

Council Meeting

**Council Chamber, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ
Wednesday, 22 February 2023 at 18:00**

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There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from St Runwald Street. There is an induction loop in all the meeting rooms.

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Colchester City Council

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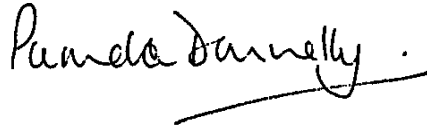
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COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
Council
Wednesday, 22 February 2023 at 18:00

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Published 14/02/2023

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held on Wednesday, 22 February 2023 at 18:00 for the transaction of the business stated below.



Chief Executive

AGENDA
THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING
(Part A - open to the public)

Please note that the business will be subject to short breaks at approximately 90 minute intervals.

Apologies

Apologies have been received from Cllr Mannion and Cllr Nissen.

1 Welcome and Announcements (Council)

The Mayor will welcome members of the public and Councillors and will ask the Chaplain to say a prayer. The Mayor will explain the procedures to be followed at the meeting including a reminder to everyone to use microphones at all times when they are speaking, but otherwise keep microphones muted.

2 Have Your Say! (Council)

Members of the public may make representations to the meeting on any item on the agenda or any other matter relating to the business of Council. Members of the public may register their wish to address the Council by e-mailing democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting. However, advance registration is not mandatory and members of the public may register to speak in person immediately before the meeting.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the agenda about which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the item or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other registerable interest or non-registerable interest.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Council)

A... Motion that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

Council minutes 01-12-22

7 - 18

5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor to make announcements.

6 Items (if any) referred under the Call-in Procedure (Council)

The Council to consider any items referred by the Scrutiny Panel under the Call-in Procedure because they are considered to be contrary to the policy framework of the Council or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with, the budget.

7 Recommendations of the Cabinet, Panels and Committees

Council will consider the following recommendations:-

7(i) Colchester Strategic Plan 2023-26 - A City Fit for the Future 19 - 20

B... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 714 of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023 be approved and adopted.

7(ii) Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2023-24 to 2027-28 21 - 70

C... Motion that the recommendations contained in draft minute 715 of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023 and the recommendations contained in the report by the Section 151 Officer entitled "Precept and Council Tax Levels 2023/24" be approved and adopted. The contents of the report by the Section 151 Officer entitled "Budget 2023/24 and Medium Terms Financial Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28" be noted.

7(iii) Colchester's New Economic Strategy 2022-25 71 - 72

D... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 722 of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023 be approved and adopted.

7(iv) Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023-24 73 - 74

E... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 720 of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023 be approved and adopted.

7(v)	Electoral Cycle	75 - 76
	F... Motion that the recommendation contained in the draft minute of the meeting of the Elections Working Group of 9 February 2023 be approved and adopted.	
8	Questions to Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10	
	Cabinet members and Committee/Panel Chairs will receive and answer pre-notified questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10(1) followed by any oral questions (not submitted in advance) in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10(3).	
	(Note: a period of up to 60 minutes is available for pre-notified questions and oral questions by Members of the Council to Cabinet Members and Chairs (or in their absence Deputy Chairs)).	
	At the time of the publication of the Summons no pre-notified questions had been received.	
9	Schedule of Portfolio Holder Decisions	77 - 82
	Council is invited to note the Schedule of Portfolio Holder decisions for the period 19 November 2022 - 9 February 2023.	
10	Urgent Items (Council)	
	Council will consider any business not specified in the Summons which by reason of special circumstances the Mayor determines should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
11	Reports Referred to in Recommendations	
	The reports specified below are submitted for information and referred to in the recommendations specified in item 7 of the agenda:	
	Colchester City Council Strategic Plan, report to Cabinet, 25 January 2023	83 - 152
	Budget 2023-24 and MTF 2023-24 - 2027-28, report to Cabinet, 25 January 2023	153 - 284
	Colchester's New Economic Strategy, report to Cabinet, 25 January 2023	285 - 326
	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023-24, report to Cabinet, 25 January 2023	327 - 332
12	Exclusion of the Public (not Scrutiny or Executive)	
	In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 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)

Council

Thursday, 01 December 2022

Attendees:

Councillor Tracy Arnold, Councillor Lewis Barber, Councillor Lyn Barton, Councillor Kevin Bentley, Councillor Molly Bloomfield, Councillor Michelle Burrows, Councillor Nigel Chapman, Councillor Helen Chuah, Councillor Mark Cory, Councillor Pam Cox, Councillor Robert Davidson, Councillor Andrew Ellis, Councillor Adam Fox, Councillor Martin Goss, Councillor Dave Harris, Councillor Mike Hogg, Councillor John Jowers, Councillor David King, Councillor Richard Kirkby-Taylor, Councillor Jocelyn Law, Councillor Darius Laws, Councillor Michael Lilley, Councillor Sue Lissimore, Councillor Jackie Maclean, Councillor Roger Mannion, Councillor Sam McCarthy, Councillor Sam McLean, Councillor Patricia Moore, Councillor Steph Nissen, Councillor Chris Pearson, Councillor Kayleigh Rippingale, Councillor Lee Scordis, Councillor Lesley Scott-Boutell, Councillor Paul Smith, Councillor Rhys Smithson, Councillor Michael Spindler, Councillor William Sunnucks, Councillor Leigh Tate, Councillor Martyn Warnes, Councillor Dennis Willetts, Councillor Barbara Wood, Councillor Tim Young

567 Prayers

The meeting was opened with prayers from the Reverend Sue Howlett.

568 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Buston, Coleman, Goacher, Hagon, Luxford Vaughan, Naylor and J. Young.

569 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Council)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 and the Special Council meetings of 23 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

570 Have Your Say! (Council)

Steve Kelly addressed Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(1) and reminded Council that it was World Aids Day. Cancer was another immune deficiency disease and death rates from cancer had increased significantly over the past century. This was due to several factors including poor nutrition in the face of increasing pollution. A lack of vitamin B could also be a contributory factor and studies had shown that certain cancers could be reduced by half through improved vitamin B. It was vital that resources were directed to address this. Councillors should research these issues with an open mind as much of this information was not easily available and was not publicised.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, responded and explained that he had provided a full response when these issues had been raised at Cabinet recently. Vitamin B was a cheap and effective way of combatting the effects of a loss of light. The prime responsibility for addressing this lay with health professionals and the Council could support them in this. Individuals also had personal responsibility, given that vitamin B was cheap and easily available. The Council had not refused a request to fund such treatment.

David Linghorn Baker addressed Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(1). Highwoods residents had been pleased to hear of the plans for the new Community Centre and the previous administration had secured £1.8 million of funding for it. However, matters did not appear to be progressing and there was concern given that capital programmes across the borough appeared to be under threat. Would the Portfolio Holder commit to ensuring that St Marks Community Centre was built and could they confirm whether other community centres, particularly those in Mile End, were under threat from the review of the capital programme.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that there was a renewed focus on the capital programme now, given its significant value, and it had been discussed at both Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet recently. The LGA Peer Review had also recommended that the capital programme be reviewed. The programme was therefore halted while the review took place. This had been agreed cross party. The situation had been made worse by issues such as the sharp rise in inflation and the government's mini budget. All projects above a certain value had been halted and this included St Marks Community Centre. He had spoken to several Highwoods residents and the Chair of Myland Community Council about this. Once the review was complete, an announcement would be made about which projects would be taken forward. This was a prudent approach which was supported cross party. Some of the other projects referred to were less dependent on capital funding as they were supported by section 106 funding.

571 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked Councillor Barton for arranging the donations to the foodbank. He highlighted that it was World Aids Day and noted the commemoration events at the Mercury Theatre. The Mayor also highlighted the following forthcoming events;-

- A reading of "A Christmas Carol" by Anthony Roberts in the Civic Suite on 13 December 2022.
- The Civic Carol Service at St Andrew's Church at 7.00pm on 18 December 2022 .
- A Sketch Show in aid of the Mayor's Charities at the Headgate Theatre on 13-14 January 2023.

572 Officer Pay Policy Statement 2023-24

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the recommendation contained in draft minute 706 of the Cabinet meeting of 16 November 2022 be approved and adopted.

573 Nomination for Deputy Mayor 2023-24

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the recommendation contained in draft minute 708 be approved and adopted and accordingly Councillor Scott-Boutell be nominated for election as Deputy Mayor of the City of Colchester for the 2023-24 municipal year.

574 Review of the Council's Ethical Governance Policies

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the recommendation contained in draft minute 337 of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 22 November 2022 be approved and adopted.

575 Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the recommendation contained in draft minute 340 of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 22 November 2022 be approved and adopted.

576 Waste and Recycling Services in Highwoods

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Law that Council Procedure Rule 11(2) be suspended to allow the motion on Waste and Recycling Services to be debated and determined at this meeting. On being put to the vote the motion was lost (FOURTEEN voted FOR, SIXTEEN voted AGAINST and ELEVEN ABSTAINED from voting).

A named vote having been requested pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 15(2) the voting was as follows:-

FOR: Councillors Barton, Bloomfield, Burrows, Cox, Fox, Harris, Hogg, Law, Lilley, McLean, Pearson, Ripplingale, Scordis and Warnes.

AGAINST: Councillors Barber, Bentley, Chapman, Davidson, Ellis, Laws, Lissimore, Maclean, Mannion, McCarthy, Moore, Smithson, Spindler, Sunnucks, Tate and Wood.

ABSTAINED FROM VOTING: Arnold, Chuah, Cory, Goss, King, Kirkby Taylor, Nissen, Scott-Boutell, Smith, the Deputy Mayor (Jowers) and the Mayor (T. Young).

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Law that:-

This Council notes:

Highwoods residents have not been formally consulted by the Council on how their waste and recycling is collected since 2016.

Residents have been frustrated by previous local surveys that have not provided an online option to respond.

Highwoods residents deserve to have clean and tidy streets.

Simpler and uniform collection services deliver better value for residents and local council taxpayers, improve recycling rates and reduce waste sent to landfill

This Council resolves:

To give Highwoods residents the option to make their views known on how their waste and recycling collections are delivered in the future.

As the motion related to an executive function it stood referred direct to Cabinet in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11(2).

577 Electoral System

It was PROPOSED by Councillor King, also on behalf of Councillor Fox and Councillor Laws, that: -

This Council notes the Local Government Peer Review recommendation to consider changing our Council electoral system which could create savings in years when there is neither a General, County or PFCC election.

It is essential that this Council has a strategic, long-term approach to policy and decision-making. This can be provided under any electoral cycle, but only if the budget and strategic plans of the budget are robust, sustainable, and supported cross-party.

This Council resolves to explore the alternative electoral arrangements, whether as now or 'All Up', or a variation. The Council will set up a cross party working group to explore all options with the aim to present findings to Full Council in February. Council can then review findings collectively and discuss next steps forward. The Council further commits to securing widespread and cross-party support for the budgets and plans of this Council, as an assurance for residents, officers and our partners.

On being put to the vote, the motion was approved.

578 Questions to Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10

Questioner	Subject	Response
Pre-notified questions		
Councillor Smithson	Could the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste please advise Council:- What contingency plans have been put into place to ensure waste collections are maintained should waste operatives be laid	Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste explained that the service would always try to deliver a full service. Staff communications included reminders on the need to ensure personal hygiene and a clean office environment. A

	<p>low by Covid and/or seasonal colds/flu?</p> <p>What contingency plans have been put in place to ensure the continuation of waste collection should waste operatives take industrial action resulting in withdrawal of their labour?</p> <p>What is the estimated cost of these plans should they need to be invoked?</p> <p>If the contingency plans could be met from the existing budget, did that mean there was surplus in the existing budget?</p>	<p>contingency plan was in place which included detailed reviews of the service daily, or hourly if necessary, taking account of staffing and weather. Decisions to pause services would be a last resort and would be for as short a time as possible. Any revised services would take account of the waste hierarchy. Pre-prepared public communications were in place and Councillors would be kept informed.</p> <p>In terms of industrial action, priority would be given to black bag waste and food waste. Detailed reviews would be undertaken considering staffing levels. Any decision to pause services would be for the shortest time and would take account of the waste hierarchy. Again, pre-prepared public communications were in place and Councillors would be kept informed. Agency staff could be employed if necessary.</p> <p>The service would be delivered within the existing forecasted budget. As with all Council budgets there was pressure on the budget and it was being managed accordingly.</p>
Councillor Sunnucks	Does the administration appreciate the importance of the scoping consultation for the East Anglia Green Environment Statement which has to be	Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, welcomed the question and stressed that the importance and significance of the issue was

	<p>submitted by 5th December? This is about the proposed line of giant pylons from Norwich to Tilbury, cutting across the East Anglian countryside.</p> <p>As a statutory consultee will the Council provide a dry technical response, or will it insist that the reasonable alternative of a full offshore grid is properly explained?</p> <p>Would the administration give officers the confidence to move away from traditional modes of response to provide the type of response that was required?</p>	<p>understood by Councillors and officers. The administration was opposed to the proposal and the way in which it had been brought forward. It was important that members were briefed and kept informed.</p> <p>The Council's response would need to be technical to a degree because it had to respond to the nature of the issues put forward. The response needed to be professional and evidenced so it would be taken seriously and have an impact.</p> <p>The Council was working together with other authorities across East Anglia to oppose the proposals. The emotional impact of what could happen was understood, but the Council had to respond within the scope of what the consultation asked. Officers would be given the space to do their professional duty. The administration would continue to work together with others to give the response that was required.</p>
Oral questions		
Councillor Barber	<p>Did the administration have any plans to devolve services or responsibilities to Parish and Town Councils?</p>	<p>Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained this was subject to ongoing discussions. In view of budget pressures, it was necessary to look at partnership working. Whilst there were no direct plans to devolve services, the door was open and he was happy to discuss options and possibilities, perhaps utilising the</p>

		Rural Prosperity Fund, with Town, Parish and Community Councils.
Councillor Harris	Did the administration have a view on the potential merits of reinstituting Neighbourhood Action Panels, where there was an appetite to do so, if they could be introduced at no cost, perhaps using remote technology?	Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities would respond, but the Council was seeking to address its current challenges by working in partnership. Partnership working shared costs and brought in experience. This proposal was in line with that ethos and it could perhaps be explored through the ONE Colchester Partnership.
Councillor Harris	Being in mind the need to act in a respectful manner, he had been pleased to under the training on the new Code of Conduct. Could the Leader of the Council confirm the numbers who had attended one of the sessions?	<p>Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that 29 Councillors had attended one of the sessions. A recording of the session had been circulated and Democratic Services would be monitoring uptake by those who not attended one of the sessions.</p> <p>He agreed with the need for respect which began and ended with courtesy.</p>
Councillor Harris	Given the number and profile of the civic events in current municipal year, could the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage provide an update on how the Mayoralty had coped with this period?	Councillor Cox, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage, explained that whilst all Mayoral years were eventful, this year had been particularly so. The Mayor and Mayoress had represented the Council very well at a number of community and civic events, culminating in the meeting for the conferment of City Status on 23 November. Thanks were also due

		to the officers who supported these functions.
Councillor Smith	<p>Did the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste consider that it was right that not for profit organisations doing work that was in line with the Council's priorities were charged at the same rate as commercial organisations for the collection of waste and recycling?</p> <p>Would the Portfolio Holder congratulate Welshwood Park Residents Association for recycling so much material?</p>	<p>Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste, explained that the Council needed to be prudent with its finances and could not make a profit from any organisation through over recovery of costs. He would continue to look at these rates, and ensure they were appropriately set to be cost effective both for the Council and Residents Associations, so that they could afford to continue to provide valuable services. It was hoped that recycling credits would cover most of the cost.</p> <p>He was happy to congratulate Welshwood Park Residents Association for their work in the collection and recycling of copious quantities of leaves.</p>
Councillor Pearson	<p>In view of the damage the last Prime Minister had done to the national economy, could the Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Transformation provide an update on any initiatives he had introduced to help the local economy?</p>	<p>Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Transformation explained that the local economy was suffering from the impact of inflation and the mini budget. However, it was necessary to remain positive.</p> <p>Town Deal Funding worth £20 million was being invested, which would unlock further investment. This would drive economic activity in the city centre.</p>

		<p>There was a drive to improve digital skills and ultra-fast broadband would be rolled out. In addition, the green energy system at Northern Gateway was being developed as was the new business centre in Queen Street.</p> <p>Local businesses were being supported through organisations such as the North Essex Economic Board, Colbea, BID and the Federation of Small Businesses.</p> <p>The Women's Tour Cycle Race had showcased the wider region on national television and had brought in £1 million to the local economy. This had brought benefits across the city, not just the centre.</p> <p>Small Business Saturday would be held on 3 December. 93% of businesses in Colchester were small or micro businesses and Council was encouraged to support them.</p>
Councillor Law	Could the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage provide an update on planning for the year of events to mark City Status and how the Council would engage with residents across the city.	Councillor Cox, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage explained that in terms of the Year of Celebration, a tourist facing suite of activities would be published shortly. These played to Colchester's heritage strengths. There also be community focussed events. Ideas were bubbling up constantly. These included the unveiling of a plaque to mark the Berechurch Dyke and commemoration of the siege of

		<p>Colchester. She was happy to receive further ideas.</p> <p>In terms of legacy planning, Lindsay Barker, Executive Director, Place, was leading a group looking at this issue and further details would follow. It was appreciated that this was challenging time to undertake such work and that there were serious financial decisions that needed to be taken, but she was confident the Council could do both.</p> <p>In terms of public engagement, the Council had recently conducted a survey to which it had received 1100 responses, which had been looked at in detail by Policy Panel. This had demonstrated the themes that residents were interested in, which included improvements to the historic city centre, sharpening the sense of place and making the most of the Colchester's cultural facilities.</p>
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579 Schedule of Portfolio Holder Decisions

RESOLVED that the schedule of Portfolio Holder decisions covering the period 6 October 2022 – 18 November 2022 be noted.

Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023

714. Colchester Strategic Plan 2023-26 – A City Fit for the Future

The Chief Operating Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Scott-Boutell attend and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet to welcome the way residents had been engaged in the preparation of the Strategic Plan and the weight given to their views. It was pleasing to note that particular efforts had been made to listen to hard to reach groups and to those in rural communities. These issues had been examined by the Policy Panel and the Panel was grateful that Cabinet members had attended and listened to their views.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, thanked Councillor Scott-Boutell and the Policy Panel for their work which had made a valuable contribution with test and challenge. The Strategic Plan 2023-26 would set out a framework under which annual delivery plans would sit. This approach had been endorsed by the LGA Peer Review. The annual delivery plans would be closely tied to the budget and to resource allocations. This would enable the Cabinet to be held to account for its performance. The Plan included a new objective “Delivering Modern Services for a Modern City” but this could only be done if the Council changed the way it worked.

Cabinet members endorsed the Plan stressing the input received from the public and across the Chamber. Communication with the public would be vital to engage and demonstrate that the Council had listened to their views in setting its priorities. It was important that Cabinet kept in mind the results of the public engagement, which had demonstrated residents desire to see regeneration of the city centre.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Plan 2023-26 be agreed.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the Strategic Plan 2026 be adopted and included in the Policy Framework.

REASONS

To enable the Strategic Plan 2023-26 to be agreed and adopted.

The Strategic Plan provides a springboard to maximise the opportunities and benefits of Colchester being granted city status. In the future this will also be supplemented by a

long-term vision for Colchester created with others across Colchester to ensure the benefits are fully harnessed.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The current Strategic Plan expires at the end of 2022-23 so a new plan is required to reflect future challenges and opportunities. This needs to be adopted by full Council as the absence of a relevant Strategic Plan would create a significant risk of the Council failing to identify and deliver on its core priorities.

Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023

715. Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2023-24 to 2027-28

The Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel at its meeting of 24 January 2023.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that the following three principles had underpinned the work on the budget:-

- To face up to the challenge and secure the long term financial future of the Council.
- To secure the services that residents valued most and protected the most vulnerable.
- To recognise that the best decisions were those made together with others.

The process had been very challenging and all the options considered had been difficult. Not taking the difficult decisions and relying on reserves would likely lead to bankruptcy. In view of comments made by Groups and the Scrutiny Panel some amendments would be proposed, and the administration would continue to listen, refine and respond.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced the report. Stability was key to the budget proposals. Several external factors had made this the most challenging budget process he had been involved in. These included the legacy of Brexit and the pandemic, the mini budget and the impact of inflation. The budget setting process had been as open as it could be and had included budget workshops, meetings with Alumni and discussions at Governance and Audit Committee. The Scrutiny Panel had also made a number of helpful recommendations. It was accepted that in these difficult circumstances, there would need to be a reduction in some services. The emphasis was on doing less but doing it better. It would focus support on services that residents had identified as most important: environment, town centre and neighbourhoods. It would ensure stability for the period of the MTFF and ensure growth and investment in well run services. It supported the hardest hit and those impacted most by the Cost of Living Crisis. There would be more working with parishes and partners to deliver services.

Inn terms of the Treasury Management Strategy and Statement, the comments made were welcomed. The format was based on advice from industry experts, LINK and the CIPFA Code had been followed. The figures it contained relating to the capital programme may be amended in due course following the completion of the review of the capital programme. Treasury management training for members had been scheduled for 30 January.

He thanked Paul Cook , Section 151 Officer, and his team for their work in preparing the budget proposals in such difficult circumstances.

