

Scrutiny Panel Meeting

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ
Tuesday, 13 December 2016 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

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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, 13 December 2016 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 - 20

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016.

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 Work Programme 2016-2017

21 - 32

See report of Assistant Chief Executive

12 Review of the Council's funding and partnership delivery arrangements with Colchester Arts Centre and The Mercury Theatre

33 - 88

See report of Head of Community Services

13 Half-yearly Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan

89 - 116

See report of Assistant Chief Executive.

14 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

8 NOVEMBER 2016

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

Substitutions:- Councillor Barber for Councillor Arnold

Also in Attendance:- Councillor Bourne, Councillor Cory, Councillor Lilley

88. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

89. Items requested by members of the Panel and Other Members

Councillor Lilley

Councillor Lilley attended the meeting and requested that the Scrutiny Panel look at the issue of advertising boards in the Town Centre. Councillor Lilley stated that this was a significant issue in Colchester and that something needed to be done about it. By bringing this to the Scrutiny Panel members can fully discuss the issues and possibly make a recommendation to Cabinet.

Councillor Davies thanked Councillor Lilley for the suggestion, and stated that this would be further discussed under the Work Programme item.

90. Work Programme 2016/17

Councillor Davies introduced the Work Programme for 2016/17. Councillor Davies welcomed the suggestion from Councillor Lilley that the Panel look at the issue of advertising 'A' boards in Colchester Town Centre, particularly as these impact significantly on those with mobility or sight issues. Councillor Davies suggested to Panel members that the item could come to the March 2017 meeting, with scoping work starting as soon as possible.

Councillor Davies also highlighted that questionnaire responses had been received from all bus companies. The Panel requested that the responses be compiled and circulated to Councillors before discussions occurred around the next steps.

Following a comment from Councillor Davies, Pamela Donnelly, Executive Director, provided the Panel with an update on the forward plan of key decisions. Jonathan Baker, Democratic Services Officer, reminded the Panel of the Scrutiny training event taking place on 15 November. Panel members were also reminded to inform Jonathan Baker if they had any requests for information in advance of the Mercury Theatre and Arts Centre attend the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 13 December.

RESOLVED;

- a) That a Scrutiny Panel review of advertising 'A' Boards in Colchester be scheduled for the meeting on 28 March 2017
- b) That the bus company questionnaire results be circulated to Panel members.
- c) that the Work Programme 2016/2017 be noted.

91. Review of Colchester Borough Homes' Performance 2015/16

Councillor Hogg (in respect of his Directorship of Colchester Borough) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Bourne (in respect of being a trustee of Beacon House) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Davies (in respect of being an employee of Rural Community Council of Essex, who assist with the Community Agents) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection, introduced the report which requests the Panel review the performance of Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) during 2015/16 and to make any recommendations on CBH performance managements arrangements for 2016/17 and beyond. Councillor Bourne stated that she was pleased that Colchester Borough Homes were here to present the performance over the past year to the Scrutiny Panel.

Anne Grahamslaw, Chair, Colchester Borough Homes, and Gareth Mitchell, Chief Executive Colchester Borough Homes gave the Panel the presentation about the performance of the Arms-Length Organisation.

Anne Grahamslaw, stated that Colchester Borough Council had in 2013 signed a new ten-year management agreement with Colchester Borough Homes. At that time the Housing Options and Homelessness service as well as the Corporate Facilities Management service was transferred over to CBH from CBC. Whilst the ten-year management agreement will run until 2023, there will be a review of the agreement in 2020.

Colchester Borough Homes achieved all but one of its key performance indicators during 2015/16, but there is continuing pressure some areas, particularly given the changing landscape in the housing sector. The one key performance indicator that Colchester Borough Homes did not achieve was the ambitious target to reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation. Satisfaction from tenants had increased, and the organisation had also achieved the Investors in People Gold Status.

In addition, during this year Colchester Borough Homes have continued in looking for business development opportunities, which are fully supported by Colchester Borough Council; and this will continue into next year. Colchester Borough Homes have also continued to strengthen the governance arrangements with a focus on risk management, and have also been encouraging training and recruitment of board members.

Anne Grahamslaw stated that there have been a significant changes in legislation that have had an impact on Colchester Borough Homes. This includes rent reduction and the sale of high value assets will mean less revenue for the Housing Service. In addition the introduction of fixed term tenancies, demand exceeding supply, and affordability issues mean that not only demand for services is increasing, but supply issues means that CBH will be dealing with an increasingly vulnerable customer base. CBH have been working closely with CBC to prepare for the challenges ahead and have been jointly reviewing the Housing Revenue Account budget and re-profiling the investment programme. Anne Grahamslaw then introduced a short video about the performance of Colchester Borough Homes.

Gareth Mitchell, Chief Executive, Colchester Borough Homes, provided further information about the performance of Colchester Borough Homes. Gareth Mitchell stated that Colchester Borough Homes has two focuses; this includes the key performance indicators that have been set in agreement with CBC, and the measures from tenant and leaseholders.

With regard to performance, all targets were achieved during 2015/16, apart from one, the number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation. Gareth Mitchell stated that the target set by Colchester Borough Homes was ambitious as it is a last resort to have individuals in bed and breakfast accommodation. Colchester Borough Homes are focused on finding a solution to assist those households in temporary accommodation; however this is an area where demand can be seen increasing nationally.

Gareth Mitchell also highlighted that the survey of tenants and residents in 2016 showed that there had been increases in general satisfaction and value for money for rent and service charges. Since the 2014 survey CBH have put in place a number of improvements including photovoltaic panel installations, and improvements to sheltered housing.

Following the 2016 survey, Colchester Borough Homes will focus on issues around anti-social behaviour areas, as well as communication and involvement. Gareth Mitchell also noted that the priorities are investing in homes and repairs and maintenance, as well support and advice on paying rent and reducing under occupation.

Gareth Mitchell also informed the Panel that Colchester Borough Homes achieving both the Bronze and the Silver award for the Homelessness Standard. In addition, CBH deliver the anti-social behaviour service for Colchester Borough Council, and a particular highlight is the proactive use of legislation around the St Botolph's public space protection order, which has made a significant difference.

With regard to the use of housing stock, Colchester Borough Homes use the transfer incentive scheme to incentivise tenants who are occupying a home that is too big for them to move into a smaller home, and during 2015/16 49 family homes were freed to enable a family to move in. The level of direct debit payments has also increased, and Colchester Borough Homes had also project managed the Creative Business Centre and the first phase of the refurbishment project for the Mercury Theatre.

Gareth Mitchell also highlighted the business development opportunities and partnership development. Colchester Borough Homes also need to become more efficient, through the use of ICT to change the way of working. In conclusion to the presentation Gareth Mitchell stated that he would be keen to seek further work with the Borough Council in providing services and business development.

The Panel welcomed the report, and congratulated Colchester Borough Homes on the performance during 2015/16.

Councillor Hogg was concerned that Colchester Borough Homes would return next year with similar figures for use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation. In response Gareth Mitchell stated that the situation is one that is affecting local authorities across the country. It revolves around residents who are no longer able to sustain their tenancy, the shortage of housing and housing reform. Gareth Mitchell stated that Colchester Borough Homes would continue to look at how services are provided, assess the pressure within the community and reorganise and allocate resources to try and reduce the use of bed and breakfasts. Gareth Mitchell highlighted that the Council allowed CBH to set up a private sector leasing scheme which would assist in working with landlords to providing housing for people in need. In addition, there are requirements to apply for the relevant Government funding when it becomes available as well as work in partnership. The work being undertaken will make Colchester Borough Homes better equipped to meet the challenge of reducing bed and breakfast provision, but the increase in need will create significant difficulties in achieving the KPI next year.

Councillor Coleman asked for further information about anti-social behaviour and the strategies that Colchester Borough Homes are using. In response Gareth Mitchell stated that it is possible to measure the number of cases that hadn't been reopened; the current workload is approximately 24 cases per month. With regard to the strategies used there has been an increase in the use of powers to resolve situations, such as Public Space Protection Orders and Closure Orders. This is a key issue for tenants of CBH properties.

Councillor Davies highlighted that the Housing Options cases where homelessness was prevented figures are skewed as the final month in each quarter includes information from

two local support agencies. In response Gareth Mitchell stated that the figures for CBH are reported monthly, but in line with national guidelines the figures must also include the prevention activities that the delivery authority (CBH) enable through other organisations which is only reported in the final month of the quarter. This results in the final month of each quarter having a higher level even though the homelessness prevention is still taking place; information from just CBH can be provided if requested, or just information for each quarter.

Councillor Barber questioned whether it's possible to quantify any business development successes and whether these successes could offset the future financial pressures. In response, Gareth Mitchell stated that one of his key tasks is to review the business development activity. Gareth Mitchell stated that CBH has core competencies that would be attractive to the market, such as property services which are currently being offered to the Colchester Institute. Other professional services in Colchester Town Centre may also be interested in the future. Further opportunities may also be presented with the work around communities and tenants which would present better outcomes and to schools following moves to academy statuses.

Councillor Bourne also highlighted that the core business for Colchester Borough Homes is the maintenance of assets and providing for tenants. The new management agreement provided the ability to grow the business to make revenue and surpluses that could be reinvested into housing.

Councillor Fox asked what the improvements in communication and involvement with tenants could be and whether this would help to allay fears of anti-social behaviour. In addition, Councillor Fox questioned whether further communication could also benefit the transfer incentive scheme. In response Gareth Mitchell confirmed that involvement and communication with tenants is at the core of the organisation. The challenges for the future are to broaden the opportunities to engage and the tenants that are involved. Gareth Mitchell highlighted an example of tenants being able to vote on how community budgets are being spent. The CBH Board approved the new strategy recently which focuses on enabling residents to have their say, get involved and manage areas themselves; the progress on the strategy will be reported back next year. With regard to the Transfer Incentive Scheme, CBH do a lot of work in this area and hold a database to know who to approach and review the tenancies. Councillor Bourne, highlighted that there are a number of conversations required to help those move because of the emotional connection residents have with their houses. Freeing up the larger properties has a significant knock on effect benefiting families throughout the chain. Councillor Bourne highlighted that there are 813 households that are under occupied by over 60's in the Borough of Colchester. Colchester Borough Homes are doing well to incentivise people to move and part of this is the improvement in Sheltered accommodation; going forward more creative methods need to be used.

Councillor Davies questioned whether agencies were contacted to provide assistance to those who hoarding. Councillor Bourne stated that CBH are provide support to tenants to go through and reduce the amount of possessions they own.

Councillor Scordis questioned whether when residents move in whether they are given regular updates or an information pack of what their tenancy consists of. In response Gareth Mitchell stated that CBH are very proactive in managing the introductory tenancy period as it is a key point in the tenancy. Councillor Bourne confirmed that tenants are kept up to date with their tenancies through the Housing News and Views and Magazine as well as through Twitter and Facebook. Anne Grahamslaw also confirmed that a training session is put on for young new tenants before they are allowed to take ownership of the property.

In response to a question from Councillor Davies, Colchester Borough Homes confirmed that older people are referred to the Community Agents service.

RESOLVED that the performance of Colchester Borough Homes during 2015/16 be noted.

92. Homelessness Strategy Progress Report 2016

Councillor Bourne (in respect of being a trustee of Beacon House) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Tina Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection, introduced the report, which requests that the Panel considers the progress on implementing Colchester's Homelessness Strategy 2014-19.

Councillor Bourne highlighted the significance of the Homelessness Strategy Progress Report and that the priorities in the strategy are assisting the most vulnerable in Colchester including residents that are under financial pressure, due to the recent welfare reforms.

Councillor Bourne reminded the Panel that the five-year strategy was first adopted in 2014, with a report on the progress of the actions produced annually. This report includes information on how Colchester Borough Council and its partner organisations have worked together over the last year and includes the updated delivery plan.

Councillor Bourne highlighted the key priorities for the Homelessness Strategy Progress Report. With regard to the priority on mitigating the negative impacts of welfare reform, Councillor Bourne stated that some of the actions in this section related to the need to support individuals when downsizing their accommodation and changes to benefit caps. With regard to key priority four, *Changing the perception and culture of social housing through education – managing expectations*, Councillor Bourne highlighted the requirement to manage expectation over the arrangements for the allocation of Council Housing which is based on need. With regard to Rough Sleepers, the Delivery plan includes a number of different strategies for providing assistance.

Karen Paton, Housing Strategy Officer, stated that the Council has a statutory duty to produce a Homelessness strategy, which sets out ways in which the Council will work together with partner organisations to prevent homelessness. Progress on the actions set out in the Delivery Plan for the strategy are continually monitored by the project group. A

progress report is produced on an annual basis and circulated to all stakeholders. Karen Paton pointed out that the report to the Panel highlights some of the main achievements of the strategy over the last year.

Councillor Barber asked for further information about the difference between rough sleepers and those who are homeless. In response Karen Paton and Councillor Bourne informed the Panel that rough sleepers refer to those who are homeless and living on the street, and that homeless refers to those who have recently lost their home which could be for a number of reasons. Families and individuals can be made homeless as a result of issues with landlords (tenancy ending), not being able to pay rent, relationship break-down, or leaving care facilities or prison. With regard to Rough Sleepers a count is done on a specific night set to criteria defined by the Government; the Council may also provide an estimate for the number of rough sleepers. In both cases the Council works with its partner organisations to locate and gather information. This information will also be used to ensure that assistance is tailored to those living on the street, with the aim to get them back into accommodation. Councillor Bourne highlighted the work undertaken by Colchester Borough Homes in preventing homelessness and assisting to keep families in their home.

Councillor Coleman questioned whether the alternative giving campaign was ongoing. Karen Paton stated that she was not sure if the project was still running. Councillor Bourne highlighted that the campaign actively discouraged people giving donations to those individuals who are begging, and instead encourages them to donate and volunteer their time to the organisations that are actively working with the homeless to help provide support, accommodation and help them access employment.

Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Licensing, provided the Panel with an update regarding Zone Wardens interactions with beggars, rough sleepers and street drinkers in Colchester. Councillor Lilley highlighted that the Council provides assistance to help those vulnerable people in Colchester, but also to assist local businesses who may have street beggars blocking access to their property. Councillor Lilley also highlighted the recent Kindness Kills campaign; following a recent PubWatch meeting a number of licensed premises had agreed to display posters and provide collection buckets for the organisations providing support.

Councillor Davies questioned whether anything had been done regarding access issues to Beacon House due to opening times, conflicts with other users or having been banned from using the facility. In response Councillor Bourne thanked Councillor Davies for the contribution, and stated that providing one location allows for the right type of support to be provided to both homeless individuals as well as rough sleepers. If there were a number of different locations providing the support it would create a piecemeal approach. Councillor Bourne highlighted that the strategy had identified the need for agencies to be open longer and noted that the Winter Accommodation Project would be commencing shortly.

