

Scrutiny Panel Meeting

**Council Chamber, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ**

Tuesday, 28 February 2017 at 18:00

The Scrutiny Panel examines the policies and strategies from a borough-wide perspective and ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the Council's policies and budget. The Panel reviews corporate strategies that form the Council's Strategic Plan, Council partnerships and the Council's budgetary guidelines, and scrutinises Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decisions which have been called in.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

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Have Your Say!

The Council values contributions from members of the public. Under the Council's Have Your Say! policy you can ask questions or express a view to most public meetings. If you wish to speak at a meeting or wish to find out more, please refer to Your Council> Councillors and Meetings>Have Your Say at www.colchester.gov.uk

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Scrutiny Panel – Terms of Reference

1. To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee under section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and in particular (but not limited to):

- (a) To review corporate strategies;
- (b) To ensure that actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council;
- (c) To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, performance reporting and to make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions;
- (d) To review the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic and Implementation Plans;
- (e) To review the financial performance of the Council and to make recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to financial outturns, revenue and capital expenditure monitors;
- (f) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet, the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee (in relation to decisions relating to offstreet matters only) and the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
- (g) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Portfolio Holders and officers taking key decisions which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
- (h) To monitor the effectiveness and application of the Call-In Procedure, to report on the number and reasons for Call-In and to make recommendations to the Council on any changes required to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the process;
- (i) To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet;
- (j) At the request of the Cabinet, to make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet or creating difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business;

2. To fulfil all the functions of the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee ("the Committee") under the Police and Justice Act 2006 and in particular (but not limited to):

- (a) To review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of those functions by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions;
- (b) To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of those functions.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Scrutiny Panel
Tuesday, 28 February 2017 at 18:00

Member:

Councillor Beverly Davies
Councillor Christopher Arnold
Councillor Phil Coleman
Councillor Adam Fox
Councillor Mike Hogg
Councillor Lee Scordis
Councillor Barbara Wood

Chairman
Deputy Chairman

Substitutes:

All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

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

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

1 Welcome and Announcements

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

2 Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3 Urgent Items

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

4 **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

5 **Minutes**

9 - 18

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2017.

6 **Have Your Say!**

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

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter relating to

the terms of reference of the Committee/Panel not on this agenda.

7 Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Provisions

To consider any Cabinet decisions taken under the special urgency provisions.

8 Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

To consider any Portfolio Holder decisions taken under the special urgency provisions.

9 Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any decisions taken under the Call in Procedure.

10 Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members

(a) To evaluate requests by members of the Panel for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

(b) To evaluate requests by other members of the Council for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

Members of the panel may use agenda item 'a' (all other members will use agenda item 'b') as the appropriate route for referring a 'local government matter' in the context of the Councillor Call for Action to the panel. Please refer to the panel's terms of reference for further procedural arrangements.

11 Review of the Council's funding and partnership delivery arrangements with Firstsite 19 - 78

See report of Chief Operating Officer

12 Work Programme 79 - 88

See report of Assistant Chief Executive

13 Exclusion of the Public (Scrutiny)

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Part B

(not open to the public including the press)

SCRUTINY PANEL

31 JANUARY 2016

Present:- Councillor Davies (Chairman), Councillor Arnold,
Councillor Coleman, Councillor Fox, Councillor Hogg,
Councillor Scordis, Councillor Wood

Also in Attendance:- Councillor Cory, Councillor Oxford

101. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 12 December 2016 and 13 December 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

102. Digital Challenge

Pamela Donnelly, Executive Director, introduced the report, which requests that the Panel review the report and associated documents and comment on the progress made to date and the planned activity for the Digital Challenge.

Pamela Donnelly informed the Panel that the report provides an update on progress one year on from the beginning of the project, as well as a reminder of the key issues that the project is hoping to tackle. The report also includes information on the level of investment in digital services required to achieve the digital challenge aims. Pamela Donnelly stated that the Digital Challenge includes two strands of work, the first strand focuses on smarter working, maximising services through utilising technology. The second strand, paperchase, relates to significantly reducing the use of and reliance on paper, print and postage. Pamela Donnelly thanked Stephen Nash, Programme Manager, for his work on the Digital Challenge.

Pamela Donnelly gave the Panel a presentation highlighting outlining how the Digital Challenge will be delivered, the progress so far, outcomes from the progress and the next steps for the project. Pamela Donnelly highlighted the investment made in technology and how this, through cultural change and training, will enable staff and Councillors to work more effectively and efficiently, particularly with Office365. The reduction of use of print and paper as well as investment in IT to maximise efficiency will provide £1m of savings over four years. The Digital Challenge has also provided an opportunity to offer learning to other Local Authorities, which could provide a further source of income.

Pamela Donnelly highlighted changes to the payroll system, which over the next 6-12 months would provide efficiency opportunities through self-serve. In addition, the Council is working on implementing improved Customer Relations Management software, Microsoft

Dynamics and Arcus, which will improve the customer journey and delivery of the Digital Challenge.

Pamela Donnelly also informed the Panel about the Community Hub and Spokes development. The Community Hub, situated in the library, has provided the opportunity for public services including Essex County Council, the Police and health services to come together in a single point of contact. This allows for quick referrals to the relevant authority. This approach has been seen as a leading innovation in Essex by the Department for Communities and Local Government who provided £200,000 funding for the project. The next stage of the development is to expand the 'spokes' by utilising community centres, parish councils and libraries across the Borough.

Pamela Donnelly highlighted to the Panel that the increase online capabilities for dealing with customer queries has reduced the requirement for customers to request face-to-face appointments by 55%. The savings from this are then use to preserve frontline customer contact.

Councillor Oxford, Portfolio Holder for Customers, stated the Council has to adapt the way in which it communicates with customers so that it is convenient for them. Whilst many customers wish to contact Colchester Borough Council online, it is essential that assistance be provided to those who do not wish to use online services and prefer face-to-face meetings. In providing online systems, the savings from this allow for face-to-face meetings to continue to be available.

The following questions were asked by Councillors;

- Councillor Davies – Questioned whether customers who contacted the Council would in future have just one account to ensure quick access to relevant information.
 - Pamela Donnelly confirmed that the introduction of Microsoft Dynamics Customer Relationship Management system would provide a single record of customer transactions. However, given that some information may not always be appropriate to be stored in the same place, information may be grouped so that different officers could access different information. The exact details of this are currently being devised following implementation of Microsoft Dynamics. Councillor Oxford highlighted a scheme called 'tell us once' which will mean that customers will only have to fill in one form when they originally contact the Council.
- Councillor Arnold – Highlighted that a number of local residents were concerned about using the internet due to the potential risks, rather than technology itself and questioned what assistance the Council can provide in these circumstances.
 - Councillor Oxford highlighted the assistance the officers can provide in both the Community Hub and the 'spokes' to demonstrate that using technology and the internet does not have to be an intimidating experience. Pamela Donnelly highlighted that a lot of work has been completed at the hub to try and take the

fear of using technology away. Other offline methods of payments will still be available to those customers who prefer not to use online payments.

- Councillor Hogg – Highlighted examples of fraud and scam e-mails that are common online, as well as concerns regarding relying on one device for multiple uses.
 - Pamela Donnelly highlighted that internet users need to be aware of the fraud and scams that can occur. Providing training assists in reducing the fear associated with using the internet and adopting new technologies; Pamela Donnelly highlighted the Go Online Partnership, which works with banks and retailers to help residents go online. With regard to data loss, Pamela Donnelly advised that important information should be backed up so that is accessible from other devices.
- Councillor Davies – Suggested that the Council should streamline and simplify it's points of contact, given that there are references to 'capture once and reuse', 'touch once and deal' and 'tell us once' campaigns.
 - Pamela Donnelly highlighted that the Council is focusing on continuing to improve its communication to make interacting with the Council an easier experience for customers. The introduction of Microsoft Dynamics and business re-engineering will assist with this process. If requested a further update on progress on the digital challenge could be brought back to the Panel in a year's time. Councillor Oxford confirmed that the Council has learnt and improved the experience to make it as easy as possible and to increase the number of users online.
- Councillor Fox – Questioned whether the Council would be altering its social media policies to respond to queries outside of traditional office hours.
 - Pamela Donnelly confirmed that this is currently being assessed and an access strategy has been drafted. There is a wider debate about whether this is an appropriate method of communication for public sector organisations given the risks associated and the political environment in which they operate.
- Councillor Coleman – Questioned what could be done to assist those who do not intend to use modern technology to access services.
 - In response to Councillor Coleman, Councillor Oxford stated that services to help those who do not use modern technology to access Council services will remain. The Council will continue to be contactable through post, telephone or a face to face meetings. Pamela Donnelly highlighted that the Community Hub provides 6-7 access points where customers can use online Council services. These access points are supported by Council Officers to assist and respond to any queries. In addition to this, the Council also has Go Online Champions that operate in community centres to help those who do not have access to online services.
- Councillor Scordis – Queried whether further steps to reduce the printing of agendas for Councillors could be taken.

- In response, Councillor Oxford highlighted the availability of the MyCMIS tablet application, which automatically delivers agendas to personal devices and allows for annotation. The Panel were also informed that Councillors are able to opt out of receiving paper agendas if they wish to, and that the steps to move to digital agendas for Committee meetings forms part of the Review of Meetings and Ways of Work currently being held by the Governance and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED that the progress made to date on the Digital Challenge project has been reviewed.

103. Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18

Steve Heath, Finance Manager, introduced the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18. The report requests that the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy be reviewed prior to it being considered by Cabinet and Full Council as part of the 2017/18 budget report.

Steve Heath highlighted that this report forms part of the General Fund Budget report that is being taken to Cabinet on 1 February 2017. Steve Heath stated that the report provides information on the latest forecast for capital expenditure between 2017/18 and 2019/20. The overall approach remains largely unchanged from the current year, but does include the adjustments made as part of the mid-year review.

Steve Heath informed the Panel of the adjustments that had been made. The first of which related to the minimum revenue provision policy statement. The Council is required to pay off an element of its capital financing requirement every year; which had previously been set at 4% per year. Following advice from external auditors this has been changed to equal instalments each year over a period of 50 years. This measure came into effect this year and provides a revenue saving of £93,000 for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The Panel were also informed about the revised interest rate forecast; in August 2016 the rate was cut from 0.5% to 0.25%. The current forecast predicts that the interest rate will remain at 0.25% until the middle of 2019.

With regard to the borrowing strategy, the Council has a policy of internal borrowing, which maximises short term general revenue savings and reduces the Council's exposure to counterparty risk. As the rates available are now lower, this needs to be balanced against the current potential of long term savings. Steve Heath stated that the Council has still not undertaken any new external borrowing this year, but this will be kept under review based on the rates that are on offer.

In terms of the investment strategy, as the bank rate is currently low the estimated returns are also low; the cost pressures from this have been built into the 2017/18 budget. In addition, there has been an adjustment to the sovereign debt limits, which currently stands at -AA; the policy has been changed so that the UK is excluded.

Steve Heath also highlighted that this is the first of three scheduled reports regarding Treasury Management, with the end of year review and mid-year review to follow. Any additional updates that are required will be provided through the Capital Quarterly Monitoring reports.

Councillor Coleman questioned how accurate the bank rate prediction would be, given the changing political circumstances. In response, Steve Heath highlighted the difficulty in predicting the future level of bank rates as there are so many different issues that could influence it; a summary of these issues that could affect the economic outlook are provided in the report. The appendix to the report includes a two year forecast by the Council's external treasury management advisors and another economics organisation which are both relatively consistent in their two year predictions.

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy State and Annual Investment Strategy has been reviewed.

104. 2017/18 General Fund Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast, Housing Revenue Accounts Estimates and Housing Investment Programme

Sean Plummer, Strategic Finance Manager, and Councillor Mark Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced the report. The report requests that the Panel review and comment on the 2017/18 General Fund Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast, Housing Revenue Account Estimates and Housing Investment programme reports which are being submitted to Cabinet on 1 February 2017.

Sean Plummer informed the Panel of the key points within the report. This included the current situation with government funding; Sean Plummer confirmed that the Council had applied to accept the four-year settlement from the government. This meant that the Council is aware of the reduction to government funding for a further two years (2018/19 and 2019/20). In 2017/18 the government grant will reduce by 17%, £980,000. In addition to this the government also confirmed a reform to the New Homes Bonus which has resulted in a £931,000 reduction in the grant for 2017/18. Sean Plummer also confirmed that the funding streams are going to continue to reduce in future years.

With regard to the cost pressures for 2017/18, the budget report includes information about the business rates revaluation, which has seen an increase in cost to the Council of approximately £100,000. Other cost pressures include the apprenticeship levy, and the reduction in interest earnings. Alongside the cost pressures, the budget report includes information around growth items that are recommended for inclusion in the budget, this includes an allocation for Councillors locality budgets and £110,000 in the base budget to support delivery of strategic plan priorities. Following confirmation of the level of New Homes Bonus, £500,000 has been allocated to the Mercury Theatre and £87,000 allocated to the Waste Review. The remaining £2.036m will be allocated to help deliver projects which support strategic plan priorities and deliver income to assist with managing future budget pressures; further information on this will be available in due course.

Sean Plummer highlighted the savings and income included in the report, and informed the Panel that £0.9m of the savings required are as a result of the reduction of New Homes Bonus. In terms of Council Tax, the proposal in the report is an increase of 2.8%, which equates to £4.95 for a Band D Council Tax property; this is below the £5 Government threshold. Sean Plummer informed the Panel that in the government's own spending power figures they assume that the Council Tax will increase by £5. The report also includes further information about the balances and reserves, Sean Plummer stated that the Council has balances of £0.3m above the recommended level. Sean Plummer stated that following the assessment of risks it is up to the Council to consider whether balances should be held at a higher level to provide flexibility and given the financial outlook.

With regard to the Medium Term Financial Forecast, it is expected that core government funding will reduce in line with the 4-year settlement and that the New Homes Bonus will also reduce by a further £2.5m over the next three years. It is predicted that following further savings and anticipated income levels already built into budget forecasts there will still be a budget gap of £2.5m after the next three years.

The following questions were raised by Councillors;

- Councillor Davies – Questioned where, in the budget report, the capital cost of the waste review was listed.
 - In response, Sean Plummer stated that the capital programme is included on page 80 within the report. This highlighted that there is sufficient funding from capital receipts to spend the £857,000 allocated. The information is not shown within the detailed capital programme at this stage, as the report to cabinet includes a recommendation to include it in the programme. If the budget is approved at the Full Council meeting it will be added to the capital programme budget.
- Councillor Davies – Suggested that the aims of the waste strategy can be achieved by limiting individuals residual waste rather than spending £857,000 of capital on the provision of wheelie bins, and questioned whether the spend could be reviewed again.
 - In response Councillor Cory highlighted that this issue had been to Scrutiny previously, and that the decision to commit the capital spending followed a public consultation and conversations with local ward councillors. The investment is required to make the changes that were agreed which includes wheelie bins in wards where they will be introduced and additional green boxes where required.
- Councillor Arnold – Queried what the Waste review revenue budget savings and expenditure will be for future years.
 - Councillor Cory highlighted that the savings and costs for the waste review were included within the report that went to Cabinet. Councillor Cory also confirmed that an upgrade to freighters as part of a regular cycle was already due to occur. Councillor Cory confirmed that more one off costs may arise, but page 71 within the report highlights the one off capital cost of the waste review. In terms of revenue budgets, net savings of £38,000 are anticipated each year. Councillor Cory also highlighted the environmental benefits in reducing the amount of waste that is going to landfill which

would benefit Essex County Council in reducing the costs of landfill tax. Councillor Cory also suggested that the Waste Strategy could be reviewed by the Scrutiny Panel in a years' time.

- Councillor Davies – asked for further clarification on the net cost of the waste strategy.
 - Councillor Cory confirmed the position in respect of one-off costs and recurring savings.
- Councillor Wood – Requested further information on whether Ipswich Borough Council assisted in funding Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service.
 - In response, Sean Plummer stated that the section in the budget refers predominantly to the income from the Colchester Castle museum. Sean Plummer informed the Panel that the management arrangements with the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service had recently changed, so that the income from the Colchester Museums is kept by Colchester. The costs of running the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service remains shared between Colchester Borough Council and Ipswich Borough Council.
- Councillor Arnold – Questioned whether the money raised by museums in Colchester is retained by the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service. Councillor Arnold also requested further information on the budget of the museums service.
 - Sean Plummer stated that the income from Colchester Museums is presented in the budget in a different account. Currently the contribution to the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service (CIMS) exceeds the income generated by museums in Colchester and the money received in income is used to fund CIMS. Sean Plummer stated that he would provide further information on the level of income from Colchester Museums and the contribution to the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service after the meeting.
- Councillor Davies – Questioned whether the projected income for sport and leisure is going to be achievable. Councillor Davies also asked about membership information and whether this had increased.
 - Sean Plummer confirmed that as Section 151 Officer, there is a requirement to comment on the robustness of the budget. All items included within the budget have been looked at in detail, with Heads of Service required to set out assumptions and risks. Sean Plummer stated that the projected incomes are achievable however there are a number of external factors that could influence this. Sean Plummer highlighted that the income level had been anticipated to be higher than the level provided in the budget, but following a delay in the Sport and Leisure Project this was altered. Councillor Cory informed the Panel that he was confident about the income estimates, following the investment in the leisure facilities. With regard to the membership information, Councillor Cory recommended that Councillor Davies contact Councillor Feltham.
- Councillor Davies – Questioned whether the car park income level could be achieved.