Cabinet members also endorsed the proposals stressing how the challenge of delivering a budget in these circumstances could deliver innovative solutions and thanking the Chief Executive for her work in transforming the Council which had played a key role in delivering modern services for a modern city and allowing a balanced budget to be delivered.

Councillor Willetts, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. Scrutiny of the budget was the most important piece of work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel and considerable time and effort had been devoted to it. He would not address the resolutions of the Panel, which were largely technical, except to highlight that there was a difference of opinion in respect of the Treasury Management Strategy and whether it was possible to have a credible Strategy without a balance sheet as its foundation. However, the commissioning of independent advice on the Strategy was welcomed.

The Panel had made a number of recommendations to Cabinet. The budget was well prepared, balanced and in broad terms followed the priorities of the Strategic Plan. It had recommended that the equality impact assessments be tightened up and further consideration be given to the impact on different ethnic communities, and of the impact on the health of operatives of the suggestion different containers be allowed to be used for garden waste. There had been a lack of clarity as to whether a Treasury Management Statement could be used to support a budget without a balance sheet, and over the use of reserves, so it was recommended training be provided to members.

The Panel had also had some concerns about the assumptions made regarding the proposals to charge for garden waste collections and the impact this may have. In view of proposed reduction in the provision for Neighbourhood Services there appeared to be a conflicting policy objective. It could fall to Neighbourhood Services to deal with the impact of the charging for garden waste services and to take any necessary enforcement action. This conflict needed to be resolved. Finally, the Panel considered that greater consideration needed to be given to the pay settlements in future years in the MTFF. The proposed settlements for 24/25 onwards seemed very optimistic, as stagflation took hold it was likely that pay settlements in excess of these levels would be sought.

Councillor King and Councillor Cory welcomed the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations, and noted their view that the budget was essentially sound. The administration would continue to revisit the assumptions in the budget and would be bringing forward amendment to the proposals that would address some of the recommendations.

Councillor Scott-Boutell attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet to welcome the open nature of the budget setting process and the use of budget workshops. These had been welcome opportunities to share ideas and make

suggestions. The development of the Alumni meetings had also been a welcome addition to the budget process. The next challenge would be ensuring residents understood the proposals and understood that the Council was still listening.

Councillor Laws attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. The impact of the war in Ukraine also needed to be acknowledged as a factor in the challenging economic landscape. The open approach to the budget setting process was welcomed and the Conservative group comments in respect of the accounts were offered in a positive way. There was no allegation of impropriety. However other authorities had made draft accounts available and it was entirely legitimate to request this. The open conversation on waste collection was also welcomed and further consideration needed to be given to the introduction of wheeled bins, although consideration needed to be given to issues of residual waste.

Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste, welcomed his comments and emphasised the need to consider the health and well being benefits to operatives of wheeled bins and that hybrid methods of collection were more expensive.

Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Transformation, emphasised that the way Councils were funded had changed fundamentally and were now expected to stand on their own feet. The budget proposals would provide stability and allow the Council to deliver modern services to a modern city, notwithstanding the challenging economic circumstances. The thanks to the Finance Team were echoed and it was important that staff were continued to be paid fairly and that the Council maintained its living wage commitments. The Council would continue to deliver a wide range of services, and unlike some other Council, there were no proposals to close any facilities.

Councillor Cory explained that it was proposed to amend the recommended decision by adding the following additional decisions, which were aimed at maintaining neighbourhood services by increasing the prospective income from the early stages of charging for garden waste. It also provided a budget for repairs and maintenance for the City Centre, and to make a recommendation to Council to provide for 100% premium Council Tax charge to be levied on second homes, with effect from 1 April 2024.

- 2.7 *To amend Appendix D to adjust the technical reconciliation and proposed savings measures in Table D4 as follows:*
- 3. *Remove Neighbourhoods Discretionary Services reduction savings of £300k*
 - 8. *Garden Waste income - increase from £200k to £600k.*
 - 26. *Remove Review of Tree Maintenance SLA with ECC saving of £50k*
- Add an additional item:*
- Table D5 (new 18) City Centre repairs and maintenance response service at a cost of £50k*
- To make any consequential amendments to Appendix J in light of the above changes.*

2.8 *To recommend to Council that it adopts the provisions contained in section 75 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill once enacted which will permit the Council to apply a 100% premium council tax charge to be levied on second homes in the city with effect from 1 April 2024.*

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The 2023/24 Revenue Budget and revised Medium Term Financial Forecast as set out in Appendix A of the Section 151 Officer's report be approved.

(b) To note the Local Government Act 2003 Section 25 budget resilience statement and forecast level of balances set out in Appendix B of the Section 151 Officer's report be noted.

(c) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix C of the Section 151 Officer's report be approved.

(d) To *RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL* the 2023/24 revenue budget requirement of £25.285m.

(e) To *RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL* Colchester's element of the Council Tax at £211.59 per Band D property being an increase of £6.12.

(f) £400k capital grant funding from the Right to Buy retained receipts reserve as set out in Section 10.7 of the Section 151 Officer's report be approved.

(g) To amend Appendix D of the Section 151 Officer's report to adjust the technical reconciliation and proposed savings measures in Table D4 as follows:

3. Remove Neighbourhoods Discretionary Services reduction savings of £300k

8. Garden Waste income - increase from £200k to £600k.

26. Remove Review of Tree Maintenance SLA with ECC saving of £50k

Add an additional item:

Table D5 (new 18) City Centre repairs and maintenance response service at a cost of £50k

To make any consequential amendments to Appendix J in light of the above changes.

(h) To *RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL* that it adopts the provisions contained in section 75 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill once enacted which will permit the Council to apply a 100% premium council tax charge to be levied on second homes in the city with effect from 1 April 2024.

(i) The recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 24 January 2023 be accepted.

REASONS

To balance the 2023/24 budget and revise the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were proposed.

22 February 2023

Report of	Head of Finance and S.151 Officer	Author	Paul Cook Darren Brown Diane Gentile
Title	Precept and Council Tax Levels 2023/24		
Wards affected	Not Applicable		

1 Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the statutory resolutions the Council is required to approve, in order to set the Council Tax for each band for the financial year 2023/24. These include the following information:

- A Council Tax Base of 65,865.1 Band D equivalent properties, together with details of the Council Tax base for individual parishes.
- A Council Tax requirement for Colchester Borough Council of £13.936 million (excluding parishes).
- Colchester's element of the Council Tax being £211.59 for Band D properties (excluding parishes). An increase of 2.98%.
- Expected Band D Council Tax for Essex County Council, Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Authority.
- The total Council Tax payable for the different parts of the Council's area.
- Parish, Town and Community Councils precept amounts for 2023/24.

1.2 The report should be read alongside the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and the Medium-Term Financial Forecast.

2 Recommended Decision

2.1 To approve the statutory resolutions as set out at Appendix 1 which are in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, in respect of the Council Tax for each band for the financial year 2023/24.

3 Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 The Council is required, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, to set formally the Council Tax for each band, which will include precepting authorities.

4 **Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The resolutions are a statutory requirement.

5 **Colchester Borough Council's Council Tax Requirement**

- 5.1 25 January 2023 Cabinet approved and recommended to Council the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Requirement.
- 5.2 The final 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement was received 6 February 2023. There is no overall change to total government funding between the draft settlement reported to 25 January 2023 and the final settlement. There is however a £7k switch to services grant from the funding guarantee grant.
- 5.3 The budget proposals are based on additional business rates income above the 2023/24 business rate baseline. The NNDR 1 2023/24 business rates return to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirms the budget estimate.
- 5.4 The forecast collection fund business rates deficit as at the end of 2022/23 is unchanged from the budgeted figure of £268k. This deficit will be met from the business rates reserve.
- 5.5 Any additional business rates achieved over the forecasts will be allocated to the business rates reserve.
- 5.6 Cabinet recommended that Colchester's element of the Council Tax for 2023/24 be agreed at £211.59 for Band D properties, which represents an increase of £6.12 (2.98%).
- 5.7 In approving Colchester's element of the Council Tax, account must be taken of Retained Business Rates and any surplus or deficit arising from the Collection Fund. Colchester's Council Tax requirement also must reflect Parish Council spending and the Table 1 sets out the position:

Table 1 – Council Tax Requirement (£k)			
1	Budget Requirement		24,735
2	Use of New Homes Bonus	(576)	
3	Use of Reserves and Balances	(2,430)	
4			21,729
5	Parish Councils requirement	2,365	
6			24,094
7	Business Rates Baseline	(4,693)	
8	Business Rates Growth	(1,563)	
9	Government Grant	(1,860)	
10			15,978
11	Deficit on collection fund business rates	268	
12	Deficit on collection fund council tax	55	
13	Council Tax Requirement		16,301

5.8 Colchester's Council Tax at Band D for 2023/24 is £211.59 and is set out in Table 2

Table 2 – Colchester Band D Council Tax		
1	Council Tax Requirement (as detailed above)	16,301,319
2	Divided by Council Tax Base	65,865.1
3	Council Tax at Band D (including Parishes)	247.50
4	Deduct Parish Element	(35.91)
5	Council Tax at Band D for Colchester Borough Council	211.59

6 Essex County Council and Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

- 6.1 In order to determine formally the overall level of Council Tax, account has to be taken of the precept requirements of Essex County Council, Essex Police and the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 6.2 Table 3 sets out the overall position based on information received at the date of writing this report. The Police Fire and Crime Panel approved the budgets for Essex Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire and Rescue Service on 7 February 2023. Essex County Council is expected to formally approve its budget on 9 February. Any change to the information set out in this report will be reported to this meeting.

Table 3 - Essex County Council, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner				
	Council Tax at Band D			
	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Change £p	Change %
Colchester City Council	205.47	211.59	6.12	2.98
Essex County Council	1,401.12	1,450.17	49.05	3.50
Essex Police & Crime Commissioner	218.52	233.46	14.94	6.84
Essex Fire and Rescue Service	75.33	80.28	4.95	6.57
	1900.44	1975.50	75.06	3.95

- 6.3 The overall position (excluding parishes) is set out in Table 4.
- 6.4 The appropriate Parish elements are added to these figures. Full details of the tax rates are given in Appendix 1. (Details of the individual Parish Precepts are set out in Appendix 2).

Table 4 - Overall Council Tax Rates					
Band	Colchester	County	Police	Fire	Total
A	141.06	966.78	155.64	53.52	1,317.00
B	164.57	1,127.91	181.58	62.44	1,536.50
C	188.08	1,289.04	207.52	71.36	1,756.00
D	211.59	1,450.17	233.46	80.28	1,975.50
E	258.61	1,772.43	285.34	98.12	2,414.50
F	305.63	2,094.69	337.22	115.96	2,853.50
G	352.65	2,416.95	389.10	133.80	3,292.50
H	423.18	2,900.34	466.92	160.56	3,951.00

7. Special Expenses

- 7.1 Special expenses are defined as those expenses incurred by the Council in performing, in part of the borough, a function performed elsewhere in the borough by a Parish Council. The Local Government Act 1992 allows the Council to treat any special expenses as general expenses, i.e. as part of its own budget requirement for Council Tax purposes, provided the Council resolved accordingly.
- 7.2 It is reasonable for the Council to continue to treat special expenses as general expenses, and for clarity it is considered sensible to reaffirm this position on an annual basis. A resolution to this effect, therefore, is included within Appendix 1.

8. Strategic Plan References

- 8.1 The Strategic Plan objectives have informed all stages of the Council's budget setting process.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The usual arrangements will be made to publish the approved tax levels in the local press and to produce the Council Tax Information Leaflet for distribution with the Council Tax bills. These will be in accordance with the legal requirements.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 Included in the body of this report.

11. Consultation

- 11.1. The budget report to Cabinet set out consultation in respect of the budget including the statutory business ratepayers meeting. This meeting will take place on 21 February 2023.

12. Environment and Sustainability Implications

- 12.1. All budget measures are assessed for their likely environmental impact, reflecting the Council's commitment to be 'carbon neutral' by 2030. Environment and Climate Change is an essential cross-cutting theme in the Council's recovery planning and a core theme of the new Strategic Plan.

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 13.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

14. Standard References

- 14.1. There are no direct Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Resolutions

Appendix 2: Parish Council Precepts 2023/24

Background Papers

None

RESOLUTIONS

1. It be noted that the Tax Base has been approved and the following amounts were calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended ('the Act'):
 - (a) 65,865.1 equivalent band D properties being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year. (Item T in the Act)
 - (b) Part of the Council's area for the parish of:

Parish	Parish Tax Base
Abberton & Langenhoe	440.4
Aldham	210.2
Birch	311.5
Boxted	627.2
Chappel	222.0
Copford	680.9
Dedham	937.8
East Donyland	889.7
East Mersea	126.5
Eight Ash Green	675.3
Fingringhoe	341.9
Fordham	329.5
Great Horkesley	1,063.8
Great Tey	391.7
Langham	490.5
Laver Breton	136.0
Laver de la Haye	724.0
Laver Marney	95.5
Little Horkesley	90.6
Marks Tey	950.3
Messing cum Inworth	179.7
Mount Bures	109.0

Myland	6,326.4
Stanway	4,348.8
Tiptree	3,703.1
Wakes Colne	252.9
West Bergholt	1,372.7
West Mersea	3,179.8
Winstred Hundred	491.0
Wivenhoe	2,890.4
Wormingford	193.9

Being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

2. Calculate that the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding parish precepts) is £13,936,000
3. The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) £123,672,819 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act. [Gross Expenditure]
 - (b) £107,371,500 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. [Gross Income including Government grants]
 - (c) £16,301,319 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act)
 - (d) £247.50 Being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. [Council Tax, including parishes]
 - (e) £2,365,319 Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. [Parish Precepts]
 - (f) £211.59 Being the amount at 3(d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at 1(a) above (Item T in the formula), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

(g) Part of the Council's area

	£
Abberton & Langenhoe	40.28
Aldham	76.41
Birch	54.57
Boxted	96.49
Chappel	78.20
Copford	80.59
Dedham	46.00
East Donyland	88.69
East Mersea	61.77
Eight Ash Green	53.07
Fingringhoe	33.66
Fordham	94.46
Great Horkesley	39.70
Great Tey	50.51
Langham	46.89
Layer Breton	0.00
Layer de la Haye	27.01
Layer Marney	0.00
Little Horkesley	65.98
Marks Tey	67.74
Messing cum Inworth	136.63
Mount Bures	30.28
Myland	18.97
Stanway	81.35
Tiptree	104.36
Wakes Colne	55.64
West Bergholt	84.41
West Mersea	111.57
Winstred Hundred	31.25
Wivenhoe	138.41

Wormingford	53.18
All other parts of the Council's area	211.59

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basis amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h) Parts of the Council's Area

Parish	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Abberton & Langenhoe	26.85	31.33	35.80	40.28	49.23	58.18	67.13	80.56
Aldham	50.94	59.43	67.92	76.41	93.39	110.37	127.35	152.82
Birch	36.38	42.44	48.51	54.57	66.70	78.82	90.95	109.14
Boxted	64.33	75.05	85.77	96.49	117.93	139.37	160.82	192.98
Chappel	52.13	60.82	69.51	78.20	95.58	112.96	130.33	156.40
Copford	53.73	62.68	71.64	80.59	98.50	116.41	134.32	161.18
Dedham	30.67	35.78	40.89	46.00	56.22	66.44	76.67	92.00
East Donyland	59.13	68.98	78.84	88.69	108.40	128.11	147.82	177.38
East Mersea	41.18	48.04	54.91	61.77	75.50	89.22	102.95	123.54
Eight Ash Green	35.38	41.28	47.17	53.07	64.86	76.66	88.45	106.14
Fingringhoe	22.44	26.18	29.92	33.66	41.14	48.62	56.10	67.32
Fordham	62.97	73.47	83.96	94.46	115.45	136.44	157.43	188.92
Great Horkesley	26.47	30.88	35.29	39.70	48.52	57.34	66.17	79.40
Great Tey	33.67	39.29	44.90	50.51	61.73	72.96	84.18	101.02
Langham	31.26	36.47	41.68	46.89	57.31	67.73	78.15	93.78
Layer Breton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Layer de la Haye	18.01	21.01	24.01	27.01	33.01	39.01	45.02	54.02
Layer Marney	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Little Horkesley	43.99	51.32	58.65	65.98	80.64	95.30	109.97	131.96

Parish	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Marks Tey	45.16	52.69	60.21	67.74	82.79	97.85	112.90	135.48
Messing cum Inworth	91.09	106.27	121.45	136.63	166.99	197.35	227.72	273.26
Mount Bures	20.19	23.55	26.92	30.28	37.01	43.74	50.47	60.56
Myland	12.65	14.75	16.86	18.97	23.19	27.40	31.62	37.94
Stanway	54.23	63.27	72.31	81.35	99.43	117.51	135.58	162.70
Tiptree	69.57	81.17	92.76	104.36	127.55	150.74	173.93	208.72
Wakes Colne	37.09	43.28	49.46	55.64	68.00	80.37	92.73	111.28
West Bergholt	56.27	65.65	75.03	84.41	103.17	121.93	140.68	168.82
West Mersea	74.38	86.78	99.17	111.57	136.36	161.16	185.95	223.14
Winstred Hundred	20.83	24.31	27.78	31.25	38.19	45.14	52.08	62.50
Wivenhoe	92.27	107.65	123.03	138.41	169.17	199.93	230.68	276.82
Wormingford	35.45	41.36	47.27	53.18	65.00	76.82	88.63	106.36
All other parts of Council's area	141.06	164.57	188.08	211.59	258.61	305.63	352.65	423.18

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (f) and (g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. It be noted that for the year 2023/24 Essex County Council, and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands	Precepting Authority		
	County	Police	Fire
	£	£	£
A	966.78	155.64	53.52
B	1,127.91	181.58	62.44
C	1,289.04	207.52	71.36
D	1,450.17	233.46	80.28
E	1,772.43	285.34	98.12
F	2,094.69	337.22	115.96
G	2,416.95	389.10	133.80
H	2,900.34	466.92	160.56

5. Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2023/24 for each of the categories of dwellings shown overleaf:
6. For the purposes of Section 35 of the Local Government Act 1992, any expenses incurred by the Council in performing in part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by a parish council or chairman of a parish meeting shall not be treated as special expenses.
7. Determined that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 is **not excessive** in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Act, and as shown in the calculation below.

(a) Increase defined by the Secretary of State as constituting an excessive increase for 2023/24:

(i) 3%, or more than 3%, greater than its relevant basic amount of council tax for 2022/23;
and

(ii) more than £5.00 greater than its relevant basic amount of council tax for 2022/23.

(b) Percentage increase in the Council's basic amount of Council Tax:

2022/23 amount	£205.47
2023/24 amount	£211.59
Percentage increase:	£6.12 and 2.98%

The figure at 7(b) is less than the figure at 7(a) above and therefore the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 is **not excessive** and no referendum is required.

8 Discretionary council tax discounts and exemptions for 2023/24 are:

Reference to:	Council position
<i>Second Homes: (Prescribed classes of Dwelling A & B)</i>	No discount applicable to this class
<i>Empty dwellings undergoing major repair (formerly Exempt Dwellings "Class A")</i>	No discount applicable to this class
<i>Vacant dwellings (formerly Exempt Dwellings "Class C")</i>	A 100% discount will be given for a maximum period of 28 days.
<i>Empty Homes Premium</i>	A premium of 100% will be charged for properties empty for over 2 years, 200% for empty over 5 years, and 300% for empty over 10 years.