Councillor Lilley confirmed, after a further query from Councillor Davies, that the Winter Accommodation Project and the project set up by the Safer Colchester Partnership and the Police to remove aggressive beggars were not connected.

Councillor Wood questioned the amount of grant funding from the Government, the region communities funding and funding provided to Beacon House. Karen Paton stated that the Government grant for Homelessness Prevention totalled £193,000 for 2016-17, and is administered by Colchester Borough Homes. With regards to the Regional Communities grant, further information will be provided following the meeting. Beacon House receive funding from the Homelessness Prevention grant totalling £14,047.

Councillor Hogg welcomed the strategy, and questioned whether it would be possible to compare the strategy with other Local Authorities.

Councillor Fox questioned whether it would assist Councillors to visit Beacon House, and also asked for clarification on whether anyone involved with the Council is taking the belongings of rough sleepers away from them as part of the action that is being taken. Councillor Bourne stated that if the belongings are being used as props and are littering a doorway they will be removed and stored at Beacon House; to date no one has collected any of the belongings.

In response to a question from Councillor Davies, Karen Paton confirmed that the Council is going to be applying for the DCLG Trailblazer and Rough Sleeper Funding jointly with Tendring District Council.

Councillor Lilley also confirmed that licenced premises are going to provide funding to help the SOS bus each month.

RESOLVED that the progress on implementing Colchester's Homelessness Strategy 2014-19 be noted.

93. Local Council Tax Support 2017/18

Councillor Mark Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced the Local Council Tax Support 2017/18 report. The report invites the Panel to review and comment on the proposed Local Council Tax Support scheme commencing 2017/18. Comments from the Panel will be considered ahead of the Cabinet meeting of 30 November 2016 and Full Council on 8 December 2016 where approval of the scheme will be requested.

Councillor Cory stated that the Local Council Tax Support scheme comes to the Scrutiny Panel each year and focuses on how the scheme may need to be altered following national legislative amendments. Councillor Cory outlined that the scheme current helps 10,100 residents, and that includes people of all ages some of whom are fully supported and others who receive smaller levels of support.

In the current scheme, all working age recipients of Local Council Tax Support have to pay a minimum contribution of 20% towards their Council Tax. The scheme does also include a back to work bonus where if a resident gets a job they are paid four weeks in arrears; this ensures that the recipient receives an income before any support provided is stopped.

The changes proposed in the report include amending the backdating of support to one calendar month; which brings it in line with housing benefit. The second change is to reduce the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Local Council Tax Support from 13 weeks to four weeks. Councillor Cory highlighted that there will be exceptions to this rule if there is a justified reason, for example a death in the family.

Councillor Cory also highlighted that the report includes information about the financial elements of the scheme, and that the scheme was one of the most generous across Essex. The Local Council Tax Support scheme supports residents in the Borough and assists with Council Tax collection. Councillor Cory stated that with the proposed changes the scheme is anticipated to cost Colchester Borough Council £261,000.

Councillor Davies stated that the report would need to include a specific reference to the reduction to the four-week period as part of the second proposal in paragraph 4.2.

In addition, Councillor Davies welcomed that the time absent from Great Britain would not include stays in hospital and questioned how the Council would know that an individual would be outside the Country for more than four weeks. In response Jason Granger, Customer Interventions Manager, stated that it is the responsibility of the resident to declare a change in circumstances. Officers within the team will assess and declarations where circumstances have changed, and also ensure that underlying checks on caseloads are completed throughout the year.

Councillor Coleman questioned Councillor Cory regarding the wider costs if Colchester Borough Council did not provide the scheme. In response Councillor Cory stated that without the scheme low income families would struggle and the Council would be adding to the difficult issues that these families already have, potentially pushing them past the breaking point. If it was expected that these families pay more towards their Council tax, there would be those who are not able to pay; resulting in a mutual disbenefit for both the local resident and Colchester Borough Council. Councillor Cory also confirmed that the cost of the scheme is offset by the significant benefits that it provides.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Panel reviewed and commented on the recommendations in respect of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18.

94. Financial Monitoring Report – April to September 2016

Darren Brown, Finance Manager, introduced the Financial Monitoring report for April to September 2016. The Panel is asked to consider the financial performance of General Fund Services and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the first six months of 2016/17.

Darren Brown stated that at the six-month position the General Fund has a favourable variance of £617,000, against profiled budgets to date. This is primarily due to the timing of expenditure and the profiling of expenditure budgets. Darren Brown stated that the income level to date was below target in some areas, including community alarms, but above the target in others.

Darren Brown also highlighted the possible increased pressure on achieving investment income targets due to the EU referendum potentially causing the short term interest rates to reduce.

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account, there is a current underspend of £760,000, which is a result of the budget profile and the timing of expenditure. Darren Brown said that it was expected that the Housing Revenue Account would at the end of the year be on budget. Any underspend at the end of the financial year will be used to fund a greater proportion of the Housing Capital Programme, minimising new borrowing and maximising available headroom.

A further forecast will be provided to the Governance and Audit Committee in March, with the budget coming to the Scrutiny Panel at the end of January.

Councillor Barber questioned where the savings comes from within Community Zones and Development service of £12,000 relating to Castle Park. In response Darren Brown stated that this particular saving relates to an offset salary overspend in this area; further information on this can be provided after the meeting.

Councillor Davies questioned the overspend associated with the Assistant Chief Executive directorate. In response Darren Brown stated that this is due to a vacancy factor. Matt Sterling, Assistant Chief Executive, confirmed that this particular overspend relates to a budget process where the budget objective is to save money and this is assumed through the use of vacant posts. Until such time that there is a vacant post an overspend will be recorded.

Councillor Coleman questioned why there was £6,000 less income generated in Community Development by school visits. In response to this Darren Brown stated that he would have to find out the information and come back to the Panel.

Councillor Davies also questioned why there was a late submission penalty charge for the Professional Support Unit. In response the Panel were informed that the fine was a result of the deadline for submitting payroll information to Essex County Council being brought forward at the same time as the Council was changing its payroll supplier. Councillor Cory confirmed that the payroll supplier had changed saving approximately £300,000. Unfortunately, in changing between providers there were some issues that required the Council to set up its own bureau system to ensure that staff were provided with their payslips at the required time. Whilst there was a fine, this change has achieved a saving and a more efficient service.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Panel considered and commented on the Financial Monitoring Report April to September 2016.

95. Capital Expenditure Monitor 2016-17

Councillor Davies (in respect of being an employee of Rural Community Council of Essex, who manage an arts project that received a Council grant) declared a non-

pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Cory (in respect of being involved in the Wivenhoe Gym) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Hogg (in respect of being a trustee of the Oak Tree Centre, a recipient of a Council grant) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Sean Plummer, Finance Manager, introduced the Capital Expenditure Monitor for 2016/17. The report requests that the Panel review the level of capital spending during the first six months of 2016/17, and forecasts for future years.

Sean Plummer highlighted that the previous quarter report went to the Governance and Audit Committee in September. Sean Plummer highlighted that the costs associated with the Capital Monitor do not flow evenly through the financial year and many schemes have spending planned across more than one year. The budget for the year is broadly on track, with no specific issues identified. Sean Plummer also highlighted that there were no red category schemes, with only amber and green schemes.

Councillor Coleman questioned what the issues were that caused the delay in the Leisure World Health and Fitness Extension. In response Sean Plummer stated that there were some delays in the tendering of the processes, which may impact on the timescales. Sean Plummer stated that further information from the budget manager can be provided.

Councillor Scordis questioned the funding provided for the surface water flooding along Haven Road. Sean Plummer stated that further information could be provided after the meeting.

Councillor Davies requested further information on the Garrison Gym. Councillor Cory stated that a number of organisations have shown interest in the facility. One organisation is looking in to taking between 60-70% of the building, with other smaller groups using the remainder of the building. Councillor Cory informed the Panel that the building has been fitting out, and Colchester Borough Council are currently finalising the insurance details about further costs that can be recovered from the insurer.

Councillor Coleman stated that as the Alderman Blaxill School is scheduled to be closed in the near future and some groups that current use that facility may be interested. Councillor Cory highlighted that whilst the aim is to get those groups who are interested in the long term future to ensure the future of the building is secure, a number of short term users would also be possible.

Councillor Davies requested further information on the disabled facilities grant as a small amount of the total budget had been spent so far this year. Rory Doyle, Environmental Health Service Manager, confirmed that a briefing note would be circulated to the Scrutiny

Panel with the latest information. Rory Doyle stated that the current situation, is an expenditure of £375,611 with a commitment to spend another £320,513 on works that have either just started or are due to be completed. There is also a further £200,000 of works to approve, with a forecast spend of £933,000. During this municipal year the Council has dealt with more cases so far this year than during the whole of the previous year, with the focus on targeting the vulnerable who require the works.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Panel reviewed the level of capital spending during the first six months of 2016/17, and forecasts for future years.

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 Following the request from Councillor Lilley at the November Scrutiny Panel meeting, a review of Advertising 'A' Boards has been provisionally scheduled for March 2017.

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 and MTFF (Pre-scrutiny of Cabinet Decision (Leader / Business and Resources) 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

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS 1 December 2016 – 31 March 2017

During the period from 1 December 2016 – 31 March 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 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)
Colchester Waste Collection Strategy – to agree a series of changes in the way the borough collects waste and recycling	No	20 December 2016	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	Ann Hedges Chief Operating Officer Ann.hedges@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282202
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 an interim business case that sets out the first	Yes	20 December 2016	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

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)	DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD 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)
stage of legal and financial advice and the next steps					
Corporate Asset Management Strategy – to approve the Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2016 - 2019	No	20 December 2016	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, draft Corporate Asset Management Strategy	Elizabeth Simpson Estates Manager elizabeth.simpson@colchester.gov.uk 01206 508792
Colchester and Ipswich Museums Application to Arts Council England's National Portfolio 2018-22 - to request that an application be made and to delegate authority to make the application to the Head of Community Services	No	20 December 2016	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	Bill Seaman Colchester and Ipswich Museums Manager bill.seaman@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282930
To consider options for progressing development of the	Yes	20 December 2016	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham,	Cabinet report, site plans	Ian Vipond Strategic Director, Commercial and Place

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)
land at Vineyard Street/Osborne Street			Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk		lan.vipond@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282717
Housing Revenue Account Fees and Charges 2017-18 To agree the HRA fees and charges for 2017-18	No	December 2016/January 2017	Councillor Tina Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Protection Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Report, including appendices of charges	Daniella Woraker Housing System Business Partner Daniella.woraker@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282392
Health and Fitness Refurbishment Building Project at Leisure World Colchester - The Portfolio Holder for Business Leisure and	No	January 2017	Councillor Annie Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Business, Leisure and Opportunities Please contact via	Tender report	Brett Gooch Business Manager – Fitness brett.gooch@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282047

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)
Opportunities to award the contract (over £500,000) to refurbish and extend the health and fitness facilities at Leisure World Colchester to the preferred supplier.			Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk		
Approval to release up to £543,559k S106 funding from Lakelands Stanway for refurbishment of Stanway Village Hall	No	January 2017	Councillor Mark Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, and Councillor Annie Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Business, Leisure and Opportunities Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report Project proposal for Stanway Village Hall works, costs	Bob Penny Community Development Manager Bob.penny@colchester.gov.uk 01206 282903
Appointment for a contractor to undertake redevelopment works	Yes	January – March 2017	Ian Vipond, Strategic Director, Commercial and Place, in consultation with Councillor Cory,	Report	Howard Davies Regeneration Project Manager (Town Centre and East) Howard.davies@colchester.gov.uk

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)
at 5-6 St Nicholas Street (Jacks)			Portfolio Holder for Resources Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk		01206 507885
Decision to Appoint the Contractor for Voids JCT Contract Award – contract to be for 4 years plus a possible 2 x 1 year extension, incorporating both revenue and capital works in empty properties	Yes	1 February 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
Decision to appoint the contractor for the External painting and Repair external overview JCT contract award – contract to be for 4	Yes	15 March 2017	Cabinet (Cllrs Bourne, Cory, Feltham, Graham, Lilley, B Oxford, Smith, T Young) Please contact via	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)
years plus a possible 2 x 1 year extension			Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services @colchester.gov.uk		

**CONTACT ADDRESSES
FOR
COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Report of	Head of Community Services	Author	Claire Taylor ☎ 282655
Title	Review of the Council's funding and partnership delivery arrangements with Colchester Arts Centre and The Mercury Theatre		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the range of programmes delivered by each organisation and how effectively they support the Council's Strategic Plan priorities and the value for money for the funding provided.

1.0 Scope of review

- 1.1 To review the range of programmes delivered by each organisation and how effectively they support the Council's Strategic Plan 2015-18 priorities and the value for money for the funding provided.

2.0 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.
- 2.2 Regular reviews of Colchester's arts and cultural partners are undertaken by the Panel. The last review took place on the 17th of March 2015.

3.0 Representatives

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

Steve Mannix, Executive Director, Mercury Theatre
 Robin Fenwick, Director of Communications and Audience Services, Mercury Theatre
 Anthony Roberts, Director, Colchester Arts Centre

- 3.2 The Chairs of the respective Boards of Trustees have been invited to attend the meeting.

4.0 Partnership delivery arrangements

- 4.1 Colchester's cultural organisations help to make Colchester the place to live, learn, work and visit. They have a role to play in community development; ensuring a diverse range of experiences and activities are accessible to all, and vulnerable and hard to reach groups have positive ways to interact in their local community. The organisations are integral to the creative industries and the tourism and nighttime economies, all priority sectors for the Borough.

- 4.2 This cultural and creative asset base is a result of a strong funding partnership

between the Council, the arts organisations, Arts Council England, and Essex County Council which has been in place for more than 10 years.

4.3 Annual Funding Agreements are agreed in close consultation with each organisation and set out the activity and targets around delivery. Copies of the Funding Agreements for 2015/16 with outcomes and the current agreements for 2016/17 are attached as Appendices.

4.4 A Member of Colchester Borough Council is nominated to sit on the Board of both organisations.

5.0 The organisations

5.1 The Mercury Theatre

The Mercury engages with over 120,000 people in Colchester and the surrounding area each year through a broad programme staged across two auditoria, and through community education partnerships. It has a proven track record of attracting people into theatre for the first time.

Under the Made in Colchester brand, the Mercury reaches audiences and generates critical attention regionally and nationally; representing and raising the profile of the Borough by association.

The Mercury has been housed in its current location since 1972. The Main Theatre and Studio Theatre seat a combined total of 586. On-site production and workshop facilities create sets, props and costumes for both for in-house productions and touring companies, including the National Theatre. Fundraising is currently under way for a £8.7m extension and refurbishment of the building, transforming and safeguarding the venue as a cultural and community asset for Colchester into the future.