- In response Councillor Cory was confident that the income could be achieved given the circumstances in the previous year, such as the introduction of Park and Ride which did not impact on car park income as much as expected. In addition, looking forward, Councillor Cory highlighted the Fenwick store and the soon to be open Primark store which would increase footfall in the town centre. Sean Plummer informed the Panel that an update on the income from car parks up to quarter 3 of 2016/17 would be brought to the next Governance and Audit meeting. Sean Plummer confirmed that the latest forecast was broadly on target to be achieved
- Councillor Wood – Asked for further information about the Tiptree Parish Council Store and WC's.
 - In response Sean Plummer confirmed that this was a Section 106 funding agreement that the Council had received to be allocated to that particular scheme.
- Councillor Coleman – Asked for further information about the future arrangements for collection and retaining business rates.
 - Sean Plummer stated that currently the Council collects c£60m in business rates in the Borough; £4m of this is kept by the Council. The future arrangements will see this change, but it is likely the adjustments will be made so that the actual amount of business rates retained by the Council would be broadly similar to the current arrangements.
- Councillor Davies – requested an update about 'Think Global, Act Local'.
 - Councillor Cory stated that this is a project where the Council will invest in supporting vulnerable communities. There has been a workshop looking at how the Council can reallocate resources given the many challenges that are being faced across public services. This has included looking at the issues around homelessness and provision of Colchester Borough Council's own emergency bed and breakfast. Pamela Donnelly, Executive Director, stated that this piece of work was a result of Colchester Borough Council being positioned further down the indices of deprivation, and looking to see how reallocating funding can help improve the situation. Councillor Feltham has agreed that the priority will be the 0-19-year-old age group to try and tackle issues early on. The next stage is for teams, including the Safer Colchester Partnership, the Public Health Team and Councillor Feltham to come together to review a range of projects that will tackle the issues.
- Councillor Arnold – Requested further information on the budget transfers for the Gosbecks Reserve, including what has been spent over the last twenty years.
 - Sean Plummer confirmed that the information going back as far as possible would be provided after the meeting. Sean Plummer highlighted that in many cases, the costs may be starting to exceed the income because of lower interest rates.
- Councillor Davies – Questioned why the cost pressures for elections were only included for 2018/19

- Sean Plummer highlighted as there are no elections this year, this refers to the money being put back into the budget for the next set of elections in 2018/19 and was therefore back in the base budget.
- Councillor Fox – Questioned what impact the £2.5m of savings required in the Medium Term Financial Forecast will have within the Council.
 - Sean Plummer stated that each year the budget includes a number of savings across the Council. By 2019-20 the Council will be required to pay funding back to the Government, which will make the savings harder to achieve. Whilst this may be achievable through further savings like the digital challenge and commercial income it will become significantly harder. Councillor Cory confirmed that the continued cuts are making it harder for Local Government. Councillor Cory highlighted the pressure that the Housing Revenue Account is currently experiencing and the difficulty in investing in additional housing stock. Councillor Cory highlighted that the improvements in Waste, additional developments such as the northern gateway and improvement in commercial services will assist in creating more income. Councillor Cory highlighted that the cuts have required an increase in Council Tax for the first time in seven years.

RESOLVED that the 2017/18 General Fund Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast, Housing Revenue Accounts Estimates and Housing Investment Programme has been reviewed.

105. Work Programme

Councillor Hogg (in respect of his partner being a Stakeholder Governor for Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Coleman (in respect of his spouse being employed by Care UK) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Davies introduced the Scrutiny Panel Work Programme report for 2016/17. Councillor Davies informed members that a private briefing maybe required. The Panel discussed whether a briefing could take place during April and suggested that the Democratic Services Officer canvass dates for all members' availability.

Councillor Davies also suggested that a scrutiny review take place regarding last year's Big Choice award. The review would request that each of the organisations that were awarded funding provide information about how the money was spent, what difference was made and the added value to the funding provided.

The Panel queried when it would be suitable to invite Colchester Hospital University NHS Hospital to a meeting. In response, officers stated that they could be invited for a specially arranged meeting when required, however given the recent changes it may be better to

hold a review, if requested, in the next municipal year. Councillor Arnold requested that the provisional work programme for 2017/18 be circulated to Panel members.

Following a query from Councillor Coleman, Jonathan Baker confirmed that a briefing note regarding buses in Colchester would be circulated shortly, and that an invitation would be sent to Essex Highways following receipt of concerns from Panel members.

RESOLVED that;

- a) The provisional work programme for 2017/18 be circulated to members prior to the next Scrutiny Panel meeting.
- b) That Vineyard Gate be provisionally scheduled for the 2017/18 work programme.
- c) That scoping work be undertaken about the potential of reviewing the previous year's Big Choice award.
- d) The Work Programme for 2016/17 be noted.

Scrutiny Panel

28 February 2017

Item
11

Report of	Chief Operating Officer	Author	Ann Hedges ☎ 282202
Title	Review of the Council's funding and partnership delivery arrangements with Firstsite		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the progress of Firstsite since the decision by Arts Council to withdraw their National Portfolio Organisation status and to consider how effectively they support the Council's Strategic Plan priorities and provide value for money for the funding provided

1. Scope of review

- 1.1 To review the progress of Firstsite since the decision by Arts Council to withdraw their National Portfolio Organisation status and to consider how effectively they support the Council's Strategic Plan priorities and provide value for money for the funding provided.

2. Reason for undertaking review

- 2.1 The Council's Code of Corporate Governance states the aim for robust scrutiny, and principle to engage with stakeholders to ensure public accountability.

3. Representatives

- 3.1 The following representatives have accepted an invitation to attend and present to this meeting:

- Sally Shaw, Director
- Noorzaman Rashid, Chair

4. The Organisation

- 4.1 Housed in a landmark building opened in 2011, Firstsite is leading contemporary visual arts organisation presenting exhibitions from both locally and international renowned artists, as well as events, activities and workshops that aim to bring art to the heart of the community, ensuring a diverse range of experiences and activities are accessible to all. The organisation is integral to the creative industries and visitor economy, both priority sectors for the Borough.

5 Partnership delivery arrangements

- 5.1 Firstsite, the Mercury Theatre and Colchester Arts Centre form a cultural and creative asset base for Colchester which is the result of a strong funding partnership between the Council, the arts organisations, Arts Council England, and Essex County Council and which has been in place for more than 10 years.

- 5.2 In 2014 Firstsite was awarded Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding status for 2015-18. In Feb 2015 this was withdrawn and Firstsite was put into special funding arrangements by ACE for one year. An interim Director, Anthony Roberts, was appointed in April 2015. In November 2015 in view of the substantial progress made against the conditions set in February, ACE awarded an additional two years revenue funding to allow Firstsite to continue with its plans to develop a new and sustainable business model. As per this agreement, Firstsite's funding partners, ACE, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council continue to work closely with the organisation to monitor and support its progress against the Milestones attached here as Appendix 1. In April 2016 a new permanent Director, Sally Shaw, was appointed to lead Firstsite, which will be applying for readmission to the ACE National Portfolio for 2018-22.
- 5.3 The next round of formal NPO applications has just been completed and Firstsite have submitted a bid that if successful will mean the Arts Council will provide £814,512 per year, for four years from 2018. This will give the organisation much more financial stability. The application includes up to date financial forecasts for this period. (Application and financial information attached at Appendices 2 & 3) The decision on whether the application is successful will be notified in late June 2017. Part of the criteria for successful applications will then be the development of a full business case by October 2017 to demonstrate how the programme described in the application will be delivered.
- 5.4 An annual funding agreement is agreed between CBC and Firstsite and sets out the activity and targets for that financial year in line with objectives within the Strategic Plan 2015-18. A copy of the current funding agreement is attached as an Appendix 4.

6. Financial Arrangements

- 6.1 The Council determines the level of revenue funding that will be provided on an annual basis, and aims to support the organisation's medium-term business and operational plans. The funding is agreed by Cabinet and full Council through the budget process. The terms and conditions of funding including eligibility criteria and performance monitoring arrangements are set out in the funding agreements attached here as an Appendix 4.
- 6.2 Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, the Council will have provided funding of £127,925 to firstsite Ltd.
- 6.3 In early 2016 Colchester Borough Council agreed and provided one-off additional funding of £100,000 to support Firstsite, in recognition of the ongoing transition the organisation needs to make to complete its recovery. The conditions of this funding were that it is used for specific, positive activities (letter of agreement attached here as Appendix 5).

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 This report links to the 'Vibrant' strand of Strategic Plan 2015-18:
- Enhance the diverse retail and leisure mix supporting independent businesses 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 Colchester's great heritage and culture so that people can enjoy them and draw inspiration for their creative talents
 - Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure

8. Standard References

- 8.1 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations; or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Firstsite Milestones 2016/17
- Appendix 2 NPO application
- Appendix 3 NPO financial model
- Appendix 4 Firstsite Funding Agreement
- Appendix 5 Additional Funding Agreement

Background Papers

[Firstsite Business Plan](#)

Firstsite milestones 2016 -18

Confirmation of appointment of Director or alternative arrangements to provide leadership for Firstsite	April 2016
Recruitment to new staffing structure complete. Key appointments in place – Director of finance, Head of programmes	April 2016
Volunteer programme in place	April 2016
Retail and marketing strategy and action plan produced	April 2016
Fundraising strategy produced	April 2016
Action plan for review of catering facilities and catering suppliers	April 2016
Update on marketing and communication plan 2016-18	April 2016
Board Awayday	May 2016
Gold Square strategy agreed	June 2016
Formal education offer developed	June 2016
Compliance Log completed	June 2016
Board recruitment – second phase completed	July 2016
Confirmation of artistic programme 2017/18	July 2016
Volunteer programme review	September 2016
15 Queen Street established as creative incubator with confirmed occupancy programme	September 2016
Confirmation of artistic programme 2018/19	January 2017
Review of Equality action plan 2016-18	January 2017
Review of audience engagement plan 2016-18	January 2017

Review of fundraising strategy, marketing and communication plans	January 2017
Update on business plan 2016-18	January 2017
Informal education offer developed	January 2017
Capital renewal strategy produced	June 2017

**FIRSTSITE
ACE NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION (NPO)
2018/2022 APPLICATION PROPOSAL**

1. Vision and Mission

1.1 Vision: A thriving art gallery and a vibrant cultural organisation that is valued and admired locally, regionally and internationally, and which significantly serves diverse communities.

1.2 Mission: To inspire people through innovative art and culture that contributes to the wellbeing, learning and economy of the surrounding areas.

1.3 We will achieve this through the way we work, as informed by our values:

Inclusivity: equality of access and opportunity combined with best practice to help engage with our audiences, artists, hard-to-reach groups, partners, suppliers and staff.

Quality: the use of analytics to help us continuously improve customer experience and how we work and make decisions, to ensure we make measureable impacts.

Innovation: working collaboratively with our stakeholders, partners and funders to ensure we are continuously looking for better ways of working and delivering higher returns on investment.

Professionalism: adopting best practice in all that we do to ensure that we are well governed, well managed and seen as an effective asset for the communities we serve.

1.4 Our radical Colcestrian past and our extraordinary and unconventional award-winning building are our inspiration for being a centre for experimentation in cultural production. At Firstsite our approach places visitor experience and community engagement first, informing this with evidence-based insight. We are responding to the changing role of the gallery in the post-internet age by becoming imaginative facilitators of a shared vision, so that we can remain relevant in the long-term.

2. GOAL 1 – Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the Arts

2.1 The artistic or cultural outcomes of our proposal

Three 'Golden Threads' run throughout our activity to ensure that the integrity of our values, vision and mission are reflected in artistic and cultural outcomes.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: making what we are doing relevant for a broad range of people who are reflective of the protected characteristic groups most relevant in our area.

Social Mobility: Ensuring difficult-to-reach audiences are engaged directly or indirectly, and inspiring, motivating and making a difference to their learning, health and social wellbeing through creative endeavors.

Digital, experimentation and innovation: providing a platform for artists, young people and future innovators to encourage exploration of digital creativity, and making potential contributions to the economic wellbeing of the region.

2.2 At Firstsite we are shifting the negative perception of contemporary art and galleries as 'elitist and closed-off places for a privileged few' to being 'open, welcoming and relevant to everyone' by being relentless and rigorous in how we listen and encourage engagement. We will continue to do this to ensure we deliver desired outcomes. More specifically we have:

- A planned programme of engagement with arts organisations and entities within the region, contributing to joined-up thinking. This includes our contribution to the Creative Essex Strategy and Plan.
- Collaboration with other arts organisations in Colchester. This includes a Memorandum of Understanding, referencing joint training of staff and shared project activities with the Mercury Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre (CAC) and Colchester & Ipswich Museum Services (CIMS).
- Proactively engaging communities through resource-light means, listening to their ideas in open conversation. This has already led to their involvement in our governance and advisory groups, new learning activities and creative and cultural events.
- Working with artists in the region to uncover their individual needs and help realise their ideas through our artistic programme and through the potential that our extraordinary building offers.

2.3 Artistic Programme 2018-22

Over the grant period we will deliver an inspiring programme of exhibitions, artist and 'art-house' films, public art works and collaborative community engagement projects with artists at their centre. In this programme we will combine experimental approaches with traditional methods, helping to inspire existing and future cultural producers and consumers.

We want to be simultaneously smart with our resources and ambitious in the quality of our content. We want to lead the way in making new work and an impactful difference with our partners to genuinely inspire many people from many backgrounds, making Firstsite 'First for Everyone'. The programme therefore includes a number of strands responding to the possibilities that different areas of our building offer, and reflecting the varying needs of our stakeholders.

Each year Firstsite will deliver:

1. Year-round activity, meaning there is always something to see on any day that Firstsite is open to the public, even during install periods. This is achieved through:
 - One annual 'mural' to substantially animate the main public areas inside Firstsite (primarily the long curved wall)
 - A continuous and interconnected film programme in our auditorium, including free artist films, which visitors can drop in on between ticketed/commercial and programmed activities.
 - An annual 'Wunderkammer' project (in collaboration with CIMS) in the mosaic area, showing curated selections of local collections to chime with temporary exhibitions
2. A minimum of 6-8 overlapping temporary exhibitions in our main gallery spaces, incorporating work by regional artists, national and international guest artists and outcomes from collaborative projects such as Radical Essex, ECVAN, John Ball and The Britishness Project – all of which are outlined later in this proposal.
3. A programme of weekly learning-based and public engagement events. These are designed to: respond to exhibition content and the four Annual Themes outlined below; enrich visitor experience, leading to longer and more repetitive visits, and attract new audiences from groups outlined in Goal 2.

2.4 In response to one-to-one consultations, and conversations with our stakeholders and audiences, we have created four Annual Themes inspired by our specific heritage and local context. The themes have been shaped to ensure we can invite reflection from a diverse

range of people, believing that these conversations are as much universal as they are locally specific.

2018/19 Conflict & Culture

Colchester is a historic garrison town, home to the armed forces since the Roman occupation 2000 years ago. The 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War in 2018 enables us to reflect on this in a rich and engaging way with a broad range of communities and artists.

2019/20 Digital Technology & Innovation

Connecting with Colchester's identity as a digital creative hub and the University of Essex programme will enable us to investigate fully the impact of digital technologies on creative practices and exhibition making.

2020/21 Landscape & Wellbeing

Derived from the legacy of artists such as John Constable, the influence of the Essex landscape and our relationship with the local NHS Trust (and social care entities within the region) will enable us to celebrate art in the landscape and the connection between wellbeing and nature.

2021/22 Science, Art & the Imagination.

Colchester is the historical home of some scientific and cultural legends such as William Gilbert (inventor of the term 'electricity') and Jane Taylor (author of 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'). 2021 is also the 10th anniversary of our award winning building.

2.5 Evidence that supports the quality of our work – excerpts from peer, stakeholder, audience and participant reviews

Since the appointment of Firstsite's new Director Sally Shaw, in April 2016, we have created a wealth of evidence – both quantitative and qualitative – of the success of our new approach. The three case studies outline how our Golden Threads are beginning to emerge in impactful and inspiring ways.

Social Mobility

Flipside – a two-week festival of art and cultural activities by and for young people from diverse backgrounds. Arising from Circuit, funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, this short festival had significant impact on engagement with young people and on broader communication between Firstsite and non-arts audiences unfamiliar with the organisation. The project developed over a number of years in advance of the two-week festival.

Charlotte Winters, aged 18. Young Artists Kommunity member and now co-opted Board member: 'When I first joined YAK I was pretty damn terrified of Firstsite, let alone the people within it. Now its one of my favourite places to be and has given me chances to do things I never even dreamt of. But most importantly to me to be in a group of people I feel at home around and supported by, something I haven't had in a long time.'

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Veteran's Day at Firstsite – A collaboration with the Mayor of Colchester Cllr Julie Young and the Invicta Foundation. One hundred veterans and their families were invited for lunch at Firstsite after the Remembrance Sunday parade in Colchester Town Centre. Following the lunch, Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller gave a talk about his artwork '*we're here because we're here*'. The event was sold out and the audience included veterans, serving members of the military as well as culture fans. We now have new volunteers from families in the services, new hires for events and new audiences.

Social innovations

Syrian Pop-Up Café – One of Firstsite's earliest conversations was with Refugee Action - Colchester, who were in need of a space to celebrate Eid with refugee families new to the town. This successful event led to Refugee Action - Colchester hosting a pop-up café in the restaurant so that their refugee families could gain crucial work experience and qualifications. The event saw over 2000 people from across communities come to Firstsite over two days, raised £4,000 for CRA and enabled two refugees to gain part-time employment.

Maria Wilby, Colchester Refugee Action: 'Fatima came to England about a year ago in one of the first waves of refugees to come to the UK. After the first day of the café, Fatima's mother called her after seeing her on Facebook and reading comments about her food. She said she was proud and that this was the first ray of sunshine in her life for a long time because her daughter had taught people about the beauty of Syria through her food.'

Artistic Quality

Our recent Gee Vaucher Exhibition received unprecedented levels of press coverage locally, nationally and internationally. This included one of Gee's artworks being reproduced as the Daily Mirror's cover image on the day of the US presidential election results. Gee was also interviewed on Radio 4's *Woman's Hour* and her image *Oh America* went viral on social media channels, being tweeted by global stars such as Rihanna. Equally, local press coverage was very strong, including a three-page spread in the Colchester Gazette about Gee's invitation to Refugee Action Colchester to host the Syrian pop-up café.

2.6 Our Assessment of changes that our organisation needs to make to continue to improve quality, and what we will do to bring about these changes

A Learning Organisation

Encouraging training, learning and support to create a professional and customer-focused staff team at all levels. This will include service excellence, unconscious bias and management training. In 2017 we will implement our first staff-training day.

Collaboration

Building collaboration into all levels of our creative planning and implementation with stakeholders and local arts entities, in order to share best practice and resources.

Community Engagement

Working proactively with communities to build our brand as a place for everyone; engaging with the local media to promote our work and image.

Audience Surveys

Continuously improving our capability for measuring visitor feedback, and feeding this into our evaluation processes.

Analytics

Learning how to better analyse on and off-line data as part of our approach to improving the quality of our work

Programme Advisory Group

Using this forum to gauge how we are performing against outcomes and KPIs we have established.

Proactive and focused Marketing

Exploiting use of digital marketing to increase audience reach and promote our brand. Improving audience numbers and diversity to contribute to a better visitor experience and income generation.

KPIs

Introducing KPIs to our main dashboard and continually reviewing these at Board and management levels to ensure we look at feedback honestly and mitigate risks properly. Communicating how we are doing to all staff, to contribute to a performance-focused organisation.