9. Parts of the Council's Area

Parish	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Abberton & Langenhoe	1,343.85	1,567.83	1,791.80	2,015.78	2,463.73	2,911.68	3,359.63	4,031.56
Aldham	1,367.94	1,595.93	1,823.92	2,051.91	2,507.89	2,963.87	3,419.85	4,103.82
Birch	1,353.38	1,578.94	1,804.51	2,030.07	2,481.20	2,932.32	3,383.45	4,060.14
Boxted	1,381.33	1,611.55	1,841.77	2,071.99	2,532.43	2,992.87	3,453.32	4,143.98
Chappel	1,369.13	1,597.32	1,825.51	2,053.70	2,510.08	2,966.46	3,422.83	4,107.40
Copford	1,370.73	1,599.18	1,827.64	2,056.09	2,513.00	2,969.91	3,426.82	4,112.18
Dedham	1,347.67	1,572.28	1,796.89	2,021.50	2,470.72	2,919.94	3,369.17	4,043.00
East Donyland	1,376.13	1,605.48	1,834.84	2,064.19	2,522.90	2,981.61	3,440.32	4,128.38
East Mersea	1,358.18	1,584.54	1,810.91	2,037.27	2,490.00	2,942.72	3,395.45	4,074.54
Eight Ash Green	1,352.38	1,577.78	1,803.17	2,028.57	2,479.36	2,930.16	3,380.95	4,057.14
Fingringhoe	1,339.44	1,562.68	1,785.92	2,009.16	2,455.64	2,902.12	3,348.60	4,018.32
Fordham	1,379.97	1,609.97	1,839.96	2,069.96	2,529.95	2,989.94	3,449.93	4,139.92
Great Horkesley	1,343.47	1,567.38	1,791.29	2,015.20	2,463.02	2,910.84	3,358.67	4,030.40
Great Tey	1,350.67	1,575.79	1,800.90	2,026.01	2,476.23	2,926.46	3,376.68	4,052.02
Langham	1,348.26	1,572.97	1,797.68	2,022.39	2,471.81	2,921.23	3,370.65	4,044.78
Layer Breton	1,317.00	1,536.50	1,756.00	1,975.50	2,414.50	2,853.50	3,292.50	3,951.00
Layer de la Haye	1,335.01	1,557.51	1,780.01	2,002.51	2,447.51	2,892.51	3,337.52	4,005.02
Layer Marney	1,317.00	1,536.50	1,756.00	1,975.50	2,414.50	2,853.50	3,292.50	3,951.00
Little Horkesley	1,360.99	1,587.82	1,814.65	2,041.48	2,495.14	2,948.80	3,402.47	4,082.96

Parish	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Marks Tey	1,362.16	1,589.19	1,816.21	2,043.24	2,497.29	2,951.35	3,405.40	4,086.48
Messing cum Inworth	1,408.09	1,642.77	1,877.45	2,112.13	2,581.49	3,050.85	3,520.22	4,224.26
Mount Bures	1,337.19	1,560.05	1,782.92	2,005.78	2,451.51	2,897.24	3,342.97	4,011.56
Myland	1,329.65	1,551.25	1,772.86	1,994.47	2,437.69	2,880.90	3,324.12	3,988.94
Stanway	1,371.23	1,599.77	1,828.31	2,056.85	2,513.93	2,971.01	3,428.08	4,113.70
Tiptree	1,386.57	1,617.67	1,848.76	2,079.86	2,542.05	3,004.24	3,466.43	4,159.72
Wakes Colne	1,354.09	1,579.78	1,805.46	2,031.14	2,482.50	2,933.87	3,385.23	4,062.28
West Bergholt	1,373.27	1,602.15	1,831.03	2,059.91	2,517.67	2,975.43	3,433.18	4,119.82
West Mersea	1,391.38	1,623.28	1,855.17	2,087.07	2,550.86	3,014.66	3,478.45	4,174.14
Winstred Hundred	1,337.83	1,560.81	1,783.78	2,006.75	2,452.69	2,898.64	3,344.58	4,013.50
Wivenhoe	1,409.27	1,644.15	1,879.03	2,113.91	2,583.67	3,053.43	3,523.18	4,227.82
Wormingford	1,352.45	1,577.86	1,803.27	2,028.68	2,479.50	2,930.32	3,381.13	4,057.36
All other parts of Council's area	1,317.00	1,536.50	1,756.00	1,975.50	2,414.50	2,853.50	3,292.50	3,951.00

Parish Council Precepts 2023/24

Parish	Precept 2022/23	Precept 2023/24	Increase/ (Reduction)	Increase/ (Reduction)
	£	£	£	%
Abberton & Langenhoe	16,311	17,741	1,430	8.77
Aldham	15,254	16,062	808	5.30
Birch	15,000	17,000	2,000	13.33
Boxted	55,104	60,517	5,413	9.82
Chappel	16,841	17,361	520	3.09
Copford	40,494	54,876	14,382	35.52
Dedham	42,297	43,143	846	2.00
East Donyland	74,538	78,908	4,370	5.86
East Mersea	7,814	7,814	0	0.00
Eight Ash Green	34,459	35,838	1,379	4.00
Fingringhoe	11,507	11,507	0	0.00
Fordham	29,511	31,124	1,613	5.47
Great Horkesley	40,664	42,232	1,568	3.86
Great Tey	19,427	19,784	357	1.84
Langham	20,425	22,998	2,573	12.60
Layer Breton	0	0	0	0
Layer de la Haye	18,628	19,559	931	5.00
Layer Marney	0	0	0	0
Little Horkesley	5,748	5,978	230	4.00
Marks Tey	59,550	64,378	4,828	8.11
Messing cum Inworth	21,050	24,552	3,502	16.64
Mount Bures	3,082	3,300	218	7.07
Myland	120,000	120,000	0	0.00
Stanway	290,762	353,793	63,031	21.68
Tiptree	378,872	386,449	7,577	2.00
Wakes Colne	13,866	14,071	205	1.48
West Bergholt	108,757	115,867	7,110	6.54

West Mersea	340,017	354,757	14,740	4.34
Winstred Hundred	13,864	15,342	1,478	10.66
Wivenhoe	363,688	400,057	36,369	10.00
Wormingford	9,851	10,311	460	4.67
Totals	2,187,381	2,365,319	177,938	8.13

22 February 2023

Report of	Head of Finance and S151 Officer	Author	Paul Cook ☎ 505861 Darren Brown ☎ 282891
Title	Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28 – Supplementary Report		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report revises the 2023/24 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28 following decisions by the 24 January 2023 Scrutiny Panel and 25 January 2023 Cabinet.
- 1.2 The main budget recommendation is contained in the minute reference from the Cabinet meeting of 25 January 2023.

2 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To note the revised appendices A, D, E, F, G and J attached to this report.

3 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To balance the 2023/24 budget and revise the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5 Summary of Changes to the Appendices

- 5.1 The table sets out a summary of the changes to the Appendices compared to the 25 January 2023 Cabinet Report. More detail and amendments to the other appendices will be reported in 2023/24 revenue monitoring.

A	Revised figures setting out the overall budget position incorporating the changes set out below.
B	Budget Robustness statement no changes.
C	Treasury Management Strategy no changes. Scrutiny Panel will receive the briefing note requested at their 24 January 2023

	meeting in support of the recommended Treasury Management prudential and treasury indicators.
D	<p>Detailed savings and cost pressures – a fully revised appendix is attached.</p> <p>This includes the following items agreed by 25 January 2023 Cabinet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £550k increased sport and leisure income following the recent decision in the VAT treatment case taken against HMRC. This and any prior year adjustments will be taken to a Strategic Plan Delivery reserve. • Remove Neighbourhoods Discretionary Services reduction savings of £300k. • Garden Waste income - increase from £200k to £600k. • Remove Review of Tree Maintenance SLA with ECC saving of £50k. • Add an additional item to Table D5 City Centre repairs and maintenance response service at a cost of £50k
E	The Summary Budget details now fully updated, including a minor switch from funding guarantee grant to services grant.
F	General Fund Budgets details now fully updated.
G	<p>Reserves, Provisions and Balances fully revised.</p> <p>This reflects the new Strategic Plan Delivery reserve created from forecast VAT gains following HMRC recognition that local authority leisure services are outside the scope of VAT.</p> <p>This table also incorporates the statement of reserve movements requested by 24 January 2023 Scrutiny Panel</p>
H	New Homes Bonus Allocations no changes
J	Revised savings templates to reflect the changes set out above.

6 Final 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement

6.1 There is no overall change to total government funding between the provisional settlement and the final settlement announced 6 February 2023. There is however a £7k switch to services grant from the funding guarantee grant.

6.2 There is no change to the Referendum Principles.

7 Risk Management Implications

7.1 The 2023-24 Budget reflects current assumptions but will be subject to rigorous monitoring during the 2023-24 financial year.

7.2 Modelling has been undertaken with service managers to assess the potential range of impacts before adopting the assumptions described within the report.

8 Financial implications

8.1 As set out in the report.

9 Climate Emergency and Environment

- 9.1 All budget measures are assessed for their likely environmental impact, reflecting the Council's commitment to be 'carbon neutral' by 2030. Environment and Climate Change is an essential cross-cutting theme in the Council's recovery planning and a core theme of the new Strategic Plan.+

10 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

11 Other Standard References

- 11.1 There are no direct Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.

Revised Appendices

A	2023-28 Medium Term Financial Forecast and Assumptions
D	Technical reconciliations of budget requirement 2023/24
E	Summary Budget 2023/24
F	2023/24 General Fund Budgets
G	Reserves, Provisions and Balances
J	Transformation Savings

Appendix A – 2023-28 Medium Term Financial Forecast and Assumptions

2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast	23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000
Previous year's budget	21,875	24,735	21,458	20,932	21,832
One-off Items	(1,179)	(836)	0	0	0
Cost pressures and growth items	9,347	400	200	1,400	1,550
Capital financing	731	385	(276)	(300)	(303)
Income losses	0	(200)	(200)	(200)	0
Savings	(5,261)	(3,000)	(250)	0	0
Use of new homes bonus for one-off investment	(778)	(26)	0	0	0
Current year's budget	24,735	21,458	20,932	21,832	23,079
Business rates	(6,456)	(6,003)	(5,550)	(5,098)	(4,646)
Government Grant	(1,860)	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(576)	(550)	(550)	(550)	(550)
Council Tax	(13,936)	(14,591)	(15,152)	(15,721)	(16,304)
Previously planned use of reserves	(207)	79	79	79	279
One-off use of reserves	(1,700)	(200)	(200)	0	0
Budget Gap Cumulative	0	193	(441)	542	1,858

Medium Term Financial Forecast Assumptions	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
Council Tax collection	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Growth in council tax base	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Council tax increase	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12

Appendix D Technical reconciliations of budget requirement 2023/24

Table D1 – Technical reconciliation of budget requirement		
	Element	£'000
1	Revenue expenditure requirement for 2023/24	24,735
2	Collection fund deficit (business rates and Council Tax)	323
3	New Homes Bonus	(576)
4	Use of balances / reserves for pensions payment	(557)
5	Use of Business Rates Reserve	(323)
6	Use of Business Rates Pooling gain	(200)
7	Use of other reserves	(1,350)
8	Budget Requirement	22,052
9	Funded by:	
10	Government Grant (Services and Funding Guarantee)	(1,860)
11	Business Rates Baseline Funding	(4,693)
12	Business Rates Improvement	(1,563)
13	Council Taxpayers requirement (before Parish element)	(13,936)
14	Total Funding	(22,052)

Table D2 – Technical reconciliation of Band D Council Tax (Full reconciliation in Council Tax recommendation)		
1	Council Taxpayers requirement (before Parish element) (£m)	13,936
2	Council Tax Base – Number of Band D Equivalent Properties	65,865.1
3	Council Tax at Band D	211.59

Table D3 – Technical reconciliation of 2023/24 Base Budget		
1	Base Budget	21,875
2	One-off items	(1,179)
3	Cost Pressures	8,678
4	Growth Items	1,400
5	Change in use of New Homes Bonus for one off investment	(778)
6	Savings	(5,261)
7	Forecast Base Budget	24,735

Table D4 – Technical reconciliation of 2023/24 savings		
1	Garden Waste Charging	(600)
2	Sport & Leisure Income due to change in VAT status	(550)
3	Income from budgets overperforming in recent financial years	(550)
4	Recruitment Freeze	(500)
5	Technical items - GF/HRA recharges	(259)
6	Recycling Kit new policy	(230)
7	CCHL Mgt fee reduction to reflect additional project mgt fees	(200)
8	Organisational Design	(200)
9	1.25% NI Reduction (Employers Rate)	(198)
10	Turnstone income	(100)
11	23/24 Fees & Charges growth reflecting higher inflation	(100)
12	Commercial review of existing income generating services	(100)
13	Overtime reduction	(100)
14	Contact & Support – service reduction	(100)
15	Consolidation of GF Housing Services	(100)
16	Reduce Energy Consumption	(100)
17	Castle Park Cricket Club Grounds Maintenance	(82)
18	Eudo Road Sports Ground rental	(80)
19	CBH SLA income from tri-annual review	(80)
20	Various Asset Management Initiatives (easements, lease regears)	(75)
21	Museums - review of service model & utilise external funding	(60)
22	Northern Gateway Sports Park increased income assumptions	(56)
23	Rowan House Refurbishment - re-profiling/cost update	(56)
24	Local Fast Fibre Network reduced income assumptions	(50)
25	Removal of Amphora Sport & Leisure Strategic Management Fee	(50)
26	22/23 Fees & Charges mid-year review feeding into 23/24 base budget	(50)
27	Review all Fixed-Term contracts	(50)
28	Allow staff to reduce hours	(50)
29	AVC scheme & reduction in ER's NI contributions	(50)
30	Sports & Playing Fields - review GM standards & enable/empower others	(50)
31	Environmental Health – service reduction	(50)
32	Revs & Bens New Burdens Grant	(50)
33	Arts Council funding increase (21/22 budget setting)	(40)
34	Community Initiatives - utilise further external funding	(35)
35	Reduction in Community Enabling Team	(30)
36	Property Group 1 easements	(30)
37	Property Group 3 Lettings (Rent)	(30)
38	Countryside sites - commercial opportunities/model of management	(25)
39	Property Group 5 (Service Charge & NNDR)	(23)
40	Castle Park café (21/22 budget setting)	(20)

41	Payment processing system	(20)
42	Amphora dividend (Memoirs)	(15)
43	Heckworth House business rates saving (21/22 budget setting)	(15)
44	Council tax penalties	(12)
45	Car park markets and events (21/22 budget setting)	(10)
46	Property Group 0 lease regear	(10)
47	Property Group 4 (Service Charge & NNDR)	(10)
48	Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	(10)
49	Total Savings	(5,261)

Table D5 – Technical reconciliation of 2023-24 cost pressures and growth items		
1	General Inflation (pay, contractual etc)	3,000
2	Utilities/Energy Inflation	1,533
3	Support for transformation & future budget savings	1,400
4	Waste Service - various cost pressures	864
5	Pensions (3 year up-front deficit payment)	836
6	Net Impact of Minimum Revenue Provision and Interest	731
7	2022 Actuarial Review Impact	500
8	Fuel	270
9	Sport and Leisure - various cost pressures	206
10	Council Tax Sharing Agreement	200
11	Elections	157
12	Audit Fees	150
13	Banking Charges	65
14	Insurance	51
15	City Centre Repairs & Maintenance Response service	50
16	Voluntary Sector Grants	35
17	Asset Valuations	16
18	Payroll System costs	14
19	Total cost pressures and growth items	10,078

Appendix E - Summary Budget 2023/24

	Adjusted Base Budget	One-Off Items	Cost Pressures	Growth Items	Technical Items	Total Savings	Detailed 22/23 Budgets
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate & Democratic Core	(448)	0	415	0		0	(33)
Executive Management Team	794	0	47	0		(7)	834
Corporate & Improvement	6,986	0	365	0		(167)	7,184
Community	1,493	0	434	0		(445)	1,482
Customer	1,931	0	436	0		(178)	2,189
Environmental (excl NEPP)	5,878	(363)	2,286	0		(1,242)	6,559
Place & Client	3,351	(686)	2,331	3		(1,851)	3,148
Total General Fund Services	19,985	(1,049)	6,314	3	0	(3,890)	21,363
Technical Items							
<i>Corporate Items / sums to be allocated to services</i>							
Procurement Savings	(108)		0			0	(108)
Investment Allowance funded by New Homes Bonus	1,323	0	0	(781)		0	542
Previously agreed funding for Strategic Priorities	(94)		0	0		0	(94)
Digital Roadmap	100		0	0			100
Fees & Charges Review & Growth	0		0			(250)	(250)
Senior Management Restructure	0		0			(200)	(200)
Inflation yet to be allocated	96	(130)	797				763
Improved Establishment Control	(10)		0				(10)
Rowan House	65		0			(65)	0
General Fund Housing Services Review	0		0			(100)	(100)

Energy consumption reduction	0		0			(136)	(136)
Overtime reduction	0		0			(100)	(100)
Fixed Term contracts review	0		0			(50)	(50)
Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme	0		0			(50)	(50)
Reduced staffing hours	0		0			(50)	(50)
Revs & Bens New Burdens Grant	0		0			(50)	(50)
Council tax Penalties	0		0			(12)	(12)
Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	0		0			(10)	(10)
Payment processing system	0		0			(20)	(20)
Support for transformation & future budget savings	0		0	1,400			1,400
<i>Non-Service Budgets</i>							
CLIA (net interest)	1,025		101				1,126
Repairs & Renewals Contribution	300		0				300
Minimum Revenue Provision	2,123		630				2,753
Pensions	366	0	836				1,202
Contribution to Bad Debts Provision	20		0				20
GF/HRA/NEPP Adjustment	(3,316)		0			(278)	(3,594)
Sub-Total	1,890	(130)	2,364	619	0	(1,371)	3,372
Total incl Below the line	21,875	(1,179)	8,678	622	0	(5,261)	24,735
<i>Funded by:-</i>							
Use of balances	(125)	125	0		0		0
Contribution to balances	935	(935)	0		829		829
Use of other Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0		(836)		(836)
Use of Reserves - Covid 19	(522)	522	0		(1,900)		(1,900)
Use of NNDR reserve	(4,908)	4,908	0		(323)		(323)
Govt - CSP Funding Guarantee Grant	0	0	0		(1,685)		(1,685)

Govt - Lower Tier Grant	(198)	198	0		0		0
Govt - Services Grant	(298)	298	0		(175)		(175)
Business Rates Baseline	(4,343)		0		(350)		(4,693)
NNDR Growth above Baseline	(1,870)		0		307		(1,563)
Business Rates Pooling	(200)		0		0		(200)
Council Tax	(13,300)		0		(636)		(13,936)
Collection fund Transfer	4,908	(4,908)	0		323		323
New Homes Bonus	(1,954)		0		1,378		(576)
Total	(21,875)	208	0	0	(3,068)	0	(24,735)

Appendix F - 2023/24 General Fund Budgets

	Direct Budgets			Non-Direct Budgets	
Area	Spend	Income	Net	Net	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate & Democratic Core	537	(570)	(33)	2,908	2,875
Total	537	(570)	(33)	2,908	2,875
Executive Management Team					
EMT	834	-	834	(834)	-
Total	834	-	834	(834)	-
Community					
Assistant Director	174	-	174	(174)	-
Licencing, Food & Safety	545	(583)	(38)	314	276
Community Safety	100	-	100	3	103
Environmental Health Services	415	(66)	349	124	473
Building Control	464	(564)	(100)	266	166
Community Initiatives	351	(1)	350	184	534
Private Sector Housing	552	(174)	378	103	481
Bereavement Services	1,159	(2,024)	(865)	273	(592)
Cultural Services	631	(96)	535	1,054	1,589
Colchester Museums	33	(594)	(561)	39	(522)
Subtotal	4,424	(4,102)	322	2,186	2,508
Colchester & Ipswich Museums	2,420	(1,260)	1,160	799	1,959
Total	6,844	(5,362)	1,482	2,985	4,467
Customer					
Assistant Director	169	-	169	(169)	-
Accounts & Debt	797	(165)	632	(632)	-
Local Taxation & NNDR	615	(750)	(135)	627	492
Benefits & Hub	928	(188)	740	(740)	-
Contact & Support Centre	1,112	(30)	1,082	(1,082)	-
Electoral Services	562	(3)	559	76	635
Customer Digital & Systems	174	-	174	(174)	-
Land Charges	147	(299)	(152)	152	-
Subtotal	4,504	(1,435)	3,069	(1,942)	1,127
Benefits - Payments & Subsidy	32,491	(33,371)	(880)	656	(224)
Total	36,995	(34,806)	2,189	(1,286)	903
Environment					
Assistant Director	168	-	168	(168)	-
Neighbourhood Services	14,278	(5,277)	9,001	3,072	12,073
Car Parking	1,089	(3,699)	(2,610)	888	(1,722)

		Direct Budgets			Non-Direct Budgets	
	Subtotal	15,535	(8,976)	6,559	3,792	10,351
	Parking Partnership (NEPP)	4,301	(4,340)	(39)	81	42
	Total	19,836	(13,316)	6,520	3,873	10,393
	Place & Client					
	Assistant Director	163	-	163	(163)	-
	Place Strategy	658	-	658	115	773
	Housing	2,887	(1,341)	1,546	(190)	1,356
	Planning	1,297	(1,415)	(118)	701	583
	Sustainability & Climate Change	274	(16)	258	14	272
	Subtotal	5,279	(2,772)	2,507	477	2,984
	<i>Company Related:-</i>					
	Client - Commercial Company	1,846	(302)	1,544	(1,846)	(302)
	Corporate Asset Management	2,221	(308)	1,913	(1,835)	78
	Commercial & Investment	1,252	(4,343)	(3,091)	2,517	(574)
	Sport & Leisure	6,857	(6,582)	275	2,075	2,350
	Total	17,455	(14,307)	3,148	1,388	4,536
	Corporate & Improvement					
	Assistant Director	153	(129)	24	(153)	(129)
	Finance	1,164	(211)	953	(953)	-
	ICT	2,864	(464)	2,400	(2,400)	-
	People and Performance	854	(164)	690	(726)	(36)
	Governance	3,126	(442)	2,684	(2,624)	60
	Communications	663	(230)	433	(433)	-
	Total	8,824	(1,640)	7,184	(7,289)	(105)
	Total (excl. NEPP)	87,024	(65,661)	21,363	1,664	23,027

* Non-direct budgets reflect recharges between service areas and technical accounting charges. These are shown to present the full cost of services.