With a turnover of £3m annually, the Mercury is a significant local employer and provider of apprenticeships. It is a major driver of the restaurant and hospitality economy in Colchester.

5.2 Colchester Arts Centre

Housed in St Mary's Church, Colchester Arts Centre reaches over 40,000 people a year with a full and diverse programme across a wide range of contemporary performing arts and events. It takes a leading role in the development of live art through commissions and partnerships. The Centre's mission is to provide arts events of the highest quality and in doing so support new work, innovation, experimentation and international work. Colchester Arts Centre aims to be assessable to the local community in every way and to inspire and nurture creativity within it. The variety and number of events taking place at the venue, on almost every day of the year, make it a key asset in attracting people into the centre of Colchester.

6.0 Financial Arrangements

6.1 The Council determines the level of funding that will be provided on an annual basis, but also aims to support the organisations' medium-term business and operational plans. The funding is agreed by Cabinet and full Council. The terms and conditions of funding including eligibility criteria and performance monitoring arrangements are set out in the Funding Agreements attached here as Appendices.

6.2 Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, the Council will provide funding of:

- £221,850 to The Mercury Theatre
- £63,650 to Colchester Arts Centre

7.0 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.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 Funding Agreement with the Mercury Theatre 2015/16 with outcomes
 Appendix 2 Funding Agreement with the Mercury Theatre 2016/17 (current)
 Appendix 3 Funding Agreement with Colchester Arts Centre 2015/16 with outcomes
 Appendix 4 Funding Agreement with Colchester Arts Centre 2016/17 (current)

Funding Agreement between Colchester Borough Council and the Mercury Theatre

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. Colchester Arts Centre, firstsite 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 The Mercury Theatre is one of three arts organisations strategically-funded by CBC. In 2014 the Mercury was successful in their bid to the Arts Council for continued National Portfolio Organisation funding from April 2015. Therefore, the 2015-16 funding agreement with CBC will focus on the Theatre's work towards the goals as set out in its bid, and updated Business Plan, as well as the key areas of performance and delivery required by CBC.

2.0 Scope and Financial Arrangements

- 2.1 Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 the Council will fund the Mercury Theatre to the amount of £221,850. 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 theatre buildings is deemed to be outside of this

agreement. However, any tenant responsibilities that the Mercury Theatre holds are considered to be within this agreement.

- 2.4 On signing this Agreement, the Mercury Theatre 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. The Theatre also agreed 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 the Mercury Theatre 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, the Mercury Theatre 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.

3.0 Eligibility and Criteria for Acceptance

- 3.1 In order to be eligible for funding the Mercury Theatre 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
 - 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 The Mercury Theatre 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 2014-15.
- 4.2 As a minimum throughout the term of the agreement, the Mercury Theatre 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

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

- 5.1 A review meeting will take place between Colchester Borough Council and Mercury Theatre twice in the period of the agreement. The meetings shall be attended by the relevant officer(s) of the Council and Executive staff of the Mercury Theatre.
- 5.2 The Portfolio Holder and Theatre 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 The Mercury Theatre 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 the Mercury Theatre as an agent of the Council or otherwise make the Council liable to any person who may take proceedings against the Theatre.
- 7.3 The Council reserves the right to nominate annually a councillor to be a director on the Mercury Board.
- 7.4 Funds will be repayable in full to the Council in the event of any of the following:
 - i. Misuse of payment received from the Council by Mercury Theatre
 - ii. A breach of the law by Mercury Theatre
 - iii. Petitioning the court for the appointment of an administrator
 - iv. Having a receiver appointed over all or any part of the Theatre's assets
 - v. Being the subject of a petition or resolution for the Mercury Theatre'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 the Mercury Theatre 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 the Mercury Theatre agree that they have an equal responsibility to reach a practical and reasonable solution to the breach, but if

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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 the Mercury Theatre. The information provided here substantiates the Council's decision to invest public funds and helps to strengthen the partnership delivery model.
- 9.2 The information is 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
Annual target to put on 380 performances with 108,000 people attending	533 performances and events achieving a capacity of 78% (against the national average of 60%). The refurbished studio was only operational from November 2015. Increase of 153 in performances compared to the previous year. Actual audience attendance of 123,833 (17% increase on 2014/15).
Collate and report audience feedback about the artistic programme with a minimum of 60% approval rating	Customer Satisfaction Surveys are carried out following each Made in Colchester Production. Customers currently rate the Mercury as 4.5* out of 5* . This feedback is reviewed regularly and there is an additional formal quarterly review of all audience feedback by SMT and Heads of Department with actions minuted and distributed to all staff responsible.
Collate and report press feedback about the artistic programme.	All press reports from local, regional and national papers are collated. Copied are available on request. There were 76 mentions of the Mercury Theatre in the national press in 2015/16, none were overtly negative.
At least 60% local audience and 40% audience supporting tourism economy	50% of our audience was local to Colchester (within Borough postcodes) and 50% from beyond Colchester (the majority from Essex).
Annual target of 900 community and education sessions with 20,000 participants	22,300 people took part in our Learning and Participation Programme across 846 sessions.

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Continue SLA partnership between CBC, Arts Council England and the Mercury to ensure on-going revenue funding for core stage and community work is maintained.	Revenue funding maintained. The Mercury retains membership of Arts Council England's National Portfolio of arts organisations and the further support of Essex County Council (annual award).
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9.4 Community and Audience Development

Target	Outputs/Report
£ 200,000 to be invested into work in the community.	Total Investment: £224,377 .
Annual target – 900 community and education sessions with 20,000 participants.	Please refer to the above.
Maintain rate of 35% tickets sold on a concessionary basis.	22% of tickets sold in 2015/16 were concessions.
Maintain rate of 7% of tickets sold to disabled people and carers.	7,921 achieved. 19% increase on 2014/15
Increase level of concessionary tickets to 35%	As above, 22% of tickets sold were concessions.
Maintain level of accessible performances for disabled and deaf people – 21 performances	16 access performances achieved Further development of access provision to continue in 2016/17 with additional funding support from Colchester Catalyst and Colne Housing Community Trust.
Maintain methods of seeking audience and user feedback – target – monthly audience survey	An audience experience survey is conducted throughout the year following each of our Made in Colchester productions. Feedback is reviewed and actioned throughout the business.

9.5. Governance and Management

Target	Outputs/Report
Mercury Theatre Board of Directors to agree a new three-year business plan for the period 2015/16 – 2017/18 to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Plan • Artistic Programme • Financial Projections 	<p>Three Year Business plan agreed with annual reviews each year to agree an Annual Action Plan.</p> <p>Next business plan (for the period 2018-2022) to be developed over summer 2016 for submission to Arts Council England NPO Round in the autumn. Decision expected early 2017.</p> <p>The Board of Directors receive regular reports on artistic activity and review quarterly management accounts at the full meeting and its quarterly Finance and General Purposes Committee.</p>

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<p>Mercury Board to review and update all policy statements to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Diversity Strategy and action plan • Risk Management • Health and Safety • Sustainability and Environmental Strategy 	<p>All policies have been reviewed annually with appropriate updates.</p> <p>In particular, our Health and Safety Policy has been updated to reflect the new CDM regulations relating to venues, theatres and the entertainment industry.</p>
<p>Mercury Board and senior staff to continue to progress the capital development of the Mercury Theatre and other possible locations to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options Appraisal • Tender and procurement processes • Details plans and costings to RIBA Stage D • Financial and fundraising strategy <p>(subject to additional funding being secured)</p>	<p>Our Large Capital Programme has commenced following allocation of funding from Arts Council England, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council (£7 million).</p> <p>Arts Council England has confirmed a Development Award of £478,000 towards the project.</p> <p>The project will now be managed by Colchester Borough Homes on behalf of Colchester Borough Council and the Mercury and will meet all necessary RIBA Stages, tendering and procurement processes.</p> <p>A Joint Working Group has been established between CBC, CBH and the Mercury that meets monthly.</p> <p>The Board of Directors has established a Capital Sub Committee to support the Large Capital Scheme.</p> <p>A Fundraising Strategy has been developed and agreed and will seek to secure the additional £1.7 million required for the project from Trusts and Foundations, sponsors and individuals.</p> <p>A public fundraising campaign will be launched in September 2016 at the House of Commons.</p>
<p>Mercury Board and senior staff to participate with CBC in a review of the Lease for the main theatre building and associated premises</p>	<p>Discussions have commenced with CBC relating to the leases of the main theatre and associated premises and will form part of the work plan relating to the Large Capital Scheme as above.</p>

9.6. Diversity

Target	Outputs/Report
Continue to encourage more diverse audiences and participants engage with the Mercury across all equality groups. Target: 2% of audiences	2.5% of our audience self identified as being from a minority ethnic group in 2015/16 (1.4% increase) 5% of our audience were disabled, deaf or hard of hearing. 51% of our audience were women. No data is available around sexuality.
Continue to ensure the Mercury recruits and attracts a diverse workforce. Target: 70% female 5% disabled 2% minority ethnic 5% lesbian and gay	The Mercury continues to ensure all of its recruitment methods target local diverse communities. Staffing statistics include – 114 staff employed across full time, part time and casual 179 actors and creatives 70% female 5% disabled 2% minority ethnic 5% lesbian/gay
Annual review all equality action plans and policies.	A New Equality Action Plan was implemented from April 2015.
Continue to attract those from lower income and modest income households, proactively engaging with those from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived areas of Colchester. Target: 10% of users and audiences	Attendance from 2014/15 priority areas – St. Anne's Ward, St Andrew's. Greenstead, Berechurch, Shrub End (CO4 0, CO4 3, CO2 9) was 12,147 which is 9.8% of the total audience.

9.7. Young People

Target	Outputs/Report
Maintain rate of 10% all tickets sold as concessions are for young people.	10% achieved. (Schools 6% , Under 26's 2% , Student 1% , Child 1%)
Deliver 900 community and education sessions attracting 20,000 participants.	Please refer to the above comments.
Target 100 sessions/performances in Schools.	48 performances of Not Now Bernard. Learning & Participation in schools in Colchester and North Essex. Total school workshops - 114

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<p>Establish and maintain Teachers Forums for Primary and Secondary Schools.</p> <p>Target: 50 member schools</p>	<p>The Forums have been successfully established with 37 member schools taking part.</p> <p>We continue to work in partnership with North Essex Training Schools Alliance and Essex County Council to provide regular CPD Sessions for Teachers.</p>
<p>Continue to create opportunities for access to the arts particularly for children and young people. This includes community involvement in Mercury Company productions and an ongoing commitment to our overall community activities.</p>	<p>Opportunities created for people of all ages</p> <p>3-5 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play <p>5 – 11 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After School Drama Clubs • Summer Schools <p>11 – 18 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Theatres • Summer Schools <p>16 – 25 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Theatres • Young Company <p>18+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act V Drama for Over 50's • Talent Development Programme <p>Additional workshops have taken place in partnership with organisations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester Women's Refuge • Colchester Chinese Society • Colchester Nepalese Society • Barnardos • Jaywick Community Centre • St Anne's Children's Centre • Greenstead Children's Centre <p>CPD Network for Teachers</p> <p>Local community involvement in Made in Colchester productions continues such as our Panto through our junior chorus (16 young people).</p>

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Maintain level (145 people) of young people enrolled in youth drama classes	<p>Maintained during the year at 152. All groups are oversubscribed and we are looking to grow this capacity.</p> <p>Following the refurbishment of the studio theatre in November all Youth Theatre Groups are now based at The Mercury for the very first time and taken place Sunday – Wednesday each week.</p> <p>At the end of the period, the Mercury hosts the <i>Connections Youth Theatre</i> Festival in partnership with the National Theatre.</p>
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9.8. Older People

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Continue to deliver specific projects and activities for older people to include: Senior Matinees</p> <p>Regular classes and workshops Target: 30 workshops per year 9 senior matinees</p>	<p>40 older people participate in Act V.</p> <p>From January 2016 Act V has been expanded following the confirmation of additional funding from the BIG Lottery.</p> <p>Senior Matinees remain popular – there were 12 in the year 2015/16 achieving 76% attendance.</p>

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

Target	Outputs/Report
Commission and carry out an economic impact study in collaboration with CBC and other partners and share outcomes	<p>A dedicated Economic Impact Study for arts organisations in Colchester was completed in summer 2015. A final report and statistics were shared with all organisations and stakeholders.</p> <p>We also participated in a nationwide project (“Audience Finder” sponsored by Arts Council England which reported on our Economic Impact as part of its annual report.</p>
Deliver 20 work experience placements during the year.	24 achieved.
Deliver 3 apprenticeships across all areas of the Mercury.	<p>Achieved 1 Apprenticeship during the year due to budget restrictions.</p> <p>Funding has been secured for 3 new Apprenticeships to commence in June</p>

	<p>2016.</p> <p>A partnership with Colchester Institute has been confirmed to commence a new Technical Theatre Vocational Degree Course (approx 10 students) from September 2016.</p> <p>In addition, we hosted 2 paid internships supported by the University of Essex funded by Santander.</p> <p>4 paid internships will be offered in 2016/17.</p>
<p>Provide evidence and support for new and emerging regional talent and companies.</p> <p>Target: 6 new local companies and artists 60 participants</p> <p>Produce Annual Lights Up Festival – June 2015</p>	<p>During 2015/16 we launched our new Talent Development Programme that included:</p> <p>Essex Playwriting Competition 50 playwrights submitted and received feedback on their work 5 playwrights received professional rehearsed readings 22 actors/5 directors employed</p> <p>Associate Artists Scheme 40 applicants 5 associates appointed</p> <p>Early Career Training Programme 40 applicants 13 artists participated in the pilot programme</p> <p>Essex Theatre Artists Network 300 current members</p> <p>The first Lights Up! Festival was produced in June 2015 showcasing regional talent and provided with professional support. The Festival engaged with 203 non-professionals.</p> <p>The Lights Up! Festival will continue in 2016/17.</p> <p>Our Young Company – 60 members – produced <i>Animal Farm</i> in the Main House.</p>

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Target and engage with 20 volunteers during the year.	18 regular volunteers and 9 one-off volunteers for projects such as the recording of our audio brochure.
Assist CBC with other initiatives including: Night-time economy Local employment and skills Development of creative and cultural industries Marketing of Colchester as a visitor destination	<p>The Mercury continues to work in partnership with CBC as follows –</p> <p>Night-time Economy The Mercury continues to be active members of local trade associations such as the new CIC – <i>Colchester Presents</i> and works closely with the Town Centre Manager.</p> <p>The Mercury's Executive Director sits on the board of <i>Colchester Presents</i> and was a member of the working group to support <i>Purple Flag</i>.</p> <p>The Mercury had a visible presence in the Colchester Carnival and Christmas Lights Switch on. These events will be repeated in 2016/17.</p> <p>Local Employment and Skills The Mercury continues to work in partnership with a variety of organisations to improve local employment and skills such as –</p> <p>Hosting Essex Chamber of Commerce bi-monthly breakfast briefings and twilight events for local businesses.</p> <p>Regular presence at local business and employment events and fairs.</p> <p>Strong partnership with local Job Centre, Colchester Inst and Essex University.</p> <p>Development of Creative and Cultural industries The Mercury is an active member of the Creative Colchester Initiative with representation at Board level and the Project Working Group.</p> <p>Marketing of Colchester as a Visitor Destination The Mercury has continued a dialogue with senior officers from CBC about how to promote Colchester as a destination.</p>

