and to support communities to build resilience. During the first 6 months of 2016/2017, the Council worked with third sector partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty, through the delivery of a Big Energy Week in Colchester Market and disseminating information about the Big Community Switch to our own tenants and registered social housing providers. CBC secured external funding from DECC to help a third sector partner deliver an alternative switching scheme for vulnerable people unable to use computers. Colchester residents were helped to save on their fuel bills by signing up to the Big Community Switch which provided participating households with an average annual saving of £244.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support external grant funding applications; encourage partnership approaches to fill gaps in provision and actively promote new rural skills training courses at CBC led events.
Make the most of our parks and open spaces by managing them well and offering a range of activities and events.	Colchester's Parks have seen one of the busiest Summers on record with thousands of visitors daily and lots of Pokémon Go hunters! A new Grounds Maintenance Contract has come into action at the start of the growing season. This new contract, combined with excessive rainfall presented considerable challenges which have now been overcome. Colchester's Parks have once again had a successful Anglia In Bloom campaign with Colchester winning a Gold award in the City Category and High Woods Country Park being the overall winner and receiving gold for the best park over 10 acres in the Anglia region.

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 update
Work with partners to fund and deliver streetscape improvements to support economic vitality.	The Council is working with ECC to include bids for funding to the SELEP to improve the streetscape from the Mercury theatre through to First Site via St Nicholas Square.
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 Days of Action across the Borough. Ongoing support is provided for a range of safety related initiatives including the SOS bus. The Partnership has agreed new priorities for 2016 onwards to address current community safety priorities and has launched a new website and dedicated social media along with progressing the new Safer Colchester Hub which will see all partners spending time working together in one location in the future. The Licensing Enforcement Group continues to co-ordinate multi agency enforcement of licensed premises to achieve shared community safety objectives.
Improve street cleansing and enforcement in Colchester town centre, and in Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea, and Wivenhoe.	A new deep clean service for the High Street has been introduced. This has included a protective coating being added, and the procurement of a new Hot Wash machine which has been used in the town centre, our car parks and at several other locations around Colchester. We have had two very successful behaviour change campaigns in 'Love Essex' – Litter Campaign and 'We are Watching You' Dog Fouling Campaign. Both seeing a significant reduction in problems in the hot spot areas put forward by residents and wardens. Additional Enforcement activity is also taking place, balanced with trying to re-educate those guilty of enforcement offences. After the introduction of Litter Warriors nearly a year ago, we are now celebrating our 200th volunteer! We are working with Keep Britain Tidy to look at a Fly Tipping Campaign given the increase in this type of offence across the Borough.
Work with health partners to contribute towards delivering effective outcomes for individuals and their families, with	We successfully recruited a new Public Health Improvement Coordinator who has been in post for four months. The post is joint funded with Essex County Council for a period of two years. The new resource enables us to better coordinate activities across all Council services and to work

<p>particular focus on prevention and intervention to improve health outcomes and to tackle health inequalities.</p>	<p>more effectively with partners to deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents. We have launched a new 'Making Every Contact count' tool for front line staff and are working with the NHS organisation 'Provide' to deliver opportunistic advice to customers and refer individuals to free services based on five key lifestyle areas; healthy eating, physical activity, smoking cessation, alcohol and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Preventative initiatives are also being developed with Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust, North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, Anglian Community Enterprise and ECC to expedite discharge from hospital back in to the community and prevent avoidable admissions to hospital in the first place.</p>
<p>Lead and develop the Active Colchester Network to co-ordinate programmes and activities to increase participation.</p>	<p>The Active Colchester Network has been successful in securing £11,000 funding via Active Essex for a range of activities in Colchester. All the activities aim to increase participation in sport and physical activity and to encourage healthy and active lifestyles. Active Colchester partners are delivering: Football activities including "Super sixes", Street Sport, Women and Girls' Come and Play & Walking Football as well as Grassroots Football Club Workshops to up skill and develop local club coaches. Funding will also contribute to start-up cost of a second Colchester based park run at Mersea Island with an anticipated start date in December and a workshop for local sports clubs to highlight potential funding streams and how to apply. Weekly indoor cricket sessions for adults with disabilities and weekly netball sessions for women are currently being stage at Leisure World centres. Active ageing events are also planned for later in the year.</p>
<p>Work with Colchester Borough Homes, housing providers, private landlords, residents and partners to create cleaner, greener and safer communities.</p>	<p>In the first five months of the year we have worked with landlords to improve twenty three Houses in Multiple Occupation in Colchester. Informal and formal enforcement has resulted in the removal of 123 serious hazards from dwellings, and the lifting of 23 families from fuel poverty.</p> <p>We utilised a successful Residential Property Tribunal case upholding the Council's decision to take action against a prominent local Letting Agent to issue a press release via the local media on the Council's role in providing a safe home environment.</p> <p>We are working closely with Colchester Borough Homes, Housing Providers and private landlords to ensure that accommodation in the Borough accessed via the various available rehousing schemes such as the new private sector leasing scheme and temporary accommodation is safe for vulnerable families and individuals.</p> <p>We continue to manage the Bus Emission project. Early results from First Essex are good with the ten retrofitted buses demonstrating a 96% reduction of Nitrogen Dioxide from tailpipe emissions.</p> <p>The Council has provided residents, businesses and healthcare providers with an air quality forecasting service & alert system (air TEXT). We have been actively trying to promote the service, most recently at the University and with health colleagues.</p>

Enhance the offer from Colchester Business Enterprise Agency to deliver a 'one-stop-shop' for business start-ups and survival.	The Service Level Agreement in place with Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) in 2015/16 and 2016/17 has ensured an increased offer from COLBE. This has resulted in increasing the number of business start-ups, improving business support, advice and mentoring. COLBEA have secured additional funding from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills to run a series of business critical workshops covering key issues affecting SME's such as web presence, cash flow and recruitment. A tender for further funding of £39k is pending.
Deliver the Creative Business Centre in the town centre to support fledgling businesses.	Renovation of the former Police Station building is due for completion in mid-October 2016. A centre operator, 'Space', is now in place and interest in units is high. Ultra-fast broadband will be available at the centre.
Launch a new destination marketing campaign to raise Colchester's profile and to encourage pride in the borough.	The Treasures of Colchester advertising campaign was launched in June 2016 with billboard and national press ads. July saw the launch of the social media campaign i-spy. A closer working relationship with Visit Britain/England has been created. New relationships are being forged with local attractions, hoteliers and businesses to be part of the campaign. An incentive has been identified with the Museum service and the promotion of this in trade press has just begun.