Building Improvements

The shop, café area at the front of the building and 15 Queen Street need investment to be sustainable for the long term and to provide an improved customer experience. We are applying for small-scale capital grant from ACE to make these changes.

2.7 Plans to support, produce and distribute creative content and experiences digitally

Our primary commitment to working to support artists to make and show work digitally is via our Auditorium. There is a potential of 2000 hours per year of presentation time outside of the time allotted to Curzon Cinema's contribution to our film programme. We will use these 2000 hours to:

Screen existing artistic film productions through our re-invigorated relationship with Film and Video Umbrella (FVU). When the auditorium is not screening commercial films or content connected to our Children and Young People / Schools programmes, we will screen a rolling programme of artists' films and film shorts on a monthly basis, curated in partnership with FVU.

Screen artistic, historical and/or commercial film content that connects directly with the National Curriculum. This will primarily be screened between 10am and 1pm, when School groups more frequently come in to Firstsite. Films will be selected in consultation with schools via our leadership of the Local Creative Education Partnership LCEP.

Commission x12 one-minute and five-minute artist films, to be screened immediately before each commercial film screened by Curzon Cinema. This equates to a potential of 240 screenings to over 12,000 viewers, assuming film attendance of 50 people per screening.

Through our Programme Advisory Group, the University of Essex and working closely with young artists in particular, we will investigate fully the impact of digital technologies on creative practices and exhibition making. This will help us to connect to Colchester's identity as a digital creative hub and to develop our theme of Digital and Innovation for 2019/20.

2.8 Working with independent artists by developing artistic talent and how this relates to the needs of artists in our area

ENAS, Colchester Art Society and emerging regional talent

We will deliver one prominent presentation per year highlighting the work of an up-coming artist from the region, achieved by working with Essex Network of Artists Studios (ENAS) and Colchester Art Society.

Commitments to local Talent

Every year we will feature at least one showcase of artists who live or have lived locally. This includes collaborative exhibitions such as Radical North Essex with Focal Point Gallery. Firstsite's contribution is to present an exhibition of the Artists of Great Barfield, curated with regionally based Curator Maeve Polkinhorn.

2.9 Offering time, space and resources to develop artistic or specialist practice

Once a year within our main exhibition programme we will develop a headline exhibition connected to the Annual Theme for the year. These will be guest curated with at least two exhibitions led by colleagues at the University of Essex as a direct extension of their research specialisms. A high profile artist and an industry partner will curate two exhibitions.

Confirmed Examples:

- *War, Art and Popular Culture*. Curated by Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller. 2018/19 Confirmed.

- *The History of the Pixel: From Mosaic to Minecraft*. Curated by a University of Essex Research Fellow and students at the University of Essex. 2019/20 Confirmed.
- *Art and Industry*: An exhibition exploring the impact of the artistic imagination in fashion, gaming, industrial design and architecture. Developed in partnership with the Creative Industries Federation. 2021/22 In discussion.

2.10 Commissioning new work and encouraging new collaboration

The size and innovative design of our building and its surrounding area present challenges and opportunities. We are working smartly with our partners to realise longer-duration new commissions, alongside shorter-term exhibition activity. Our visitor and stakeholder feedback tells us we need a balance of both to animate our large spaces with regular moments of new activity to attract a regular flow of visitors. We are programming:

An annual year-long 'Wunderkammer'

Objects responding to the four Annual Themes will be curated by artists and local groups working in partnership with Colchester & Ipswich Museum Services, as well as a range of 'hidden gem' local collections from across Essex (Malden Military Museum, Victor Batte-Lay Collection, Essex County Council Collection). This is to be presented as a semi-permanent display alongside our celebrated ancient Roman Mosaic embedded in our gallery floor.

GO! Essex.

Great Place Scheme application with ECC, University of Essex, Creative Colchester Board. A three-year programme of community focused activity leading to digital interventions in the public realm in conjunction with our year of 'Digital and Innovation' in 2019. This is a new strategic project across Essex, which Firstsite have been instrumental in drawing together. It will bring new investment to Firstsite, Cultural Partners and the University of Essex if successful.

John Ball Project. Subject to an ACE Ambition for Excellence application, this is a three-year project to celebrate the legacy of John Ball, who introduced the concept of equality to Western thought in the 1300s. It will include an international open call for artists to submit ideas for an artwork celebrating equality today, an exhibition at Firstsite of all the ideas submitted and eventually one commissioned artwork produced and displayed permanently outside Firstsite as part of the Gold Square development. With Mayor of Colchester, CBC, University of Essex, Bishop of Colchester, Colchester Cultural Partnership

2.11 Commitment to longer-term initiatives, such as mentoring, or creating accessible offer and an environment to support the development of diverse artistic practice

We have established the John Ball Project as our primary strand in this area outlined later in this proposal. We will also deliver a number of projects that specifically support individuals sharing the protected characteristics we have identified as a priority:

Annual Women's solo presentation

Arising from the Annual Theme of our 2018 programme, the 100th anniversary of the Women's right to vote, which was a direct result of World War I, and the keenness felt by women in Essex that they are misrepresented through such clichés stereotypes as the 'Essex Girl', we will present one solo presentation by a woman artist, either emerging or established, every year. Timed to coincide with 6th February each year, when Royal Assent was given to the Representation of the People Act in 1918.

Essex Cultural Diversity and Wysing Arts Centre Partnership

We will develop a new collaboration to present at least two solo presentations per year by an artist from one of the protected characteristic groups, providing valuable artistic development time and the opportunity to show in an internationally celebrated art centre.

The Britishness Project (dependent on Garfield Weston Foundation application)
Working with young people across North Essex in a variety of educational settings, we will collaborate to produce a set of works both authored by young people and curated by young people from national and local collections that give a high profile platform for young people's interpretations of British Values and Britishness. Potentially supported by Garfield Western Foundation (TBC).

Learning & Education

Children and Young People. We aim to reach at least 10% of children and young people across Essex over the funding period through direct visits and digital interactions. The programme is our primary method for positively influencing social mobility. By engaging children and young people from economically challenged backgrounds, we will help provide them with the skills and confidence to achieve success throughout their lives. Activities are outlined in full in Goal 5.

2.12 How we will aim to share our work internationally and attract audiences and work with artists around the world

New Frontiers. At least one major presentation per year by an artist from or invited to work in an international context, driven by our relationship with the Colchester Garrison and their work in West Africa and The Baltic States, and in partnership with The British Council. Working with Wysing Arts Centre, we will deliver a residency and exhibition project with one international artist per year, focusing on contemporary military conflict zones.

Europe's Most Ancient Towns Network (funding dependent). Over the course of the funding period we will take one body of work by an Essex-based artist or artists from our programme to Europe through this network of towns with which we are already associated.

ECVAN – Geographies of the East. Working with our regional partners, we will deliver this exchange and professional development project with European venues.

3. How Firstsite is responding to the Creative Case for Diversity

3.1 How our programme reflects the diversity of contemporary England

Three 'Golden Threads' run throughout our activity to ensure that the integrity of our values, vision and mission are reflected in artistic and cultural outcomes.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: making what we are doing relevant for a broad range of people who are reflective of the protected characteristic groups most relevant in our area.

Social Mobility: Ensuring difficult to reach audiences are engaged directly or indirectly; inspiring, motivating and making a difference to their learning, health and social wellbeing through creative endeavors.

Digital, experimentation and innovation: providing a platform for artists, young people and future innovators to encourage exploration of digital creativity; making potential contributions to the economic wellbeing of the region.

We have significantly changed the structure and style of our artistic programme to allow us to show a greater variety of artists and media over the course of each year. Our 'portfolio' approach plays to the strengths of our unique building, allowing us to show many types of work and practices simultaneously attracting local, national and international audiences.

3.2 How we make sure that diversity is an essential part of our programme activity

Through our open and collaborative working practices, we are committed to ensuring that at least 50% of our artistic content is created or curated by or involves members of the protected characteristic groups. We are particularly focusing on women, BAME groups and individuals from socio-economically deprived backgrounds.

Co-curated projects, University of Essex student collaborations and intern placements will also provide opportunities to engage with artists and cultural practitioners who can make a difference to our programme activity.

3.3 Our plans for supporting the development of artists and practitioners, and providing platforms for showing work from, and providing opportunities for, diverse artists practitioners and other organisations

We will show emerging talent alongside established names. We will show local and regional practitioners alongside artists from further afield. We will show 'traditional' art forms alongside experimental and new modes of production, long-term presentations alongside quick and high-turnover projects. This approach means a much greater level of opportunity for ideas, influences and productions from a greater range of people – and ultimately more reasons for more people to come to Firstsite. Within this range, we are committed to specific outputs by women artists, BAME artists and artists from socio-economically deprived backgrounds as outlined in Goal 1.

We have listened intently to our communities and stakeholders to shape the themes and subjects we will explore through our programme. We have deliberately sought subjects that we believe to be more universal, and which can be discussed from a diverse range of perspectives. For example, by focusing on Culture and Conflict in 2018 we can invite a variety of viewpoints on the impact of conflict through the many cultures of Colchester, including small but vital communities such as the Gurkhas, represented by the Colchester Nepalese Society. Other communities we are currently engaging with include the Chinese Society, African communities and Syrian refugees. All of whom can potentially use Firstsite as a platform.

3.4 Recruitment Selection and Involvement

We have an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and have completed an Equalities Impact Assessment, which includes our approach to recruitment and selection. We have a very experienced Diversity Advisor working for us pro bono. The Board Chair at Firstsite champions diversity, and we have a diversity champion within our core staff team.

Our collaborative networks heavily influence recruitment with representatives of members of the protected characteristics groups. For example, any new employment opportunity is highlighted through extensive community networks enabled through our strategic involvement with groups such as the LCEP, Creative Colchester Board, CCVS and Citizen's UK.

We are working with our Colchester Cultural Partners to understand best practice with regards to the practical side of improving our recruitment systems. For example, Colchester & Ipswich Museum Services have been sharing ideas and techniques for seeking applications for employment opportunities, including initiating conversations via phone or video apps, and asking for a range of qualifications or equivalent experience gained through employment.

Our involvement with members of the protected characteristic groups starts with open conversation, listening to what people are trying to achieve and gaining an understanding of how we can help as an organisation. From this we build small-scale projects to test new relationships and assess potential, while listening and developing further ideas. We are now in the process of developing a longer-term project driven by collaborations with groups that we see as stakeholders in Firstsite, which will carry across the grant period. Our activities with Colchester Refugee Action, Flipside and the Veteran's day are examples of how we have established involvement.

3.5 How we respond to challenges and barriers facing members of the protected characteristic groups in participating in and engaging with the arts and cultural sector

Our primary response to the various challenges facing members of the protected characteristic groups has been to establish the John Ball Project. The project is at its heart a public art work for Colchester (dependent on an Ambition for Excellence Award). Alongside exploring how we will commission this work in a way that is truly reflective of the impact of John Ball (who introduced equality to Western thought in the 1300s in Colchester), the partners are embarking on a process of uncovering the challenges people face in our region, and how the range of organisations involved in our partnership can address these challenges.

The John Ball Partnership is one of the most important ways (but not the only way) in which we are beginning to advocate for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across Colchester, Essex and eventually the UK and internationally, and sharing best practice among colleagues and peers. The John Ball Group meets monthly to discuss the development of the project, and there are a small number of working groups that focus on specific aspects of delivery, such as the first John Ball Day in July 2017, which will be an opportunity for the Partners to present the full project and our plans.

3.6 Our plans to share best practice and continued learning around diversity to promote change in the arts and cultural sector

Firstsite's Board, Director and Diversity Advisor are keen to use the gallery as a platform to share best practice in the arts, and will look for support to run an annual event for arts leaders, this may start with funds from the +Tate network in 2017/18. This will directly connect with the work of the John Ball Project group.

3.7 How we will collect evidence, including review and feedback from peers, audiences and other stakeholders, that demonstrates our contribution to the creative case for diversity

We have many mechanisms for collecting data at Firstsite, including our online enterprise systems, analysis of social media through our communications partners, proactive promotion of questionnaires and through community consultation and audience engagement.

The data provides important information about our audiences and their behaviours, in order to inform our priorities and identify where and when we create new content, as well as how to better distribute our existing content to reach more people, with a view to cross-pollinating our audiences between assets such as the auditorium, café and exhibitions. This is a cost-effective approach, which responds to our learning and arises from transition, and ensures we maximise the different parts of our building and programme to appeal to different groups, exposing them to new content, as well as that which they may be more familiar with.

Data is analysed by our in-house teams, Programme Advisory Group and marketing and communication partners, creating a continuing loop of gathering, analysing and adapting in response to new insight.

3.8 How we will advocate for the creative case for diversity and promote best practice locally and internationally

We intend to achieve this through three pieces of work:

- our annual event, which will be promoted widely and
- through our John Ball art commission (subject to funding).
- Through the continued work of the John Ball Group to identify opportunities and share progress on diversity and inclusion across all the committed parties.

3.9 Volunteers.

In 2016 we established a brand-new volunteer scheme, which has met with considerable success in its infancy. We have attracted over 70 volunteers since June 2016, when the scheme was introduced. We have monitored the participants and analysed their demographic reach to ensure they are in line with our region, and we are close to matching the local picture. We have a range of ages from 18 to 65, and a strong mix of nationalities and ethnic

backgrounds. This has been achieved with a relatively light touch when publicising the programme.

In 2017/18 we are starting a more focused plan to bring up our numbers directly in line with national figures for the protected characteristic groups, or as close as possible, given our local context. We will do this a small amount of targeted advertising and via our extensive community links.

Over the course of the grant period we aim to increase our pool of volunteers to 200 and to have established ways for volunteers to contribute to Firstsite beyond care for the galleries. We plan to have volunteers spending 50% of their time in a specialist area of their choice (events, marketing, finance, programming, retail or customer care) and 50% of their time in the galleries interacting with our visitors and the team.

4. GOAL 2 - Everyone has the opportunity to be involved in and be inspired by the arts.

4.1 How we show that there is demand for our work from our audiences

Our audience attendance has remained strong over the last two financial years, since moving through transition. We achieved 125,000 in 2015/16, and we are on track to achieve 100-105,000 in 2016/17. This is despite considerable change within the organisation over this period and is at least a 25% increase on our achievements prior to transition. This has been achieved by programming inclusive content such as an open submission exhibition in 2015 and community engagement activity through our Public Programmes in 2016/17, strategies we will continue across the funding period.

4.4 Our digital and on-line channels show the following all of which indicate steady growth over the last 12 months:

Social Channels:

Facebook: 3689 likes (growing by 100 per month).
Instagram: 3142 followers
Twitter: 10467 followers

Direct Channels:

Newsletter: 11309 subscribers
Emails Delivered: 305,619
Emails Opened: 79,774

Website - Since November 9th:

Page Impressions: 31691
Unique Users: 16764
Sessions: 24331
Av. dwell time: 1 minute 10 seconds

4.5 We use social as part of the comms approach to generate large reach for our messaging. Since the launch of our current campaign in November 2016, total marketing impressions have been 11,023,323 of which social impressions contributed 189,692. We are now running a series of cost-effective tests on different social impressions growth providers including paid for reach. Our aim over the funding period is to significantly increase reach and salience with new audiences and deepen commitment and value with existing visitors.

We have established a new catchment area through Audience Finder, based on a 45-minute drive time from Firstsite. Using data reflecting this catchment, we have a clear sense of our current performance and where to focus next to achieve the numbers we are aiming for over the grant period.

4.6 All our activity will be driven through two strands

- Our inclusive programme as mentioned above and how we go about sharing this with our current and new target audiences
- Creating a stronger Firstsite brand salience with existing and new audiences of the 17/18 and 18/19 financial years

4.7 Our successes are strongest with audiences in the 45+ age range, and we are dominated by the 'Dormitory Dependables' segmentation. Our priorities, when attracting substantial new audiences over the grant period, are:

- Children and young people,
- The local and very diverse student population (which does not appear strongly in the 45-minute catchment, but does appear when examining a closer 15-minute range) and with
- 'Home & Heritage' and 'Trips and Treats' segmentations.

These priorities are reflected in our artistic and commercial programming activities outlined in Goal 1 our developing plans for Children and young people outlined in Goal 5 and in plans outlined below relating to communications, marketing and specific audience engagement activity to be carried out over the grant period.

4.8 Where we have tested our new approach – through our auditorium, artistic programme and café activities – we have achieved overwhelmingly positive results. For example, showing 'live' screenings (RSC, Bolshoi Ballet, the Met and the National Theatre) and recently released films draws in high levels of people from our target groups, programming bespoke activity for young people in the artistic programme, such as our recent 'Flipside' festival, and informing people through relevant communications channels equally helps to generate considerable and immediate success. Lastly, an inclusive approach through commercial activities – for example, the Syrian pop-up café – have generated excellent responses as a result of the positive social capital generated as well as financial capital. This 'minimum viable product' model allows us to test in a low-risk environment before scaling with careful investment.

4.9 Our plans for keeping current audiences and developing new ones

We are responding to the demands of our existing audiences – mostly comprising Experience Seekers, Dormitory Dependables, Commuterland Culturebuffs, Trips & Treats and Home & Heritage – by continuing to present high levels of 'traditional' art forms alongside newer and more experimental forms, and which we know appeal.

The key difference in our new approach is in the consistent combination of the two at any given moment in the programme. We are also continuing to produce tried and tested methods of communicating with these audiences, such as our printed what's-on guide, regular e-bulletins and an improved website.

To attract new audiences we have developed new strands of activity that we know will appeal because of our recent small-scale tests. We will continue our cost effective research into new areas with representatives from 'Trips and Treats' and 'Heydays', Facebook Families' and 'Up Our Street' segmentations over 2017/18, and will feed results into our forthcoming programmes of activity.

4.10 How we will increase the number and range of people who have the opportunity to experience and participate in high quality art and culture

Over and above our programme-driven activity, we are progressing plans to increase the salience of Firstsite's brand with all our priority audiences, both existing and new. This work will increase the likelihood of visitors choosing Firstsite as a default destination in which to spend their time and disposable income. This will be achieved by continuing our work in 2017/18 to create a clearer and more focused audience engagement plan through our Innovation and Enterprise Group and communications partners. This will include, where impactful, bespoke activity for specific audiences (in response to low cost one-to-one

consultation between the team and representatives of target groups) and cost effective, tailored means of communicating our existing offer – for example, with our nearby student audiences.