	<p>The Mercury has taken on ticketing for key events (such as the annual Fireworks in Castle Park, Summer Screens and Charter Hall). This data will be used to support further campaigns and initiatives to support tourism and the visitor economy for the town.</p> <p>In addition, the Mercury has agreed a partnership with CBC to offer support and advice to further develop Charter Hall as a venue.</p> <p>Through its overall marketing strategies, the Mercury continues to promote Colchester as a destination and through the use of the <i>Made in Colchester</i> brand on tour throughout the UK for a record 19 weeks.</p> <p>50% of audiences attend from outside of the borough.</p> <p>The Economic Impact Study completed last summer provided further evidence that the Mercury's audience contribute £3.7 million to the local economy.</p>
Continue to participate in and support the ongoing development of the Colchester Comedy Festival	<p>Programming for the festival last year was very late. The Mercury was not able to contribute as much as we would have liked. However, we supported the promotion of the wider festival with emails and social media activity.</p> <p>Further planning has commenced for the festival in 2016.</p>

9.10. Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Target	Outputs/Report
Develop and agree a Sustainability and Environmental Policy and Action Plan.	Completed.
Collate and publish targets to reduce carbon footprint and provide evidence of improvement at regular intervals.	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The Mercury is an active member of the Arts Council England sustainable energy scheme – <i>Julie's Bicycle</i> and monitors all energy usage quarterly and completes and annual return of data.</p>
Monitor the installation of solar panels and the usage of green energy (installation summer 2015)	The solar panels have been installed (October 2015) and the Mercury has joined CBC's Sustainable Energy

	Scheme.
Strengthen and grow partnership working through joint bids, cross programming and shared activity, including developing a big data approach to audience development across partners	<p>Achieved. Commitment to the Audience Agency's Audience Finder big data project.</p> <p>Successful joint funding bids have been achieved with community groups including the Colchester Nepalese Society, Stage Write and the Colchester Chinese Community.</p>

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

Each year, the Mercury focuses on developing partnerships for the benefit of the community and local economy, for example assisting the Chinese and Nepalese Communities in their annual cultural celebrations, providing space and support for the Essex Gang Show, Colchester Operatic Society and other school and community groups.

The Theatre continues to develop co-productions to enable **Made in Colchester** shows to tour nationally and where appropriate internationally raising the profile of Colchester. In 2015/16 achieved **19** weeks of national touring against a target of **8** weeks.

The Mercury continues to attend regional and national conferences and events to present and share best practise to those within the arts and creative industries and others acknowledging the support of the Council. Conferences planned for this year include:

- Arts Marketing Association
- The Independent Theatre Council
- UK Theatre
- British Council
- Arts Council England

Acknowledgement of the Council's support in **25,500** brochures distributed **three** times a year. In addition, electronically we distribute a monthly e-newsletter to **38,000** people with a further **253,095** unique visitors to our website in 2015/16 (**24%** increase on 2014/15). In addition, there was a growth of **62%** on Facebook and a **23%** increase in Twitter followers compared to 2014/15.

The Mercury hosts a civic evening each year as a chance to say thank you for the support given and to promote the stage and community work that the funding partnership makes possible. The event includes acknowledgment of the Council's support.

In October 2015, the Mercury hosted a formal 'opening' event for the refurbished Studio Theatre and work to the Main House. This was attended by the Chairman of Arts Council England (the first visit of any Chairman to the Mercury) along with Will Quince MP and Bernard Jenkin MP. This event received significant national press coverage.

On the 11th January 2016, the Mercury was featured in a House of Commons debate highlighting the work of the DCMS and the importance of regional theatre. The debate received national press coverage and was featured on the local Look East News Programme with a live broadcast from the Mercury.

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

Local

The Mercury Theatre continues to work proactively with the Council (including Colchester and Ipswich Museums), firstsite and Colchester Arts Centre to ensure a collective and united vision for Arts, Culture & Heritage promotion and accessibility across Colchester aimed at maximising potential and seeking out opportunities for a more collaborative and sustainable approach. This has included joint marketing and visitor package offers to encourage increased numbers of cultural visitors to the town and the commissioning of the Economic Impact Study last summer.

The Mercury Theatre actively contributed to 'The Creative Colchester Strategy' by supporting emerging local talent and providing work experience, supporting cultural tourism initiatives, and working with a range of community service providers such as charities, health providers and voluntary groups to engage and develop communities.

The Mercury is an active member of the Creative Colchester Board (Chair of Mercury Board of Directors attends) and the Creative Colchester Project Group (Executive Director).

The Mercury is an active member of Colchester Presents CIC and actively participates and contributes to the Colchester Carnival, Christmas Lights Switch On Event and other community events throughout the borough.

The Mercury's Executive Director is a member of the Purple Flag Working Group.

Further partnership agreements are in place with the Colchester Institute and Essex University.

National

The Mercury Theatre has promoted its collaborative working with other arts providers and Colchester & Ipswich Museums to Arts Council England. This has demonstrated a strategic partnership approach to the development of arts and heritage in Colchester which will raise the profile and status of the town as a cultural centre and generate greater efficiencies and value for money.

Following a review in 2015/16, Arts Council England has identified Colchester as one of the five priority sub regions across the South East to develop the arts and cultural 'offer'.

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

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 Mercury Theatre	Date	
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Signed (Executive Director)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Mercury Theatre	Date	
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Signed (Chair of the Board)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council	Date	
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Signed (Portfolio Holder)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council	Date	
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Signed (Officer)

Name (please print)

Funding Agreement between Colchester Borough Council and the Mercury Theatre

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. Colchester Arts Centre, firstsite 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 The Mercury Theatre is one of three arts organisations strategically-funded by CBC. In 2014 the Mercury was successful in their bid to the Arts Council for continued National Portfolio Organisation funding from April 2015. Therefore, the 2016-17 funding agreement with CBC will focus on the Theatre's work towards the goals as set out in its bid, and updated Business Plan, as well as the 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 the Mercury Theatre to the amount of £221,850. 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 theatre buildings is deemed to be outside of this

agreement. However, any tenant responsibilities that the Mercury Theatre holds are considered to be within this agreement.

- 2.4 On signing this Agreement, the Mercury Theatre 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. The Theatre also agreed 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 the Mercury Theatre 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, the Mercury Theatre 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.

3.0 Eligibility and Criteria for Acceptance

- 3.1 In order to be eligible for funding the Mercury Theatre 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
 - 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 The Mercury Theatre 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 2014-15.
- 4.2 As a minimum throughout the term of the agreement, the Mercury Theatre 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

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- 5.1 A review meeting will take place between Colchester Borough Council and Mercury Theatre twice in the period of the agreement. The meetings shall be attended by the relevant officer(s) of the Council and Executive staff of the Mercury Theatre.
- 5.2 The Portfolio Holder and Theatre 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 The Mercury Theatre 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 the Mercury Theatre as an agent of the Council or otherwise make the Council liable to any person who may take proceedings against the Theatre.
- 7.3 The Council reserves the right to nominate annually a councillor to be a director on the Mercury Board.
- 7.4 Funds will be repayable in full to the Council in the event of any of the following:
 - i. Misuse of payment received from the Council by Mercury Theatre
 - ii. A breach of the law by Mercury Theatre
 - iii. Petitioning the court for the appointment of an administrator
 - iv. Having a receiver appointed over all or any part of the Theatre's assets
 - v. Being the subject of a petition or resolution for the Mercury Theatre'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 the Mercury Theatre 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 the Mercury Theatre agree that they have an equal responsibility to reach a practical and reasonable solution to the breach, but if

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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 the Mercury Theatre. The information provided here substantiates the Council's decision to invest public funds and helps to strengthen the partnership delivery model.
- 9.2 The information is 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
Annual target to put on 400 performances with 115,000 people attending	
Collate and report audience feedback about the artistic programme with a minimum of 60% approval rating	
Collate and report press feedback about the artistic programme.	
At least 60% local audience and 40% audience supporting tourism economy	
Annual target of 900 community and education sessions with 20,000 participants	
Continue SLA partnership between CBC, Arts Council England and the Mercury to ensure on-going revenue funding for core stage and community work is maintained.	

9.4 Community and Audience Development

Target	Outputs/Report
£ 200,000 to be invested into work in the community.	
Annual target – 900 community and education sessions with 20,000 participants.	
Maintain rate of 35% tickets sold on a concessionary basis.	
Maintain rate of 7% of tickets sold to disabled people and carers.	
Increase level of concessionary tickets to 35%	

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Maintain level of accessible performances for disabled and deaf people – 18 performances	
Maintain methods of seeking audience and user feedback – target - monthly audience survey	

9.5. Governance and Management

Target	Outputs/Report
Mercury Theatre Board of Directors to agree a new three year business plan for the period 2018/19 – 2021/22 to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Plan • Artistic Programme • Financial Projections 	
Mercury Board to review and update all policy statements to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Diversity Strategy and action plan • Risk Management • Health and Safety • Sustainability and Environmental Strategy 	
Mercury Board and senior staff to continue to progress the capital development of the Mercury Theatre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender and procurement processes • Details plans and costings to RIBA Stage D • Financial and fundraising strategy (subject to additional funding being secured)	
Mercury Board and senior staff to participate with CBC in confirming the Leases for the main theatre building and associated premises	

9.6. Diversity

Target	Outputs/Report
Continue to encourage more diverse audiences and participants engage with the Mercury across all equality groups. Target: 3.% of audiences	

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

Continue to ensure the Mercury recruits and attracts a diverse workforce. Target: 70% female 5% disabled 2% minority ethnic 5% lesbian and gay	
Annual review all equality action plans and policies.	
Continue to attract those from lower income and modest income households, proactively engaging with those from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived areas of Colchester. Target: 10% of users and audiences	

9.7. Young People

Target	Outputs/Report
Maintain rate of 10% all tickets sold as concessions are for young people.	
Deliver 900 community and education sessions attracting 20,000 participants.	
Target 100 sessions/performances in Schools.	
Establish and maintain Teachers Forums for Primary and Secondary Schools. Target: 40 members schools	
Continue to create opportunities for access to the arts particularly for children and young people. This includes community involvement in Mercury Company productions and an ongoing commitment to our overall community activities.	
Maintain level (145 people) of young people enrolled in youth drama classes	

9.8. Older People

Target	Outputs/Report
Continue to deliver specific projects and activities for older people to include: Senior Matinees Regular classes and workshops	

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

Target: 30 workshops per year 9 senior matinees	
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9.9. Job Creation, sector skills development and contribution to the local economy

Target	Outputs/Report
Deliver 20 work experience placements during the year.	
Deliver 3 apprenticeships across all areas of the Mercury.	
Deliver new Technical Theatre Vocational Degree in partnership with Colchester Institute	
Provide evidence and support for new and emerging regional talent and companies. Target: 6 new local companies and artists 60 participants Produce Annual Lights Up Festival – June 2016	
Target and engage with 20 volunteers during the year.	
Assist CBC with other initiatives including: Night-time economy Local employment and skills Development of creative and cultural industries Marketing of Colchester as a visitor destination	
Continue to participate in and support the ongoing development of the Colchester Comedy Festival	

9.10. Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Target	Outputs/Report
Develop and agree a Sustainability and Environmental Policy and Action Plan.	
Collate and publish targets to reduce carbon footprint and provide evidence of improvement at regular intervals.	
Monitor the usage of green energy	
Strengthen and grow partnership	

working through joint bids, cross programming and shared activity, including developing a big data approach to audience development across partners	
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9.11. What are the Mercury's particular plans to promote the support that the Council provides during the period of the agreement?

The Mercury will continue to focus upon developing partnerships for the benefit of the community and local economy, for example assisting the Chinese and Nepalese Communities in their annual cultural celebrations, providing space and support for the Essex Gang Show, Colchester Operatic Society and other school and community groups.

The Theatre will continue to develop co-productions to enable **Made in Colchester** shows to tour nationally and where appropriate internationally raising the profile of Colchester. Target touring weeks: 8 nationally.

The Mercury will continue to attend regional and national conferences and events to present and share best practise to those within the arts and creative industries and others acknowledging the support of the Council.

Acknowledgement of the Council's support in 25,000 brochures distributed three times a year. In addition electronically they distribute a monthly e-newsletter on our website.

The Mercury will host a civic evening each year as a chance to say thank you for the support given and to promote the stage and community work that the funding partnership makes possible. The event includes acknowledgment of the Council's support.

In September 2016, the Mercury will host a formal launch of the Public Capital Fundraising Campaign at the House of Commons with a further local launch event where the support of the Borough will be highlighted.

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

Local

The Mercury Theatre will work proactively in partnership with the Council (including Colchester and Ipswich Museums), firstsite and Colchester Arts Centre to ensure a collective and united vision for Arts, Culture & Heritage promotion and accessibility across Colchester aimed at maximising potential and seeking out opportunities for a more collaborative and sustainable approach. This will include joint marketing and visitor package offers to encourage increased numbers of cultural visitors to the town and to ensure they have a stimulating and rewarding experience.

The Mercury Theatre will contribute to 'The Creative Colchester Strategy' by supporting emerging local talent and providing work experience, supporting cultural tourism initiatives, and working with a range of community service providers such as charities, health providers and voluntary groups to engage and develop communities.

The Mercury will continue to be an active member of the Creative Colchester Board (Chair of Mercury Board of Directors attends) and the Creative Colchester Project Group (Executive

Director).

The Mercury will continue to be an active member of the new Town Centre Management Group – Colchester Presents CIC and will actively participate and contribute to the Colchester Carnival and Christmas Lights Switch On Event.

The Mercury's Executive Director is a member of the Purple Flag Working Group.

Further partnership agreements are in place with the Colchester Institute and Essex University.

National

The Mercury Theatre will promote its collaborative working with other arts providers and Colchester & Ipswich Museums to Arts Council England. This will demonstrate a strategic partnership approach to the development of arts and heritage in Colchester which will raise the profile and status of the town as a cultural centre and generate greater efficiencies and value for money.