Appendix G - Reserves, Provisions and Balances

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Actual	Forecast	Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Balance	2,160	2,160	2,160
Future budget Reserve	6,862	1,992	1,092
Strategic Plan Delivery Reserve	-	-	550
Redundancy Provision	1,000	750	750
Risk Allocation - Available for revenue purposes	515	515	515
NEPP/CIMS Ring-Fenced Reserves etc	252	252	252
Pension Fund Deficit	2,279	3,214	2,657
Repairs & Renewals Fund	3,182	3,182	2,682
Insurance Reserve	739	739	739
Capital Expenditure Reserve	516	516	516
Gosbecks Reserve	114	114	114
Revenue Grants Unapplied	4,869	4,869	4,669
Decriminalisation Parking Reserve	336	336	336
Business Rates Reserve	9,918	6,010	6,687
Revolving Investment Fund Reserve	2,056	2,056	2,056
Other Reserves	305	305	305
Total General Fund Reserves	35,103	27,010	26,080
Housing Revenue Account Balance	4,555	4,555	4,555
Housing Revenue Account Retained Right To Buy Receipts – Replacement & Debt	7,712	6,637	5,338
Total Housing Revenue Account Reserves	12,267	11,192	9,893
Total Reserves	47,370	38,202	35,973

	2022/23			2023/24
	Forecast	In	Out	Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Summary Total Reserves	38,202	4,052	(6,281)	35,973
<i>Analysed as follows:</i>				
Pension Fund Deficit		279	(836)	
Business Rates Reserve			(323)	
Future budget Reserve – use to balance 2023/24 budget		-	(900)	
Repairs & Renewals Fund – use to balance 2023/24 budget			(800)	
Strategic Plan Delivery Reserve		550	-	
Revenue Grants Unapplied		-	(200)	
As per Table D1		829	(3,059)	
Repairs & Renewals Fund – contribution included in Base Budget		300		
Business Rates Reserve – potential year-end gain, not included in budget.		1,000		
General Fund Reserves Movement	27,010	2,129	(3,059)	26,080
Housing Revenue Account Retained Right To Buy Receipts – Replacement & Debt		1,923	(3,222)	
Housing Revenue Account Reserves Movement	11,192	1,923	(3,222)	9,893
Total Reserves Movement	38,202	4,052	(6,281)	35,973

Appendix J

Transformation Budget Savings 2023/24 onwards. Non-transformational see Appendix D4.

Strategy Theme	Council wide staffing		
Introduction	£25.8m of the Council's spend is on staffing. Savings can be made across the whole organisation through initiatives to manage the staffing budgets. The following workstreams will reduce staffing expenditure.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Recruitment freezes for external appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff turnover rate 15% (ex H&S and income generation). Freeze the recruitment of external appointments except for roles required for health and safety, income generation, are fully externally funded or in specialist technical areas. We will encourage and help staff on permanent contracts to be flexibly employed and re-trained where required to move around and within the organisation where needed. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reprioritise activities or reduce quality-of-service delivery 	500	0
Review all fixed term contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have numerous fixed term contracts that will be reviewed on an individual and service basis to reduce the number that need to be extended. Use external funding to pay for permanently employed staff (risk if external funding ceases). Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As fixed term contracts end areas of work will need to be reduced or reprioritised. Loss of external funding Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	50	0
Reduce overtime budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review all overtime budgets and spend Reduce budgets if work could be reduced or reprioritised Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	100	0
Reduction of staffing hours worked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow staff to reduce paid hours in a fair and flexible way Need commitment for a full year's reduction in hours Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	50	0
Reduce employers NI contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option for staff to make Additional Voluntary Contributions to their pension through a new salary sacrifice scheme This in turn will reduce employers NI contribution and results in a saving. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take up uncertain 	50	0
Sub total:		750	0

Strategy Theme	Collaboration across service and system partners		
Introduction	Empower, support, and enable system partners and communities to use their agility, resources, and skills to find solutions themselves and build self-reliance. We recognise that with appropriate resources they may be able to deliver more efficiently at a local level. This will allow us to minimise or co-produce services within a citizen led model resulting in system partners and communities fostering a sense of independence, pride, and possibilities.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Reduce Community Enabling Team resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Enabling Team external funding raised Through our Community Can approach (ABCD), we work with partners to empower and enable residents Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External funding not available medium to longer term. Reduction in capacity whilst maintaining service delivery 	65	0
Reduce spend on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise cost recovery from DFG grant A Home Improvement Agency (as other councils). Resource still needed to monitor contract performance Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost recovery will be investigated in business case Loss of experienced staff (hard to recruit area) 	0	68
Reduce CCC spend on countryside sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use commercial opportunities and mode of management / ownership; consideration of increasing commerciality of Mersea Beach Huts and Mersea Pontoon. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Hut agreement changes require 12-month notice. 	25	25
Reduce CCC spend on sports and playing fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review standards of grounds maintenance. Enable and empower Parish Councils/Sports Clubs to take on management or ownership with an appropriate payment. Risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criticism of standards Groups' 23/24 budgets already set. Mitigated by the Council providing some start-up funding. 	50	50
Sub total:		140	143

Strategy Theme	Funding Strategy and Reserves		
Introduction	We pay a core management fee to our Amphora subsidiaries, as well as project management fees. We will review these arrangements to ensure there is no duplication and that value for money is maintained.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Reduce project management fee to Amphora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the core management fee to Amphora to reflect additional project management fees paid to subsidiaries Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income to Amphora 	200	0
Sub total:		200	0

Budget Strategy Theme	Fees and Charges / Commercialising CCC Services		
Introduction to Theme	We will review our ability to provide discretionary services that have previously been free of charge or below the market rate. Fees and charges will be increased or introduced to maintain these services. We will focus on our commercial activities to enable us to be sustainable and self-sufficient based on an income generating capability and ensure our fees and charges keep pace with inflationary pressures.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
2022/23 mid-year review of fees and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-year review has happened to reflect inflationary factors • Additional income 22/23 then allows us to increase the baseline income assumptions for 23/24 Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for services falls due to increased fee charged. Mitigated by reviewing each fee and charge individually. 	50	0
2023/24 review of fees and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase fees and charges for 23/24 by inflation • Currently assume a 2.5% increase Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for services falls due to increased fee charged. Mitigated by reviewing each fee and charge individually 	100	0
Commercial review of existing income generating services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas identified for additional income are activities in Colchester Museum and commercial opportunities in Castle Park, Café, Boating Lake and Bowling Club Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue or capital costs for some proposals to improve commercial offering and legal compliance 	100	100
New income from Eudo Road Tennis Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now rented out part of the Eudo Road Sports Ground • With full planning approval additional 25-50% rent income Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of income depends on whether the Padel Tennis provider can get planning permission • First 3 months will be rent free affecting income 23/24 	80	0
Charge for Garden Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging for discretionary services currently provided free of charge. • Budget assumes 10% take-up in Season 1 (2023/24), and 21% in 2024/25. • Budget is income less Credit Claim, based on above percentage assumptions. • The budget assumes revenue costs remain the same (i.e. fuel and staffing), until such time as the customer base is stabilised and routes are re-optimised Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income forecast has been based on numerous assumptions and will be subject to change. • The current economic climate may impact take-up, considering this is discretionary spend. • Consultation on the Environment Act 2021 has not ended. If the act does not allow charging in future years new burdens funding is likely to be offered. 	600	725

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fly tipping of green waste may initially increase 		
Charge residents for Recycling Kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce a new policy for the provision of recycling kit. All options to be explored Residents can use any suitable items to contain and present recycling. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling kit costs fluctuate. The current economic climate may impact sales. Credit claim may reduce if recycling tonnages reduces. The Environment Act 2021 (as above). 	230	0
Revs and Bens New Burdens Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is anticipated income for the administration of Business Grant reconciliation work, Council Tax rebates and new alternative energy schemes <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is one off income in 2023/24 	50	0
Council Tax penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Council Tax penalties for residents claiming discounts and exemptions which they no longer qualify for. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some residents may find it difficult to pay penalties 	12	0
Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant can be used as income The admin work that is being done internally can be absorbed within current workloads. The remainder of the admin grant is needed for external consultancy work. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is low risk one off income in 2023/24 	10	0
Sub total:		1,232	825

Strategy Theme	Service Rationalisation and Organisational Development		
Introduction to Theme	<p>Over the years we have provided a broad range of high quality statutory and discretionary services. Our financial challenges mean we can no longer provide such a broad range at the same levels, and we now need to reprioritise these. We will review services and provide what is essential at acceptable levels to meet our statutory requirements and deliver against our Strategic Plan.</p> <p>As an organisation we have become more streamlined and less hierarchical, making continued efficiencies.</p> <p>We are making further savings in the workstreams detailed in this section.</p>		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Organisational Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team (SMT) structure has been reviewed, redesigned to a new Senior Board Structure. The resulting team has reduced from nine roles to six roles with an overall saving of £200K. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has reduced by a third so there is less overall capacity and resilience, but this has been mitigated by distributing leadership and decision making to service delivery leads. 	200	0
Sport and Leisure - New service model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and Leisure will create a more efficient staffing structure and service model • There is confidence that service levels and associated income can be maintained <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The savings will rely on a further service review and the implementation of a new technology system for sport and leisure 	0	200
New refuse and recycling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new refuse and recycling strategy will be developed with anticipated reduced running costs. • It will be a strategy fit for a modern and green city • We will look at options to improve staff welfare and provide a resilient service, whilst aiming to improve recycling rates • Numerous options to be considered in a phased approach. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Act 2021 (see above). • Depending on the model capital and revenue investment may be needed. 	0	1,000
Contact and Support - service reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review is being done on current opening hours for the telephone contact centre which will include response rates for telephony and emails. It is likely that there will be an improved pattern of opening hours and increased response rates. 	100	100

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New customer service standards will be developed and published which will include new opening times and updated response times. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to implement the new service approach. 		
Consolidation of housing functions in CCC and CBH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consolidate some General Fund housing services which are currently distributed across both CBH and CCC in multiple departments • By consolidating them, duplication and management costs can be reduced Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts need to be identified and risks will be mitigated by generating efficiencies from management and reduced duplication 	100	100
Museums - service reorganisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase income targets, utilise business rate savings and improve income generation through digitisation and fundraising Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship management 	60	0
Museums – service remodelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our service model to improve efficiency Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship management 	0	100
Environmental Health - service reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review to reduce the FTE in Environmental Protection and Food Safety by 0.5 FTE each • Increase income for PSH by £17K Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy and reduced capacity. 	50	0
Sub total:		510	1,500

Strategy Theme	Asset Management		
Introduction to Theme	CCC owns a significant number of land and property assets which can be used to bring in income. By proactively managing these assets, income can be maximised, and costs reduced.		
Identified savings			
Title of saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Property Group 0 lease Re-gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">One off premium Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	10	0
Property Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning permission has been grantedOne off £30K premium agreed if it proceeds Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	30	0
Property Group 2 Other asset management initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Arising in year includes easement requests, lease re-gears Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	75	0
Property Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3 units available Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	30	0
Property Group 4 lettings service charge and NNDR income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Service charge and NNDR income on 3 units to be let Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	10	0
Property Group 5 service charge and NNDR income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">NNDR saving of £8K per annum and Service charge of £15K income on property to be let Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	23	0
Reduce energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We are currently recruiting an Energy Manager to identify opportunities to reduce energy usageEarly innovation ideas could include speed/RPM control motor for pool heating at Leisure World which will reduce energy use Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Inevitably some savings will require capital investment first, e.g. sub-metersSome options may require a reduction in opening times for services, or more attention to patterns of use and energy “awareness”	100	100
Sub total:		278	100

Strategy Theme	Digital Innovation		
Introduction	We have been ahead of the curve in local government in digital development and transformation. We have been upgrading internal infrastructure and using new cloud-based systems to run and deliver our services. We have been (and still are) replacing old legacy systems which have become expensive and no longer supported. Next generation digital solutions are being fully implemented and adopted which will enable us to optimise and automate our services. This will also enable shared services with other LA's.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Payment processing system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the costs of processing payments and the assessment has found potential savings of £40K Merchant services transfer process will be fully managed and paid for by Lloyds Bank Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement and Legal requirements to finalise 	20	20
Sport and Leisure system review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all Sport and Leisure systems and options which will be modern and should be more efficient New Sport and Leisure systems should also enhance and enable increased income for the service Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure staff are trained and able to run/develop new systems for resilience and digital focus. 	0	50
Contact and Support telephony automation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The replacement of an outdated and limited-support contact centre (Voice Only) with a full Contact Centre (Voice / Email / Chat Bot / Agent Chat) will enable more automation and should lead to resource efficiencies. There will be more options to develop and build automation and optimisation for customer contact Phase 1 early 2023 Voice, Email, and Secure Pay. Phase 2 Chat Bot, Agent Chat, Social Media 23-24. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact and Support large change programme 	0	20
New Finance system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a procurement saving as we implement a new finance system Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other demands on scarce finance team resources 	0	25
New Finance system process efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New system more efficient processes and automation New processes to illuminate data input and duplication Processes and e-communications will cut out costs in staff resources and print and post Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other demands on scarce finance team resources 	0	25

Sub total:	20	140
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Total: (£000's)	3,130	2,708
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Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 January 2023

722. Colchester's New Economic Strategy 2022-25

The Assistant Director submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Transformation, introduced the report. The New Economic Strategy built on the previous Strategy. Whilst economic circumstances were challenging, there was an expectation that the Council would boost the local economy. It reflected the Council priorities of having an inclusive economy, the commitment to raising pay levels through championing the Living Wage and improving infrastructure. The Strategy set out how Colchester would compete for talent and investment to help tackle inequalities and improve residents' lives by improving skills and increasing job growth. Working with partners and business and local authority partners would be key in delivering the Strategy. Decarbonisation was also an important theme of the Strategy.

There were several programmes and initiatives in place to support the Strategy including the Town Deal projects, grant schemes from the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Rural Prosperity Fund, the Colchester Skills Programme, the Digital Strategy and the Levelling Up project.

Thanks were expressed to Karen Turnbull, Economic Strategy Specialist, for her work in developing the Strategy.

RESOLVED that the new Economic Strategy 2022-25 for Colchester be approved.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the Economic Strategy be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

REASONS

With Colchester recently honoured with city status as part of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, Colchester's new Economic Strategy is timely.

Colchester is a hot spot for innovation and investment. Employment levels are high and businesses have proved their resilience. However, the combined impact of the pandemic, the UK's departure from the EU, the situation in Ukraine and climate change are presenting unprecedented economic challenges.

This Strategy aligns strongly with partners and their strategies to coordinate our efforts to support an inclusive economy. It charts a course to take Colchester's economy forward in partnership:

- supporting the economy to survive and thrive.
- enabling Colchester to compete for future talent, investment and influence; and
- improving people's lives and tackling inequalities through gaining and improving skills, encouraging jobs growth, influencing health and transport choices; and delivering

more effective digital connectivity and improved personal and commercial prospects from this.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To not adopt the Economic Strategy. There are however clear risks to not having a robust evidence based strategy in place such as not achieving local priorities, not being able to evidence and articulate Colchester Borough Council's wider vision for the economy and not providing a strong focus to our partners about their contribution to meeting our priorities and helping economic recovery.

Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 January 2023

720. Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023-24

The Assistant Director submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Smith, Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee, attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet. The Governance and Audit Committee had looked at the draft scheme and supported it. It was important that the Council did all it could to support those hit hardest by the cost of living crisis. The support this scheme provided to those most in need was vital.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained this a valuable benefit in kind. All residents had to pay some element of Council Tax but the scheme provided support of up to 85% to the most vulnerable Whilst the Scheme had an impact on Council funding at all levels, it helped maintain high Council Tax collection rates.

RESOLVED that:-

The following elements be included within the Local Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24:

- Increase the maximum entitlement to 85% for working age claimants.
- Disregarding certain crisis payments paid to taxpayers (Local Welfare Provision)
- Disregarding emergency increase in national welfare benefits

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the Local Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24 be approved and adopted.

REASONS

To provide more financial support to low-income households throughout the City.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Not to make any changes to the scheme for 2023/24.

ELECTIONS WORKING GROUP

9 February 2023

Present: -

Councillor Chapman, Councillor Fox, Councillor Goacher, Councillor Laws, Councillor Rippingale, Councillor Scott-Boutell

Also present: -

Andrew Weavers, Strategic Governance Manager, Sarah Cheek, Elections Manager

Electoral Cycle

The Working Group was constituted following a motion agreed by Full Council at its meeting on 1 December 2022 to consider alternative electoral arrangements following a recommendation made by the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge report.

The Working Group considered a report from the Strategic Governance Manager which provided the background information regarding the options available to the Council (elections by thirds or whole council elections). The report provided details of previous considerations by the Council of considering changing its electoral cycle, the advantages and disadvantages and financial implications of both.

The Working Group discussed the merits of both options and considered the importance of undertaking proper consultation prior to making any decision. The Working Group also discussed the pending electoral review of Colchester by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The Working Group noted the timetable and that the Commission would shortly be undertaking a public consultation on its proposals and that if the Council decided to undertake a consultation on changing its electoral cycle now this would potentially cause confusion to the public. The Working Group also noted that Voter ID was being implemented for the May elections and considered that, on balance, now is not the appropriate time to commence the process for moving to whole council elections and that consideration of this should be deferred until the results of the electoral review have been implemented in 2026.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that consideration of changing the Council's electoral cycle be deferred until the forthcoming electoral review of Colchester has been completed and implemented in 2026.

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
19 November 2022 – 9 February 2023**

Portfolio – Culture and Heritage					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
No decisions in this period					

Portfolio – Environment and Sustainability					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
No decisions in this period					

Portfolio – Housing and Communities					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
8 Decemb er 2022	HOU-019-22	Housing Revenue Account Fees and Charges	Suzanne Norton	Approval of the Housing Revenue Account Fees and Charges 2023-24	Decision implemented 22 December 2022
19 Decemb er 2022	HOU-020-22	Award of Design and Build construction contract for “Phase 3 Garage Site” of the “New Council Housing Programme” at Cross Cottages	Terri Hamilton	To award a contract to Rose Builders for the Design and Build Construction works required on the 7 units at Cross Cottages within the Rural North ward in Colchester	Deciion implemented 9 January 2023
10 January 2023	HOU-021-22	Award of Contract for Unadopted Road Repairs	Martin Norgett	To award a contract to Henderson & Taylor (Public Works) Limited to undertake the highways repairs to unadopted roads for up to 4 years (3 +1) under a JCT Standard Form of Intermediate Building contract 2016.	Decision implemented 24 January 2023

Agenda item 9

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
19 November 2022 – 9 February 2023**

10 January 2023	HOU-022-22	Award of Design and Build construction contract for “Phase 3 Garage Site” of the “New Council Housing Programme” at Wheeler Close	Terri Hamilton	To award a contract to Amplis Construction Ltd for the Design and Build Construction works required on the 6 units at Wheeler Close within the Greenstead ward in Colchester	Decision implemented 24 January 2023
6 February 2023	HOU-023-22	Award of Contract for completion of Void Work in the Housing Stock	Martin Norgett	To award a contract to Houghton & Son Ltd to undertake void work within the Housing Stock for up to four years (on a 2+1+1-year basis)	Call in period expires 20 February 2023

Portfolio – Local Economy and Transformation

Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
16 November 2022	ECO-005-22	Rural England Prosperity Fund	Karen Turnbull	<p>To endorse the proposed approach to managing Colchester’s REPF allocation.</p> <p>To agree to delegate the final approval of the REPF submission to the Assistant Director for Place and Client, and thereafter its submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on or before 30 November 2022 by officers.</p>	Decision implemented 23 November 2022

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
19 November 2022 – 9 February 2023**

Portfolio – Neighbourhood Services and Waste					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
9 February 2023	WAS-002-22	Review of Saturday Household Drop Off Service	Rosa Tanfield	To agree to change the current free operating model for the Saturday Household Dropoff Service so that the Council only offers a selection of chargeable Saturday collection services to residents' associations, parish councils, managing agents or other organisations, with the fees as set out within the report.	Call in period expires 23 February 2023
9 February 2023	WAS-003-22	Review of Bulky Collection Service	Rosa Tanfield	To agree that the Council signposts residents wishing to have bulky household items disposed or recycled, to either the Council's chargeable collection service or to local recycling centres and/or charity collection services, and that it no longer offers free collections for those residents in certain postcode areas.	Call in period expires 23 February 2023

Agenda item 9

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
19 November 2022 – 9 February 2023**

Portfolio – Planning and Infrastructure					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
4 December 2022	PLA-004-22	ECC Consultaiton – Park and Ride Charges	Jane Thompson	<p>To agree the response (see Appendix 1) to the ECC consultation, which will help increase Park and Ride ridership, giving more flexibility for the use of the site, thereby helping the City Council meet its sustainability objectives and promote the town centre as a major destination to work and visit.</p> <p>To request that the City Council remains closely involved with ECC in the resulting promotion and provision of the Colchester Park and Ride service to ensure it aligns with the City Council's plans and policies, including the Positive Parking Strategy.</p>	Decision implemented 9 December 2022

Portfolio – Resources					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
20 December 2022	RES-003-22	Rowan House Refurbishment: Award of Contract	Jessica Douglas	To award a contract to supply and install the replacement furniture at Rowan house to Wagstaff Interiors Ltd.	Decision implemented 3 January 2023

Agenda item 9**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
19 November 2022 – 9 February 2023**

16 January 2020	RES-004-22	Rowan House – Letting of the Ground Floor and Part of the First Floor	Elizabeth Simpson	1. To authorise the letting of the whole of the ground floor and part first floor at Rowan House as per the Heads of Terms in Appendix 1 in the Confidential Report. 2. To agree that final terms and completion of the lease will be delegated to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.	Decision implemented 23 January 2023
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Portfolio – Strategy					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result
No decisions in this period					



Cabinet

25 January 2023

Report of **Chief Operating Officer** **Author** **Richard Block**
Richard.block@colchester.gov.uk

Title **Colchester Strategic Plan 2023-26 – A City fit For the Future**

Wards affected **All**

1 **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report concerns the draft Strategic Plan 2023-26 (attached). The Strategic Plan sets the priorities for the City and the Council for the next three years. The current Strategic Plan was published in March 2020 and runs to March 2023.
- 1.2 The Strategic Plan is one of the core statutory elements of the Council's Policy framework, as set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution. It must therefore be adopted by full Council.
- 1.3 The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting. The proposed plan recognises the significant transformation of Council services that will be required to respond to future challenges and to provide services for a city fit for the future.
- 1.4 This plan recognises that it in the future it even more important that the Council works with and enables other organisations to support delivery of key priorities for the city.
- 1.5 Since the last Strategic plan was developed Colchester was granted City Status and the proposed plan recognises the opportunities this provides.
- 1.6 The recent Local Government Peer Challenge emphasised the need for a strong link between priorities and capacity to deliver. As such, once this plan is adopted by the Council as part of the Council's Policy Framework, a delivery plan for 2023/2024 based on available capacity and resources will be developed for consideration by Cabinet in March 2023.