4.11 Our plans for touring and distributing our work and how we make the most of the impact of our work has.

Our approach to touring and distributing our work is to keep things practical and impactful, and to focus on sharing better our existing content, as opposed to creating new content for the purposes of distribution. For example, this will include making low-cost, bite-sized films about our programme (artist interviews, guest tours, etc.) for social media. We will also punctuate our building with prompts for our visitors to share content they are experiencing there and then.

We are developing a number of touring initiatives to take material from our gallery and film programme to venues across Essex (potentially via initiatives such as the Community Rail Network, which connects Colchester via a number of small towns to Clacton-on-Sea, one of the most socio-economically deprived areas of England), as well as nationally and internationally, as noted in Goal 1. We are also working with others organisations to better share content created in other regions as a low-cost means of bringing high quality content to Firstsite.

Where we commission new work, such as our programme of solo presentations by women, we aim to commission the kind of seminal works that will be shown repeatedly across an artist's career. Through our auditorium – one of our most prized assets – we also aim to facilitate the continued screening of the wealth of existing artists' moving image work in the UK. Through our Wunderkammer project we are supporting the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Services so that valuable unseen exhibits can be experienced by new audiences in surprising ways.

4.12 How we will work to make sure that currently people who are least engaged in the arts are able to experience our work.

At Firstsite we currently score well in two of the less engaged segmentations – Home & Heritage and Trips & Treats – due in part to the high density of these groups in our catchment area. We are approaching other less engaged groups, such as Heydays, Facebook Families and Up Our Street, through our brand salience work and also by providing specific content that has been tested first on a small, low-cost scale. One of our most interesting findings recently resulted from the Veterans' Day we delivered in collaboration with the Mayor of Colchester. We hosted a veterans' lunch, after which the Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller talked about his artwork commissioned as part of the commemorations for the 100th anniversary of WWI. By putting on an event dedicated to a small group of people who fall firmly in the Heydays segmentation, we also attracted their families and supporters, many of whom fall into the Up Our Street segmentation. In response, we are implementing plans to build on this experience, particularly through our 'Conflict and Culture' programme in 2018.

Our auditorium is, again, one of our key assets in engaging less inclined audiences. We are commencing a new partnership with Curzon Cinemas, who will run our mainstream film programme from February 2017 onwards. We know from our own evidence and evidence gathered by Curzon and Audience Finder that many people who frequently enjoy film and cinema can be identified in the harder-to-reach categories. By boosting our film programming activities over the funding period, we are building a familiarity with the building and the rest of our programmes, which these audiences will connect with as a consequence of using the auditorium.

4.13 Our target audiences and the types of people our activity will be likely to reach.

Our target audiences, in terms of addressing the least engaged of the Audience Finder segmentations, are Facebook Families, Up Our Street, and Heydays. We will reach them by working with our special collaborative partners, and in particular through our links with the Garrison and our 2018 programme.

We will follow our listening and interpreting approach to gauge need, and translate this into small packages of bespoke activity linked through our broader programme. We will also gain a better understanding of how to show the relevance of our existing planned activity by taking content to specific groups, and finding better, cost-effective ways to communicate content at the gallery – for example through digital platforms for Facebook Families.

4.14 How we will distribute our planned programme of art and culture digitally, with a focus on captured and/or cultural learning content.

We plan to distribute our planned programme by creating content specific to our online and social media channels. We have recently employed a part-time Marketing Coordinator to work alongside our communications partner. One of the primary functions of the in-house role is to look for means to create new content in-house that can be shared digitally.

This will include working with local digital influencers and bloggers to create low expense material – for example short films and interviews with exhibiting artists – which can be shared via social media. The post holder will also be working closely with our Young Art Kommunity to create digital spikes of online activity relating to our in-house content.

Our communications partner are developing our digital platforms and have completed extensive research recently into the impact of social media and digital platforms with specific audiences and target groups. This information is being folded into an element of our audience engagement plan specific to digital activities produced in 2017/18.

We anticipate that one of the functions of our Learning and Education activity, via our leadership of the LCEP, will be to focus on connecting life and activity in the gallery with a much greater on-line community in consultation with teachers and education specialists. This will include capturing talks and events and ensuring they are easily accessible on our website, creating downloadable materials for schools and teachers, and digital tours of exhibitions for visitors unable to come in person.

Our work with Colchester & Ipswich Museums Services, through the Wunderkammer project, will also lead to new activity in this area, enabling communities to contribute their own stories about specific objects via digital platforms in the gallery and online.

4.15 Any major current or planned development in the use of technologies to improve marketing, sales or customers feedback and experience

We continue to work with the Audience Agency to develop our visitor survey. We believe that the data collected by this technique will, when analysed for consumer insight, provide us with the tools to achieve more effective marketing, and thereby increase engagement while also providing us with visitor experience measures.

We have introduced Electronic Point-of-Sale systems across retail, Food & Drink and Cinema. This enables us to gather much more detailed insight into our customer's behavior and interests. This information is reviewed by the core Staff as well as at our Innovation & Enterprise committee, during which we scrutinise all commercial activity, how this links to the programme and how we continually drive footfall and income generation.

Our new partnership with Curzon Cinemas gives us access to a wealth of film presentation, marketing and analysis expertise gleaned from Curzon's network of cinemas across the UK.

As part of our collaboration with the University of Essex, we are looking into better ways to capture data about children and young people who are by nature put off by our more traditional survey activities.

4.16 How we will make the most of opportunities to increase the depth and quality of experience of people accessing our collections

Our ongoing collaboration with the University of Essex is generating new projects in this area for the grant period. This includes a project to introduce V-touch (virtual touch) gloves in certain exhibitions, funded through a University Research grant. The gloves will enable visually impaired visitors to 'feel' works remotely and also for non-disabled visitors to have increased access to specific objects which cannot be touched directly.

4.17 Our approach to collecting information about our current and potential audiences

At Firstsite, data and insight collection and analysis is now a year-round activity facilitated through our work with Audience Finder, our improved online activity our regular Board level and working group scrutiny and our frequent 1:2:1 conversations with specific communities and audience segmentations. In 2017 we will produce, as part of our revised Business Plan, a new Audience Development Plan, which will connect all our planned programme and commercial activity through a comprehensive set of works. We are also working closely with the Colchester Cultural Partnership and the University of Essex to better understand the collection of data across Colchester. We anticipate new work in this area over the funding period which give greater insight to inform all of our activities to create a richer and more connected offer.

4.18 Our approach to audience development for arts and culture as a whole and for developing shared approaches to capturing, sharing and reporting audience data

Integral to this plan will be how we work in partnership with the other key cultural organisations in Colchester – the Museums Services, Mercury Theatre and Colchester Arts Centre, as well as businesses in the town, such as Fenwick and Greyfriars Hotel, who have similar vested interests in attracting and keeping tourists in Colchester for longer and providing a rich commercial, retail and cultural environment. We have already together identified scope for a combined Audience Development plan, which would analyse audience overlap between venues and establish a number of activities – for example, a Colchester Culture Magazine / Guide – which could create a sense of connectivity and greater opportunities for visitors.

We are developing a number of initial, small-scale projects to test how audiences might be directly shared by collaborating in each other's content. For example, to support CIMS's move to a new storage venue and to broaden the access available to their collections, we have developed the Wunderkammer. We will also be piloting collaborative projects with Colchester Art Centre as part of our Gold Square Initiative and Go! Essex to animate the external spaces around the gallery during the development of the site immediately adjacent to us.

These projects, although relatively small in scale, will reveal new information about how audiences view and use our individual organisations, and how they can be strengthened over a longer period of time by working together better.

On an operational level, we are also looking into mechanisms through which we can share data about our audiences. This may come through box office mechanisms or via Audience Finder. This is connected to our establishing joint marketing initiatives, and will provide valuable insight into communication channel effectiveness for different audiences and cultural formats.

5. GOAL 5 - Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the Arts.

5.1 Our overall understanding and approach

Firstsite is committed to working with the Essex Children and Young Peoples Partnership to ensure that our resources have a positive impact on the priorities identified. We are leading the creation of the Local Cultural Educational Partnership (LCEP) to strengthen our commitment further. We want our resources to be seen as community assets that can be mobilised to benefit the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach people.

There are 296,000 children and young people in Essex – 21% of the population. 14.7 % of these live in poverty and 8.5% are from minority and ethnic groups.

Firstsite is a place where we can support the development of Children and Young People to improve their self-esteem, motivation and resilience through interaction with art and culture. We will use the impact framework created by the Impetus Trust to measure the difference we make to the lives of young people and to provide independent evaluation to support future funding applications to Trusts and Foundations. We will launch a charter for children and young people as part of our New YAK (Young Art Kommunity) – to be developed over the course of 2017/18.

Our trustees and Board and core staff are adamant that we make a difference – so much so that we have co-opted and are fully supporting the development of a young person (aged 18) on to our Trustee Board and Programme Advisory Group. They will act as an Ambassador for this target group. Firstsite want to demonstrate a genuine commitment to children and young people at every level of the gallery's activities. We will also involve, parents, guardians, carers and teachers in our collaborations and when curating learning activity for this target group.

We have arranged the programme around one major thematic project – The Britishness Project – for which we are seeking funding from the Garfield Weston Foundation in 2017/18 and into 2018/19. If successful, we intend to extend this project over the remainder of the NPO Grant period. This will enable us to engage in detail with one major curriculum topic that we know from existing relationships with teachers is particularly relevant in our area, namely Citizenship and British Values.

Around this spine of activity we are generating a second tier of smaller-scale regular workshops and drop-in activities, connected to our four Annual Themes and to assets such as the Wunderkammer. These will be designed to link with work being delivered by our other Cultural Partners in Colchester as a holistic offer, which will attract a greater level of interaction with schools, teachers, families and ultimately children and young people.

5.2 How we will include the Quality Principles across the programme

Quality Principle: Striving for excellence and innovation, being authentic and ensuring a positive and inclusive experience.

The Britishness Project (dependent on a Garfield Weston Foundation application). This is one of our 'comet-shaped' projects, designed to generate community engagement and leading to an exhibition outcome in our main on-site programme.

We will collaborate with children and young people in a range of educational settings across Essex, where cultural provision is low and communities and families show a lower than regional tendency to engage with arts and cultural activities.

We will identify ten schools in locations that provide a broad cross-section of cultural provision in the county. We will place artists in residence at the schools, to develop work made by students responding to themes of Citizenship and British Values. These works will be developed with a view to being presented at Firstsite later in the project as an exhibition outcome in the exhibitions programme.

It is assumed at this stage that the artists to be placed in schools will be from a pool developed through the continuation of YAK. This will enable further professional development for YAK membership, a channel for recruiting new members to the group and a mentoring opportunity with artists close to the age of school pupils.

Alongside developing their own work to be presented, students will also be invited to curate works from local and national collections, which will be included in presentations at Firstsite alongside their own work. For example, one school (or a collaboration of schools) will curate the Wunderkammer for 2018 to co-inside with our year of activity commemorating the 100th anniversary of the World War I.

The participating schools will then be invited, as part of forming the overall presentation of works and curated content, to devise a programme of public engagement activity for Firstsite. This will contribute to the authenticity and inclusive nature of the experience.

In operating a project of this nature, we are creating innovative firsthand ways for children and young people to take on the role of artist and curator, and to make an entire section of content in our programme. They will be directly responsible, with the support of Firstsite staff and YAK, for a CYP takeover of the galleries along similar lines to Flipside 2016.

Quality Principle: Being Exciting, Inspiring and Engaging

Weekend drop-in activities Designed by and for children and young people to respond to specific content in our four Annual Themes, and focused on directly engaging existing audiences as well as attracting new visitors from targeted segmentations outlined in Goal 2. We aim to develop YAK to the point where members can be commissioned to design a series of free daily or weekend drop-in activities, along similar lines to Firstsite's recent Warhol 'Print Factory' (6000 participants) and Gee Vaucher's Community Collage, which has generated over 300 collages made by the public in response to themes of family and community.

The activities will take place in different parts of the building and will be designed to create evidence that participants have gained experience of the Impetus Trust impact framework capabilities. To design the projects, YAK will work with both the Learning & Education Team at Firstsite, as well as our communications partner. They will take part in and help conduct a set of conversations, which will enable Firstsite to understand better the needs and interests of the audience segmentations we currently struggle to engage – in particular Facebook Families and Up Our Street.

Quality Principal: Actively involving children and young people and enabling personal progression.

YAK will build on our successful experience of working with children and young people through Flipside, providing the opportunity to involve a wider range of young people and create further momentum. We will create a charter on how to engage this target group and make a difference to their lives. We will use the Impetus Trusts framework to consistently measure the impact we are making on the lives of young people to support their wellbeing and progression.

Quality Principle: Developing belonging and ownership

Involvement in the development of YAK and our Children and Young People's Charter will be the principle mechanisms we use to involve the public and build a genuine sense of ownership.

More recently we co-opted 18-year-old Charlotte Winters a member of YAK on to our Trustee Board as a champion for young people. Insights from her involvement in Circuit and her personal experience of the vulnerability of children and young people are informing the way we think and how we work with this target group. To enable Charlotte to contribute effectively she has been provided with a Board Buddy, who takes her through papers, particularly those Charlotte is interested in and those that concern the areas she is championing. She is receiving training and coaching on the role of trustees and related issues.

In return, Charlotte is using her recent experience in YAK to directly improve the shape and direction of our Artistic and Learning activity. Charlotte has directly informed Goal 5 and will play a lead role in creating our Charter for children and young people.

5.3 How we identify and meet the demands of different audiences of children and young people, including those who are less engaged, have protected characteristics, are less advantaged and are under the age of five years old.

We will seek to share data from Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council and cross-reference this with the detailed information provided in the Essex Children and Young People's Strategy. Currently there are no clear links on how cultural organisations, and particularly arts organisations, can contribute to some of the key priorities identified.

In terms of children under the age of five years old, we will continue to make provision for parents, babies and toddlers through bespoke activities in different parts of our building. This includes arts classes, specific activities at exhibitions and parent-toddler sessions in our auditorium screenings.

5.4 How we will improve our collection of data about children and young people with protected characteristics (to include socio-economic background)

YAK will work with Firstsite's communications partner in 2017 and 2018 to help shape how we collect and analyse data related to children and young people. We know from our audience survey work that children and young people are put off by our surveys – both the format and the rationale for why they are important – they say 'it looks like homework'. New YAK will work with our communications partner and students from the University of Essex to develop new mechanisms to generate vital information that will sit alongside our Audience Finder research.

We obtain data from the HM National Office of Statistics on the demographic profile of our region in order to analyse families and their socio-economic situations to build a stronger understanding and profile of where and how we can target children and young people with protected characteristics.

5.5 How we will work with partners who can help us reach targeted groups

Through our four Annual Themes we will be able to create opportunities for conversations with different audiences of children and young people – as we did with Syrian young people through the successful pop-up café we hosted in December 2016.

A key priority for this programme will be to increase the diversity of those taking part. In 2017/18 we will test a number of strategies to achieve this:

- Through the LCEP develop a network of Community Ambassadors from the most deprived wards of Colchester and the surrounding boroughs to engage with families,
- Running taster workshops in community venues in the most deprived wards,
- Offering vouchers to encourage first-time attendance at workshops,
- Marketing workshops to pupils on schools' visits – perhaps through vouchers.

Working with YAK we will build on the success of recent partnerships – for example, the Barnardo's Children's Centre partnership workshops for teenage parents and their babies from the Greenstead and St Anne's areas of Colchester and Essex Social Services/Care Leavers Project, which produced work for the Flipside Festival.

Leading on the LCEP will enable us to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones to form a combined offer across varying art forms. We are working with the University of Essex on the initial scoping document. This is being written and presented by University students in the Social Sciences department, who will collate current activity and make recommendations for specific projects that the LCEP will work together to deliver.

We will also work in partnership to develop off-site projects that reach children and young people with protected characteristics. For example, the E-CVAN, New Geographies of the East project, will create site-specific works of art in locations chosen by communities and Go! Essex (subject to a Great Places funding application) and culminate in digital installations in public spaces in Colchester, developed by digital artists working with communities.

The engagement of children and young people in these projects may be in the context of the wider community. These projects will generally focus on communities experiencing high levels of deprivation. They will always link back to the gallery and its exhibition programme in order to encourage attendance.

5.6 How we will demonstrate a commitment to the broader educational challenge, advocating and supporting arts and cultural provision in schools through either senior leadership becoming school governors, or by permitting staff time to undertake duties as school governors

Our Trustee Board chair is a former founder of 30 city academies and along with the Director, continues to champion involvement in schools by staff, volunteers and trustees. Via our leadership of the LCEP We will look positively to such activities as development for the individual member of staff, as well as helping to develop a stronger understanding and relationships with parents, teachers and carers.

5.7 How we are working in and how we will make progress in strategic partnerships by either taking a central role, being actively involved and taking a lead in cultural education partnerships

Colchester does not currently have a Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP). Firstsite has discussed this with the other main NPO organisations and arts entities in the area, and it is agreed that we will take a strategic lead in the development of Colchester's first LCEP. We will seek to engage neighbouring Essex boroughs of Tendring, Braintree and Maldon.

We will work in partnership with ROH Bridge and the Creative Colchester Board to implement the LCEP. Through our new Learning & Education Co-ordinator role (to be established in 2017/18), we will deliver a programme of activities which help us coordinate data across the cultural sector, create a connected response to the Education Challenge and identify key pieces of work that will better enable Firstsite and the Cultural Partners of Colchester to generate their own in-house activities.

The LCEP in partnership with Creative Colchester Board plan to undertake work that will include:

- Mapping current provision of all cultural Learning and Education in Colchester (and potentially a broader area than this later in the grant period).
- Mapping data collection across all cultural partners, analysing what systems are in place, what reports are available, where the gaps are in this information
- Identifying projects through which the LCEP can engage better with schools, families and children and young people – for example, creating a unified teachers' forum across all cultural organisations, at which programmed activity for a full year is outlined to a larger group of schools, with a focus on diversity and the protected characteristics.
- Creating a better networked cross-sector group of officers at delivery level who are informed by the above work to create dedicated in-house activities that meet the needs of teachers, schools, families and children and young people across Colchester and surrounding wards.

During 2017/18 Firstsite will produce a set of recommendations and project-based objectives connected to our business plan via the LCEP.

5.8 How we plan to contribute to at least two of the three priorities for goal five:

Arts Mark: Through developing the LCEP, we will support schools in Colchester in developing Arts Mark. We will also support other schools in North Essex in achieving Arts Mark, focusing on schools with significant numbers of pupils in receipt of free school meals. Recognising the challenges schools face in achieving Arts Mark, we will offer in-depth support to one school each year.