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 Mercury Theatre	Date	
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Signed (Executive Director)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Mercury Theatre	Date	
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Signed (Chair of the Board)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council	Date	
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Signed (Portfolio Holder)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council	Date	
---	------	--

Signed (Officer)

Name (please print)

Funding Agreement between Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Arts Centre

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. Colchester Arts Centre, firstsite 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 Colchester Arts Centre is one of three arts organisations strategically-funded by CBC. In 2014 the Arts Centre was successful in their bid to the Arts Council for continued National Portfolio Organisation funding from April 2015. Therefore, the 2015-16 funding agreement with CBC will focus on the Arts Centre's work towards the goals as set out in its bid, as well as the key areas of performance and delivery required by CBC.

2.0 Scope and Financial Arrangements

- 2.1 Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 the Council will fund Colchester Arts Centre to the amount of £63,650. 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 lease holder of the building is deemed to be outside of this agreement.

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

However, any tenant responsibilities that Colchester Arts Centre Theatre holds are considered to be within this agreement.

- 2.4 On signing this Agreement, the Arts Centre 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. The Arts Centre 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 the Arts Centre 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, the Arts Centre 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.

3.0 Eligibility and Criteria for Acceptance

- 3.1 In order to be eligible for funding the Arts Centre 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
 - 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 The Arts Centre 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, the Arts Centre 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

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

- 5.1 A review meeting will take place between Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Arts Centre twice in the period of the agreement. The meetings shall be attended by the relevant officer(s) of the Council and Executive staff of the Arts Centre.
- 5.2 The Portfolio Holder and Arts Centre 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 Colchester Arts Centre 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 the Colchester Arts Centre as an agent of the Council or otherwise make the Council liable to any person who may take proceedings against the Theatre.
- 7.3 The Council reserves the right to nominate annually a councillor to be a director on the Colchester Arts Centre Board.
- 7.4 The Council should be consulted where any change or development in the direction of the organisation's affairs might affect this Agreement.
- 7.5 Funds will be repayable in full to the Council in the event of any of the following:
 - i. Misuse of payment received from the Council by Colchester Arts Centre
 - ii. A breach of the law by Colchester Arts Centre
 - iii. Petitioning the court for the appointment of an administrator
 - iv. Having a receiver appointed over all or any part of the Arts Centre's assets
 - v. Being the subject of a petition or resolution for the Arts Centre's 'winding up'

8.0 Breach in agreement

- 8.1 In the event of either the Council or Colchester Arts Centre's notifying the other in writing of a breach in this agreement, the parties shall meet to discuss the alleged breach within 21 days.

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

- 8.2 Both the Council and the Colchester Arts Centre 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 your organisation. The information provided here substantiates the Council's decision to invest public funds and helps to strengthen the partnership delivery model.
- 9.2 The information is 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/Programme Overview

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Colchester Arts Centre will promote, present and nurture artistic talent. Through a combination of curatorial expertise, outstanding production values and straightforward commercial nous it will act as a home for artists, a breeding ground for artistic ambition and innovation, and a platform for local, national and international talent. In line with CBC's Strategic Plan, with its broad ranging and risk-taking performance programme Colchester Arts Centre will seek to inspire and nurture creativity in the local community, inspiring artists already on the path and encouraging others to embrace their creativity.</p> <p>Target: In 2015/16 we will present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four pieces of international work. • One major partnership project. • Eight jazz performances • Forty Folk gigs • Sixteen Rock / Indie / Pop gigs • Forty Comedy Shows • Thirty-two shows specifically for children. • Six World Music performances. • Six Film screenings • Six Experimental Music Performances 	<p>International work presented by Reverend Billy and The Church of Stop Shopping Gospel Choir from the USA, theatre from Freedom Theatre (West Bank, Palestine), performance work from Canada's The Chop Theatre, and music from international artists Lubomyr Melnyk (Ukraine) and Massar Egbari (Egypt).</p> <p>We partnered with Firstsite to produce their hugely successful relaunch night in June 2015.</p> <p>Eight jazz performances delivered, with a reinvigorated programme led by a former member of Colchester Jazz Club. Performances on the first Sunday of every month and occasional one-offs. Artists included the Tom Harrison Quartet, Alec Dankworth and Deirdre Cartwright. A successful relaunch night featuring John Etheridge, Anita Wardell & Robin Aspland and the Reg Webb Trio played to a sold out crowd.</p> <p>The thriving Monday Folk Club programme continues, hosted by Colchester Folk Club. 40 shows</p>

	<p>took place, including highlights outside of the regular programme from big names such as Fairport Convention, Sharon Shannon and Maddy Prior.</p> <p>49 Indie / rock artists represented across the spectrum, with up and coming artists such as Fickle Friends and Eliza vs The Bear alongside established names like Turin Brakes, The Levellers and Don Broco.</p> <p>61 comedy shows delivered, with a slew of up and coming names appearing for the first time in Colchester, and sold out shows from household names such as Omid Djalili, Dave Gorman, Jeremy Hardy, Sean Lock and more.</p> <p>29 Childrens' shows delivered, with popular theatre shows represented alongside more ambitious work encompassing a multitude of artforms including dance, music, puppetry and mime.</p> <p>Five World Music performances, including Tim Kliphuis, Acid Mothers Temple, Islam Chippy and Seckou Keita.</p> <p>Six film nights delivered: Buster Keaton Night, Still The Enemy Within, Cowspiracy, White Shadow and The Dinner Party Revisited.</p> <p>Experimental music performances from Macgillivray, United Bible Studies, Goodiepal, Guillaume Gargaud, Justice Yeldham and Solstafir.</p>
<p>Wonderful Wednesdays – the flagship part of our programme – where we present innovative, new, exciting, cutting edge and perhaps “experimental” work in</p>	<p>30 performances delivered, featuring artists working in a variety of fields ranging from dance, live art, theatre, installation and spoken word. Hugely</p>

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

<p>the most accessible fashion. Admission is by Pay What You Can Afford – anything from £0 (nothing) to £15. This encourages “risk-taking” in taking a chance on trying something they may not have experienced before, being affordable for anyone whatever their income.</p> <p>Target: 30 performances in the funding period under</p>	<p>encouraging attendances thanks to the popular Pay What You Can Afford structure. Average attendance of 60 over the funding period (full capacity is 80).</p>
<p>A dedicated programme of Childrens’ Shows and Workshops – programmed by a dedicated booker with specialist knowledge. All show tickets kept at a low affordable price of £4.95.</p> <p>Target: 32 Shows and 10 workshops.</p>	<p>A very successful programme with many shows sold out and regular attendances of 80+ (capacity 150). A pleasing variety of shows going far beyond the regular theatre / panto offer. Very accessible pricing with a low baseline ticket price and discounts for families on some shows. Summertime workshops with Arts Award accreditation delivered.</p>

9.4 Community and Audience Development

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Community Events – we commit to program a number of events focusing on the talents of the local community including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Variety Night in Aid of the Mayor’s Charities • Colchester’s Got Talent • Sixth Form College Battle of the Bands • A Christmas Cracker Variety Night 	<p>Variety Night postponed in 2015 / 16 due to Director’s commitments to management of firstsite. Returning in 2016 / 17.</p> <p>Colchester’s Got Talent delivered for a second successful occasion.</p> <p>Sixth Form College Battle of the Bands delivered, with four acts fighting for the title.</p> <p>A successful Frock Swap event at which members of the community can trade and recycle their unwanted clothing.</p> <p>A successful Teddy Bear’s Concert at which children aged 5 to 11 and their families enjoyed a relaxed afternoon orchestral concert.</p> <p>Christmas Cracker variety Night postponed due to scheduling conflicts.</p>
<p>Increase known audience attendance from 48,003 (2014 /15) to 50,403.</p>	<p>Figures down: 41774</p>
<p>Increase online audience figures by 5% by the end of the funding agreement. This to include the Colchester Arts Centre website and our social media</p>	<p>Targets met and significantly surpassed:</p> <p>Number of website Unique Browsers: 115,443</p>

<p>platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase website Unique Browsers 98,877 to 103,820. • Increase number of website page impressions from 634,714 to 666,449. • Increase number of website visits from 234,037 to 245,738. • Increase Facebook fans from 4133 to 4339. • Increase Twitter followers from 6180 to 6489. 	<p>Website Page Impressions: 700,419</p> <p>Website Visits: 266,849</p> <p>Facebook fans: 6970</p> <p>Twitter followers: 9766</p>
<p>The Watching Club – In partnership with our associate artists we will create a group of audience members and nurture a closer and more intimate relationship between the arts centre and this group. The Watching Club will be invited to experience the full breadth of the programme – from Farmers Markets to Wonderful Wednesdays. This will help us to better understand the needs of our audience, as well as provide crucial feedback on the quality of our offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group to be in place by October 2015. • Group will visit one event per calendar month for the duration of the funding period. 	<p>Initiative postponed due to lack of resources.</p> <p>Audience surveys carried out by volunteer conducting face to face interviews on the night during the Wonderful Wednesdays season.</p> <p>Ever increasing volunteer force invited to pass on feedback, either by word of mouth or by email.</p> <p>Childrens' programme – written feedback invited at end of each show.</p> <p>We have provided in kind support to the FUEL theatre group, which meets to discuss the creative content of work at the arts centre and other venues.</p>
<p>The Audience Finder & The Audience Agency – We undertake to sign up to the Audience Finder by April 2016, and work with The Audience Agency to share information and develop strategies across a regional cluster across the following strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and understanding the demographic profile of participating organisations' audiences • Understanding the overall patterns of cultural attendance in Colchester and the crossover between venues and organisations • Building a picture of Colchester's demographic landscape; with a focus on how different demographic groups engage with 	<p>We are fully signed up to the Audience Finder, and are now sharing detailed anonymised data with a Colchester Cluster of organisations, including the Mercury Theatre, Minorities and firstsite. We have joined an additional cluster working with venues further afield to further understand demographics around our performance work.</p>

<p>the arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding audiences' behaviour and their different motivations to engage • identifying and understanding the place making and cultural tourism impacts of participating organisations • Audience loyalty and levels of deeper engagement through friends and membership schemes. 	
<p>Membership Scheme: Increase our membership from 107 to 150 by the end of the funding period.</p>	<p>Current numbers 95. The scheme is being revamped into a more targeted and potentially lucrative offer in 16 / 17.</p>

9.5. Governance and Management

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Arts Centre Board: Appointment of new board member(s) with fundraising skills</p>	<p>Eliza O'Toole appointed.</p>
<p>CBC representation: Agree a formalised procedure for CBC to attend Board meetings.</p>	<p>Cllr Julia Havis appointed.</p>

9.6. Diversity

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Accessible Shows – we will program specific performances made accessible to people with disabilities, beyond our regular venue accessibility offer. Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two relaxed performances • an audio described performance • a number of BSL interpreted performances. 	<p>Relaxed performances from Frozen Light (2 shows, both sold out), 2 Relaxed orchestral concerts with Orchestras Live (with “try an instrument” sessions), and Goblin Theatre.</p> <p>British Sign language interpretation at four shows.</p> <p>8 Audio Described performances</p>
<p>Increase Diversity of Artistic Programme – encouraging diversity to permeate all levels of the organisation, not just within the staff. Target: work with 6 artists with disabilities during the term of the funding agreement.</p>	<p>Artists presented included Katherine Araniello (The Dinner Party Revisited) and The Vacuum Cleaner (Mental).</p>
<p>Staff Training – to be ongoing and not merely introductory. Target: Disability Awareness Training for all staff at all levels of the organisation on an annual basis.</p>	<p>PMLD training for Box Office staff. Autism Awareness training for all staff, with representatives from Firstsite also attending.</p>

<p>Mystery Shoppers – we have made contact with representatives of Fair Access For Colchester to send people with disabilities to attend our performances, testing our accessibility systems from booking through to the end of the performance.</p> <p>Target: Mystery Shoppers to attend 10 events in the funding period, to include a spread across all art forms.</p>	<p>2 events attended. It has been difficult to engage members of the group to attend a spread of shows, possibly due to lack of interest and / or availability. With our principal contact at Fair Access To Colchester leaving, we are exploring other organisations to take this forward.</p>
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9.7. Young People

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Improve Ticket price concessions to students in full time education:</p> <p>Target: Difference in price is generally £1 or similar. Expand this to a minimum £2 discount across all events by the end of the funding period.</p>	<p>The £2 differential is in place across the majority of events. Barriers particularly in rock / indie gigs where agents will not countenance a concessionary rate. We continue to push the issue – perhaps this is an area in which we can initiate a change in culture. We are offering larger discounts at particularly appropriate events, e.g. Jeremy Hardy, Owen Jones.</p>
<p>Schools Rock Prom / On For 2015 –</p> <p>These are dedicated events for young local bands, giving emerging talent a taste of what it's like to perform in a fully professional venue.</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Rock Prom • One On For 2016 Local Band showcase 	<p>Rock prom delivered 25.02.16. featuring representatives from three Colchester schools.</p> <p>On For 2016 delivered, featuring a record number of applicants. Over 200 attenders came to see 12 local acts, most of whom were playing the arts centre for the first time.</p>

9.8. Older People

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Concessions to over 60s / those in receipt of state pension:</p> <p>Target: Difference in price is generally £1 or similar. Expand this to a minimum £2 discount across all events by the end of the funding period.</p>	<p>In place across the Folk and Jazz programme, and much of comedy. Looking at same for rock / indie gigs.</p>
<p>Programming – We aim to programme events of particular interest to older people – Talks (such as Henry “The Potaholic” Sandon from Antiques Roadshow), and the recent intergenerational project from Drake Music in which young people presented an afternoon choral concert to care home residents.</p> <p>Target: Minimum 5 in the funding period.</p>	<p>Events programmed:</p> <p>Henry Sandon of Antiques Roadshow</p> <p>Christine Bovill’s Piaf (Jazz)</p> <p>Eduardo Martin & Ahmed Dickinson (Classical)</p> <p>Pip Utton: Casanova In Love (Theatre)</p> <p>Passion To Sing (Music)</p> <p>2 x Warm & Toasty Clubs</p>

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

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Chamber of Commerce – We have joined in order to forge closer links with local business through sponsorship opportunities and or possible partnerships.</p> <p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a commercial sponsorship brochure. • CAC Representative to attend 4 networking events per year. 	<p>Commercial sponsorship brochure produced. 4 networking events attended in the period.</p>
<p>Volunteers – Volunteering, whilst hugely aiding the operation of the arts centre, also provides a valuable opportunity for work experience and skills development.</p> <p>Target: Increase volunteer numbers by 10% by the end of the funding period.</p>	<p>Number of volunteers increased from 20 to 56. One volunteer has gone on to join the staff as a paid bar supervisor. Volunteer offer greatly bolstered by a re-invigorated system featuring regular socials, clear benefits, regular recruitment drives and “thank you” nights, publicity print, social media groups and email bulletins.</p>

9.10. Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Farmers Markets – in partnership with En Form we will hold 11 monthly Farmers Markets during the funding period, offering a wide range of locally sourced produce.</p>	<p>Delivered. Looking at ways to assist organisers En-Form to further promote the markets.</p>
<p>Julie’s Bicycle – we will work with this organisation to establish measurement data for use in setting SMART targets.</p>	<p>Continued inputting of data to monitor outputs.</p>
<p>Waste Management – regular review of best practice: we commit to constant monitoring of cost effectiveness and green credentials.</p>	<p>Discussed at length in monthly Green Team meetings, alongside establishing environmental sensibilities across all aspects of the organisation.</p>

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

We acknowledge CBC funding support in our quarterly Events Guide, distributed across the Borough and direct mailed to approximately 13,000 mailing list subscribers.