2 **Recommended Decisions**

- 2.1 To agree the Strategic Plan 2023-26 and recommend to full Council that it be adopted.

3 Reason for the Decision

- 3.1 To enable the Strategic Plan 2023-26 to be agreed and adopted.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The current Strategic Plan expires at the end of 2022-23 so a new plan is required to reflect future challenges and opportunities. This needs to be adopted by full Council as the absence of a relevant Strategic Plan would create a significant risk of the Council failing to identify and deliver on its core priorities.

5 Background

- 5.1 The Council's Strategic Plan describes the organisation's view of the main priorities for the city. It covers a three-year time span, although many of the issues it addresses are long-term in nature.
- 5.2 The Strategic Plan 2023-26 sets out five strategic themes:
- Develop modern services for a modern city
 - Respond to the climate emergency
 - Tackle health, well-being and happiness
 - Deliver homes for those most in need
 - Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits
 - Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture
- 5.3 Each strategic theme includes key priorities, which address the key issues facing the City area and each priority includes key goals against which success will be measured.
- 5.4 The plan provides a springboard to maximise the opportunities and benefits of Colchester being granted city status. In the future this will also be supplemented by a long-term vision for Colchester created with others across Colchester to ensure the benefits are fully harnessed.
- 5.5 This new plan is being considered at a time of significant uncertainty and challenge and recognises the need for services to be transformed for the future through a new strategic theme to develop modern services for a modern city. This will include responding to the recent Local Government Association peer challenge including reviews of the of the Colchester Council family of companies. The plan also recognises that the City Council needs to increasingly work with others and enable them to help deliver key priorities.
- 5.6 Although other members of the Colchester Council family of companies, that is Colchester Commercial Holdings Limited, and Colchester Borough Homes have individual business plans and strategic plans these will be aligned with this strategic plan as an overarching vision for the City.

6 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 The Strategic Plan 2023-26 will continue to support the importance of equality and diversity in all aspects of life in Colchester.
- 6.2 The Equality Act requires councils to have an equality objective, and the new Plan does that throughout its themes and priorities. An Equality Impact Assessment is attaches as appendix 3.

7 Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The themes and priorities of the Strategic Plan 2023-26 will be reflected in officer reports to councillors following its adoption by full Council.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 The key priorities identified in the plan arise from a range of information sources including various assessments available such as [Census data](#), [ONS data sources](#), [Essex Open Data](#), [Public Health Profiles](#), [indices of deprivation](#), [Colchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) profile 2019](#) as well as on results of public consultation. Consultation to inform the proposed strategic plan has included a public survey run during Autumn 2022. This resulted in 1113 responses. This was supplemented by several resident focus groups. A report of the responses is shown at appendix 2.
- 8.2 The proposed plan responds to the broad themes identified in the consultation. The results of the consultation will also be used to inform the delivery plan that will be considered by Cabinet in March 2023.
- 8.4 Key themes from the consultation were:
- Most respondents agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester, but fewer respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester. 'Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities' was also the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents suggesting this is a valid area the plan should focus on.
 - Improving and regenerating the town centre was mentioned by respondents throughout the consultation also suggesting this is an area of focus for the strategic plan. When asked about Colchester becoming a city, the regeneration of the city centre received the highest number of comments at 22%. Next, was culture/heritage and tourism at 21%.
 - The desire to have pride in the place which they lived was mentioned throughout the survey, however currently this appears to be lacking for some, with residents emphasising the need for a strong future vision for the city.
 - Climate and environment were also important to many respondents although this needs to be balanced with some of the difficulties for some in utilising sustainable methods of transport

9 Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Strategic Plan is a key element of the Council's continued external engagement activity. The Council will continue to ensure promotion of strategic activity via new and existing communications channels including direct, in person, in the media, on social media platforms and on its website.
- 9.2 The Council will communicate at key milestones of strategic projects to promote a strong positive reputation for the City, with half-year updates on the website.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast. This is a period of significant financial challenge and

uncertainty, and the plan strikes a balance between ambition for the city with the reality of these financial circumstances.

- 10.2 The financial implications of delivering the Strategic Plan priorities will be incorporated into the annual budgeting process.

11 Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Health, wellbeing and community safety remains a key component in this Strategic Plan. This is clearly identified in the “Tackle Health, Wellbeing and Happiness” strategic aim, and the priority to “improve community safety”.

12 Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no Health and Safety implications from the Strategic Plan.

13 Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 When the delivery plan to deliver the Strategic Plan 2023-26 is developed, risks will be identified and addressed.
- 13.2 The absence of a Strategic Plan, or the retention of a Strategic Plan that is no longer fit for purpose, would create risks for the Council failing to deliver on its core priorities and use of resources.
- 13.3 The introduction of a new strategic plan, one year early, is a direct response to some of the key risks in the Strategic Risk Register, such as potential impacts on spending power and partnership delivery, and it will ensure that the whole organisation is focused a clearly understood, single set of priorities.

14 Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. This plan will continue to deliver against this commitment as a golden thread throughout the plan as well as through the specific theme to respond to the climate emergency.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The draft Strategic Plan 2023-26.

Appendix 2: Summary of consultation responses

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Colchester City Council Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026

The City of Colchester deserves the very best this Council can do and deliver. In high quality services, in ambition and vision and for the value we can add, in our own right, and by working with others. With Essex County Council, and Government, at every level and with partners, including the University of Essex, the NHS, and our invaluable voluntary sector.

Together we must respond to the challenges of our times, alive to what matters most to the people of Colchester. From our environment, and quality of life, to the vibrancy of our city centre. Valuing as we do the rich and distinctive qualities of rural and city life, our many communities and identities and our culture and heritage.

Our new Strategic Plan continues to provide an overarching framework, sense of direction and the key outcomes we will address, deliver or influence in the coming years. To be supported by a more detailed Delivery Plan, updated as need, to ensure resources match ambitions and enable promises made are kept.

Central to all we do will be the discipline and professionalism we can apply, with our partners. To ensure in the most challenging times for our country, as well as our city, that our finances are managed well, that we do all we can with and through others. That our sense of optimism, and ambition show in all we do, to make life better. As Councillors, officers and full Council, for all those that live, and work or visit the great City of Colchester.

Colchester City Council's Strategic Plan 2023-26

Our Strategic Objectives and Priorities will govern and shape what we do. And the Outcomes we seek to achieve, mindful of the challenges we face and foresee. Our Plan providing a framework, direction and heading, for an ambitious Council that will respond the needs of the people of the City of Colchester, as changing circumstances require.

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Outcomes
Respond to the climate emergency	<p>Reduce our carbon footprint.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance our biodiversity.</p> <p>Continuing to be a leader in waste and recycling collections</p>	<p>The Council continues to proceed at best pace towards net zero aspirations by 2030.</p> <p>The Woodland and Biodiversity Plan is renewed annually with targets to improve biodiversity across all areas. With Cymbeline Meadows a publicly accessible nature reserve.</p> <p>Waste and recycling services are reviewed, and collection arrangements simplified and revised, to support the government recycling collection targets of 70%.</p>
Deliver Modern Services for a Modern City	<p>The Colchester Council family of organisations work together to a shared and ambitious vision for the future of our city.</p> <p>The Council transforms services and moves to a community centred approach, where it enables, helps, and supports local communities as they help prioritise, shape and deliver local services.</p> <p>Our partnering approach maximises our influence and adds value through and with others, such as One Colchester, Essex County Council, the NHS, the Business Improvement District</p>	<p>The Local Government Association Peer Challenge recommendations of 2022 are delivered in full by end 2023.</p> <p>The future roles of the Council family of organisations including CCHL are refined to enable their delivery of improved services and profit for CCC that will support the delivery of essential services to our residents.</p> <p>Colchester Borough Homes is an efficient and respected quality provider of housing services.</p> <p>Assets are reviewed enabling greater use, and or transfer to community partners, rationalisation and or sale. Or use in support of city centre renewal.</p> <p>Colchester City Council closes the budget gap each year through the MTFF. And with CCHL and CBH, is able to fund capital and asset renewal and investment over the medium term.</p>

	and the Town Deal Board, the Garrison, and the University of Essex.	A new post transformation model of Council, partner, and community services delivers on our ambitions, cost effectively and with the support of the communities we serve.
Improve health, well-being, and happiness	<p>Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people</p> <p>Work with residents and partners to address quality of life and issues of happiness</p>	<p>Work with NHS and other partners on prevention, community engagement and awareness, helps us improve the life expectations and outcomes of our residents. and to support and help those most in need.</p> <p>We reduce the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis for our residents.</p> <p>With our residents we improve their sense of wellbeing.</p>
Deliver homes for those most in need	<p>Increase the number and quality and types of homes. Meet our duty to prevent or assist those facing homelessness</p> <p>Seek 30% affordable housing across all our own housing sites.</p>	<p>More Council homes have kept them in good repair and improving energy efficiency.</p> <p>More developers apply beautiful and sustainable design to all house builders across the city.</p> <p>We increase the number of affordable homes (seeking 30% where we build).</p>
Grow our economy so everyone benefits	Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant city and attract inward investment	<p>A longer-term vision and plan are created with the aid of Ambassadors and partners that will maximise the economic and social benefits of city status to all including young people</p> <p>Garden Community development that ensures Colchester gains maximum benefits.</p> <p>The Town Deal is delivered with partners, with city wide economic and social benefits.</p> <p>Economic advice and support to local businesses and key partners is available that attracts inward investment for social and economic benefit, exploiting city status with our partners.</p>
Celebrate our city, and our heritage and culture	<p>Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year</p> <p>To make our city a yet better place in which to live and work and visit.</p>	<p>The delivery with partners of the 2023 year of city status commemoration and celebration.</p> <p>With Essex County Council, we build on master planning, and take the next steps towards a transformed attractive and more accessible city centre, that makes the most of our public spaces, heritage and cultural assets.</p> <p>A step change in marketing Colchester as a destination</p>

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The Future of Colchester – A Consultation with Residents and Stakeholders

JANUARY 2023



Survey and discussion groups commissioned by the leader of the council, Councillor David King and Chief Operating Officer, Richard Block to shape the 2023 Strategic Plan.

Libby Britcher and Tricia Smith
Research Officers

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Introduction

This consultation was commissioned in September 2022 to engage residents, councillors, and other local stakeholders (local business owners and workers), to hear their views on the future of Colchester and how the Council should address the key challenges facing the borough which will be outlined in the councils Strategic Priorities for 2023-2026. The Strategic Plan sets out how Colchester City Council will play a part in making Colchester a place where people want to live, learn, work and visit.

Method

We engaged with residents, councillors, and other local stakeholders through two online surveys, consisting of both quantitative and qualitative questions:

- One for residents and other stakeholders (online), which was live from 5 October – 31 November.
- One for members, city and parish/town councillors (online), which was live from 12 October – 12 December.

We also undertook face-to-face, interactive discussion groups which were led by the content of the survey results and new emerging themes or areas of interest to the current cabinet.

The survey used opportunistic, convenience sampling and was promoted through various channels:

- Press release: 10 October
- Article in internal comms weekly update email: 6 and 28 October
- Toolkit for Members, Parish Council's and One Colchester Partners: issued 7 October
- Web banner on CCC homepage: w/c 10 and 17 October
- Borough News e-newsletter article: 14 October and 11 November issues
- Social media: multiple dates, including 21 October, 28 October, 31 October
- Facebook boost, £50: 31 October

Sample

1113 responses were received from the residents' survey. Despite being a convenience sample, we still achieved fairly good representation across different demographic groups. For a detailed breakdown by ward, age, gender, ethnicity, and disability see "[Achieved Sample of residents](#)".

There were 22 responses from members and councillors. This survey was extended for one week (5-12 Dec) to gather parish/town councillor responses which generated an additional 16 responses. There were 38 responses in total for the members survey when this closed 9am 12 December.

All those who responded to the residents' survey were invited to take part in some further face to face discussions. 230 showed interest in attending these. A further 123 said they would have been interested if they were to be virtual/online. We invited all those that stated an interest to our face-to-face discussion groups on 15 and 22 November. Of those that expressed an interest, 36 said they would attend. On the two days, a total of 29 attended (16 attendees on 15 November and 13 on 22 of November).

Headliners

- The majority (67%) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester (47% agreed, 19.5% strongly agreed)
- 42% of respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in Colchester (35.2% agreed, 7.1% strongly agreed)
- Just over half agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (39% agreed, 11.9% strongly agreed)
- In open text box for priorities, two new themes were mentioned: The City Centre and Infrastructure
- 'Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities' was the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents.
- 85% of respondents ranked 'Environment' either first or second (out of 9) in order of importance to them in terms of budget spend.
- 36% ranked 'Parks and Open Spaces' first or second in order of importance.
- 71% ranked 'Corporate Services' 8th or 9th (out of 9).

Throughout this consultation, in open-text survey responses and discussion groups, some new themes emerged and stand-out areas of concern for residents included:

- **City centre regeneration** - Lack of shops, having a 'dirty' appearance, parking and general appearance. (The city centre was discussed by 27% of respondents, when people spoke about the town centre they were referring to the historic centre of Colchester).
- The centre was also mentioned when asked about the opportunities brought by city status.
- **Infrastructure** (including roads) was mentioned by 21.8% of respondents. E.g. How the current infrastructure can't cope with the development of Colchester (and doesn't keep up).
- Other themes mentioned throughout the qualitative responses related to the current strategic priorities and it was clear these were still important to residents. For example; 14.1% mentioned culture/leisure/history and tourism (including retail). During the discussion groups it became clear that residents want Colchester to make more of its history and to have its own identity.
- Other themes also echoed the current strategic priorities and included: Safe, healthy, active communities, climate/environment, housing/development, and employment/economy/education.

Recommendations

- **Colchester City Centre/high street to be included as a priority in the Strategic Plan.** The City Centre and High Street were highlighted a number of times within the survey responses and discussion groups as a priority for a number of residents. This included regeneration and a 'clean up' of the area. The areas were described as 'dirty' and 'grubby' however this wasn't always related to their cleanliness but how they appeared to be old/broken and outdated.
- **An Identity of its Own:** When residents discussed Colchester in the focus groups they generally spoke about Colchester as being unique and that this should be celebrated, comments in the survey and discussion groups indicated that we could learn from other city's that do it well.
- **Holistic Consultation Process** – there are many meetings, strategies, projects, and consultations continually taking place at Colchester City Council. These could work well if there was more of a holistic approach, and they were more joined up/strategic approach. Is there scope for a staff member to have an oversight of all projects?

- **Consult with Knowledge** consultations should be undertaken with awareness and understanding of local issues and internal plan.
- **Talk and Listen to Residents More** – Whether this is via more consultations or general groups. Residents feel like they are not listened to (there were many comments especially in the survey) where respondents said they weren't going to leave a response as they 'wouldn't be listened to anyway' so 'what's the point'.
- **Increased Communication** (including but not limited to);
 - What Colchester City Council is responsible for
 - What Essex County Council is responsible for (mainly in relation to roads)
 - Ensure staff understand what is in their remit (and if not in their remit, are able to triage appropriately. Residents mentioned 'giving up' when sent from one place to another when staff or organisations do not understand where responsibility lies.)
 - Use the right method of communication (Facebook mentioned as not always the best)
 - Youth (Youth councils mentioned)
 - Ensure full cycle of communication is adopted (e.g. ensure that responses to this piece of engagement is communicated)
 - Ensure staff are educated and understand where responsibilities lie
 - Recognition of how much weight resident opinion has

Detailed findings

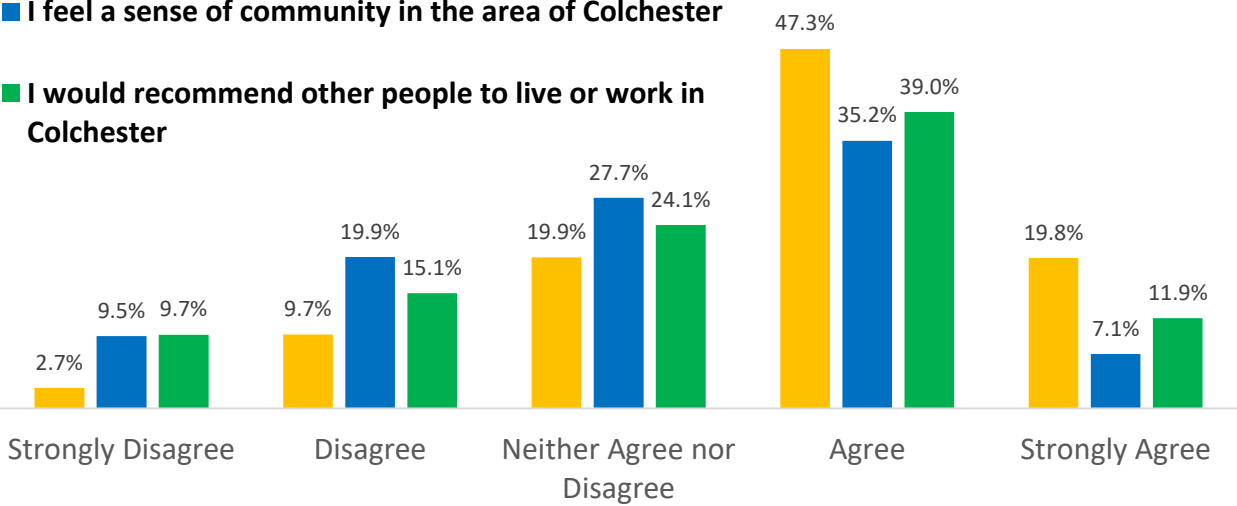
Living and working in Colchester: Residents sense of community

- The majority (67%) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester (47.3% agreed, 19.8% strongly agreed)
- 42% of respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester (35.2% agreed, 7.1% strongly agreed)
- Just over half agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (39% agreed, 11.9% strongly agreed)

I enjoy living/working in Colchester

I feel a sense of community in the area of Colchester

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester



See Appendix 1,2 and 3 for a full breakdown by age, gender, disability, ethnicity and ward profile.

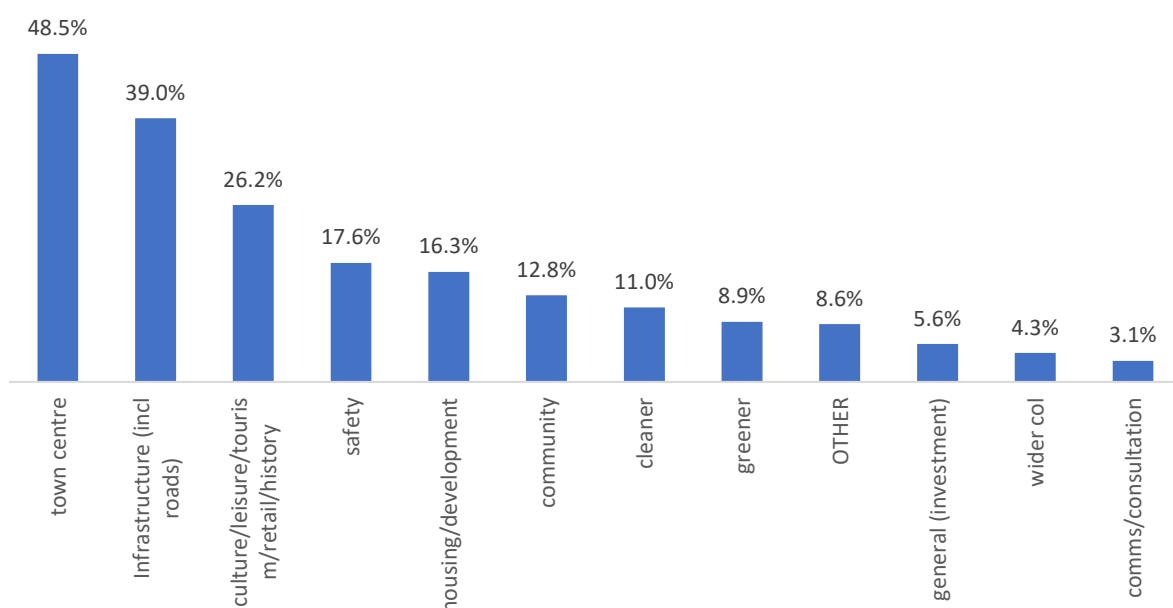
If respondents **didn't** agree with one of the three above statements, they were asked;
"What changes in Colchester would you like to see?"