Arts Award: We are an Arts Award Centre and we continue to work with Signals Media (the other Arts Award Centre) to support children and young people in achieving Arts Award. The achievement of Arts Award will be embedded in future projects, including summer schools, a tour of the New YAK programme and off-site community based projects. Each year we will support 15 young people in achieving Engage and Discover Awards, two in achieving Bronze Award, two in achieving Silver Award and one in achieving Gold award.

Digital: Go! Essex and New YAK. Assuming a successful Great Place Scheme application in collaboration with Essex County Council, Firstsite will create a social and creative forum for young artists in the region, working with digital media. We will also make available exhibition opportunities for young artists at Firstsite and locally, and devise open-platform opportunities for artists and the wider public to engage with Firstsite's existing programme throughout the grant period.

The new forum proposed – New YAK/Digital (working title) – will become part of Firstsite's rebranding of YAK to New YAK and provide opportunities for young artists to develop and share new skills, create experimental new work and participate in group critique. This will also inform thinking and research for the planned thematic structure of 2019 programme 'Digital and Innovation'.

6. How we are planning to lead and manage our proposed programme of work.

6.1 Risks and mitigation.

Our Finance and Risk Committee includes three qualified accountants. They work closely with our Programme Advisory Board and Director to ensure that we have a budget, and a marketing and project plan for each major activity. This, combined with our strategic and operational risk registers, which are reviewed monthly and our close performance management of individual members of staff, mitigates risks we might otherwise experience.

Key risks include:

Poor financial management. Mitigated by: transparent communication and increased scrutiny between Firstsite Senior Management, Trustee Board and Key Stakeholders; improved Management Accounts and clear accompanying narrative, more regular meetings between Firstsite SMT and stakeholders between board meetings.

Over-ambitious Commercial and Trusts and Foundations income generation targets. Mitigated by: setting very prudent targets in consultation with stakeholders; employing sufficient and qualified staff to monitor and meet these targets through strategic bids and carefully planned commercial activity; working in partnership with experienced partners such as Curzon Cinemas and We Walk The Line to deliver high-quality programming of key commercial assets such as our café and auditorium.

A programme that fails to engage immediate local and regional audiences. Mitigated by: intensive community and stakeholder engagement and listening; employment of highly skilled and innovative senior management staff with a track record for artistic quality and high levels of community engagement; structuring a programme team that allows for integrated and shared thinking around programme development; developing general Firstsite brand salience with communications partners.

6.2 Suitability of our Management Structure and governance arrangements

Firstsite has a core team of twenty staff led by the Director, who is supported by five senior managers with an overview of programme, development, building, commercial and finance. The core team is supplemented with placements from the University of Essex and Colchester Institute, who work across all areas of the operations of Firstsite. We have a newly established and growing pool of 70 volunteers, who support all aspects of delivery at Firstsite, with a core focus on front-of-house support.

The senior management team meets fortnightly to ensure smooth operational management. The core operational team meets weekly to communicate their work across departments. All staff receive performance management reviews. Staff receive weekly bulletins to ensure effective communication.

The Board meets five times a year with a structured agenda. Dates have been set for the next three years, and a rolling forward planner ensures that we are leading strategically and managing performance of KPIs effectively. A professional company secretary has been appointed as a trustee to ensure the highest levels of probity.

6.3 Recruitment and Performance management

All senior management posts and professional roles are advertised through open competition using a professional agency. A high priority has been given to recruiting, retaining and developing a diverse workforce. The importance of this is reflected by the fact that our Board Chair is the Diversity Champion for Firstsite. Trustees are appraised annually through informal meetings with the Chair.

Effective Decision-making: Strategic planning and detailed operational management plans that uses data and financial information (with an open and challenging culture) continues to contribute to effective decision making at board and management levels. We have put in place new systems to record income and have implemented research to better understand our audiences, including diverse communities, and to help us to make better decisions and investment choices.

Plans are reviewed annually and amended in light of learning and experience. Committees and working groups feed in their recommendations, particularly our Innovation and Enterprise Group, which is looking at new ways of working. All trustees are provided with a thorough induction programme and receive training on the role of trustees, and in particular their roles and responsibilities concerning financial management.

Effective Self Evaluation: Our work is evaluated at several levels. At a strategic level the Board reviews performance at every meeting against a dashboard with KPIs, in addition to the Risk Register. All policies and plans are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with legislative changes and best practice. The Director reviews each major programme, including key exhibitions, the talks programme and special projects. This is in turn reported back to the Board. While reviewing this feedback, the Board look at footfall achieved, community engagement and income generation achieved as well as publicity.

6.4 Partnerships: Firstsite want to collaborate as widely as possible with prospective partners. We have several layers of partnerships.

- Funders, including: ACE; local authorities; major Trusts and Foundations
- Arts and cultural organisations, including: Colchester Arts Centre; the Mercury; The Creative Arts Alliance and Minorities
- Community organisations, including: African Families in the UK; Chinese Society and Refugee Action Colchester.
- Major entities within the Borough and region: The Garrison; NHS Trust; Essex University; Schools and Youth Organisations.
- Artists based in the region and those relevant to our programme.
- Commercial partnerships to generate income: We have a partnership with Curzon Cinemas to market and programme our mainstream films. A partnership with We Walk The Line, a DWP backed social enterprise, to run our front-of-house café.

The limited time and structure of the organisation means that we have to be clear on the purpose of our partnerships and collaboration and what we are trying to achieve. This helps us to prioritise our time and investment in people and resources, ensuring those we pursue are effective and make a difference. We Walk The Line helps us commercially, but it is also aimed at providing opportunities for less socially mobile staff.

6.5 Planning for Sustainability.

Firstsite developed very detailed financial and operational plans as part of the recovery process referred to as 'our transition'. We have continued to work in this way, building on the lessons learnt. Monthly management accounts and quarterly financial reporting in a clear and transparent format has helped trustees and staff to understand more clearly how well we are doing, and any under-performance that needs to be addressed. It is also helping us make better decisions about investment and priorities for generating income that contributes to our sustainability. We have a very commercial and business-like Board supported by our Innovation and Enterprise Working Group.

Firstsite has established a strong Senior Management Team that shares responsibility for close financial management, led by the Director and Director of Finance along with clear and achievable income generation targets which are shared across different sections of the team. This includes targets for income from Trusts and Foundations led by the Director and co-ordinated by the Development Manager. Firstsite has already achieved a modest level of success in 2016/17 which will feed in to our 2017/18 targets. This work is planned as far in advance as possible, supported by clear artistic programme plans.

6.6 Board Structure and diversity

Following an audit of skills in September 2015, we have recruited through open competition a very diverse Board (13 people in total, including our President who is a co-opted member), which includes: three trustees from BAME communities, one representing the LGBT community and one young person aged 18. We have seven male and six female trustees. Three members of the Board have a disability.

The main trustee Board includes co-opted elected members from Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council. Their officers and our ACE Liaison Officer attend Board meetings.

Committees and Boards:

Finance and Risk Committee: Meets monthly attended by the Director and Finance Director. Chaired by a qualified accountant. Minutes and action notes are shared with the Board.

Nominations Committee: Chaired by Board Chair and includes two other trustees with HR experience and qualifications. Meets as required and minutes shared with the Board.

Programme Advisory Group: Chaired by a trustee, includes four trustees and external advisers, including a diversity and inclusion consultant and a member of our Young Art Kommunity.

Innovation and Enterprise Group: Chaired by Board Chair, includes Chair of Finance, three other trustees and three external business advisers. Meets every six weeks to identify income generation and business opportunities to leverage our resources.

Audience Engagement Group: Chaired by a trustee, the group includes three other trustees and our external professional communications/marketing advisers. Community representatives attend.

6.7 Mission and Board skills:

Our mission is to inspire people through innovative art and culture – contributing to our region's wellbeing, learning and economy.

Summary of the key Skills and experience represented by our Board:

Dr Noorzaman Rashid (Chair) MBA, BA (Hons)

MD Strategies for Change. Board Chair of several national charities. Management consultant with turnaround experience, commercial income generation, marketing, fundraising, diversity and inclusion policy. Also a former Trustee of NYO GB and English Touring Opera.

Bob Surman FCA

Director Mightdo Business consultancy. Previously a partner with Kingston Smith LLP. Over 20 years board level finance experience supporting blue-chip clients.

Julia Obasa BA (Hons) Business, MA International Finance

Entrepreneur and owner of several small businesses in Colchester. Good experience of finance and marketing to establish and support small businesses and community enterprises. Heavily involved with local communities.

Martin Blackburn, FCA, CIPD

A qualified Accountant and HR Director of KPMG, one of the largest professional services firms in the UK. Significant experience in organisation development and business transformation. Playwright and strong involvement in performing arts.

Roger Hirst FCA

Police Commissioner for Essex County. Former Cabinet Member Essex CC. Over 30 years as a financial analyst. Significant experience in governance, performance management, local and regional politics.

Helen Organ BA (Hons) Solicitor

Company Secretary and Legal Counsel at Sue Ryder, a national charity. Over 20 years experience and expertise in commercial and company law.

Ranil Perera, MA (cantab), MSc, MBA, ACIB, FIS, FIMC

Financial Services and risk expert, has worked for the Financial Services Authority, Citi Bank, BBC and Barclays. Involvement in housing and regeneration investment advice.

Nicky Johnston PGCE

Former Head of Art and Design at Colchester Sixth Form College. Significant knowledge of Learning and Education, and experience in staff engagement issues. Wide range of knowledge of the arts.

Jayne Knowles BA (Hons), MA

Associate Dean Wimbledon College of Arts (University of the Arts London). Significant experience and knowledge of arts education and management. Practicing local artist.

Guy Armitage MA Artificial Intelligence

Founder of Zealous, a London based online creative network, enabling creative talent to be sourced through open calls. He previously founded Bright-Creations a web design and development agency in Egypt, and was in charge of the FTSE quarterly review for the London Stock Exchange. Has a Masters in Artificial Intelligence (1:1) from King's College London and has been featured on the world-changing potential of creativity at TEDx and in Forbes. Winner of the Tate Digital Art Hackathon with digital artwork *echo*.

CLLR Tim Young

Cabinet Member of Colchester Borough Council's Coalition Administration. Chair of Colne Housing and NED of an NHS Trust. Significant experience in culture, the arts, regeneration and governance issues.

Charlotte Winter

Student and practicing young artist, co-opted to represent the views of younger people and especially those in and emerging from care.

Summary of the key skills and experience reflected by our senior management team:

Sally Shaw MA, BA (Hons) – Director
MA Curating at Goldsmiths College of Art & Design, BA (Hons) Public Art & Design at Chelsea College of Art and Design. Oxford Cultural Leaders 2015. Previously Head of Programme, Modern Art Oxford and prior to that Deputy Head of Culture for the Mayor of London. Extensive programming, community engagement and income generation experience – specifically Trusts and Foundations.

Stuart Tulloch BA (Hons) Fine Art – Head of Programme
Formerly CEO of Arthouse, Wakefield, and prior to that Curator at Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, and Director of Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool. Extensive programming experience and income generation through Trusts and Foundations

Lorraine Stone MAAT – Director of Finance
Fifteen years' experience in senior finance roles in art organisations in the East and South-East regions. Extensive experience of managing large-scale and complex budgets, including restricted and unrestricted funds and commercial revenue streams.

Richard Oyarzabal BSc Hons – Development Manager
Previously Chief Executive of The Junction, Cambridge, and Joint CEO of Cardboard Citizens, where he led on fundraising. He has worked as a business planning consultant, fundraiser and producer for a number of cultural organisations in London and the East

Kelly Oxborrow – Commercial Manager
Fifteen years commercial experience in retail. She was previously Retail Operations Manager South East and Europe for Cath Kidstone.

Eddie Bacon BSc, MCIQB – Building Manager
Extensive experience in architecture, building design and engineering. Previously worked for Colchester Borough Housing.

7. How we will make sure our organization is financially viable

7.1 Firstsite developed very detailed financial and operational plans as part of the recovery process referred to as 'our transition'. Monthly management accounts and quarterly financial Reporting in a clear and transparent format has helped management and trustees to understand more clearly how well we are doing, and under-performance that needs to be addressed. It is also help us make better decisions about investment and priorities for generating income, contributing to our sustainability.

We are leveraging every part of the building to diversify and build our revenue streams incrementally over the grant period. We have a very commercial and business-like Board, supported by our Innovation and Enterprise Working Group (made up of trustees and external entrepreneurs and business people), which plays an important role in thinking strategically about opportunities and challenges more conventional thinking.

7.2 A credible plan for income generation.

Our Innovation and Enterprise Group has planned a programme of reviewing and evaluating the following new and existing areas of income generation over the next 12 months, many of these ideas are already in the development pipeline.

Café – Firstsite has recently introduced a new partnership with We Walk The Line (WWTL) to run our Café. Funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, WWTL are a social enterprise enabling local disengaged and vulnerable people to gain vital work experience in order to enter the working world. The partnership removes all previous losses incurred by the café and introduces a modest income of 10% profit for the Grant Period.

Auditorium – We are maximising the use of our 180-seat auditorium. We have recently replaced all the projection equipment, enabling us to screen new films as

soon as they are released. The acquisition of new equipment was advised on by our new programming partner, Curzon Cinemas, who will provide the entire commercial content for the auditorium. We will supplement this programme of screenings with four other strands: artistic, educational, community and societies. Sales associated with hospitality will contribute to income.

Restaurant/Bar – Over 2016/17 Firstsite has hosted a small number of very successful pop-up restaurant events with local chefs and community organisations. A recent pop-up restaurant run by Refugee Action Colchester attracted 2,000 visitors over two days. We will be scaling this in February 2017 across x4 weekends with a view to growing a 'restaurant pop-up programme' as a potential long-term low risk prospect. As with our café and the WWTL arrangement, the plan here is to create security and sustainability for Firstsite as well as providing additional social and community opportunity for Colchester.

Catering partnership – Firstsite is exploring a partnership with a local catering company to provide hospitality for private hire, particularly for major events. We would ideally like this to be a social enterprise.

Conference / Room Hire Facilities and Community Engagement – Firstsite has several high-quality meeting and seminar rooms, that can seat between 20 and 100 people, for private dinners, seminars and conferences (in addition to the 180-seat Auditorium). We programme these with a mix of commercial activity that creates immediate revenue, along with using these facilities as a resource to support communities by providing space, initially for free. This more inclusive approach leads to longer term, slower but potentially much higher financial benefits as a result of 'advertising' our facilities to a much broader pool of potential hirers.

Business Hub – We are looking to designate one of the spaces as a hot-desking area for artists and the self-employed, providing free tea, coffee and water and high quality Wi-Fi for a minimum annual fee. This will help keep the space busy and provide income in the café.

Wedding Reception / Private party Hire – We have a 120-seat restaurant and a room for private parties that seats 120 (The Learning Studios, when not programmed). Land is available for the erection of a marquee for similar functions, particularly during the summer periods. Firstsite plans to promote these facilities as part of our Audience Development Plan.

Shop – We have recently hired a former regional sales manager of a major boutique store to redesign and evaluate options for maximizing income. We are considering a designer gift shop (none exist in Colchester), and introducing a range of Colchester products commissioned in collaboration with the four Cultural Partner organisations (Colchester Art Centre, Colchester & Ipswich Museums Services and The Mercury Theatre) and to be sold through all four venues.

Sponsorship Packages – We are investigating SMEs to both help generate income, as well as promote local businesses more widely through our planned programme of advertising and through our membership scheme to be introduced in 2017/18.

Membership Scheme. Firstsite is re-designing its members scheme to be re-launched in 2017/18. This will include offers across the auditorium, café and shop and will scale up to corporate membership for support of specific exhibitions and artistic activity.

Collectors Group – We will support the extension of our Collectors Group, who currently donate approx. £15,00 per annum to our various activities.

Artistic Programmes – We are scrutinising the artistic programme for opportunities to generate income, and forming a commercial template that can be applied to each exhibition. For example, we will develop sales of work and editions, and will procure

donations of work from artists to be sold at auction, drawing clear, up-front agreements with commercial galleries, outlining merchandise opportunities for key exhibitions.

The visitor experience – Within our plans for each area of the building, we are also developing an attitude that supports ‘a great visitor experience’. The aim is to make visits positively memorable, encouraging repeat visits and recommendations to friends and family, building our reputation as an arts and cultural centre for everyone.

Foundations and Trusts – We are developing a separate strategy to link our programmes and activities to the funding criteria of a large number of foundations and trusts, including Livery companies. We believe that we are likely to experience modest success, since Firstsite has not previously applied to many of these organisations. In addition, we are utilising the Board’s experience, in particular how best to measure impact of our activities and provide more evidence to funders.

7.3 How we will manage with less.

There is always the possibility that financial constraints applied to one of our key funders could lead to a larger than anticipated reduction in income. We look to mitigate these risks by ensuring that we work very collaboratively with our funders, so that what we are doing is in line with their priorities and requirements. In addition, collaborative working and a Risk Register will ensure that we can anticipate such eventualities and enable us to plan accordingly. Our plans are based on modest targets for income generation from Trusts and Foundations, with a small year-on-year increase. We have sought to mitigate the risk of being less successful by focusing on commercial income generation as described above.

Our Board is very experienced in business transformation and organisational change for scaling activity down, as well as up. For Firstsite, this would mean looking at reducing our operating costs further, which would impact on what, outside of our core activities and main commitments made with funders, we can or cannot deliver in our agreed Business Plan.

7.4 Developing our resilience over the next funding period.

A mixed economy of income-generation is core to our strategy in positioning Firstsite as one of the best regional art galleries in the country. It contributes to our sustainability, resilience and long-term future in a newly revitalised cultural quarter – hence making Firstsite an integral part of the town’s development.

Firstsite is in the east of Colchester, close to the Castle Museum, Mercury Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre and The Minories. Firstsite itself is located centrally, in a major regeneration area that has seen the opening of a new Arts Business Centre and multi-screen picture house (opening in late 2017). This is to be followed by a major hotel and pedestrian walkway from the train station to the gallery. Our strategy for creating Gold Square (the area around Firstsite) is supported by the local authority. In essence, we will create a new cultural quarter with outdoor performance arts spaces. Firstsite has become a major player that is already helping to nudge the regeneration of the area, and therefore maintain its position as a necessary player.

7.5 Analysis of costs and maximising efficiencies: The management accounts provide a summary of costs for review by the Finance and Risk Committee before scrutiny by the trustees. A comparison with the budget is part of the review process. A review of all utility and maintenance contracts is currently in progress, and significant savings have already been achieved. The operation of all activities is constantly considered in terms of visitor experience and effective use of resources

7.6 Fair pay for artists: Firstsite is committed to ensuring proper and fair payments to artists it works with, in recognition of their professional status, skills and experience. We consult [a-n], the artist information company, for guidance on fees and day rates for visual artists when commissioning artworks and projects and setting budgets.