Funding acknowledgement on website and through social media via re-tweets, facebook re-posts etc.

Looking at certain flagship events at which to highlight CBC funding, such as the On For 2016 local bands all dayer, Childrens' Workshops etc.

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

Local

We contribute to CBC's Strategic Plan across the four highlighted areas:

Vibrant

Colchester Arts Centre enhances the retail mix of the town by hosting Farmers Markets, Art Fairs and other independent trade events, and the leisure mix through the dynamic eclecticism of our events programme. It contributes to a sense of community through its involvement in "grassroots" projects (Annual Variety Night, The Warm & Toasty Club, hosting the long-standing independent Colchester Folk Club...), contributing to the artistic community of the town through collaborations with other venues (space hire, collaborative projects, provision of rehearsal space) and helping to empower people with disabilities through its strong emphasis on accessibility that permeates all levels of the organisation.

Prosperous

Colchester Arts Centre supports its employees through professional development programmes and on spec training when required. The venue has been the starting point for many high-achieving professionals who have gone on to work on projects such as the Latitude Festival, international tour bookers The Agency Group and Live Nation, and progress to senior positions at other nationally recognised arts institutions. Colchester Arts Centre plays a full part in providing work experience for under 18s, and has participated in the recent Creative Apprenticeships scheme.

Thriving

Promoting Colchester's history and heritage through our Heritage Open Days. The venue recognises it is fortunate to be housed in such a historic building that is of considerable interest to many visitors, including those from overseas and visitors are welcome to view the space whenever circumstances will allow. Providing young people opportunities to make the best of their potential, via the provision of participation of events like the Schools Rock Prom, On For 2016 Local Bands showcase, and in the earlier years through our Kids Workshops and Arts Award qualification sessions. The arts centre cares about its environs with regular litter picks and the recent cultivation of new gardens in the entrance area.

Welcoming

For Colchester Arts Centre, accessibility runs through the organisation and is an agenda item at every meeting. The venue has a can-do attitude to accommodate all requests. The performance programme aims to be accessible and inclusive. We are listening to the views of our customers with disabilities through our Mystery Shopper sessions. Equal Opportunities is enshrined at the core of the organisation.

Regional

We are a leading and indeed founder member of the South East Disability Action Group

National

We respond to the targets as laid out within the Arts Council's "Great Art & Culture For Everyone" Ten Year Strategic Framework. We are working and delivering on three of the five

stated goals:

Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

Building on our already strong audience, broadening our reach, penetrating areas of low engagement and extending and enhancing our appeal and cultural offer to communities.

Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

Delivering a cohesive and dynamic arts provision across a multitude of platforms, interventions and scenarios.

Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

Developing a rich programme of events for those in the 3 to 16 yrs age range. Partnership working with educational and schools networks. Targeted projects for deaf and disabled children. Partnership working Bridge and Essex Music Hub. A Summer Festival with Arts Award Accreditation. Engagement with Schools Artsmark Award. Commissioning of new work.

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 Colchester Arts Centre

Signed (Director)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Arts Centre

Signed(Chair of the Board)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council

Signed (Portfolio Holder)

Name (please print)

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2015/16

On behalf of Colchester Borough Council

Signed (Officer)

Name (please print)

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- 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.
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- 2.2 Upon signature of this Agreement, the Council will release the funding in quarterly instalments.
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 - c. Able to manage its work effectively, monitor and manage risk, and seek necessary professional financial, legal and insurance advice
 - 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

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5.0 Bi-annual review process

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

- 5.1 A review meeting will take place between Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Arts Centre twice in the period of the agreement. The meetings shall be attended by the relevant officer(s) of the Council and Executive staff of the Arts Centre.
- 5.2 The Portfolio Holder and Arts Centre 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 Colchester Arts Centre 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 the Colchester Arts Centre as an agent of the Council or otherwise make the Council liable to any person who may take proceedings against the Theatre.
- 7.3 The Council reserves the right to nominate annually a councillor to be a director on the Colchester Arts Centre Board.
- 7.4 The Council should be consulted where any change or development in the direction of the organisation's affairs might affect this Agreement.
- 7.5 Funds will be repayable in full to the Council in the event of any of the following:
 - i. Misuse of payment received from the Council by Colchester Arts Centre
 - ii. A breach of the law by Colchester Arts Centre
 - iii. Petitioning the court for the appointment of an administrator
 - iv. Having a receiver appointed over all or any part of the Arts Centre's assets
 - v. Being the subject of a petition or resolution for the Arts Centre's 'winding up'

8.0 Breach in agreement

- 8.1 In the event of either the Council or Colchester Arts Centre's notifying the other in writing of a breach in this agreement, the parties shall meet to discuss the alleged breach within 21 days.

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

- 8.2 Both the Council and the Colchester Arts Centre 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 your organisation. The information provided here substantiates the Council's decision to invest public funds and helps to strengthen the partnership delivery model.
- 9.2 The information is 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/Programme Overview

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Colchester Arts Centre will promote, present and nurture artistic talent. Through a combination of curatorial expertise, outstanding production values and straightforward commercial nous it will act as a home for artists, a breeding ground for artistic ambition and innovation, and a platform for local, national and international talent. In line with CBC's Strategic Plan, with its broad ranging and risk-taking performance programme Colchester Arts Centre will seek to inspire and nurture creativity in the local community, inspiring artists already on the path and encouraging others to embrace their creativity.</p> <p>Target: In 2016/17 we will present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four pieces of international work.• One major partnership project.• Ten jazz performances• Forty Folk gigs• Thirty Rock / Indie / Pop gigs• Forty Comedy Shows• Thirty shows specifically for children.• Six World Music performances.• Six Film screenings• Ten Experimental Music Performances	
<p>Wonderful Wednesdays – New, challenging, experimental, innovative</p>	.

<p>performance work, made accessible for a regular Colchester audience with a radical pay what you can afford admission structure that makes this work, perhaps more commonly seen as the preserve of the arts elite, truly open to anyone. Personally curated by our Director, and presented in a relaxed, inclusive atmosphere.</p> <p>Target: 30 performances in the funding period.</p>	
<p>A dedicated programme of Childrens' Shows and Workshops – programmed by a dedicated booker with specialist knowledge. All show tickets kept at a low, accessible, affordable price of £4.95.</p> <p>Target: 32 Shows and 10 workshops.</p>	

9.4 Community and Audience Development

Target	Outputs/Report
<p>Community Events – we commit to program a number of events focusing on the talents of the local community including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two “Made In Colchester” Art Fairs featuring work from local artists • Colchester’s Got Talent • Sixth Form College Battle of the Bands • Variety Night 2017 in aid of Mayor’s Charities 	
<p>Increase known audience attendance from 41, 774 (2015 /16) to 42,000</p>	
<p>Increase online audience figures by 5% by the end of the funding agreement. This to include the Colchester Arts Centre website and our social media platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase website Unique Browsers from 115,443 to 121,215 • Increase number of website page impressions from 700,419 to 735,439 • Increase number of website visits from 266,849 to 280,191 • Increase Facebook fans from 6970 to 7318 • Increase Twitter followers from 9766 to 10254 	

<p>Reinvigorated SMS text list – this has proven to be a hugely effective marketing tool in the past, highly targeted but traditionally rather costly. Improved technology and affordability now make this form of direct marketing more cost effective and worthy of further exploration.</p>	
<p>The Audience Finder & The Audience Agency – We will continue to work with The Audience Agency to share information and develop strategies across regional and Colchester clusters, across the following strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and understanding the demographic profile of participating organisations' audiences. • Understanding the overall patterns of cultural attendance in Colchester and the crossover between venues and organisations. • Building a picture of Colchester's demographic landscape; with a focus on how different demographic groups engage with the arts. • Understanding audiences' behaviour and their different motivations to engage. • Identifying and understanding the place making and cultural tourism impacts of participating organisations. • Audience loyalty and levels of deeper engagement through friends and membership schemes. 	
<p>Membership Scheme: Relaunch with new pricing structure and more targeted offer. The scheme has been successful in the past with a good take-up despite minimal or no publicity. With previously struggling areas of the programme now flourishing as a result of changes made to presentation and price structure, the time is right to change the emphasis of the scheme to encourage increased take-up across all areas.</p>	

9.5. Governance and Management

Target	Outputs/Report
Arts Centre Board: Organise a Board retreat.	

9.6. Diversity

Target	Outputs/Report
Accessible Shows – we will program specific performances made accessible to people with disabilities, beyond our regular venue accessibility offer. Target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six relaxed performances • An audio described performance • Six BSL interpreted performances. 	
Increase Diversity of Artistic Programme – encouraging diversity to permeate all levels of the organisation, not just within the staff. Target: work with 6 artists with disabilities during the term of the funding agreement.	
Staff Training – to be ongoing and not merely introductory. Target: Disability Awareness Training for all staff at all levels of the organisation on an annual basis. Offer to be made available to all volunteers.	
Mystery Shoppers – to forge a relationship with local disability groups to evaluate our accessibility provisions. Target: Mystery Shoppers to attend 10 events in the funding period, to include a spread across all art forms.	

9.7. Young People

Target	Outputs/Report
Improve Ticket price concessions to students in full time education: Target: Difference in price is generally £1 or similar. Expand this to a minimum £2 discount across all events by the end of the funding period.	
Schools Rock Prom / On For ... – These are dedicated events for young local bands, giving emerging talent the experience of performing in a fully professional venue. Target:	

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Rock Prom. • One On For 2017 Local Band showcase. • Offer support slots to visiting national and international bands to those appearing at the On showcase. 	
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9.8. Older People

Target	Outputs/Report
Concessions to over 60s / those in receipt of state pension: Target: Difference in price is generally £1 or similar. Expand this to a minimum £2 discount across all events by the end of the funding period.	
Programming – We aim to programme events of particular interest to older people. Target: Minimum 5 in the funding period.	

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

Target	Outputs/Report
Chamber of Commerce – We have joined in order to forge closer links with local business through sponsorship opportunities and or possible partnerships. Target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update commercial sponsorship brochure. • CAC Representative to attend 4 networking events per year. 	
Volunteers – Volunteering, whilst hugely aiding the operation of the arts centre, also provides a valuable opportunity for work experience and skills development. Target: Increase volunteer numbers by 10% by the end of the funding period.	

9.10. Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Target	Outputs/Report
Farmers Markets – in partnership with En Form we will hold 11 monthly	

Farmers Markets during the funding period, offering a wide range of locally sourced produce.	
Julie's Bicycle – we will continue our work with this organisation to establish measurement data for use in setting SMART targets.	
Green Team – meeting monthly to improve green credentials across the organisation.	
Waste Management – regular review of best practice: we commit to constant monitoring of cost effectiveness and green credentials.	

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

We acknowledge CBC funding support in our quarterly Events Guide, distributed across the Borough and direct mailed to approximately 13,000 mailing list subscribers.

Funding acknowledgement on website and through social media via re-tweets, facebook re-posts etc.

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

Local

We contribute to CBC's Strategic Plan 2015-18 across the four watchwords:

Vibrant

Colchester Arts Centre enhances the retail mix of the town by hosting Farmers Markets, Art Fairs and other independent trade events, and the leisure mix through the dynamic eclecticism of our events programme. It contributes to a sense of community through its involvement in "grassroots" projects (Annual Variety Night, The Warm & Toasty Club, hosting the long-standing independent Colchester Folk Club...), contributing to the artistic community of the town through collaborations with other venues (space hire, collaborative projects, provision of rehearsal space) and helping to empower people with disabilities through its strong emphasis on accessibility that permeates all levels of the organisation.

Prosperous

Colchester Arts Centre supports its employees through professional development programmes and on spec training when required. The venue has been the starting point for many high-achieving professionals who have gone on to work on projects such as the Latitude Festival, international tour bookers United Talent Agency and Live Nation, and progress to senior positions at other nationally recognised arts institutions. Colchester Arts Centre plays a full part in providing work experience for under 18s, and has participated in various apprenticeship programmes. Its volunteer scheme gives many the chance to cut their teeth in an arts environment, and some have gone on to gain regular employment as a result of their time with us.

Thriving

Promoting Colchester's history and heritage through our Heritage Open Days. The venue recognises it is fortunate to be housed in such a historic building that is of considerable interest to many visitors, including those from overseas and they are welcome to view the space whenever circumstances will allow. We have recently commissioned a local historian to produce a document detailing the history of the building, for distribution to interested visitors free of charge. Providing young people opportunities to make the best of their potential, via the provision of participatory events like the Schools Rock Prom, On For... Local Bands showcase, and in the earlier years through our Kids Workshops and Arts Award qualification sessions. The arts centre cares about its environs with regular litter picks and the recent cultivation of new gardens in the entrance area. A specialised Green Team now meets monthly to discuss methods of improving environmental sensibilities within the organisation and reducing our carbon footprint.

Welcoming

For Colchester Arts Centre, accessibility runs through the organisation and is an agenda item at every staff and board meeting. The venue has a can-do attitude to accommodate all requests. The performance programme aims to be accessible and inclusive. We are listening to the views of our customers with disabilities through our audience surveys, informal feedback on the night and observations from volunteers. Equal Opportunities is enshrined at the core of the organisation.

Regional

We are a leading and indeed founder member of the South East Disability Action Group.

National

We respond to the targets as laid out within the Arts Council's "Great Art & Culture For Everyone" Ten Year Strategic Framework. We are working and delivering on three of the five stated goals:

Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

Building on our already strong audience, broadening our reach, penetrating areas of low engagement and extending and enhancing our appeal and cultural offer to communities.

Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

Delivering a cohesive and dynamic arts provision across a multitude of platforms, interventions and scenarios.

Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

Developing a rich programme of events for those in the 3 to 16 yrs age range. Partnership working with educational and schools networks. Targeted projects for deaf and disabled children. Partnership working Bridge and Essex Music Hub. A Summer Festival with Arts Award Accreditation. Engagement with Schools Artsmark Award. Commissioning of new work.

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.