All comments were sorted into themes, many comments fell into multiple themes. 55% (n=608) of respondents left a comment. (Detail regarding theme content and examples on next page).

• Infrastructure (Including Roads)	237	39.0%
• Communication and Consultation	19	3.1%
• Housing/Development	99	16.3%
• Cleaner	67	11.0%
• Greener	54	8.9%
• Culture/Leisure/Tourism/Retail/History	159	26.2%

• Town Centre	295	48.5%
• Safety	107	17.6%
• General (Investment)	34	5.6%
• Community	78	12.8%
• Wider Colchester	26	4.3%
• Other	52	8.6%

Changes residents would like to see



Below are a selection of random, anonymous, verbatim quotes sorted into themes for this question. Quotes are likely to also fall within multiple themes including the one it is sat under.

- **Infrastructure;** Including roads, congestion, car parks, schools and surgeries etc. usually in negative context.
 - *"The town centre needs a massive revamp (its really grim) and you need to stop building houses with no infrastructure"*
 - *"Less houses, more green areas, more things for children to do/places to go, better roads, less traffic, more gp surgeries, better town centre as it's awful!"*
 - *"A better 'city centre' that's clean! With better parking. I refuse to go into town due to the price of parking."*
 - *"Rush hour traffic issues have never been resolved, so many roads are overloaded and have never been improved in the last 70 years."*
- The need for more/better **communication and consultation** from Colchester City Council
 - *"Transparency, honesty and any works undertaken for Colchester Borough, closely monitored, but it won't be. Far too much time and money is wasted, but that will continue"*
 - *"Mote interaction with the uni and other collaborations with the groups and cultures we have."*
- **Housing and development;** often linked to infrastructure comments - usually in negative context.

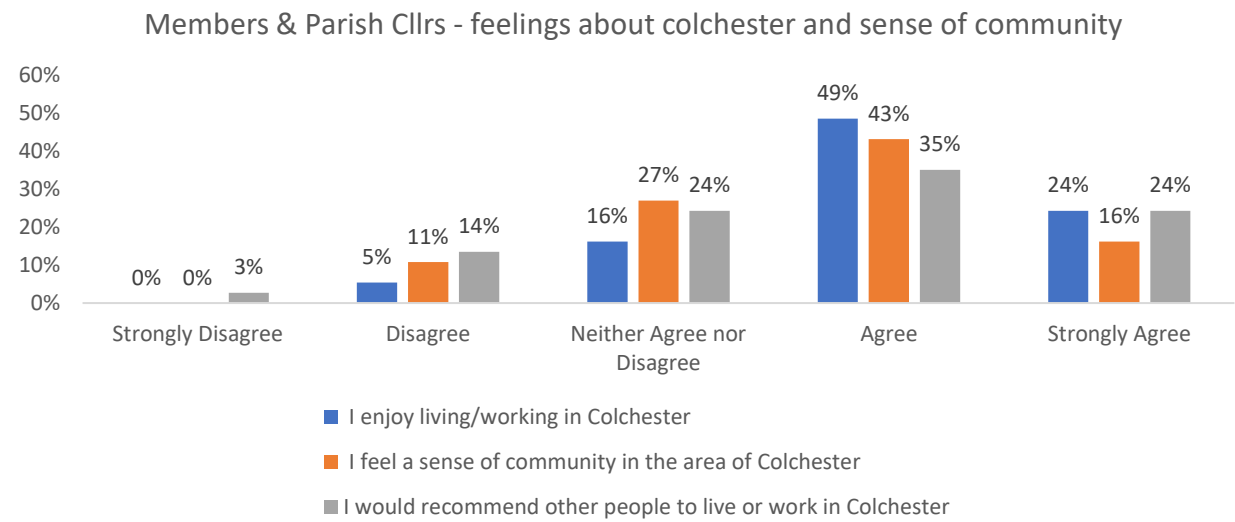
- *"More infrastructure to cope with the enormous amount of new homes. Less 'coffee shops' more real shops. Repair the town centre pavements. More street cleaning."*
- *"It has become an overdeveloped monstrosity"*
- **Cleaner;** physical cleanliness and the appearance of cleanliness - including phrases like 'shabby and run down'
 - *"Ban indiscriminate scooter parking; improved riverside e.g. pop up street food stalls; clean up St Botolph Street; more street cleaning"*
 - *"More community feel, more activities, more investment in running a green, efficient, clean town"*
 - *"...Buildings look rundown, streets are dirty..."*
- **Greener;** This theme includes comments about open green spaces which have been developed, environment and climate comments and smaller scale such as want for trees in areas.
 - *"Less people, stop building, more green space and more for the environment"*
 - *"Too many coffee shops, hairdressers and barbers as well as closing shops that then get replaced and close again. I'd like to see more open space, greenery, maybe shutting off the high street and having tables and chairs out."*
- **Culture/Leisure/Tourism/Retail/History;** often mentioned together in relation to town centre (but not always)
 - *"Get the town centre working as a hub with more reasons to go there. At the moment it's extremely expensive to park to go to either pubs, coffee shops or restaurants. More local independent shops should be financially supported. Make more of what is unique about Colchester and its amazing history"*
 - *"More community and cultural festivals, more international events and a big focus on Roman history."*
- **Town Centre;** regeneration
 - *"More civic pride! City centre smartened up."*
 - *"The town centre is like a dustbin. The pavements are like an obstacle course - dodgy lifted slabs, broken glass, litter and dog mess. The High Street is a disgrace"*
 - *"I would like to see the city centre smartened and cleaned up. Decent roads and pavements are needed. Better social housing. The council property I live in is mouldy and damp suffering from subsidence, mould and damp etc etc."*
- **Safety;** General safety including; policing, anti-social behaviour (ASB), unsafe areas in Colchester and pavements
 - *"It has become a ghetto, It only used to be Greenstead that had a bad reputation, now its the whole of Colchester, thanks to the continuous overdevelopment."*
 - *"Make all the pavements safe, it is safer to walk in the roads, nowadays there is less traffic as no one wants to pay to park, only danger is from scooter users, and yes I have been hit by one on the pavement"*
 - *"The town has no shops, and the town is a very small part of what is colchester that is full of homeless, fly tipping and anti social behaviour"*
- **General (investment);** general comments regarding broad investment
 - *"Better investment in the city centre, better investment in supporting the environment and improving green areas"*

- *"More community feel, more activities, more investment in running a green, efficient, clean town"*
- **Community**
 - *"More neighbourhood community groups for residents to share ideas about their local streets/areas. One time free visit to the local castle for Colchester residents. A better door step rubbish/recycling service from weekly refuse persons. Council workers and police located in local areas of the Borough and towns/locations advertised."*
 - *"More childcare facilities, better free access services for families and children, more community events in the surrounding areas such as Stanway not just in town centre, fix the park in Westlands, better cultural and entertainment facilities"*
- **Wider Colchester** – specifically mentioning an area or outside of centre
 - *"More investment in outlying/satellite communities."*
 - *"Much more social events bringing community and villages closer"*
- **Other;** all other comments (including comment unable to group/theme as too broad or one off comment relating to specific item)
 - *"More links with the football club in the city center, e.g flags, murals, painting cable boxes with former players shirts and names. Have seen it in other towns locally and increases sense of pride in community."*
 - *"More things for young adults to do as there are many students at the colleges and university"*
 - *"More indoor facilities for kids. Kids museum or indoor playatorium"*
 - *"A council that cares for existing residents"*
 - *"More independent businesses, probable lower rents would help"*
 - *"People very unwelcoming...."*

Living and working in Colchester: Members and parish councillors - Feelings about Colchester and a sense of community

A high proportion of members also agreed/strongly agreed:

- That they enjoy living/working in Colchester (49% agreed, 24% strongly agreed)
- That they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester (43% agreed, 16% strongly agreed)
- And almost two thirds agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (35% agreed, 24% strongly agreed)



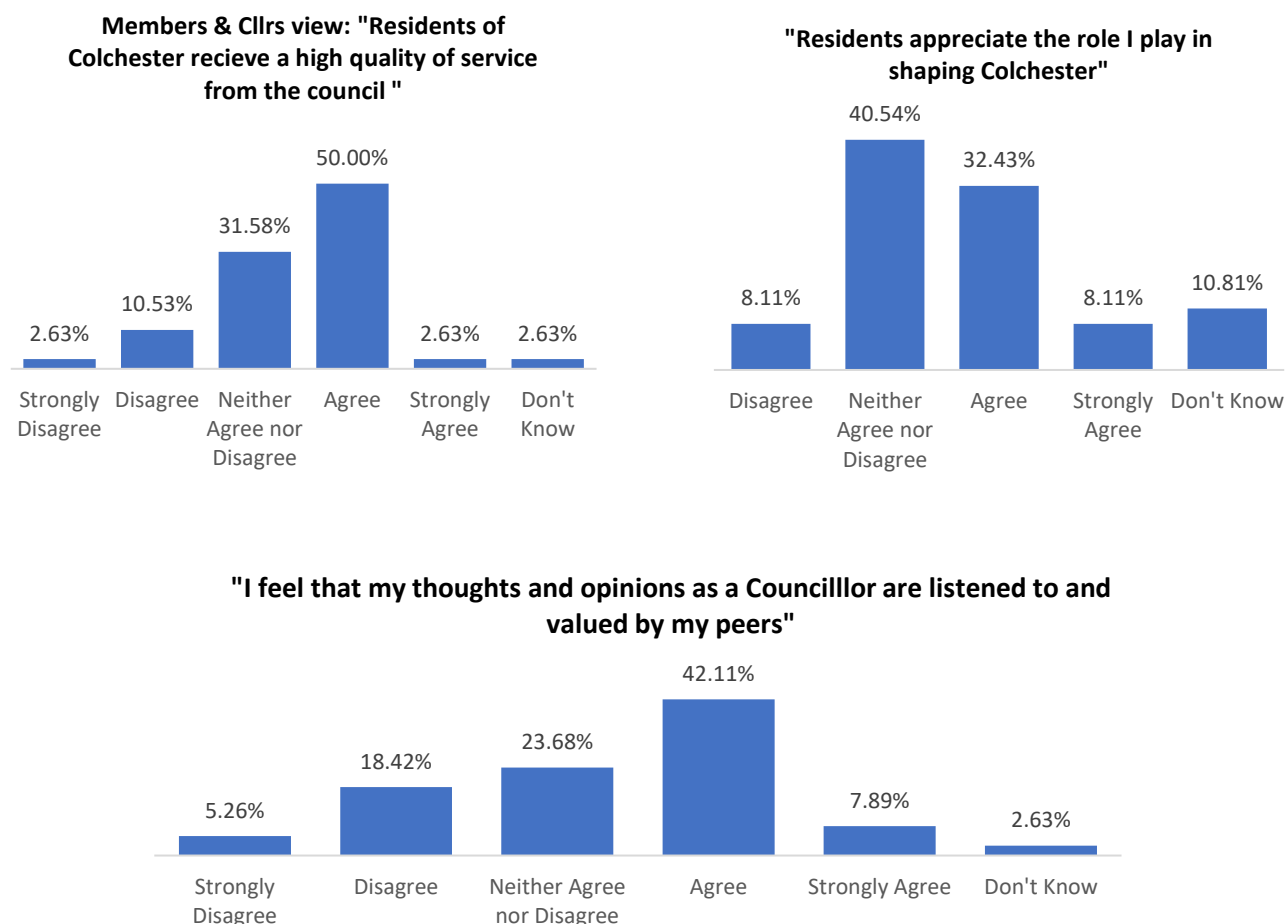
If members **didn't** agree, they were asked to tell us;
"What changes in Colchester would you like to see?"

(7 comments left, many of which mentioned multiple themes. All quotes verbatim, random, and anonymous).

- *"Changes to its shabby down market centre and better architectural design on new builds. See Chester"*
- *"I would not usually make recommendations on where to live or work"*
- *"I live in x, which is a rural ward. It doesn't have a particular affinity with Colchester. The administration needs to think of the Borough/City as a whole rather than the city centre. Life doesn't start and end in the city!"*
- *"Colchester's Direction of Travel has been distorted, and as a result, over the last 14 years it has become a singularly unattractive place to live in"*

The role of councillor's in representing communities

Members and Parish Councillors were also asked whether they felt residents were well served by the council and whether they felt their role as a Member or Councillor were appreciated.



The role of communities - themes from discussion groups

There was a general view that **community empowerment** was both possible and important but that it should be **proportional to capability and not *instead of the council***. Residents explained that they knew it takes time and that **simple, easy initiatives would enable people to 'dip in and out'** (and thus not become a burden) and the focus should be on **quality rather than quantity**. The focus should be on tackling future issues rather than "bog-standard" recurrent issues and not just quick fixes or 'sticking plasters' on issues but a more **holistic approach**.

For this to happen, and for residents to feel more empowered, **the council needs to more accessible and less intimidating** (the group agreed that they knew there was the ability to attend meetings as a member of the public, but felt that they didn't know where/when these were and who held responsibility for different things (i.e. Parish, Ward, Colchester and Essex Councils) – and they felt that the council often didn't know either (examples were given here of when residents tried to 'fix' something in the community but councils, parishes and charities kept passing them to different organisations. **They felt deflated and**

- Communities need **inspiration to get involved**
- People should **take ownership** – those who are engaged are willing
- The council doesn't really engage with the community. They need to **make it less intimidating**. How are they getting people to sign up? Integration and **communication need to be better managed**. People need to have clear signposts on how to sign up to get emails
- There's a **lack of understanding on how local democracy runs**. Takes a huge amount of **effort to understand and navigate the system**
- Council needs to make things easier as it's 'pretty impenetrable' and then **people give up**.
- **Citizens UK** – Colchester has a group. Invite them to your meeting and tell your personal stories. Ask Cllr King to attend or someone from the council
- Communities don't feel empowered to make a difference and though we have ward Cllrs it's never resolved – just a sticking plaster
- Town Centre Community – **Masterplan meeting was disjointed** as you've a strategy for the town centre, history, jumbo but it feels like it's a little bit here and a little bit there. It doesn't **look at the holistic picture** and we could have a better **strategy at the higher level** which could get people to buy into it a bit more, they could make sense of it on how it fits together.
- Living wage – Use all the platforms or the council could facilitate that through comms messages
- We should **empower young people** – don't shoot them down
- Suggested that schools are the best point of call for getting information out to different age groups. **Using the influence of the schools** of hearing of young voices.
- Youth Council - Do we have a youth council in Colchester that talks to the council? **Wendy** knows of someone that could talk to the council (Research team has Wendy's details)
- There needs to be **consistency**
- Look at a '**Champion**' model – for skateboarding, cycling etc,
- Every school can put out a survey through tutor groups and invite council to come in and have a forum
- Where is the pressure from young people to feeling unempowered? It's **mental health** side of things
- Young people don't know how to **express something they're passionate about**
- They don't know how/where to have any **interaction with someone in authority** to express their concerns
- **Have your say meetings**: they are quite **intimidating**, and it appears to be the **same people from the community attending**. You need to make it more inclusive and let people know you can make representations

- There's **no integration in communication at schools, across cultures** etc. There are over 20 sites where different events are going on

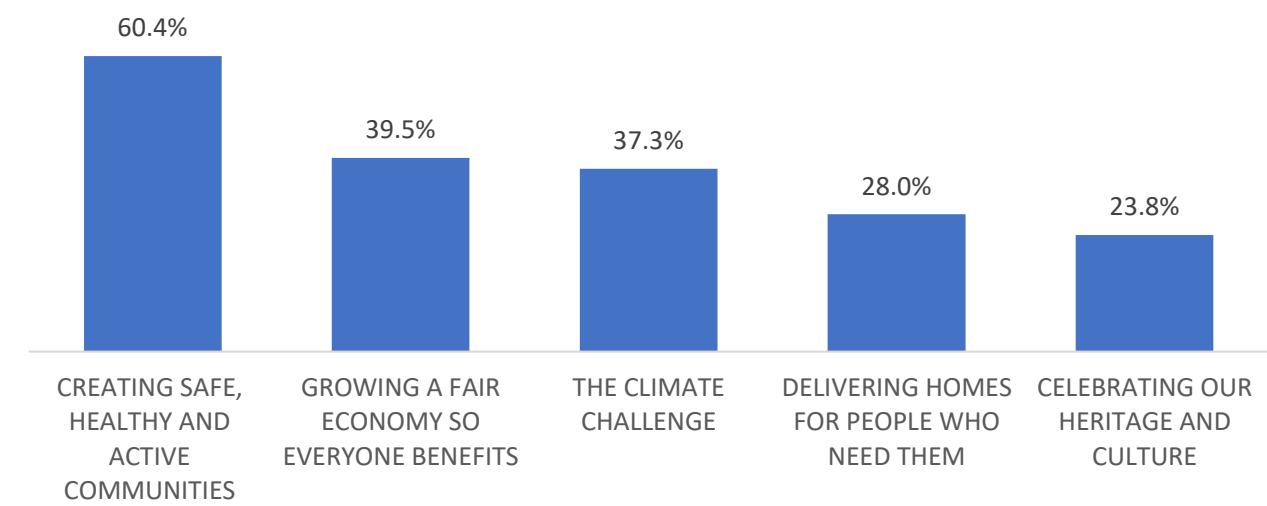


Priorities for the Council

Priorities of residents

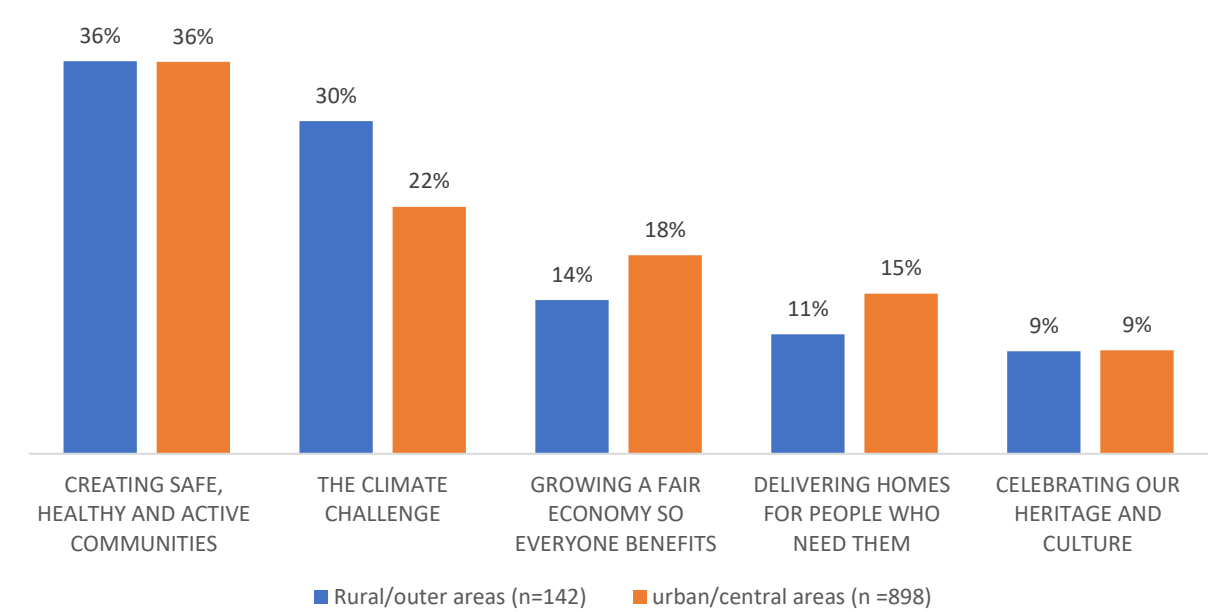
Residents were asked to rank the current council priorities in order of importance.

‘Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities’ was the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents.