7.7 Quality of financial controls and monitoring: Regular management accounts are reviewed by the Finance and Risk Committee before submission to the trustees for their scrutiny. The Finance Department is staffed by an experienced team of three people, who maintain the normal financial records, which include key control accounts, bank, cash, debtors, creditors, VAT and PAYE. A member of the Finance and Risk Committee reviews these periodically. A Risk Register has been prepared, and actions arising from the review of matters raised are being dealt with. These include the sharing of responsibilities and authorisation procedures.

7.8 Management of Reserves.

The policy of Firstsite is to maintain liquid reserves able to manage the organisation for a period of three months. An annual budget is prepared and agreed by the trustees that aims to achieve that level of reserves and to gradually add to it on an annual basis.

7.9 Business Model and financial sustainability.

Plans to develop commercial activity at the site are considered above, and we anticipate that an income stream initially of 20% of the gallery total income will come from these resources. The development of the gallery learning activities through further grant-funded activities will draw more people into the gallery and create an opportunity to share overheads. Additional resources will enable Firstsite to develop other commercial activities as it evolves into the regional centre.

7.10 Managing large-scale grants.

Accounts are prepared in accordance with the Charity SORP, identifying Restricted Grants and Unrestricted Funds separately. Requested reports are submitted accurately and on time to ensure prompt release of funds. Large-scale grants and restricted grants are identified separately on the management accounts and reviewed by the Finance and Risk Committee before scrutiny by the trustees. Separate budgets for restricted grants record the fund, in-kind and match funding, as well as direct and indirect costs that are maintained by the budget holder and reviewed regularly by the financial team.

FIRSTSITE LTD

UNRESTRICTED BUDGETS

2018-22

This document provides a description for each line of the Firstsite budget for 2017/18 and the proposed budget for the NPO Grant Period 2018-2022. Its purpose is to give insight into activity that will achieve income generation targets as well as narrative on what resources are spent on and any savings or changes to this we anticipate over the grant period.

INCOME BUDGET as shown in Appendix A

1. CORE INVESTMENT

- 1.1 Arts Council have previously funded Firstsite for 66% of the Firstsite income with an annual grant of £814,512. Firstsite will apply to Arts Council England for the National Portfolio Programme (NPO) 2018/19-2021/22 funding. The amount £814,512 per year for the Grant Period is as advised by ACE consistent with our support for the year 2017/18.
- 1.2 Colchester Borough Council (CBC) supports Firstsite with an annual grant of £127,925. The conditions of this grant are articulated through a grant agreement with specific objectives to be met with the funding to be agreed on an annual basis and to reflect the primary principals of ACE funding. This amount has been profiled as remaining consistent across the grant period. CBC have not yet indicated a change to this support although it is anticipated that 2018/19 will be a review.
- 1.3 Essex County Council (ECC) supports Firstsite with an annual grant of £100,000. This amount has been profiled as remaining consistent across the grant period. ECC have not yet indicated a change to this support although it is anticipated that 2018/19 will be a review.

2. PROGRAMME EARNED INCOME.

This area of our activity is led by the Head of Programme with support from our part-time Development Manager and Programme Team, including both Exhibitions and Learning and Education.

- 2.1 Touring. Within our NPO application Artistic Outcomes Firstsite have articulated a number of touring projects that are likely to generate more than the target of £8,000. This includes applying to ACE in 2017/18 for Strategic Touring Funds to tour existing programme content (not newly commissioned specially to tour) to venues in less well-resourced areas immediately outside Colchester. We have also indicated that at least one of our major exhibitions will tour to UK and International venues generating income.

- 2.2 Gallery and Exhibition contributions are generated from various sources such as commercial gallery support and exhibition partners. The income target contributes towards the programme cost and remains at £10,000 throughout 2018-22.
- 2.3 Public Programme contributions are generated from various sources such as ticket sales for artist events, In-conversation and artist talks. The income target contributes towards the programme cost and remains at £10,800 throughout 2018-22.
- 2.4 Learning & Education income is generated from donors, events and workshop activities. The Income target has been reduced in 2017/18 with changes in staff and re-evaluating the Learning Programme. The income target is further reduced to a cautious £6,000 for 2018-22 as the Learning & Education programme is developed.

3. PUBLIC GRANTS / TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

This area of our activity is led by the Director and Director of Finance with support from our part-time Development Manager and input from the Head of Programme. Our Trusts and Foundations Plan is regularly reviewed by the Finance and Risk Committee and at specific times in the financial year is scrutinised and discussed by the Board of Trustees. The Trust and Foundations income target of £76,401 was introduced in 2017/18 with the appointment of a Development Manager along with a new strategy being developed. The strategy will link our programme and activities to the funding criteria of a large number of trusts and foundations including livery companies. We believe we are likely to experience modest success at least as Firstsite has not previously applied to many of these organisations.

- 3.1 We are anticipating that the Programme activity outlined in the NPO application will create opportunities to generate applications to Trusts and Foundations to cover delivery of programme costs and contribute towards core staffing costs to the value of £45,000 per year. For example, we are submitting an application for 'The Britishness Project', taking place 2016/17 and 2017/18, to Garfield Weston for £60k. This grant will go towards staffing, schools outreach activity and exhibition costs in the main artistic programme.
- 3.2 Our Learning & Education programme is expected to generate successful applications achieving the target of £15,000 from a broad range of Trusts and Foundations. The Trust and Foundations income target of £40,901 was introduced in 2017/18. The application to Garfield Weston for funding towards 'The Britishness Project' taking place in 2017/18 will contribute towards this target.
- 3.3 Our core programme of exhibition activity is expected to generate successful applications reaching the target of £16,000 from a broad range of Trusts and Foundations.

4. DEVELOPMENT

This area of our activity is led by the Director of Finance with support from our part time Development Manager.

- 4.1 We are re-introducing our Friends and Membership schemes in 2017/18. These will be re-configured around special exhibition activities and film, café & retail discounts. This will start modestly and grow over the period of the grant.
- 4.2 Cash and Gift Aid on donations introduces a new income target of £4,332. New designs and Improvements to the signage and position of the donation box within the gallery aims to increase the cash donations received from visitors. Gift aid envelopes will be visible by the donations box to encourage taxpaying visitors to complete to enable the claim of the additional gift aid donation from HMRC as well as Individual tax paying donors. The income target is moderately increased to £5,015 in 2022.
- 4.3 Individual donations are received from various people and organisations who support Firstsite or wish to show gratitude of their experience received by Firstsite. For example, Firstsite are fortunate to receive regular donations from the Coode-Adams Firstsite Trust founded by Sonia and Giles Coode-Adams, supporters of the gallery for many years. This is expected to continue over the Grant Period and will connect to specific projects such as 'The Britishness Project'.
- 4.4 Internships. We currently have x2 Interns working at Firstsite. They have been identified through our growing partnership with the University of Essex. All costs are covered by the University of Essex. We are building this area as it represents a major opportunity with regards supplementing our cost-efficient team with extra administrative support, as well representing considerable opportunity to diversify the team and introduce new skills and voices. We aim to have one intern per each of the five departments all year round. These costs and connected income are reflected in the four year grant period budgets.

5. TRADING INCOME – FIRSTSITE ENTERPRISES LTD.

This area of our activity is overseen by the Director and led by the Director of Finance with support from our Commercial Manager and the Innovation and Enterprise Group that includes members of the Board of Trustees and invited guest advisors. The performance of each area of the organisation is reviewed on a monthly basis by the core team and quarterly by the Innovation and Enterprise Group. Our Board of Trustees reviews KPIs and performance as part of the dashboard included in all board papers for every meeting. Our specially invited advisors also contribute to all planning and delivery in this area. The group regularly focusses on data analysis from EPOS systems and is adept at folding in local expertise and insight into broader commercial activity in Colchester.

- 5.1 The Café has previously been run internally and taken over on January 9th 2017 by 'We Walk the Line' (WWTL) a social enterprise funded by Department of Work and Pensions and endorsed by Mayor of Colchester Cllr Julie Young. This collaboration removes the losses previously incurred by Firstsite from the café and replaced by a fee of 10% net profit from WWTL from 2018/19 onwards.
- 5.2 The Bar has been sporadic and dependent on screenings, previews, programmed events and private event bars. Due to infrequency of external and events bars monitoring the stock and expenditure, realising the commercial opportunities has been challenging. The new

relationship with Curzon Cinemas running our auditorium mainstream film activity anticipates a significant uplift in bar income.

- 5.3 The Restaurant seats 120 people and is at the rear of the Gallery with large kitchen facilities in attractive surroundings. The restaurant was previously run by an external company and remains empty since their departure apart from occasional hires and pop-up café. Firstsite plan to invite tenders for the restaurant in 2018/19 and outsource by 2019 in line with the council project to create a cultural hub surrounding Firstsite with 9 restaurants, budget hotel and Curzon Cinema.
- 5.4 Retail has previously been without sufficient investment in shop display, merchandise or a permanent retail post for the year 2016/17. With the appointment of a Commercial Manager in October 2016 to coordinate a seasonal buying plan and identify opportunities, we plan a moderate profit growth of £29,728 in 2018 to £34,261 in 2022.
- 5.5 Venue Hire has a targeted approach to offering Firstsite as a venue for corporate AGMs, workshops, meetings and private hires anticipating a moderate profit growth of £64,050 in 2018 to £76,456 in 2022. Firstsite is considering renewing the wedding licence for wedding hires in partnership with Colchester Borough Council run Colchester Events Company as a financial viable addition.
- 5.6 To maximise the potential of Firstsite's 188 seat auditorium, we have recently upgraded the projection and sound equipment, and installed Digital Cinema Package (DCP) technology, enabling us to screen new films upon release. Our new partnership with Curzon Cinemas 'Powered by Curzon' (beginning end of 2016/17) will increase film screenings to 4 weekly, and increase further to 5-8 weekly by the end of 2017/18 as confidence and audience grow. This will be additional to Firstsite's own programme of screenings, coinciding with exhibition content. The income generated from the auditorium to November 2016 was £18,485 prior to new equipment and commencement of Curzon partnership and generated by 2-3 screenings per week. The moderate profit growth of £30,800 in 2018 increases to £37,000 in 2022 and is based on very prudent performance of 40 ticket sales per screening at x5 screenings per week, which is lower than Curzon estimations.
- 5.7 15 Queen Street is a three storey Victorian building. In 2010 Firstsite established this as a space to help creativity flourish at grass roots level in Colchester providing affordable work space to artistic and creative business. The building is currently 71% occupied in 2016/17. We are aiming to increase this to 90% in 2017/18 and maintain these levels through the grant period. This will be achieved by working in close partnership with the new 37 Queen Street Creative Studios and colleagues at the University of Essex, Colchester Borough Council and Colchester institute to ensure focussed advertising of these facilities.

EXPENDITURE as shown in Appendix A

6. STAFF

Firstsite staff design and deliver the programme of activities at the gallery and in targeted communities, as well as achieving commercial trading profits. The budget £766,852 for 2018/19 increases by £22,459 to £789,311 in 2022 allowing a contingency for increases in Living wage, Employers Ni contributions, reduction in fees to our external Partner Albany Arts Communications and with an additional post of Visitor Service Manager. Staff costs were reduced in 2016/17 by £17,220 as a result of a review of Front of House provision to ensure a cost effective and streamlined team.

6.1 Executive. Director - part-time 4 days per week. Increasing to full time in 2017/18. Direct responsibility for the strategic vision and direction of all areas of Firstsite's activities and stakeholder relationships. Directly responsible for setting budgets in consultation with stakeholders, and overseeing the successful delivery of all activity against KPIs. Particular focus is given to the successful delivery of Commercial Income and Trust and Foundations KPIs as well as establishing a programme of artistic activity which is relevant and generates significant audience attendance. The Executive Assistant is the initial contact for the Director. Prepares, coordinates and manages internal and external meetings. Collates quarterly board meeting papers and takes minutes. Coordinator and support for the Collectors' Group, a group of high value patrons.

6.2 The Learning & Education team is overseen by the Head of Programme to design and organise activities to attract and engage audiences and educational institutions, helping fulfil Firstsite's vision and mission. The team has responsibility for income generation alongside Head of programme and Development Manager.

6.3 Artistic Programme/Exhibition team is overseen by the Head of Programme to design and organise the exhibitions and events programme. Working with and supporting artists and external curators to make an extensive programme that includes presentations from internationally recognised artists to projects, ranging in scope and media, with regional and national collections and local groups and artists. The Head of Programme and team has responsibility for income generation alongside the Development Manager.

6.4 Marketing incorporates one part-time (3 days per week) in-house Marketing Co-ordinator who links with our external Communications Partner Albany Arts Communications. Fees to Albany Arts Communications of £45,000 per year for 2017/18 gives access to a team of x6 specialists (working at least x2 days a week each) working in data analytics, PR, social media and website content management and development. We are investing more in 2017/18 and 2018/19 with a view to establishing Firstsite's salience and Brand as outlined in Goal 2, with a view to capping this at £25,000 a year from 2019-2022.

6.5 The Visitor Service Manager is anticipated to be a new role for 2019/20. A key role which, through leadership, communication and management of the Team of Duty Managers, Gallery Assistants, Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteers, will deliver a first-class visitor experience and ensure Firstsite has a reputation for delivering excellence in this area.

- 6.6 The Development Manager (part-time, x3 days per week) supports the Director, Head of Programme and Director of Finance in the development, submission and management of all Trust & Foundation Applications. All four of these officers (with support from the Executive Officer and junior members of the Programme team) have responsibility for the delivery of a complex programme of grant applications which will meet our income generation targets.
- 6.7 The current Commercial Manager (part-time x4 days a week) appointed in October 2016 is responsible for the successful management and co-ordination of all areas of commercial activity at Firstsite including Hires, Auditorium, Café & Restaurant and Shop. Responsible, with the Director of Finance, for ensuring that Firstsite meets its Commercial Income and community support targets through the use of Firstsite's commercial assets.
- 6.8 The Building Manager has extensive experience in Architecture, Building Design and Engineering with previous experience working for Colchester Borough Council. Their time is spent evaluating the building maintenance requirements, assessing and responding to all building repairs for the gallery and 15 Queen Street. Successful management of 15 Queen Street tenants has seen an increase in occupancy to 71% and plans to further increase the occupancy to 90% by 2017/18.
- 6.9 Finance. The Director of Finance (full-time, appointed July 2016) leads the finance team bringing 15 years of senior finance experience in art organisations to Firstsite. Improvements in the financial reporting of Monthly Management Accounts and Quarterly Financial Reporting with clear and transparent format has helped Management and Trustees to understand performance. Improvements continue to be implemented working with the senior management team, board and local authorities ensuring financial reporting is transparent and viable. Continual scrutiny of facilities and administration costs has led to impactful reductions in expenditure during 2016/17 with further effect due in 2017/18. The Finance Officer has been with Firstsite for 7 years and during that time has kept the finance department stable, particularly during the recent transition, and remains a primary member of the team.
- 6.10 The Event Hire team comprise of 2 members, both part-time 3 days a week who manage the commercial hires in the gallery, auditorium, restaurant, Learning suite A and B, Meeting room 1 and 2 and mosaic space. In addition to commercial hire, the Events team works to build up relationships with the diverse communities of Colchester and to support them through subsidised facilities.
- 6.11 Internships. Firstsite successfully employs interns from a talented pool of students and recent graduates of University of Essex in engaging them to plan and deliver specific projects and enhance their long-term employability. The scheme has been a success and Firstsite would like to increase workstations to enable the interns to be increased by one each year.
- 6.12 Cleaners were previous employed by Firstsite in 2016/17. The daily cleaning of the gallery transferred to an external cleaning company in November 2016 and the budget reflects the transfer from Salaries in 2016/17 to Building Cleaning in 2017/18.

7. LEARNING & EDUCATION PROGRAMME

This area of our activity is led by the Head of Programme with support from the full Programme Team. In 2015/16 this area was significantly reduced as part of our transition due to escalating costs and planned activity that did not deliver against organisational vision and mission. In 2016/17 and 2017/18 we are re-formatting the staffing of the Learning & Education section of the Programme Team. Details of this re-formatting can be seen in the organogram in Appendix B of our NPO application. In response to a re-formatted team, we expect activity in this area to increase directly in line with our Vision and Mission over the grant period. Core funding is capped; therefore, team members will take responsibility for drawing in increased funding to support new activity as well as covering core costs.

- 7.1 Children & Young People. This line covers all core activity delivered to engage with Children & Young People in connection with the main exhibition programme. This does not refer to any other CYP activity that may be covered through a project activity funded through restricted income.
- 7.2 Schools. This line covers all costs associated with school visits to Firstsite outside of staff time. It includes producing teacher's resources etc.
- 7.3 Talks / Workshops. This line refers to all public programming activity directly aligned with our Learning & Education activities associated with providing access to activity which responds to the 6 Capabilities.
- 7.4 Community Engagement. This line refers to costs associated with working with community engagement ambassadors connected to Firstsite with a view to making stronger relationships with specific targeted segmentations outlined in Goal 2.

8. ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

This area of our activity is led by our Head of programme with input from the Director and with support from the reformed Programme Team. The items listed here refer to our main programmes of venue based activity, not special projects. Costs are organised across types of activity rather than 'per exhibition'. This reflects the different types of structure present in the programme and enables a more fluid use of resources to invest in artists, production and interpretation which can be adjusted in response to audience priorities.

Rather than having a fixed template per exhibition (because requirements are different for each presentation) we have pools of funding which we can move accordingly. Where we are engaged in a special project (for example a public art commission or a community engagement lead-in project) we will seek funding from Trusts and Foundations, some of which will feed into these core costs as well as supporting additional activity. The John Ball Project for example, includes an exhibition of all the

artist proposals, which would be presented within the exhibition programme as part of the process of selecting the eventual commission to go outdoors.