Colchester Borough Council strategic funding for arts organisations 2016/17

On behalf of Colchester Arts Centre

Signed (Director)

Name (please print)

On behalf of Colchester Arts Centre

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)

Scrutiny Panel

13 December 2016

Item
13

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Matthew Sterling ☎ 282577
Title	Half-yearly Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to consider the performance report for the period up to the end of September 2016. This includes progress of our performance measures and an update of progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plan.

Scrutiny Panel is asked to review and comment on this report, ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 1 February 2017.

In particular, members of the Scrutiny Panel may wish to consider the extent to which the performance shown in these reports demonstrates the Council is operating effectively and achieving its strategic priorities

The draft Cabinet report is attached.

Cabinet

24 November 2016

Item

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Matthew Sterling 📞 282577
Title	Half yearly Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report summarises performance for the first half of 2016-17 towards achieving the Council's key performance measures and the Strategic Plan Action Plan.

1. Action required

The Cabinet is asked to consider and comment on the performance update for the Council's key performance measures for the period to the end of September 2016 and on the progress update of the Strategic Plan Action Plan to the end of September 2016.

The Scrutiny Panel reviewed the report on 13 December 2016, and Cabinet is also asked to consider any comments as shown in the minutes from that meeting.

2. Background information

The Council has agreed a number of key performance areas which it uses as part of its Performance Management Framework to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides an update of our indicators along with a half-yearly review of progress against our Strategic Plan Action Plan.

3. Performance Summary

- The Council adopted a new Strategic Plan last year which describes its ambitions for making the borough a prosperous, thriving, vibrant and welcoming place.
- The actions within our Strategic Plan Action Plan show that there is a considerable amount of positive activity being undertaken across the Council and with our partners to achieve our Strategic Priorities.
- Progress towards achieving our overall set of organisational performance measures shows that 10 (72%) of our measures are on track to be achieved (or 'Green'), 2 (14%) are not meeting expectations to date but with improvement likely ('Amber'), and 2 (14%) are currently not meeting expectations and are unlikely to do so by the year-end ('Red').
- The Council has also received a number of awards and accreditations.

4. Strategic Plan references

This report provides an update of progress against the Strategic Plan Action Plan, developed to support the delivery of the Council's agreed Strategic Plan Priorities.

5. Consultation

The report's contents do not have any direct implications with regard to consultation. However, the Strategic Plan and priorities were agreed following public consultation.

6. Publicity considerations

The performance report contains key measures for our key performance indicators and our Strategic Plan Action Plan. Many of these are used to monitor the performance of our services, and as such these may be of public interest. The report and related information is published on the [Performance and Improvement](#) section of the Council's website.

7. Financial implications

The financial implications of the action plans to deliver the indicators form part of the budget setting process.

8. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

Progress and improvement of these and many of the actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan support our aims of improving both services and the lives of everyone in the borough. Where required, specific Equality Impact Assessments will exist for policies and activities rather than for individual performance indicators or actions. Progress on the Council's Equality Objectives are included within the Strategic Plan Action Plan Update.

9. Community Safety implications

There are performance measures and actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan which aim to improve community safety and as such this report provides progress updates in this area.

10. Health and Safety implications

This report has no direct implications with regard to Health and Safety.

11. Risk Management implications

We aim to deliver against performance indicators and the Strategic Plan Action Plan Actions, as both form a key part of our performance framework and expectations around delivery of our priorities to the residents of Colchester borough.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Strategic Plan Action Plan - Half Year Report covering 1 April – 30 September 2016

Vibrant

- Enhance the diverse retail and leisure mix supporting independent business opportunities valued by residents and visitors
- Develop a strong sense of community across the Borough by enabling people and groups to take more ownership and responsibility for their quality of life
- Make more of the great culture and heritage in Colchester so that more visitors can enjoy the history and passion of Colchester
- Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester in Bloom activity days arranged with local residents to improve dilapidated areas and to carry out riverside maintenance. River Colne and Middleboro drinking fountain are examples. Also maintenance of High Street planters, barrier planters and hanging baskets. • Big Garden at High Woods Country Park – horticultural therapy project funded from Community Enabling. Encouraging volunteers working with less able members of the community to improve their life opportunities by improving their health, mental and social skills. • The Recreation Ground Community Café project – working with Go4 to provide new facilities within the Recreation Ground at Old Heath Road creating a new hub/focus for community use and interest. <p>Assisting customers to self-serve and 'Go-Online' initiatives continue to help people do more for themselves. Community digital events and surgeries are expanding with nine local areas (including rural communities) now included as well as Essex County Council's mobile library. This has enabled 90 people to have one to one support to go online since April. In addition community events have enabled a further 80 people help in accessing online services. Local groups such as C CVS, Signpost and Beacon house have been trained to provide support and act as 'Online Champions'. Our Digital Skills For Life Course (DS4L) course run by Signpost, using our model, trains an average of ten people a month in basic digital skills. This includes assisting minority groups, digitally isolated younger people and older people to go online. This involved over 90 participants.</p> <p>A participatory appraisal exercise (community engagement method) was undertaken in the Library and Community Hub to allow residents to co-design the space on the ground floor.</p> <p>£200k was invested into The Big Choice funding scheme that gave residents the say in who received significant amounts of money for local projects and that called for communities to demonstrate their commitment to enabling and doing more for themselves.</p>
<p>Make more of our culture and heritage with initiatives such as the Friends of the Colchester Roman Wall and by attracting Heritage grants.</p>	<p>Ongoing activities include grants to Arts organisations and Festivals, the provision of Visitor Information Services, core promotional marketing, the heritage building maintenance programme and a refreshed Visitor Information Website.</p> <p>In addition, the Council has also invested £100,000 into promoting Colchester which has included campaigns that showcase the great heritage in the Borough, including the I-spy campaign, new poster and wider marketing campaigns.</p> <p>A further £60,000 investment into Castle attractions and £33,000 additional investment into the Roman Circus is being realised during 2016. A project to highlight the location of the Roman Gates is underway along with the recent lighting of Balcerne Gate and planned lighting of part of the Roman Wall in Priory Street Car Park.</p>

<p>Ensure sufficient land is allocated in the right places to attract and retain businesses, supply homes and identify the infrastructure that is needed by developing a Local Plan for the borough.</p>	<p>The existing Local Plan allocates sufficient land in the borough for housing and employment up to 2023. The emerging Local Plan will identify land for the period to 2033. Public consultation on Preferred Options for achieving this took place between July and September 2016 and approximately 2200 responses were received. These are now being logged and analysed to inform the Local Plan to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in 2017.</p>
<p>Co-ordinate partners and funding streams in the Northern Gateway and the Hythe to generate a wide range of jobs and facilities.</p>	<p>The Northern Gateway project aims to create an exciting leisure and sporting destination with a mixture of commercial leisure and community and club sports. Sites to the south of the A12 and close to the Stadium are coming forward with new leisure proposals; David Lloyd Leisure is about to open and sites adjoining the stadium are undergoing planning assessment for a regional cinema, refreshments and indoor leisure activity uses. The Mill Road rugby club site will be re-developed to create a major community open space, family and specialist housing with employment uses close to the Northern Approach Road.</p> <p>The sports and leisure uses currently at Mill Road will relocate to the northern side of the A12, funded in large part by the new residential development. The sports complex will provide modern and expanded facilities for most traditional sports, and particularly for rugby, indoor cricket, badminton and table tennis. It will have a specialist cyclo gym and large cafe with viewing area. A regional cycling centre will be created to include a 1.6km racetrack and BMX course.</p> <p>In August, Members endorsed the revised Master Plan that structures the development of this area with a central pedestrian and cycle-only boulevard as its linking east/west feature. A public realm strategy recommending an approach to landscape and design of the public areas is nearing completion.</p> <p>The Business model has been developed and was endorsed by Cabinet in March 2016. Cabinet will receive a report in November, identifying how the scheme will be funded, and the financial implications for the council, procurement options and with a recommendation for the management of the complex. The project is supported in principle by the clubs and sports governing bodies including Sport England and British Cycling. Once the planning application is submitted in early 2017 the funding application process can be progressed. Additional funding is sought from other external sources including central government.</p>
<p>Create more independent business opportunities by providing trading units in new large developments across the borough.</p>	<p>42 units have been provided in the new creative business centre. Opportunities are being sought to incorporate into plans coming forward in north Colchester and where appropriate in the town centre.</p>

Prosperous

- Promote Colchester to attract further inward investment and business relocation, providing greater and more diverse employment opportunities
- Support people to develop the skills needed by employers in the future to take advantage of higher paid jobs being created
- Provide opportunities to increase the number of homes available including those that are affordable for local people and to build (& renovate) our own Council houses for people in significant need
- Ensure transport infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth the keep the Borough moving

Action	Half Year update	
Deliver an inward investment campaign in key employment sectors.	An Inward investment website is in development, due to complete the Autumn of 2016. Also for imminent release are an Annual Economic Report 2015/16 and an Inward investment guide.	
Work with the Town Team and other partners to promote Colchester to attract inward investment.	A partnership has been established with Invest Essex and UKTI. Enquiries have been received and proposals developed for relocating companies. Invest Essex is featuring Colchester on social media and arrangements have been agreed for business-sector visits.	
Review the Better Colchester Town Centre website to promote Colchester. (Please note this website is for the promotion of the Town Centre projects).	<p>Much work on the town centre has taken place over this year to identify what action needs to be taken in the town centre using the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a Town Centre Mystery Shopping Benchmarking Research comparing the experience of Colchester with Chelmsford and Ipswich. • Facilitating a workshop with members of the Town Centre Steering Group to consider the results of the Mystery Shopping research and adding new items to it. • Presenting these results and developing a draft action plan which included short, medium and long term actions. <p>The next steps will be to prioritise these actions prior to the Town Centre Steering Group reviewing the website.</p>	
Secure increased funding and support for skills initiatives particularly in growth or emerging sectors.	<p>Funding has enabled an increase in apprenticeships in Colchester from 1,430 in 2013/14 to 1,580 in 2014/15. A high proportion of these apprenticeships were in growth sectors such as Health, Retail, Business Administration, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies.</p> <p>Colchester Borough Council allocated funding of £20,000 to be used to encourage new entrants into the Construction sector working on local projects in partnership with industry. Meetings scheduled with Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), Essex County Council Skills Representative and local construction companies to ascertain level of match funding and agreed joint initiatives to take forward – this would likely include a Schools Engagement Programme for the sector.</p> <p>Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service successfully secured £222,000 annually for three years to</p>	

	develop a Training Museum initiative that is in its second year. It has included skills development of the workforce, a schools programme for Children and created traineeship posts within the service for young people to gain new skills.								
Provide local economic data to education providers to help ensure that the skills that Colchester businesses need are provided.	'Colchester Skills Report 2016' was provided to local education providers in July 2016. The report gives details and data on employment, education and skills needs. Providers include 10 secondary schools, one General Further Education College, one Sixth Form College and one Higher Education Institution based in the Borough. In terms of post- 16 education and skills participation 13,340 Colchester residents were participating in further education and skills provision in 2013/14 (excluding those attending School Sixth Forms). 8,900 of these were aged 19 or over.								
Ensure there is an ongoing five-year supply of housing sites and the provision of sufficient numbers, types and tenure of housing to meet local need.	The Council continues to maintain a 5 supply of developable and deliverable housing sites. This is reviewed on an annual basis. The emerging Local Plan will identify additional sites to ensure there is adequate supply for the period to 2033.								
Deliver 205 new affordable homes in the borough by 2018.	As at the end of September 2016, 28 new affordable homes had been delivered. Along with the 106 homes built in 2015/2016, this means Colchester is well on target to deliver 205 homes by 2018.								
Seek 20% of new homes on qualifying sites to be affordable homes.	<p>During April 2016 to September 2016, a total of 3 qualifying sites had legal agreements settled which specified the affordable housing contribution to be built. The total affordable housing contributions are set out below and show that all three sites are set to deliver more than the 20% affordable housing required by our Planning Policy. Over the 3 sites, 30% of the total homes being built will be affordable homes.</p> <table><tr><td>Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites</td><td>Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied</td><td>Number of affordable homes actually secured</td></tr><tr><td>93</td><td>19</td><td>28</td></tr></table>			Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured	93	19	28
Total number of homes due on the 3 qualifying sites	Number of affordable homes due if 20% affordable policy applied	Number of affordable homes actually secured							
93	19	28							

Work with Colchester Borough Homes to increase the quality of council housing by refurbishing these properties and using new technologies to ensure they are energy efficient.	The revenue and capital programme of works continue, they are on course and in line with the budget. Work on our major refurbishment of Enoch House is now in phase three and four. The tenants that have moved into their new homes in the first two phases have expressed high levels of satisfaction. Energy Efficient technology has been used at Enoch House and some grant funding obtained, although grants for energy efficiency have been reduced across the sector we continue to apply for those that remain. CBH continue to monitor the introduction and progression of new technologies.
Work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.	The Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan contains actions to continue to prevent homelessness in Colchester and these will be updated at year end. The Homelessness Strategy Progress report for 2015/2016, which sets out actions undertaken and progress on preventing homelessness and rough sleeping in 2015/2016, has also been completed. The Delivery Plan and Evidence base have also been updated.
Articulate Colchester's transport needs to influence the development of new infrastructure by the Highway Authority and developers.	Transport modelling work has been undertaken and published as part of the Local Plan consultation. Further work is underway to develop the mitigation and infrastructure package for the Plan. Local information has been supplied for the Essex Growth Infrastructure Framework. A specific piece of work has been undertaken on Rapid Transit to support potential growth in east Colchester. As part of the principals of Garden Communities, accommodate growth in east Colchester, link together the Garden Community, the University, the Town Centre and station the study shows that there are considerable benefits in investing in a rapid transit system. The Council has responded to various ECC consultations such as Lexden Road; Parking Standards, and Development Management policies. Officers continue to work closely with ECC to develop proposals for future investment in road and public transport operation in Colchester.
Support the delivery of improvements to the strategic road and rail network.	Colchester has representation at various levels on the A120/A12 Member, Community, Economic and Environment fora being led by ECC and Highways England. Essex County Council, Highways England and Network Rail are involved in the development of the Local Plan. The award of the new Greater Anglia franchise includes investment and changes to services such as better quality, more capacity, faster trains and improved connectivity which CBC requested in response to the franchise process and the regional campaign.
Allocate developer funding to sustainable transport projects in the borough which improve the balance between different modes of transport.	Requests are made at Development Team and in response to applications to ensure new developments are well served by sustainable transport modes. A travel Planning 'App' for the University and Maltings student accommodation was launched at the October Freshers Fayre. Funding has been secured from Sainsbury's to fund an extended 61 bus service and service to Greenstead.