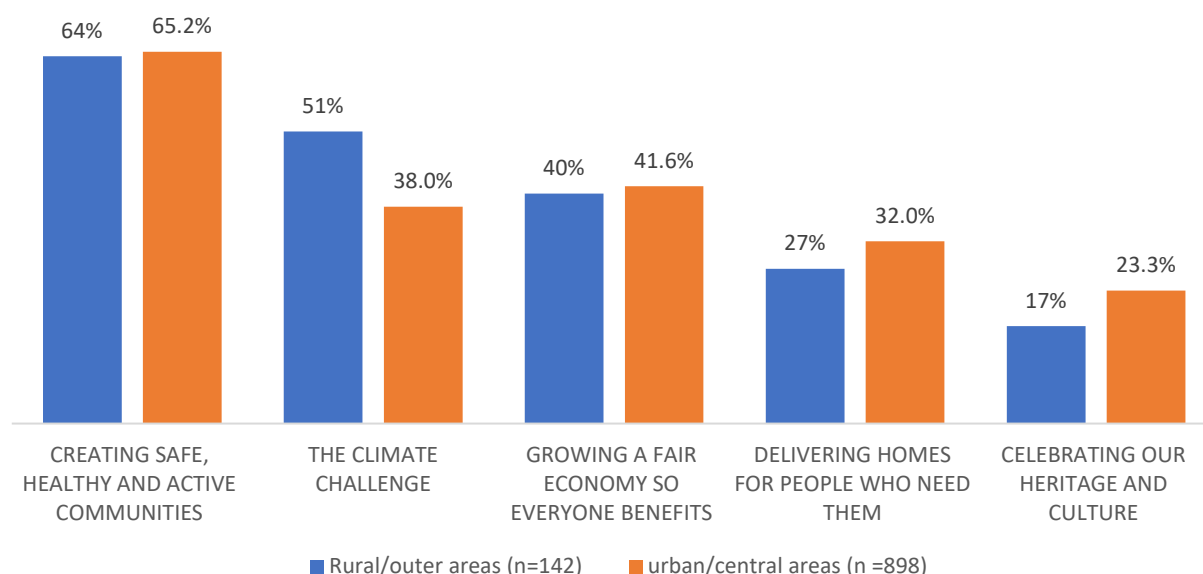


We compared responses from those in rural/outer Colchester areas with those who live more centrally to see if there were any differences in priorities. There was little difference between the areas in the proportion each priority was ranked 1st. There were some small differences when combining which priorities were ranked 1st or 2nd, with a higher percentage of those in rural areas ranking the climate challenge 1st or 2nd and those in Urban/central areas ranking delivery homes and growing a fair economy higher (Rural/outskirts = Marks Tey and Layer, Mersea and Pyefleet, Rural North, Tiptree).

Priorities ranked 1st Rural/outer areas vs Urban/central



Priorities ranked 1st or 2nd Rural/outer areas vs urban/central areas
(N/B percentage out of 200%)



For a detailed breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity, disability and ward please see appendix 4.

Other priorities

Respondents were asked; **What would your number one priority for the council be for the next 3 years?** They were then asked to explain their answer. 97% (n=1075) of respondents put an answer in the initial text box and 87% (n=911) went on to explain their answer. In the 'top priorities' open text box, of those that answered, 237 people mentioned the **TOWN CENTRE** and said that it should be one of the top priorities.

The only other 'new' themes were; **INFRASTRUCTURE** and the need for this to sufficiently support the growing population and housing stock and **LESS HOUSING** although this could be grouped with the climate challenge/sustainability as was often in relation to green space in the borough (even if green space/climate wasn't specifically mentioned).

Priority Themes from Open Text Boxes;

Top 4;

- Town Centre 25% ***NEW PRIORITY***
- Climate 18%
- Infrastructure 14% ***NEW PRIORITY***
- Community and Safety 14%

All Other Priorities Mentioned; Cost of Living, Culture, Economy, Housing, Less Housing/ Development, Affordable Housing, Other, Safety)

Housing was split into 3 themes;

1. (Want for) Less Housing

2. General

3. (More/better) Affordable Housing

(Comments in this section were only attributed one over-arching theme. All comments are random and verbatim)

(Top 3; Town Centre, Climate and Infrastructure)

- **Town Centre - 25% (n = 237)**

(Regeneration, general cleaning up, filling empty buildings. Often linked with comments relating to community, culture, retail and safety).

- *"To move away from the current "anti car" policy that has seen people driven out of the town centre, which goes in tandem with the demise of the retail sector within the town - The priorities should be to ensure that the town centre has a thriving retail economy. There should also be easy vehicular access to the town centre roads, with cheap parking to encourage residence to visit, and not force them to drive miles to out of town bland retail parks."*
- *"Making the town centre more attractive and upcoming for tourism - I just feel too much is being done on the outskirts I.e by the stadium and Stan way because land is cheap but not enough in the town centre."*
- *"To improve the infrastructure around the town to make it more accessible to all. To clean up and improve dilapidated areas. Turn empty shops and offices into affordable housing rather than building on our green spaces. Make Colchester a place to celebrate, not feel embarrassed by - The current priorities seem very vague. I appreciate the need for affordable housing but I do think we as a nation should be looking at buildings that already exist but are not used (there are plenty of these spaces) that could be turned into housing, or using brownfield sites prior to more recreational space being culled."*

- **Climate - 18% (n=177)**

(Includes green transport and general measures to keep Colchester greener).

- *"Growing the local economy in a way that supports the climate challenge - Attracting businesses that help reduce demand unsustainable resources, through sustainable technology and renewables will help to upskill communities for the longer term whilst showing our commitment to the climate challenge. Colchester seems to need a niche in the business market."*
- *"Better Maintenance of the environment so that open and green spaces are ones that we can be proud of and use safely - The environment in which people live and work is in my opinion the most important service the local authority can deliver to encourage the well being and development of all strata demographic groups"*
- *"The climate challenge. Sorting out car dependency - It's unpleasant in Colchester in places as a pedestrian. Too much public space and consideration is given to vehicles. Even new developments (Stanway) are not pedestrian friendly and encourage car use. It would make a radical difference to Colchester if the Council could grapple with these issues and resolve them effectively"*

- **Infrastructure - 14% (136)**

(Includes roads and other infrastructure such as schools and GP surgeries and how these need addressing).

- *"Better services to manage the way too much new homes that has been built - Too many new homes, infrastructure can't support, it enough incentives to use public transport"*
- *"Infrastructure and facilities - It's no good building homes and encouraging companies to come to Colchester when the roads are awful, there aren't enough Doctors dentists and schools. The elderly need better facilities too, activities and clubs to avoid loneliness."*

- *"Stop wasting money on badly planned infrastructure - Bus station replaced by arts center that's hemorrhaging money and a bus station not fit for purpose now"*
- **Community and Safety - 14% (136)**

(General community comments. Includes; policing, ASB, pavements etc).

- *"Ensuring there is a safe environment - Lots of footpaths are in dangerous conditions from tree roots (that were planted by council on green verges)"*
- *"Safety in community - Street lighting extra policing"*
- *"Safe healthy and active communities - If residents feel safe, they take pride in their area and want to contribute to reducing carbon emissions, recycle more, keep area tidy etc"*
- *"Engagement with residents, actually understand what matters to people - For too long councillors and politicians have acted upon what agenda they choose, rather than listening to their customers (the residents/voters) and what they want. For example, our road is breaking up and in need of urgent repair. It's a busy road, on a major bus route, yet we are told it can't be fixed until 2024 at the earliest. These things matter to people. Drive a people's agenda, not a politician's/council's agenda."*

All Other Priorities Mentioned; Cost of Living, Culture, Economy, Housing (General), Less Housing/Development, Affordable Housing, Other.)

- **Cost of living**

(Comments mentioning that helping those in need should be prioritised).

1. *"Cost of living - Help the community that helps the council"*
2. *"Helping people to afford to live - It would be nice to see more support towards communities and small businesses."*
3. *"Helping those most in need."*

- **Culture**

(Often closely linked with 'town centre' theme and discussing need for Colchester to make more of its culture, heritage and tourism).

1. *"Community and promoting our heritage - If we promoted our heritage like other historic cities e.g. Bath, York etc. Would have a follow on effect to the city. I'd like to see more performance venues and community gatherings."*
2. *"To preserve the heritage and attract people to see it - Not enough is done to preserve and promote the town's history. While there are things to visit in, the wider "experience" leaves you lacking. The quality and diversity of shops is poor and there is little enticement. The development at Stane Park is fine, but traffic management has been poor. More quality events need to be put on in the town."*
3. *"Arts and culture - More funding for arts and culture events. Support us organisers and we will do our utmost to support support tourism into the city and boost the local economy."*

- **Economy**

1. *"Focus on the economy and supporting local businesses - Because that creates jobs and wealth and allows the other priorities to happen."*
2. *"Economic improvement and support for working households - There are lots of options for support for low income households and those on UC but they're not the only once struggling and I'd like to see financial support for hard working people."*
3. *"Growing economy - It's good for residents especially in these difficult times"*

- **Housing**

(General comments regarding housing. Usually the need for delivering homes. Sometimes mentioning 'infrastructure'.

1. *"Have a real comprehensive plan for achieving net zero, protect people's households and avoid housing speculation"*
2. *"Stop building housing stock till you fix the infrastructure - hospitals, doctors, dentists, roads are full, stop bring in more"*
3. *"To consider the level of housing and building across Colchester and how local amenities match that, i.e. A second recycling centre or expansion of the Stanway one and access, regeneration of the town centre and retail units, more frequent buses from places like Tiptree to Stanway and Colchester town centre, station and hospital - Planning seems to be high up on CBC's agenda, at the expense of the balance of green space and public amenities, eg. Proposed development of Middlewick Ranges, regeneration and redevelopment of Stanway and Stane Park, lots of building up by the hospital, yet no improvement to road access to the hospital for emergency vehicles - particularly around North Station. Also a huge housing development in progress in Barbrook Lane, Tiptree, as well as another one proposed for Brook Meadows. GP services in Tiptree are heavily oversubscribed, as are all local schools. Housing and public services, plus a balance of green space for health and well-being, must be balanced"*

- **Less Housing/Development**

(Often linked to 'climate' and some 'infrastructure' themes and how this is having a detrimental effect on Colchester's green space).

1. *"Stop building everywhere!- Stop building everywhere and stop importing every Tom Dick and Harry that doesn't integrate or speak English"*
2. *"Stop building houses on our green spaces like the wick - Concentrate on the economy and not lining your own pockets from housing firms"*
3. *To save all of the Green space we have especially Middlewick. - The council are obsessed with concreting over every last blade of grass and this need to stop now."*

- **Affordable Housing**

(The need for suitable, affordable housing for those in need and residents in general. This includes our current stock and ensuring they are of high enough quality).

1. *"Delivering homes which are affordable and high in quality - Having affordable homes is pointless if they aren't of sufficient quality. I.e. it's pointless to have a home if it gets frozen in the winter and boiling in the summer."*
2. *"Affordable housing for people who aren't students - We have a glut of student housing and housing built for those who work in London but none is affordable for those who actually live and work here. Less houseshares and more apartments for people especially those with mental and physical needs."*
3. *"Building more council homes (some of which should be for disabled residents so have wider doors and level access). Setting a cap on rental costs so that people on low incomes and benefits can afford to live - There are not enough homes that are affordable. And disabled residents are doubly excluded as most homes are entirely unsuitable"*

- **Other**

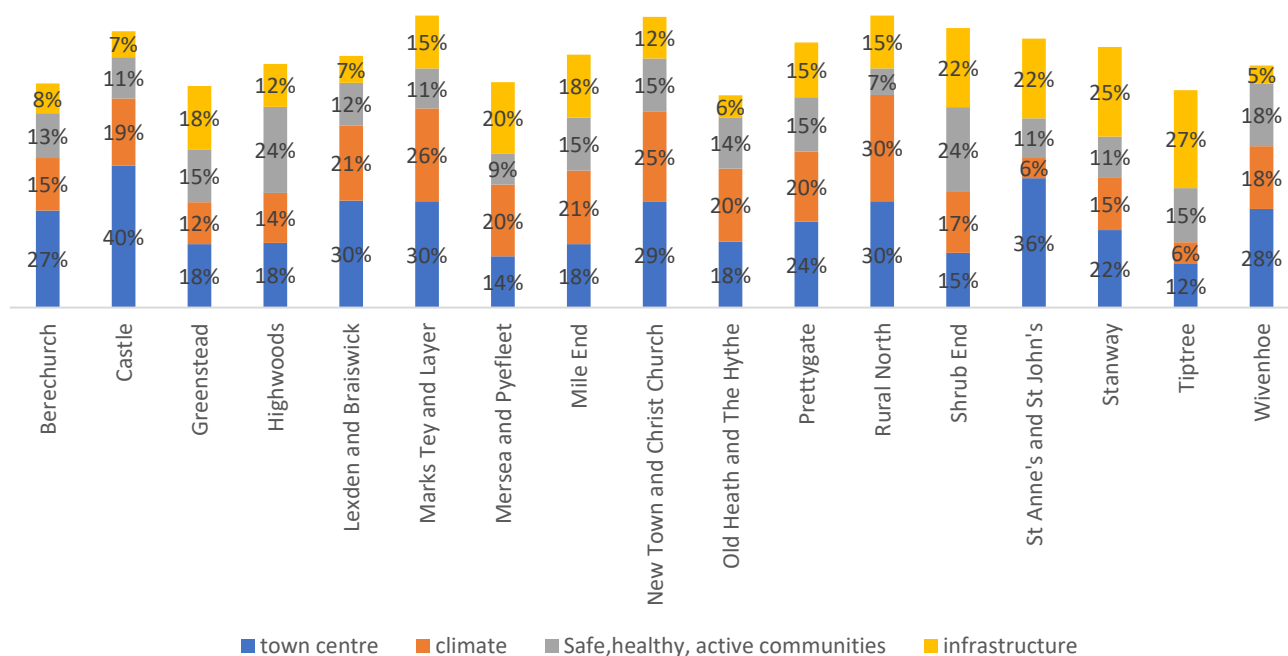
(Unrelated to any other comments thus unable to be themed).

1. *"Getting rid of the Tories"*

Top 4 'Other' priorities by ward

The town centre was one of the top 4 priorities mentioned by residents in all wards not just those that live close to the town.

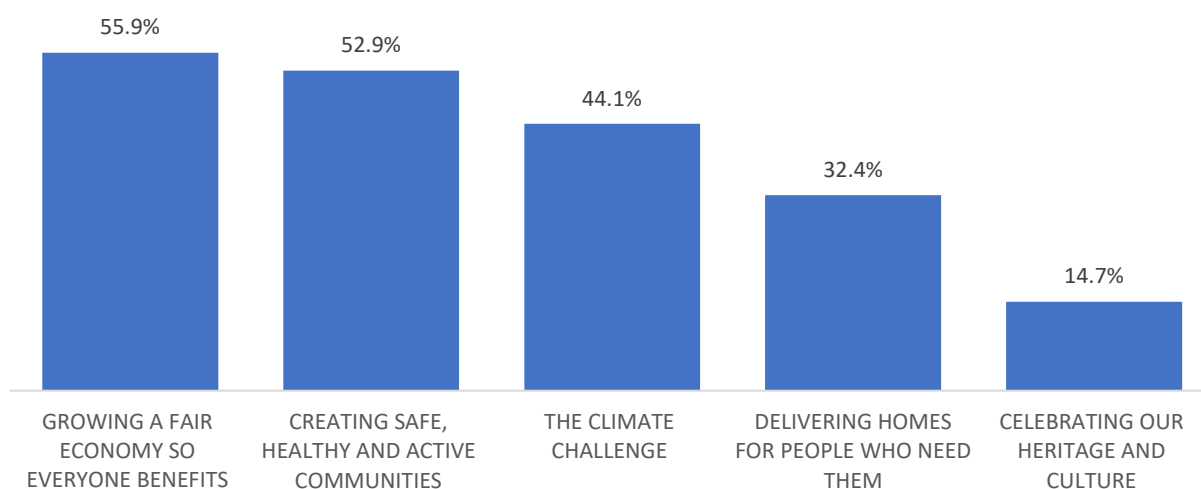
Top 4 priorities across wards - open text box



Priorities of members, parish and town councillors

Growing a fair economy was the highest ranked priority for councillors (55.9% ranked 1st or 2nd) but this was based on a much smaller sample of 38 respondents.

Priorities ranked in order of importance by members & Parish/town cllrs - %
Priority 1 or 2



PRIORITIES

After being asked to put current priorities in order of importance, members were asked what their top priority would be (Random selection of verbatim quotes below).

"The restoration of pride (in its proper sense), competence, abandoning Political Correctness, establishing more traditional values and order - Colchester's Direction of Travel is distorted: I do not agree with the priorities."

"Tidy up the town centre and High Street - Wealth of fine facades in High Street just being left to rot. Shop fronts ugly and garish. Too many fast food joints."

"Pressing ECC to sort out the horrendous traffic - Traffic is the most pressing problem causing pollution, congestion and misery. You can't go to eg Turner Rise / Asda without ending up in gridlock and then avoid using facilities. Stop building more houses introducing more traffic until the current problems are fixed. We don't need any more houses. Chesterwell have laid off builders as they can't sell the houses."

Discussion groups – focus on city centre priority

Because the renovation of the city centre was a strong theme amongst respondents of the survey, this was discussed in the face to face groups. There was a **strong relationship between the centre and out of town retail parks**. Initially it was apparent that residents felt that out-of-town retail parks were to blame for the 'decline' of the town centre, but after deeper discussion it appeared that there was room for both and that **they serve different purposes**. The older individuals in the room generally seemed angry about retail parks initially, whilst younger people liked them (along with online shopping) and said that **town was more for an 'experience'** rather than to just shop. It was also news to the majority in the room that the council opposed Stane Retail Park (after some very negative comments about the council 'letting' this happen and that the Council are to blame for the decline in the town centre). When it was explained by the discussion group facilitators that the council tried to oppose the plans, this sparked a wider debate about the **confusion around the council and what they are responsible for**. It was mentioned by those in the room that there is a **need for a clearer and more holistic communications strategy to residents** (including the need for a communications campaign to educate residents around what Essex County Council are responsible for, but this should be 'business as usual').

Other thoughts/comments from the discussion groups regarding the town centre:

- **Lower the rates and rent** on the empty buildings (especially for small or start-up businesses)
- Mend the **pavements**
- Look into why did the businesses feel the need to move out of the town?
- Chelmsford are not affected by online retail or out of town retail parks. So what are they doing that we're not doing in Colchester?
- Make more of **arts trail for shoppers**. Find a way to encourage independent/niche businesses to come into Colchester
- Rates are extortionate compared to other towns
- Empty shops - Look at **flexible terms** for independent people who are going to start their own business rather than 5 year leases.
- What are the stats with other towns? How many shops they have and how many are empty?

- **Safety factor** – People don't like walking home from work through the town. (Anti-social behaviour)
- **Circular park and ride** similar to system in Cambridge - multiple sites, multiple centres
- **Colchester as a destination rather than just retail**, it's about a destination where people go to enjoy themselves to have food, cinemas and living, shops. Has to be something **more than shops**. An experience day - dining/indoor market/experience events
- Need to do something with the old cinema instead of letting it go to complete ruin.
- Create areas where you can 'DIY'. **Pop-ups** where you can repurpose items or hold crafts areas (also beneficial for community spirit and social interaction).
- Shared working space in town – business hub – which would encourage those working from home to come into town, have coffee lunch etc.

We asked those in the room what would/could entice them to travel to the high street/centre vs. retail parks;

Town/City Centre	Out-of-Town Retail Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More electric parking • More small independent shops • Young people engagement for Osborne Street, NCP, bingo area. • Cultural facilities would entice • Incentives eg removal of charges if using the castle • Get rid of parking charges on certain days • Cargo bike hubs in the centre for families...hire and park them • Amazing history of Colchester but needs to be more accessible/available • Our heritage - need to take more advantage • Stores that are closed could exhibit as a museum - a celebration of Colchester / schools could come and visit re: roman history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer together so more under cover (weather) • Convenience • Car parking is free • Cleaner and newer • No traffic • Shops generally bigger and more selection • More convenient to get to • Open longer hours • Difficult to get to for non-drivers • Could park and ride go out further? (The Old Sainsburys could be a potential site for park and ride?) • What about an orbital bus (circular) that goes both ways • Perhaps by using the park and ride/bus some of that money could be used to support the regeneration of the high street?