- 8.1 Wunderkammer. This is envisaged as the annual budget for the implementation and production of each Wunderkammer connected to the Annual Theme. It will cover costs connected with working with specific community groups, presentation costs and any care / registrar costs associated with borrowing objects from external collections.
- 8.2 Film & Auditorium. This will cover artist and curator fees associated with presenting a programme of artist and short films during 'down time' in the auditorium as noted in Goal 1.
- 8.3 Artist and Guest Curator fees. This will cover all fees for artists and Guest Curators working on the main artistic programme. Where we work with colleagues from the University of Essex on co-curating exhibitions, their fees are covered through their salaries at the University.
- 8.4 Interpretation. This covers producing exhibition guides and where appropriate new digital interventions – filmed guided tours etc. in the galleries helping visitors have higher quality experiences of exhibitions.
- 8.5 Public Programming. This covers all costs associated with producing, documenting and distributing one high-level event per month, (over and above the Learning & Education) in connection with the core artistic programme. Along the lines of Jeremy Deller's talk for the Veteran's weekend.
- 8.6 Exhibition Production. This covers all technical costs including shipping, technicians, wall construction, painting spaces in association with the core artistic programme.
- 8.7 Research & Development. All costs associated with initial research and implementation of exhibitions that are being developed for the following year.
- 8.8 Exhibition preview costs. All costs connected with inviting visitors to preview events and delivery of special events designed to connect with specific new target segmentations as outlined in Goal 2.

9. **MARKETING**

This area of activity is led by the Director with input from the Head of Programme and Commercial Manager. Our work in this area is supported by a part-time in-house Marketing Coordinator (recruited in 2016/17 from our Young Artists Community) as well as through our work with our external Communications partner – Albany Arts Communications. This is a significant area for us over the grant period as we develop Firstsite's brand and salience with focus on specific segmentations as outlined in Goal 2. We are investing more heavily in 2017/18 and 2018/19 with a view to establishing our brand awareness and achieving considerable new visitor levels. After this point will invest less but will maintain communications across a suite of outputs established in 17/18 and 18/19.

- 9.1 Our 'What's on Guide' is our primary source of communications and links with our website and weekly bulletins / social media activity. The budget is capped each year for the period 2018-2022 covering the cost of producing the 'What's on Guide' 4-5 times a year and in

varying formats. This budget line also includes resource to develop new communications platforms linked to the What's On guide based on our brand development work.

9.2 Advertising. Our work to develop our brand and salience with existing and new target audiences suggests we need some resource to invest in focussed activity in response to audience needs to increase awareness – particularly with students, and other target segmentations outlined in Goal 2.

9.3 We have redeveloped our website as part of our transition activity. We will continue to invest in its development and maintenance over the grant period. We will focus on creating added value in the region by including online resources for teachers and other arts organisations through our Audience Development work and the formation of the LCEP.

10. FACILITIES –

10.1 Utilities budget of £95,962 for 2018/19 covers the cost of the gallery electricity, gas and water rates of £95,962 in 2018 with a moderate increase to £98,870 in 2022.

10.1.1 Electricity charges reduced in 2016/17 by £17,000 after negotiation with the present supplier for a 1-year contract along with a credit of £17,000 refunding the climate charge levy and lower 5% VAT for the previous 3 years. This will be reviewed in July 2017 and annually thereafter to ensure cost are charged at the best rate available and look to further reduce the cost.

10.1.2 Gas charges reduced in 2016/17 by £7,000 after negotiation with the present supplier for a 1-year contract back dated to April 2016 and due for review in April 2017. A refund of £2,800 was received from the supplier for climate charge levy and lower 5% VAT rate, back dated for the period of 1 year. With annual review of the gas supply to ensure cost are charged at the best rate available and look to further reduce the cost.

10.1.3 Water rates and the usage remain the same. This will increase when the restaurant is occupied and any additional cost will be passed to the concessionary as with the electricity and gas. A small contingency included for increase in supplier charges.

10.2 Insurance premium is split into two policies, Buildings and Liability and Exhibitions. The Building insurance increased from £30,000 to £50,000 due to claims made in 2014/15 to replace glass damage to the mosaic glass and front door entrance. The policy incurred an excess of £25,000 for any glass claims due to the replacement cost of £50,000 per panel. Plans are in place to install additional protection to the entrance glass doorway following a survey from the Insurance company and reduce the premium. There is a prudent budget of £42,000 for the Buildings and Liability insurance with the hope of decreasing the premium further. Exhibition Insurance is £1,500 per year with a contingency of £1,500 for adjustments on high value exhibitions adjusted at the end of each financial year.

- 10.3 Building Repairs and Maintenance contracts. The building maintenance budget of £45,192 remains the same for 2018 to 2022. This budget has been reduced considerably from 2016/17 with the new Building Manager dealing with unexpected building repairs following previous years' reductions on Maintenance contracts. There is further work to be done on the maintenance contracts ensuring required contracts are in place to cover the building needs and potential savings.
- 10.4 Building Fire, Security, Health & Safety cost of £10,000 remains the same for 2018 to 2022. Faults within the security systems have posed several alarm call outs in past years, these have been addressed reducing alarm responses and cost.
- 10.5 Building cleaning contract and equipment covers the contract cleaning company to clean the gallery daily, cleaning supplies, toilet sanitary bins and window cleaning. The budget remains the same of £34,808 for 2018 to 2022 and will be closely monitored by Building Manager and the Finance team.

11. ADMINISTRATION

- 11.1 The budget for training increases in 2017/18 to invest in training staff and volunteers developing their knowledge and skills in delivering Firstsite's vision to be a thriving art gallery and a vibrant cultural organisation. The budget reduces in 2019-20 as we improve the organisation for the future.
- 11.2 Staff Travel / Hospitality / Subscriptions remains the same of £7,500 for 2018 to 2022.
- 11.3 Volunteer Travel budget £1,200 in 2017/18 covers the cost of approximately 40 volunteers as Firstsite plans to increase to 100 volunteers the budget increases to £2,400 to reflect the increase.
- 11.4 Photocopy, Stationery & Postage budgets for the lease of a photocopier and franking machine with copy charges, stationery and postage. The budget increases moderately from £16,400 for 2018 to £18,985 in 2022 to allow for increase in postal charges.
- 11.5 Office / IT / Telephones budget increase moderately from £43,431 for 2018 to £44,747 in 2022.
- 11.5.1 IT support costs reduced in 2016/17 after the evaluation of the issues and number of calls made by staff to the IT support company. To reduce the quantity of calls made to the IT company the Building Manager was nominated as the first port of call for all IT issues to assess if the problem can be resolved in house before logging a call with the IT support company. With the upgrade of the server and backups and in-house procedures the calls and cost reduced by 30%. We continue further improve in-house IT and look to make further savings.

- 11.5.2 The Telephones system was replaced in 2015/16 with an audit of line rentals and benefit from savings of £3,444 per year.
- 11.6 Audit & Professional fees. Legal and Professional Fees includes Audit, Licenses and Professional fees. The budget remains the same of £20,000 for 2018 to 2022.
- 11.6.1 Professional Fees for 2017/18 remain higher whilst we continue the transition process. Audit budget will have reduced following improvements to the financial systems, in-house pre audit preparation and assistance from the new Director of Finance.
- 11.7 Bank charges reduced by £1,980 in 2017/18 and remain the same of £5,520 for 2018 to 2022 following an audit of the charges and credit card machines.
- 11.8 Memberships & Subscriptions moderately increases from £5,368 in 2018 to £6,214 in 2022.
- 11.9 Board Expenses covers the Board travel and accommodation expenses and is reduced to £3,000 in 2017/18.
- 11.10 Depreciation of £30,000 remains the same for 2018 to 2022. This covers existing depreciation on fixed assets including new auditorium equipment and allows a small contingency for future purchases.

Firstsite Ltd Consolidated Budget 2018-2022							Appendix A
		Budget					
		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Income						
1	Core Investment						
1.1	Arts Council England	814,512	814,512	814,512	814,512	814,512	814,512
1.2	Colchester Borough Council	127,925	127,925	127,925	127,925	127,925	127,925
1.3	Essex County Council	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
	Core Investment Total	1,042,437	1,042,437	1,042,437	1,042,437	1,042,437	1,042,437
2	Programme Earned Income						
2.1	Touring	0	0	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
2.2	Gallery Contributions & Exhibition Partners	40,000	40,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
2.3	Talks	0	0	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800
2.4	Learning & Education	20,000	17,500	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
	Programme Earned Income	60,000	57,500	34,800	34,800	34,800	34,800
3	Public Grants / Trusts and Foundations						
3.1	Programme	0	20,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
3.2	Learning & Education	0	40,901	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
3.3	Artist Development	0	15,500	16,000	16,000	16,000	16,000
	Public Grants / Trusts and Foundations	0	76,401	76,000	76,000	76,000	76,000
4	Development						
4.1	Membership	8,000	3,000	5,000	7,500	8,000	8,500
4.2	Donations / Gift Aid	0	4,126	4,332	4,549	4,776	5,015
4.3	Individuals	30,703	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
4.4	Internships	0	10,400	10,400	13,860	17,325	17,325
	Development	38,703	37,526	39,732	45,909	50,101	50,840
5	Trading - Firstsite Enterprises Ltd	68,302	128,777	146,407	168,972	180,934	189,174
	Total Income	1,209,442	1,342,641	1,339,376	1,368,118	1,384,272	1,393,251
	Expenditure						
6	Staff Costs (including NI and pension)						
6.1	Executive	106,247	113,228	113,228	113,228	113,228	113,228
6.2	Learning & Education	32,266	63,502	63,502	63,502	63,502	63,502
6.3	Artistic Programme/Exhibitions	78,759	101,660	101,660	101,660	101,660	101,660
6.4	Marketing	53,197	57,290	57,290	42,290	42,290	42,290
6.5	Visitor Service Manager	0	0	0	29,120	29,120	29,120
6.5	Duty Managers x7	105,095	115,909	117,133	117,133	117,133	117,133
6.5	Gallery Assistants x 5	103,581	75,547	76,360	76,360	76,360	76,360
6.5	Volunteer Coordinator	8,155	10,659	10,659	10,659	10,659	10,659
6.6	Development	26,016	26,016	26,016	26,016	26,016	26,016
6.7	Commercial	21,162	36,598	36,598	36,598	36,598	36,598
6.8	Building	24,246	26,585	26,585	26,585	26,585	26,585
6.9	Finance	104,509	101,411	101,411	101,411	101,411	101,411
6.10	Event Hire	26,176	24,236	25,236	25,236	25,236	25,236
6.11	Internships	0	10,400	10,400	13,860	17,325	17,325
6.12	Cleaning (contracted out in November 2016) NLW/NI increase contingency	18,076	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Salaries	707,485	763,041	766,852	784,898	788,835	789,311
7	Learning Programme						
7.1	Children and Young People	30,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
7.2	Schools	0	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
7.3	Talks/Workshops	0	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
7.4	Community Engagement	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Total Learning	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
8	Artistic Programme						
8.1	Wunderkammer	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
8.2	Film and Auditorium	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
8.3	Artist and Guest Curator	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
8.4	Interpretation	0	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
8.5	Public Programme	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
8.6	Exhibition Production	168,573	57,000	72,000	72,000	72,000	72,000
8.7	Research & Development	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
8.8	Exhibition Preview Events	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Total Artistic Programme	173,573	115,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	130,000

9	Marketing						
9.1	What's on Guide	0	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000
9.2	Advertising	16,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
9.3	Website / Digital Archive	15,500	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
	Total Marketing	31,500	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
10	Facilities						
10.1	Utilities	102,000	91,392	95,962	96,921	97,890	98,869
10.2	Building & Exhibition Insurance	53,000	53,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
10.3	Building Repairs & Maintenance	57,800	50,000	45,192	45,192	45,192	45,192
10.4	Building Fire, Security, Health & Safety	8,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
10.5	Building Cleaning Contract and Equipment	20,000	34,808	34,808	34,808	34,808	34,808
	Total Facilities	240,800	239,200	230,962	231,921	232,890	233,869
11	Administration						
11.1	Training & Recruitment	13,000	15,600	12,600	10,600	10,600	10,600
11.2	Travel / Hospitality / Subscriptions	6,000	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
11.3	Volunteer travel	0	1,200	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400
11.4	Photocopy, Stationery & Postage	13,500	16,304	16,400	17,220	18,081	18,985
11.5	Office / IT / Telephones	54,000	43,400	43,431	43,865	44,304	44,747
11.6	Audit & Professional fees	75,503	30,887	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
11.7	Bank / Lease Charges	7,500	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520
11.8	Memberships & Subscriptions	4,000	3,800	5,368	5,636	5,918	6,214
11.9	Board Expenses	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
11.10	Depreciation	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
	Total Administration	208,503	157,211	146,219	145,741	147,323	148,966
	Total Overheads	449,303	396,411	377,181	377,663	380,214	382,836
	Total Expenditure	1,391,861	1,339,452	1,339,033	1,357,561	1,364,049	1,367,147
	Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(182,419)	3,189	343	10,557	20,224	26,104
5	Trading Activity - Firstsite Enterprises Ltd						
5.1	Café income	52,496	0	2,400	2,640	2,904	3,194
	Café cost	(93,192)	0	0	0	0	0
	Net Profit/Loss	(40,696)	0	2,400	2,640	2,904	3,194
5.2	Bar income	32,045	18,320	19,236	20,198	21,208	22,268
	Bar Cost	(23,374)	(11,489)	(12,063)	(12,667)	(13,300)	(13,965)
	Net Profit/Loss	8,671	6,831	7,173	7,531	7,908	8,303
5.3	Restaurant income	0	0	0	12,000	16,000	16,000
	Restaurant cost	0	0	(2,000)	0	0	0
	Net Profit/Loss	0	0	(2,000)	12,000	16,000	16,000
5.4	Retail income	45,000	54,500	59,950	62,948	66,095	69,400
	Retail cost	(21,600)	(28,760)	(30,222)	(31,871)	(33,465)	(35,138)
	Net Profit/Loss	23,400	25,740	29,728	31,076	32,630	34,261
5.5	Venue Hire income	123,975	81,000	85,050	89,303	93,768	98,456
	Venue Hire cost	(84,126)	(20,000)	(21,000)	(22,000)	(22,000)	(22,000)
	Net Profit/Loss	39,849	61,000	64,050	67,303	71,768	76,456
5.6	Auditorium net income	55,954	73,200	88,800	93,000	97,000	101,000
	Auditorium cost	(33,356)	(52,826)	(58,000)	(60,000)	(62,000)	(64,000)
	Net Profit/Loss	22,598	20,374	30,800	33,000	35,000	37,000
5.7	15 Queen Street Rental and Membership	25,980	20,592	20,592	22,392	22,392	22,392
	15 Queen Street	(11,500)	(5,760)	(6,336)	(6,970)	(7,667)	(8,433)
	Net Profit/Loss	14,480	14,832	14,256	15,422	14,725	13,959
	Total Trading Profit/Loss	68,302	128,777	146,407	168,972	180,934	189,174

Funding Agreement between Colchester Borough Council and Firstsite

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Colchester's vibrant cultural scene is one of the town's unique selling points, and something that Colchester Borough Council (CBC) is keen to support and sustain. Firstsite, Colchester Arts Centre, and the Mercury Theatre are central to this, providing the leadership, capacity, creativity and innovative programmes of delivery to make Colchester a great place to live, learn, work and visit.
- 1.2 The Council provides core revenue grants to these organisations, because they deliver on the Council's Strategic Plan, in particular they are fundamental to supporting delivery of the Creative Colchester Strategy and Action Plan which is a detailed delivery framework for promoting and enhancing the arts in the local economy. In line with the Creative Colchester strategy, the Council continues to work with regional partners to align policy and funding to help deliver key economic and social outcomes through investing in development of the arts.
- 1.3 As part of the Council's commitment to transparency, quality and performance management systems, the arts organisations that receive CBC funding must set out clear objectives and provide performance and sector data so that the service that is provided through partnership working can be measured, evaluated and improved. This document defines the performance targets and monitoring process, and confirms the funding amounts currently agreed.
- 1.4 Firstsite is one of three arts organisations strategically-funded by CBC. In 2014 the organisation was successful in their bid to the Arts Council for continued National Portfolio Organisation funding from April 2015. However this support is now contingent on Firstsite meeting the Arts Council Milestones for 2016 as specified in Appendix 1 of this document. Therefore, the 2016-17 funding agreement with CBC will focus on the achievement of these milestones as well as work towards the goals as set out in the original bid, the updated Business Plan, and any additional key areas of performance and delivery required by CBC.

2.0 Scope and Financial Arrangements

- 2.1 Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017 the Council will fund Firstsite to the amount of £127,925. This funding was agreed by the Cabinet and full Council in line with the budget strategy to support the core operations of the organisation as set out in the business and operations plan and to meet the targets for performance set out in section 9 of this Agreement.
- 2.2 Upon signature of this Agreement, the Council will release the funding in quarterly instalments.

- 2.3 Any financial investment that the Council needs to make under its obligations as the owner of the building is deemed to be outside of this agreement. However, any tenant responsibilities that Firstsite holds are considered to be within this agreement.
- 2.4 On signing this Agreement, Firstsite recognises that it is in receipt of public funding and accepts responsibility for showing proof of eligibility, meeting the targets for performance, and collecting qualitative and quantitative performance data to provide evidence of the service standards. Firstsite also agrees to provide available sector data to assist with monitoring and performance assessment.
- 2.5 Where appropriate and possible within current resources, Colchester Borough Council will provide non-financial support to Firstsite where it seeks to develop additional services that contribute towards meeting the Council's strategic priorities. If these additional services are developed to a point that requires additional funding, Firstsite may request such funding formally, and the Council may issue a separate funding agreement if applicable. If this circumstance arises, the services will be deemed to fall outside of this agreement.
- 2.6 In 2015/16 Colchester Borough Council agreed and provided one-off additional funding of £100,000 to support Firstsite, in recognition of the transition the organisation needs to make. The conditions of this funding are that it is used for specific, positive activities. The funding should be used for items identified in the recovery budget and might include:
- Regeneration of environment and surround
 - Artists commissions
 - Launch events and public engagement
 - Tate Plus consultancy
 - Specialist curatorial support

If Firstsite wish to use the money for alternative items then prior permission, in writing, must be sought from Colchester Council.

A separate summary of how this additional funding has been deployed will be required by Colchester Council at the end of the financial year.

3.0 Eligibility and Criteria for Acceptance

- 3.1 In order to be eligible for funding Firstsite must supply evidence to demonstrate that it is:
- a. Properly constituted
 - b. Financially viable
 - c. Able to manage its work effectively, monitor and manage risk, and seek necessary professional financial, legal and insurance advice

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

- d. Operating with effective policies and procedures in equal opportunities, health and safety, equality and diversity, access, and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- e. Delivering on the current strategic priorities of the Council.