	<p>A Community Bus service to Tollgate is being developed using developer funding. Funding has been secured from the University to develop improvements to the bridge over the rail-line and to make improvements to internal cycle routes.</p> <p>Improvements for walking, cycling and public transport have been secured by conditions attached to applications including for the Cowdray Centre, Magdalen Street Student accommodation and Curzon Cinema.</p>
<p>Improve the walking and cycling links between Colchester North Station and the town centre through initiatives such as 'Fixing the Link'.</p>	<p>Events have included cycle training for all, community walks, a health referral programmes, and organised local cycle rides. Additionally, a "Best Foot Forward" travel planning programme was launched in Mile End in late May.</p> <p>Work is underway with the Fixing the Link partners to enhance the initiative. The first tranche of work included improving the Middleborough area but had to wait whilst ECC completed the work for the changes to allow for the Park and Ride bus stop. The original feasibility study included ideas for the Albert Roundabout area which is a "gap" in the Fixing the Link Route. Design consultants will shortly be appointed.</p> <p>CBC has approved the ECC planning application to widen the bridge over Balkerne Hill to allow cycling and walking to the west side of the town.</p>

Thriving

- Provide Colchester's heritage and wide ranging tourism attractions to enhance our reputation as a destination
- Be recognised as a centre of learning with excellent schools and educational opportunities for young people to make the most of their potential
- Be clear about the major opportunities to work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve more for Colchester than we could on our own
- Cultivate Colchester's green space and opportunities for health, wellbeing and the enjoyment of all

Action	Half Year update
Provide positive experiences for visitors and residents by promoting Colchester's key leisure, visitor attractions and events venues.	Purple Flag accreditation has been re-secured for Colchester's evening and night time economy. New hotels opening have brought additional bed spaces enabling the Borough to be promoted as a short break destination. New arrangements to make it easier for coaches to pick up/drop off have been introduced to welcome coach visitors from September 2016. £100k additional funding for promotion of Colchester and £33k investment into the Roman Circus have been secured. The Council has organised or supported a number of events promoting the town including the Big Screen in Castle Park; a Heritage Open Weekend, the Cricket Festival, Food Festival, Slow Food Festival and a host of other more local community celebrations.
Support and help market a range of cultural festivals for local people and visitors.	The Festival Support Fund has supported 22 festivals and events across the Borough since May 2016, many of them with a cultural focus, including multi date festivals like the Roman River Music Festival, The Colchester Comedy Festival and Open Studios, and one day events like the Big Sunday, Colchester Carnival, the Little Scarlet Festival in Tiptree and the Art Sea Music Festival in Wivenhoe. These have been promoted via the Visit Colchester website and social media channels.
Enhance Colchester's heritage attractions with initiatives such as integrating attractions, identifying trails around the town, and lighting the Roman walls.	The Ancient Colchester app was re-launched in August. Previously the Castle App, and funded as part of the Castle Redevelopment project by the HLF this has been updated to provide a self-guided tour around Roman and Norman heritage sites in the town centre, including the Roman Circus. Further content covering Gosbecks, Lexden Mount and Mersea Barrow will be added by the end of the year. Recording Colchester's Heritage Project is progressing well with volunteers producing detailed analysis of early buildings in the town centre with dendro-dating revealing some interesting dates for their construction. This data will feed into an app or on-line data to enhance the experience and appreciation of the town centre.
Promote what Colchester has to offer to residents, visitors, and new businesses.	A new www.visitcolchester.com website has been launched with new functionality and capability, supported by ongoing search engine optimisation which has substantially increased traffic to the website (visitors to the website were up by 47% in Aug 2016 compared to Aug 2015).

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

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

Welcoming

- Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses with a friendly feel that embraces tolerance and diversity
- Improve the cleanliness and health of the place by supporting events that promote fun and wellbeing
- Create a business friendly environment, encouraging business start-ups, support to small and medium sized enterprise and offer development in the right locations
- Make Colchester confident about its own abilities, to compete with the best of the towns in the region to generate a sense of pride





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

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

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

Corporate Indicator Set Year Half Year Performance April – September 2016						
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2016/17	RAG	Half Year Result 2015/16	Half Year Result 2016/17	Comments

Planning Key Indicators

KI P1 Processing of planning applications	Majors 88%	80%	G	75%	93% 	Despite another increase in application numbers and a vacant post (which has now been filled), application determination speeds remain a priority for the teams and are high.
	Minors 90%	85%	G	90%	95% 	
	Others 96%	90%	G	96%	96% 	
KI P2 Planning appeals allowed against our decision to refuse	27.9%	30% maximum	R	15.4%	37.5% 	Our performance has declined in the past month following a spate of decisions by the PINs including 2 upheld appeal at one site in Stane Park. Detailed analysis has been undertaken of the 9 allowed appeals, with no consistent patterns found. It is arguable that 2 of the 9 were avoidable, but this would not alter the overall RAG status. Some changes have been made to internal sign off processes in response but these will take at least a few months to filter through to appeals.

Corporate Indicator Set Year Half Year Performance April – September 2016						
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2016/17	RAG	Half Year Result 2015/16	Half Year Result 2016/17	Comments

Benefits Key Indicators




KI B1 Time to process housing benefit new claims and changes	10 days Housing Benefit	13 days Housing Benefit	G	12 days Housing Benefit	11 days Housing Benefit ↑	Performance for September has remained consistent. In respect of Housing Benefit there has been no change at 11 days. LCTS continues to improve with a further reduction from 15 to 14 days. We are in a good position and expect to come in either on, or under, the target by year end.
	14 days LCTS	16 days LCTS		14 days LCTS	14 days LCTS ↔	

Housing Key Indicators

KI H1 Net additional homes provided	943	830	A	150	167 ↑	House building in Colchester during the first half of the year was below target however some slow-down in delivery was expected following the EU referendum in June.
KI H2 Affordable homes delivered (gross)	106	205 delivered over three years	G	74	28 ↑	As at the end of September 2016, 28 new affordable homes had been delivered. Along with the 106 homes built in 2015/2016, this means Colchester is well on target to deliver 205 homes by 2018.




Corporate Indicator Set Year Half Year Performance April – September 2016						
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2016/17	RAG	Half Year Result 2015/16	Half Year Result 2016/17	Comments

Housing Key Indicators delivered by Colchester Borough Homes (CBH)

KI H3 Homelessness cases prevented	58%	45%	G	47%	49% 	163 applicants were supported to remain in their home or supported into alternative accommodation to prevent homelessness.
KI H4 Rent Collected	98.85%	98%	G	97%	97% 	Rent collection levels continue to remain on target despite the difficult economic climate for tenants.
KI H5 Average time to re-let council homes	General 16.81 days	28.5 days 17 days	G	General 18.5 days	(New) 20.67 days (Old) 13.01 days 	During the last six months there has been a significant drop in the number of empty Council homes. Turnaround times are well within targets due to the fall in the level of work required.




Corporate Indicator Set Year Half Year Performance April – September 2016						
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2016/17	RAG	Half Year Result 2015/16	Half Year Result 2016/17	Comments

Waste and Recycling Key Indicators

KI W1 Residual household waste per household	415 kg	400 kg	R	200 kg	210.9 kg	 Current performance for this indicator is below target. A monthly target equates to 33.3 kg current performance is averaging 35kg. Across Essex Authorities the quantities of residual waste being collected is increasing. This will be monitored closely and there are a variety of communications through the Essex Waste Partnership to minimise residual waste alongside the education provided by zones teams.
KI W2 Household waste reused, recycled and composted	45.19%	48%	A	48%	47.31%	 Performance is slightly lower than target. The performance in the next quarter will give a better indication as to whether the target will be met as this includes Christmas collections where more waste and recycling is generated. This will continue to be monitored closely against the profile of previous performance throughout the year.
KI W3 Number of weekly missed collections	82 a week	95 a week	G	85 a week	82 a week	 Performance on missed bins in relation to the target remains very positive, currently we are indicating an improvement on the level of performance that we achieved the previous year.

Corporate Indicator Set Year Half Year Performance April – September 2016						
Indicator	Result 2015/16	Target 2016/17	RAG	Half Year Result 2015/16	Half Year Result 2016/17	Comments

Resources and Organisational Key Indicators

KI R1 Council Tax collected	97.6%	97.5%	G	57.19%	57.29% 	Collection is above previous year. Furthermore considerable tax base growth noted. The team is focused on initiatives to further increase collection. Collection remains on track to meet target.
KI R2 Business Rates (NNDR) collected	98.3%	97.8%	G	57.29%	57.45% 	Collection is above last year. A number of proactive initiatives are in progress within the team to further develop our collection position. Collection remains on track to meet target.
KI R3 Sickness rate in working days	6.86 days	7.5 days	G	6.12 days	6 days 	Sickness absence continues to be managed robustly within services using the Bradford Factor absence triggers to inform discussions. Indications are that absence is within target at the half yearly point. The transition to the new Midland HR and Payroll system means that we are currently collating the data manually and it will need to be verified once the new system goes live.

Other performance news

- **Awards and accreditations**

The highlights are summarised here and are also shown on www.colchester.gov.uk in the [achievements](#) section

Achieved April to September 2016:	
Anglia in Bloom	<p>Winners included High Woods Country Park (winner of <i>Parks [Large Over 10 Acres]</i> and gold award); the Big Garden at High Woods Country Park (winner of <i>Best Garden for Special Needs</i>); Castle Park (<i>Parks [Large Over 10 Acres]</i>) gold award; the Castle Park 'three bees' (winner of <i>best local authority floral display</i>) - and Colchester earned a gold award in the city category. Colchester Cemetery was awarded silver-gilt (<i>cemeteries over 10 acres</i>).</p> <p>The 'Cub Scouts Bee Project' won the Bill Webster Award (<i>Best Young People's Project aged 12 years and under</i>). The New Town Community Garden was nominated (<i>'grow your own' category</i>). Colchester in Bloom is key through its mission to "generate community involvement in making our town a more beautiful place to live and work and contribute towards social and economic vitality".</p>
The Geography of Creativity in the UK	A national report highlighted a boom in the growth and significance of creative industries in Colchester. NESTA and Creative England launched a new report 'The Geography of Creativity in the UK'. The report ranks Colchester as 8th in the country for Creative Industries' Importance in terms of drawing people in to work in the sector from a wider area. Colchester also ranks 20th in the UK for high concentration and growth - beating places such as Brighton and Newcastle.
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park has received its fourteenth consecutive Green Flag, with High Woods receiving its thirteenth. Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and promotes the community value of green spaces.
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)	Successfully reassessed as being a CIPFA Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Accredited Employer for best practice.
Newquest's North Essex Business Awards	The Council won the Environmental Awareness category for its Environmental Sustainability Strategy and related work. The strategy outlines its approach to environmental issues and identifies what it is aiming to achieve by 2020, setting out how Colchester will be a prominent sustainable borough by being a leading example in the community and helping communities become more resilient to climate change.
Adult Learners Awards	The Training Museum is a three-year project by the Colchester + Ipswich Museums Service, set up in 2015 with funding from Arts Council England to develop the next generation of museum staff. Seven full-time trainees on this course scooped the Arts and Cultural Learning prize.

Charter Status for Elected Member Development	The Council passed its interim reassessment in June 2016. This award recognises that the Council has achieved best practice in the way it provides learning and development opportunities for its elected members (councillors). This helps ensure that elected members have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively represent the community.
Tripadvisor certificate of excellence	Awarded to High Woods Country Park for the first time - joining the Castle Museum, Hollytrees Museum and the Castle Park – for consistently achieving outstanding reviews from visitors.
LEXCEL	Legal Services were re-accredited against this Law Society standard. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care.
GeoPlace – national Exemplar Gold award	Gold Performance Award for Address Data - for consistently maintaining the highest level of data quality. The Exemplar Awards recognise excellence in local authority business-critical data creation of Address data, known as a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Street data, known as a Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). Only 15 authorities in the east of England achieved this Gold standard.
Essex Digital Awards	<p>These awards recognise the online achievements of businesses, charities and public bodies from across the county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parking Blog of 'Anna Tendant', a Civil Enforcement Officer working for the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), won the Gold Awards in the 'Business Blog' category, for its weekly updates with 7,000 views to April 2016. As a Gold Award Winner, the Partnership will now be competing to be named the overall Champion for the Business Blog category in the Digital Award Champions 2016. The public vote for this award opens in November - Champions are announced in February 2017. • Pritchard's Point of View won the Bronze Award in the 'Blog: Entertainment' category. Since its launch in February 2015, this has become a regular platform for Adrian's sometimes serious, sometimes quirky musings on issues, projects and important matters concerning Colchester and the work of the Council from his viewpoint as Chief Executive. • CBH was shortlisted in the 'use of video for business' category.
Financial Sustainability: new essential guide	The Council features as a case study in this best practice guide from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU). " <i>Colchester is currently involved in projects which will see increased business rates and rental income for the Council, and improve transport in their area</i> " (page 10 for full item).

- **Other performance news for April to September 2016**

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

Performance Reporting Timetable 2016 - 2017

The deadlines for the monthly performance reports are shown here along with the meetings this data will be reported to:

Monthly Performance Statistics April - June 2016			
Data Deadline to People & Performance (P&P)	26 May 2016 (April statistics)	30 June 2016 (May statistics)	28 July 2016 (June statistics)
SMT Chat (Mondays)	6 June 2016	4 July 2016	1 August 2016

Monthly Performance Statistics July - September 2016			
Data Deadline to People & Performance (P&P)	25 August 2016 (July statistics)	29 September 2016 (August statistics)	27 October 2016 (September statistics)
SMT Chat (Mondays)	5 September 2016	3 October 2016	31 October 2016

Half Year Performance Report April – September 2016 Strategic Plan Action Plan, Monthly Performance Statistics and Award and Accreditations				
P&P	PMB (less KPIs)	Leadership	Scrutiny Panel	Cabinet
29 September 2016	20 October 2016	21 November 2016	13 December 2016	1 February 2017

Monthly Performance Statistics October - December 2016			
Data Deadline to People & Performance (P&P)	1 December 2016 (October statistics)	29 December 2016 (November statistics)	26 January 2017 (December statistics)
SMT Chat (Mondays)	5 December 2016	9 January 2017	30 January 2017

Monthly Performance Statistics January - March 2017			
Data Deadline to People & Performance (P&P)	2 March 2017 (January statistics)	30 March 2017 (February statistics)	27 April 2017 (March statistics)
SMT Chat (Mondays)	6 March 2017	3 April 2017	8 May 2017

Year End Performance Report April 2016 – March 2017 Strategic Plan Action Plan, Monthly Performance Statistics and Award and Accreditations				
P&P	PMB (less KPIs)	Leadership	Scrutiny Panel	Cabinet
6 April 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017	September 2017

Note: Single Data List Indicators – Service to continue to reporting direct to the relevant Government Department