4.0 Performance monitoring framework

- 4.1 Firstsite must submit an up to date Business Plan and operations information to CBC, including a budget to cover the same period as the funding agreement and a copy of the audited accounts from 2015-16.
- 4.2 As a minimum throughout the term of the agreement, Firstsite must submit quarterly budget reports and invite a Council representative to observe two Board meetings. The organisation will also participate in two bi-annual review meetings, as outlined below.
- 4.3 At the end of the agreement period, the organisation must provide audited accounts and submit performance data to evidence the organisation's turnover, audience and participation levels as well as contribution to the Council's strategic priorities.

5.0 Bi-annual review process

- 5.1 A review meeting will take place between Colchester Borough Council and Firstsite twice in the period of the agreement. The meetings shall be attended by the relevant officer(s) of the Council and Executive staff of Firstsite
- 5.2 The Portfolio Holder and Firstsite Management may be asked to sit before a Scrutiny Panel to monitor performance and achievements. As such, the bi-annual review process should be seen as an opportunity to ensure that the Portfolio Holder can evidence performance within their area of responsibility.

6.0 Acknowledgement of funding

- 6.1 Firstsite will acknowledge its financial assistance from CBC in all marketing and communication materials in print, electronic, broadcast and other formats.
- 6.2 The organisation is asked to specify particular steps that it will take within the period of this Agreement to promote the support that it receives from the Council in Section 9.

7.0 General conditions

- 7.1 The funding provided under this agreement may not be assigned to any other person, association or company other than in the course of delivering the Business Plan and agreed performance targets.
- 7.2 This agreement does not constitute Firstsite as an agent of the Council or otherwise make the Council liable to any person who may take proceedings against Firstsite.

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- 7.3 The Council reserves the right to nominate annually a councillor to be a director on the Firstsite Board.
- 7.4 Funds will be repayable in full to the Council in the event of any of the following:
- Misuse of payment received from the Council by Firstsite
 - A breach of the law by Firstsite
 - Petitioning the court for the appointment of an administrator
 - Having a receiver appointed over all or any part of Firstsite's assets
 - Being the subject of a petition or resolution for Firstsite's 'winding up'
- 7.5 The Council should be consulted where any change or development in the direction of the organisation's affairs might affect this Agreement.

8.0 Breach in agreement

- 8.1 In the event of either the Council or Firstsite notifying the other in writing of a breach in this agreement, the parties shall meet to discuss the alleged breach within 21 days.
- 8.2 Both the Council and Firstsite agree that they have an equal responsibility to reach a practical and reasonable solution to the breach, but if after 12 weeks a solution has not been agreed then the parties mutually agree to arbitration.

9.0 Specification of performance targets

- 9.1 The specification of performance targets is developed collaboratively between the Council and Firstsite. The information provided here substantiates the Council's decision to invest public funds and helps to strengthen the partnership delivery model.
- 9.2 Information provided should be set out in line with the Strategic Plan to help to convey to Members, officers and partners how the Council's financial support is an effective and efficient way to deliver services to meet local identified needs.

9.3 Performance Overview

Target	Outputs/Report
Deliver four seasons of exhibitions	
Deliver between 125,000 and 150,000 visitors	
Deliver a Film programme with approximate 30%* occupancy from October 2016 onwards (based on Curzon success measure)	
Deliver a comprehensive programme of events and learning activities which engage a broad range of audiences which reflect Colchester's key demographics with regards to Diversity, Disability, Age, Gender, Sexuality,	

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

Affluence and Migrant status.	
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9.4 Community and Audience Development

Target	Outputs/Report
Produce an Audience Development plan with a view to engaging x10 new communities in Firstsite activities across the year	
Deliver x1 major Community event per month from October 2016 onwards	
Hold 1:2:1 consultation meetings with x10 hard to reach community groups with a view to developing long term collaborative relationships	
Deliver new website designed to increase footfall and income generation	
Establish Volunteer programme and build to include x100 Volunteers by end of financial year. Av X10 new recruits per month.	

9.5. Governance and Management

Target	Outputs/Report
Complete a successful ACE NPO Application	
Complete x4 Board Meetings with a focus on Operations and Communications, Vision & Strategy, Diversity & Inclusion, Income Generation & Sustainability.	
Improve Financial Monitoring and reporting by completing monthly 'Stakeholder Updates' from October 2016 onwards	
Appoint new Board Members to focus on Income Generation and Audience Development	

9.6. Diversity

Target	Outputs/Report
Deliver against our Diversity Action Plan at least one exhibition per year with an artist from a BAME background.	
Explore and design a major Equality Project via the 'John Ball Project Group'	
Attract 25% of Volunteers from BAME	

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backgrounds	
Appoint x2 new Board members from BAME backgrounds	

9.7. Young People

Target	Outputs/Report
Attract 2-3 schools to Firstsite per week on average. 150 schools in total over the financial year. From across Essex, with specific focus on Garrison Schools and Schools in areas of economic disadvantage	
Engage x20 Young Artists in 1 st hand exhibition experience each over the course of the financial year	
Attract 25% of Volunteers with age range under 25.	
Develop major Young People project in conjunction with Garfield Weston Foundation and Coode-Adams Foundation to be delivered in Financial Year 2017/18	

9.8. Older People

Target	Outputs/Report
Attract 25% of Volunteers with age range 60+	
Attract 10% of audiences with age range 60+	
Programme at least one film per month targeted towards Older People from October 2016 onwards	
Deliver x3 events through the 'Community Events Programme' targeted at Older People including a lunch for Veterans on 13 th November 2016.	

9.9. Job Creation, sector skills development and contribution to the local economy

Target	Outputs/Report
Deliver x5 Work Experience Placements over the financial year	
Complete x1 Job Shadow at senior management level	

9.10. Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Target	Outputs/Report
Complete Building Review and establish Environmental sustainability and action Plan	
Collate and publish targets to reduce carbon footprint and provide evidence of improvement at regular intervals	
Review Utilities contracts to assess where greener contracts can be engaged in future.	
Establish two new major partnership projects with NPOs in Colchester and SE region that lead to new sources of income to Firstsite, Colchester and the region.	

9.11. What are Firstsite's particular plans to promote the support that the Council provides during the period of the agreement?

9.11.1 CBC Logo and acknowledgement of support will appear on all promotional material including x15,000 exhibition guides, new website, fortnightly e-bulletins and social media posts.

9.11.2 Firstsite will establish and deliver a Community events programme which proactively seeks to offer its facilities to specific communities who will benefit from our support such as Colchester Refugee Action, Civic Alliance, Big Sunday etc

9.11.3 Firstsite will work with ACE and the Mercury to establish a local touring network that can be activated to host content from our primary exhibitions Programme. The network will concentrate on a ring of towns surrounding Colchester such as Tendring, Jaywick, Tiptree, Maldon etc ensuring CBC investment is demonstrably taken 'out of town' to other areas locally

9.11.4 Firstsite will regularly present at conferences and events locally and nationally to raise the profile of CBC's investment in culture.

9.11.5 Firstsite will establish a Community Advisory Panel comprised of representatives from the local community who will meet annually to advise Firstsite on key themes, issues and barriers to be addressed in providing greater access to high quality culture.

9.12. Please outline the way in which your organisation meets relevant local, regional and national strategies.

Local

9.12.1 Firstsite will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between itself, The

Mercury Theatre, Colchester Art Centre and Colchester & Ipswich Museums in order to better facilitate inter-organisational collaboration at all levels of our activities including sharing training opportunities, agreeing data sharing methods and shared box office systems.

9.12.2 Firstsite will take a proactive leading role in the delivery of project outcomes for the Creative Colchester Strategy and Board. This will include developing and delivering a series of creative networking events (dependent on ERDF funds) and a major place-making project across the town centre in 2019 (dependent on a successful Great Places application)

9.12.3 Firstsite is now a member of the Visit Essex Consortium, the One Colchester Volunteer strategy group and University of Essex LGBT Action Group

9.12.4 Firstsite is taking a proactive role in supporting and enhancing the St Botolph's / Gold Square development by - introducing a new live performance activity to the area from September 2016 onwards, working with CBC to develop creative place making opportunities, supporting the introduction of a PSPO order to improve perception of the area.

Regional

9.12.5 Firstsite is working with ECC to host the ENAS website within the newly re-formatted Firstsite website in order to provide greater awareness and profile raising, as well as promoting Colchester and Essex's wealth of creative practices and studio provision

9.12.6 Firstsite continues to support the Radical Essex programme in partnership with Focal Point Gallery and Visit Essex. This includes delivery of the Architecture weekend on 09 and 10 September.

9.12.7 Firstsite is collaborating on x2 Ambition 4 Excellence applications to the Arts Council to support increased levels of regional cultural activity. One application is in collaboration with Wysing Arts Centre and Kettles Yard in Cambridge. The second is being lead directly by Firstsite and responds to the requirement to celebrate the radical priest John Ball who is the first recorded person in Western Philosophy to have openly promoted Equality in Britain. He preached on the site of Firstsite and lived in Colchester.

National

9.12.8 Firstsite is leading on the above 'John Ball Project' that will have a national focus through an open submission competition to design an artwork in response to Equality.

9.12.9 Firstsite is collaborating with the Mercury Theatre, The University of Essex, the CBC Economic Development Team, CAC and Colchester & Ipswich Museum Services on a joint Great Places bid.

9.12.10 Firstsite is a member of the +Tate network of galleries which regularly meet to share best practice and collaborative opportunities as well as visiting other organisations to see first hand activity in other regions of the UK.

11.0 Acceptance

- 11.1 Upon signing this agreement, the organisation agrees to the terms and conditions of funding and use reasonable endeavours to meet the performance targets and monitoring framework that have been outlined above.

On behalf of Firstsite

Signed (Executive Director)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Firstsite

Signed (Chair of the Board)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council

Signed (Portfolio Holder)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council

Signed (Officer)

Name (please print)

Appendix 1

Firstsite milestones 2016 -18

Confirmation of appointment of Director or alternative arrangements to provide leadership for Firstsite	April 2016
Recruitment to new staffing structure complete. Key appointments in place – Director of finance, Head of programmes	April 2016
Volunteer programme in place	April 2016
Retail and marketing strategy and action plan produced	April 2016
Fundraising strategy produced	April 2016
Action plan for review of catering facilities and catering suppliers	April 2016
Update on marketing and communication plan 2016-18	April 2016
Board awayday	May 2016
Gold Square strategy agreed	June 2016
Formal education offer developed	June 2016
Compliance Log completed	June 2016
Board recruitment – second phase completed	July 2016
Confirmation of artistic programme 2017/18	July 2016
Volunteer programme review	September 2016
15 Queen Street established as creative incubator with confirmed occupancy programme	September 2016
Confirmation of artistic programme 2018/19	January 2017
Review of Equality action plan 2016-18	January 2017
Review of audience engagement plan 2016-18	January 2017
Review of fundraising strategy, marketing and communication	

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

plans	January 2017
Update on business plan 2016-18	January 2017
Informal education offer developed	January 2017
Capital renewal strategy produced	June 2017



Colchester Borough Council
Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road,
Colchester, CO3 3WG

Executive Management Team

Noorzaman Rashid
Chair
Firstsite

Contact Ann Hedges
Phone 01206 282202
Email ann.hedges@colchester.gov.uk
Your ref
Our ref AH/kb
Date 14 January 2016

Dear Noorzaman

Firstsite – Conditions of Additional Funding

As you know, Colchester Council has agreed one-off funding of £100k to support Firstsite In 2015/16 in recognition of the transition the organisation needs to make.

The conditions of this funding are that it is used for specific, positive activities. The funding should be used for items identified in the recovery budget and might include:

- Regeneration of environment and surround
- Artists commissions
- Launch events and public engagements
- Specialist curatorial support

Please can you sign and return a copy of this letter for my records.

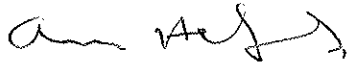
Yours sincerely

Ann Hedges
Chief Operating Officer
Executive Management Team

Textphone users dial 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call.

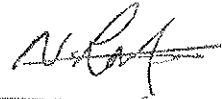


Signed



Ann Hedges
Chief Operating Officer
Colchester Borough Council

Signed



Noorzaman Rashid
Chair
Firstsite

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Jonathan Baker Tel. 282207
Title	Work Programme 2016-17		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Action Required

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the 2016-17 Work Programme.

2. Alternative options

- 2.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference and, as such, no alternative options are presented.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 The Panel's work programme will evolve as the Municipal Year progresses and items of business are commenced and concluded. At each meeting the opportunity is taken for the work programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances.
- 3.2 The Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel requested the inclusion of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions as part of the work programme for the Scrutiny Panel, and this is included an **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 Members of the Panel may wish to request items that could be included on the Work Programme for future meetings. As part of the scoping for suggested items members of the Panel may wish to identify particular objectives or request certain information to be included. To ensure that this can be incorporated in to the agenda item it is recommended that this is provided at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.4 Members may also wish to suggest items that could be included on the work programme for 2017/18. A provisional work programme for next year is currently being finalised, and will be brought to the next meeting of the Panel.

4. Strategic Plan References

- 4.1 The Council recognises that effective local government relies on establishing and maintaining the public's confidence, and that setting high standards of self governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead. Effective governance underpins the implementation and application of all aspects of the Council's work.

5. Standard References

- 5.1 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations; or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Meeting date / agenda items and relevant portfolio
21 June 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call-in of Executive Decision – Gosbecks Archaeological Park Work Plan 2016-19 2. Financial Monitoring Report – End of Year 2015/16 3. Capital Expenditure Monitor – End of Year 2015/16
19 July 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Year End 2015/16 Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan 2. Annual Scrutiny Report 3. 2017/18 Budget Strategy, Medium Term Financial Forecast and Budget Timetable 4. Treasury Management – Annual Report 2015/16
23 August 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff Survey 2. Questions to Bus Companies in Colchester
20 September 2016 (Crime and Disorder Committee) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee) (Planning and Community Safety)
21 September 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colchester Waste Collection Strategy
8 November 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Council Tax Support – Year 16/17 2. 2016-17 Revenue Monitor, period April – September 3. 2016-17 Capital Monitor, period April – September 4. Review of Colchester Borough Homes Performance 2015/16 5. Homelessness Strategy Progress Report and Delivery Plan 2015-2019
12 December 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colchester Waste Collection Strategy
13 December 2016 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2016-17 6-monthly Performance report and SPAP (Leader / Business and Resources) 2. The Mercury Theatre and Colchester Arts Centre
31 January 2017 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2017-18 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast, Housing Revenue Accounts Estimate and Housing Investment Programme (Pre-scrutiny of Cabinet Decision) 2. Treasury Management Investment Strategy 3. Digital Challenge – One Year On
28 February 2017 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firstsite
28 March 2017 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advertising 'A' Boards Review 2. Changes to ICT Support Contract

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS 1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017

During the period from 1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017 Colchester Borough Council intends to take 'Key Decisions' on the issues set out in the following pages. Key Decisions relate to those executive decisions which are likely to:

- result in the Council spending or saving money in excess of £500,000;
- have a significant impact on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the Borough of Colchester.

This Forward Plan should be seen as an outline of the proposed decisions and it will be updated on a monthly basis. Any questions on specific issues included on the Plan should be addressed to the contact name specified in the Plan. General queries about the Plan itself should be made to Democratic Services (01206) 507832 or email democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk

The Council invites members of the public to attend any of the meetings at which these decisions will be discussed and the documents listed on the Plan and any other documents relevant to each decision which may be submitted to the decision taker can be viewed free of charge although there will be a postage and photocopying charge for any copies made. *All decisions will be available for inspection at the Library and Community Hub, Colchester Central Library, 21 Trinity Square, Colchester and they are also published on the Council's website, www.colchester.gov.uk*

If you wish to request details of documents regarding the 'Key Decisions' outlined in this Plan please contact the individual officer identified.

If you wish to make comments or representations regarding the 'Key Decisions' outlined in this Plan please submit them, in writing, to the Contact Officer highlighted two working days before the date of the decision (as indicated in the brackets in the date of decision column). This will enable your views to be considered by the decision taker.

Contact details for the Council's various service departments are incorporated at the end of this plan.

If you need help with reading or understanding this document please take it to the Library and Community Hub, Colchester Central Library, 21 Trinity Square, Colchester or telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone users dial 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)	DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD DECISION BE TAKEN TO	DECISION MAKER (title and name, including Cabinet, portfolio holders and officers)	DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED OR TO BE SUBMITTED TO DECISION TAKER TO CONSIDER (and from where they are available)	CONTACT DETAILS FROM WHICH DOCUMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED (name of the authors of the reports)
Response to Essex County Council consultation on the A120 Improvement, Braintree to A12	No	March 2017	Councillor Paul Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, and Councillor Mike Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Licensing Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report A120 consultation material http://a120essex.co.uk/	Paul Wilkinson Transportation Policy Manager 01206 282787 paul.wilkinson@colchester.gov.uk
Decision to appoint the contractor for the External painting and Repair external overview JCT contract award – contract to be for 4 years plus a possible 2 x 1 year extension	Yes	15 March 2017	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham, Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Lynn Thomas Housing Asset Manager Lynn.thomas@colchester.gov.uk 01206 505863

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)	DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD DECISION TO BE TAKEN	DECISION MAKER (title and name, including Cabinet, portfolio holders and officers)	DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED OR TO BE SUBMITTED TO DECISION TAKER TO CONSIDER (and from where they are available)	CONTACT DETAILS FROM WHICH DOCUMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED (name of the authors of the reports)
Housing Development Company - Following the Cabinet report in March that sought a decision in principle on the establishment of a wholly owned company to deliver housing subject to a full business case, officers are now bringing back a business case.	Yes	15 March 2017	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham, Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report and business case	Holly Brett Housing Development Officer Holly.brett@colchester.gov.uk 01206 508830
Disposal of Maytree Court, Tiptree - the report will set out the Council's recommendation for the disposal of Maytree Court, Tiptree following a review of the options of the future use of the site.	No	15 March 2017	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham, Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Holly Brett Housing Development Officer Holly.brett@colchester.gov.uk 01206 508830
District Heating Network in North Colchester Northern Gateway - Cabinet	Yes	15 March 2017	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham,	Cabinet report	Fiona Duhamel Economic Growth Manager Fiona.duhamel@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282252

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)	DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD DECISION TO BE TAKEN	DECISION MAKER (title and name, including Cabinet, portfolio holders and officers)	DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED OR TO BE SUBMITTED TO DECISION TAKER TO CONSIDER (and from where they are available)	CONTACT DETAILS FROM WHICH DOCUMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED (name of the authors of the reports)
approval is required for a District Heating Network in North Colchester Northern Gateway.			<p>Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young)</p> <p>Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk</p>	Business case and Supporting Documents	

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