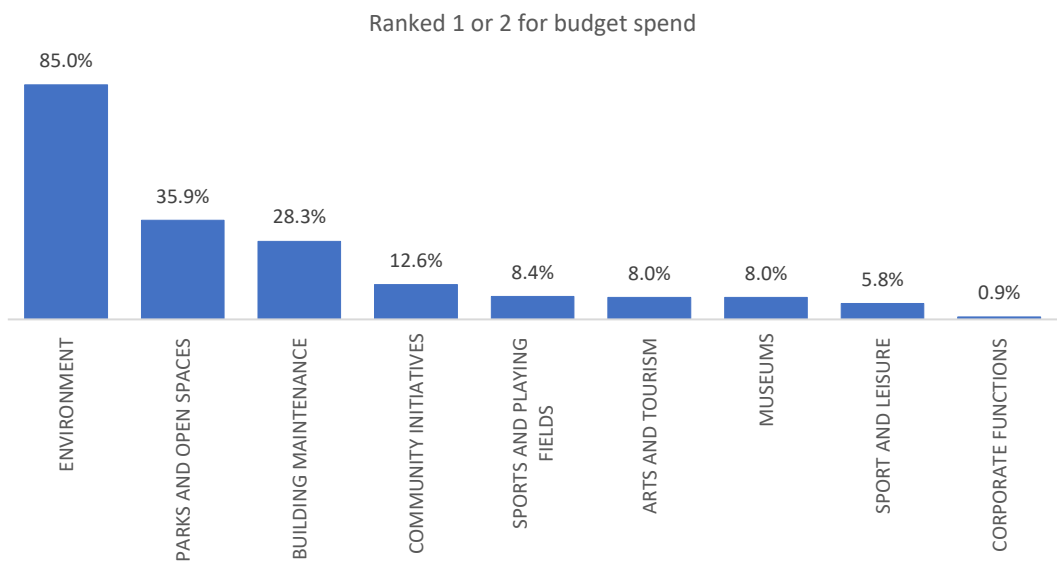


Budgetary spend

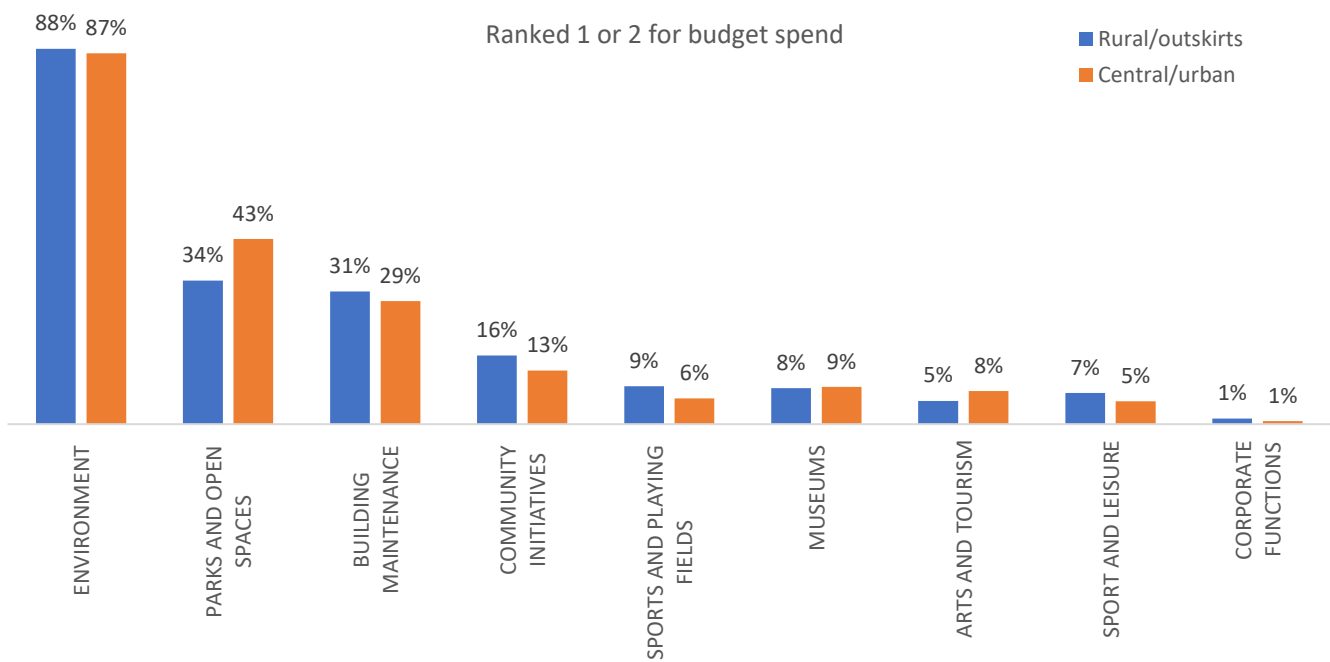
Budget areas important to residents

Residents were asked to rank the budgetary areas (that cost the council the most to run) in order of importance to them.

- 85% of respondents ranked ‘Environment’ either first or second (out of 9) in order of importance to them in terms of budget spend.
- 36% ranked ‘Parks and Open Spaces’ first or second in order of importance.

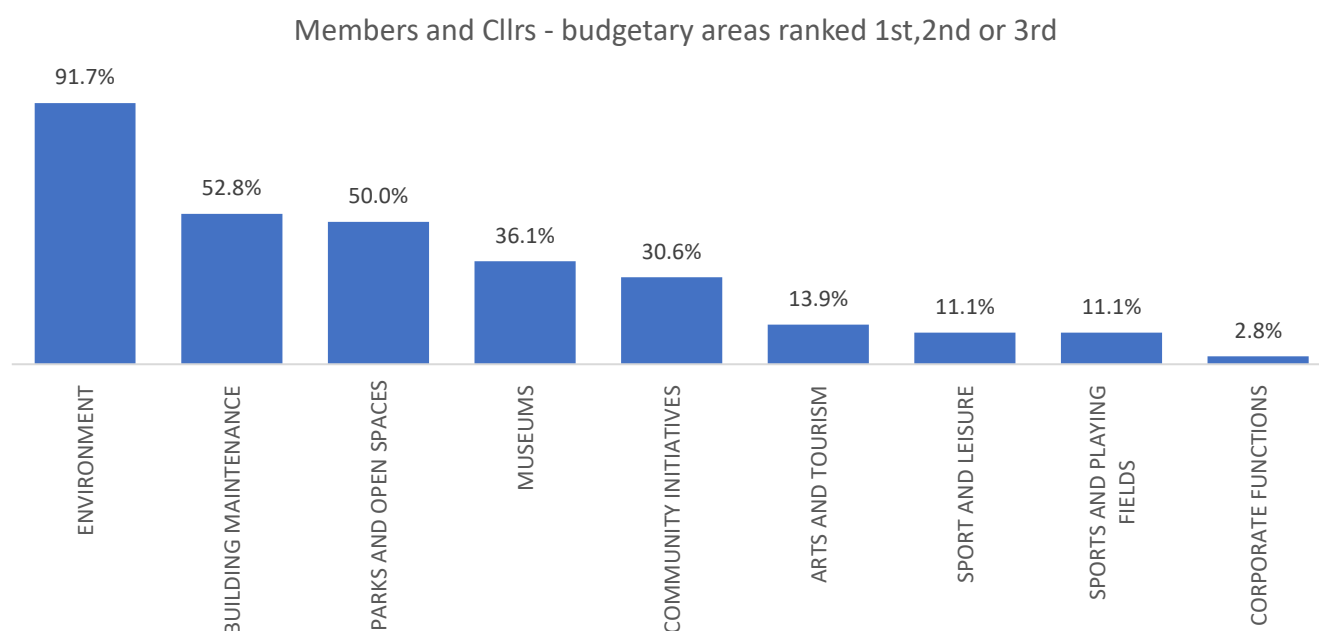


- There was little difference in how these were ranked when comparing those that live in the rural/outskirts of Colchester and the more urban/central areas of Colchester. **For a full breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and ward see appendix 5.**



Members and councillors budget ranking

Members and councillors also ranked Environment 1st, with 91.7% ranking Environment 1st, 2nd or 3rd.¹



Discussion group themes - budget saving ideas

At the discussion groups we discussed ideas with residents that could potentially save money for Colchester City Council. These ideas included: outsourcing of tourism and leisure services/facilities, country parks, and changes to waste and recycling collection.

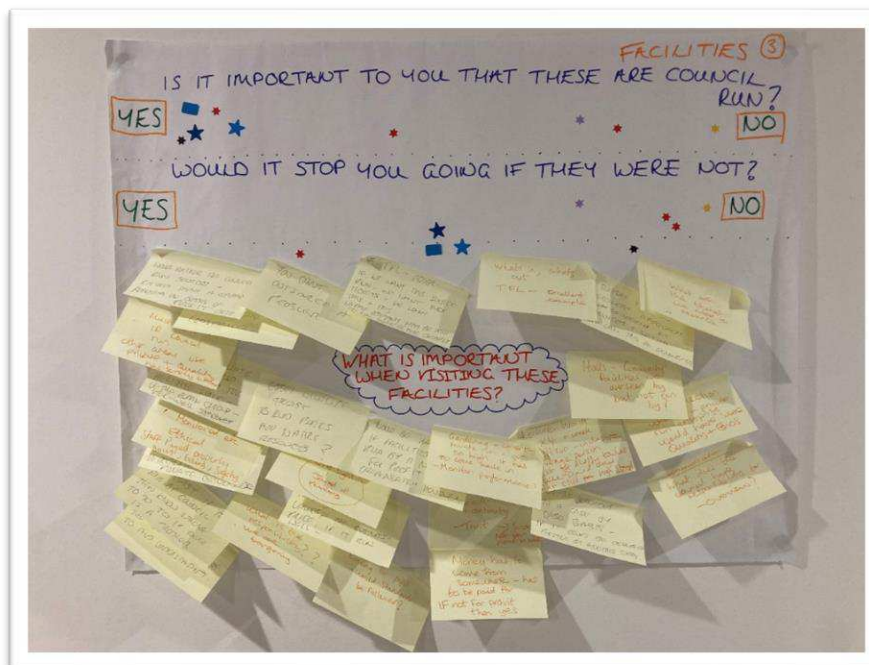
Outsourcing of tourism/leisure/country park facilities

The discussion group facilitators asked those in the room how they felt about facilities, (including but not exclusively; museums, leisure facilities and country parks) and how important they felt it was that these were owned/managed by the council. Initially, they felt that this was very important – but after unpicking the reasons as to *why* the room felt like this, it was clear that it was more important that the council remained to have overall control but it could work well if they were to be managed by other companies (both private or charitable, but ideally not for profit);

- The council is a trusted entity. People know what they are getting and that they will get a fair price, so it is important the council maintains overall control if they were to outsource
- Concerns that if privatised, profits would be the only goal
- Leisure world – well run facility and targeted at the average person – don't want an over priced David Lloyd in its place!

¹ Not all Budget areas were ranked 1st or 2nd, in order for the graph to include all budget areas we have included those ranked 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

- Health & safety is trusted if run by council - if running as a non-profit (or profit) organisation they may cut corners
- You know what you're getting with the council, and you have continuity.
- If it's non-profit – it doesn't matter who really runs it as long as its run well
- Non-profit seemed to be favourable for museums and country parks
- Private companies were favoured for heritage as room recognised need for initial cash injection (Lion Walk mentioned here as example of this done well)
- Council could make more of it than we have now
- Residents want to know what service and price they're going to get
- Currently buses don't work in Colchester all different companies (they don't 'join up'). TFL is the sort of model that could work in Colchester (eg run by private companies but overseen by TFL).
- Must be looked at on a case by case – one size doesn't fit all
- Leisure world making a loss – you can't outsource it with the problems - council needs to be honest (many didn't know Leisure World runs at a loss)



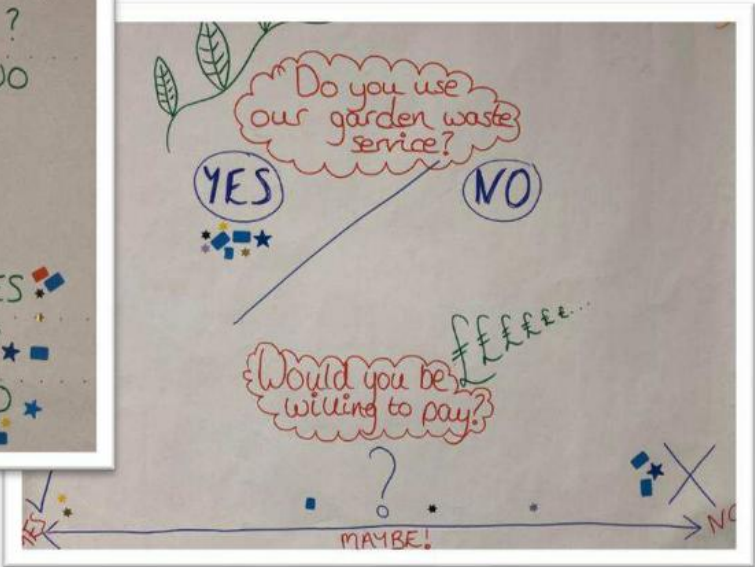
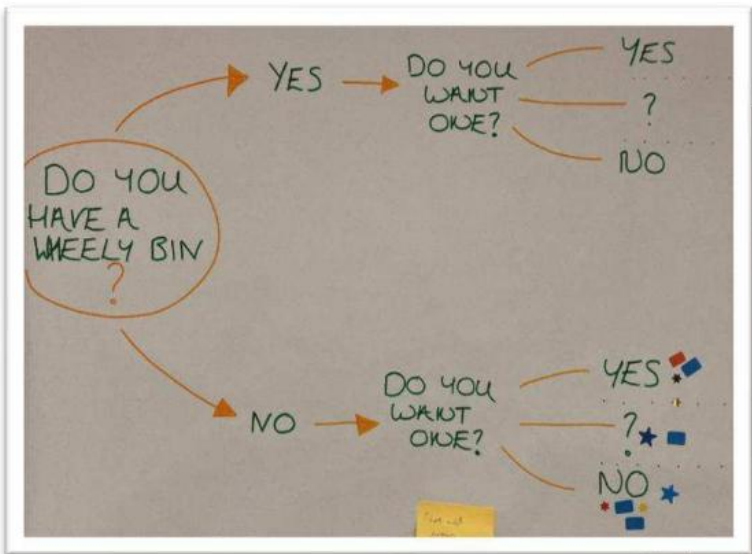
Waste and recycling:

- The room (16 participants) were all active and keen recyclers
- There is appetite for more items to be recycled (toothpaste bottles and crisp packets for example)
- Some individuals recycled other items locally in their communities (via Facebook groups, at schools and local shops)
- The easier it is, the more people will do it, but it can be complicated
- Acknowledgement that although the room recycled and found it easy to do so, it wasn't always easy; eg for people with less space and for those in flats for example
- If it was all in one container - it would be easier

It was unanimous in the room that the participants would do whatever would be more cost effective for the council when it came to recycling. If sorting recycling (or putting all on one bag) would save money for the council, they would do it – in the hope it opened up more recycling opportunities. All options and costs or saving would need to be explained for a definitive decision (or vote) to be made.



The below boards (garden waste and wheely bins) were up in the room during discussion groups and individuals were able to 'vote.' There was no time to discuss in further detail.



City status

Resident views on city status

Respondents were asked what opportunities they hope Colchester city status will bring them. In total 89% (n=992) gave an answer to this open text box question.

As with the question regarding priorities, the town centre featured highly in the responses given with 22% (n =217/992) of comments mentioning the regeneration of the town centre as a potential opportunity following city status.

Other themes mentioned in response to opportunities included; culture/leisure/tourism, employment/economy/education, infrastructure, other, general (investment), community/safety, greener, cleaner and opportunities for the wider Colchester areas (explanation of themes on next page).

The top 4 themes (Employment/Economy/Education, Infrastructure, Culture/leisure/tourism and Town centre) were consistent across wards.

13% (n=129) of respondents, when asked about opportunities, gave a negative response. The question specifically asked about opportunities, so it does not mean the remaining responders necessarily felt positive about city status.

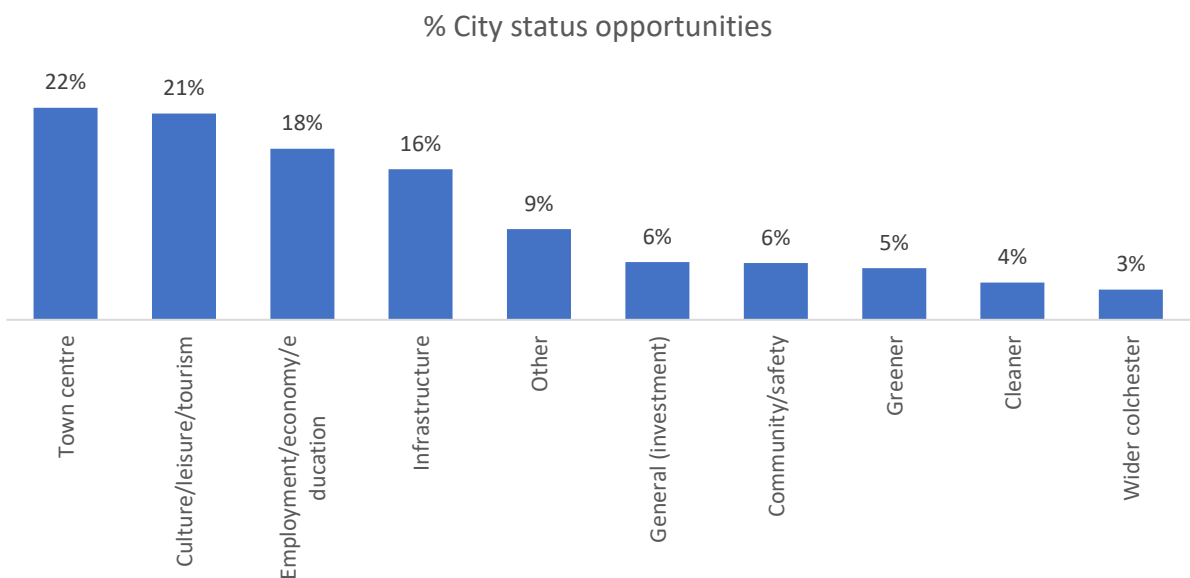
(129 negative comments) Random, verbatim examples.

“Nothing I will still not go into Colchester town it’s a dump”

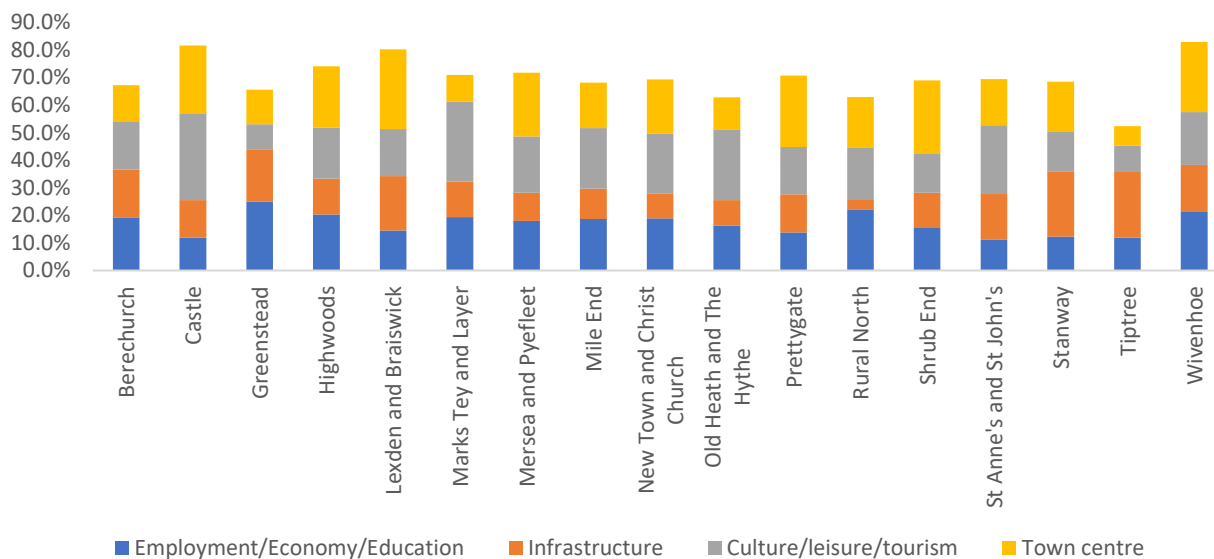
“None - waste of money”

“Did not want to live in a city”

“There is no proof that city status, I believe it’s always been a vanity project”



Top 4 themes - City status opportunities by ward



Do you have any other thoughts or comments regarding Colchester City Council's priorities? (quotes verbatim) - many fall under and have been counted under multiple themes.

58% left a comment (n=643). All comments random and verbatim.

Infrastructure

(Inclusive of car, public transport, green transport and facilities such as GPs, schools and car parks and pavements – often related to expected rise in investment).

- "Better transport links"
- "Better tourism, less building, enhanced infrastructure"
- "Improving the transport network around Colchester to grow in line with homes, another hospital/drs"

Employment/Economy/Education

(Includes comments relating to more job opportunities, tourism income and jobs, more investment and opportunities for children now and in the future).

- "More tourism, more business and a high street with shops returning/opening."
- "More support for shops and family businesses"
- "Income so we can live rather than just exist"

Cleaner

(Spoken about in relation to Colchester being more inviting)

- "That the streets will be cleaner and more shops in the centre will stay open"
- "A better, cleaner and more successful town (city) centre."

Greener

(Including developing on green land, the climate and green transport and open spaces).

- "Better sports facilities. More cheaper environmental transportation via buses."
- "Green investment, renewables"

Culture/Leisure/Tourism

(Includes comments which discuss shopping, our history and heritage for jobs and investment from visitors and business)

- “More work opportunities and better shopping and eating experience”
- “Hopefully a job in heritage!”
- “Hopefully more funding for the arts and also leisure facilities.”

Town Centre

(Regeneration – often linked to leisure, tourism, culture and heritage related comments)

- “Make the city centre a nice place to be in.”
- “Better shopping, bigger brand names in town. More cultural events”
- “More choice shops, less barbers. Outside areas to sit and chill with no traffic.”

General (Investment)

- “More inward investment and growth (through business investment and additional tourism)”
- “More funding for the community”
- “Investment in reducing poverty in the area and increasing opportunities”

Community/Safety

(More support in local communities and/or safety relating to ASB, policing and pavements).

- “Safe, happy communities.”
- “A cleaner, Safer more attractive place to live in, to work in and to visit”
- “Greater investment into community activities, hopefully to bring down costs so that activities like swimming etc are more affordable”

Wider Colchester

(Comments which mentioned the wider borough or specifically outside of the centre).

- “Policing in Tiptree”
- “Don't forget the surrounding villages it's not all about Colchester”
- “To save MIDDLEWICK from development.”

Other

- “Make it somewhere to be proud of”
- “Big brand shops, upgrades to park play areas, house prices increase”
- “I'd like to see all of the above but we are in the midst of a cost of living crisis and as such I can't see any benefits happening in the near future.”
- “Better planning.”

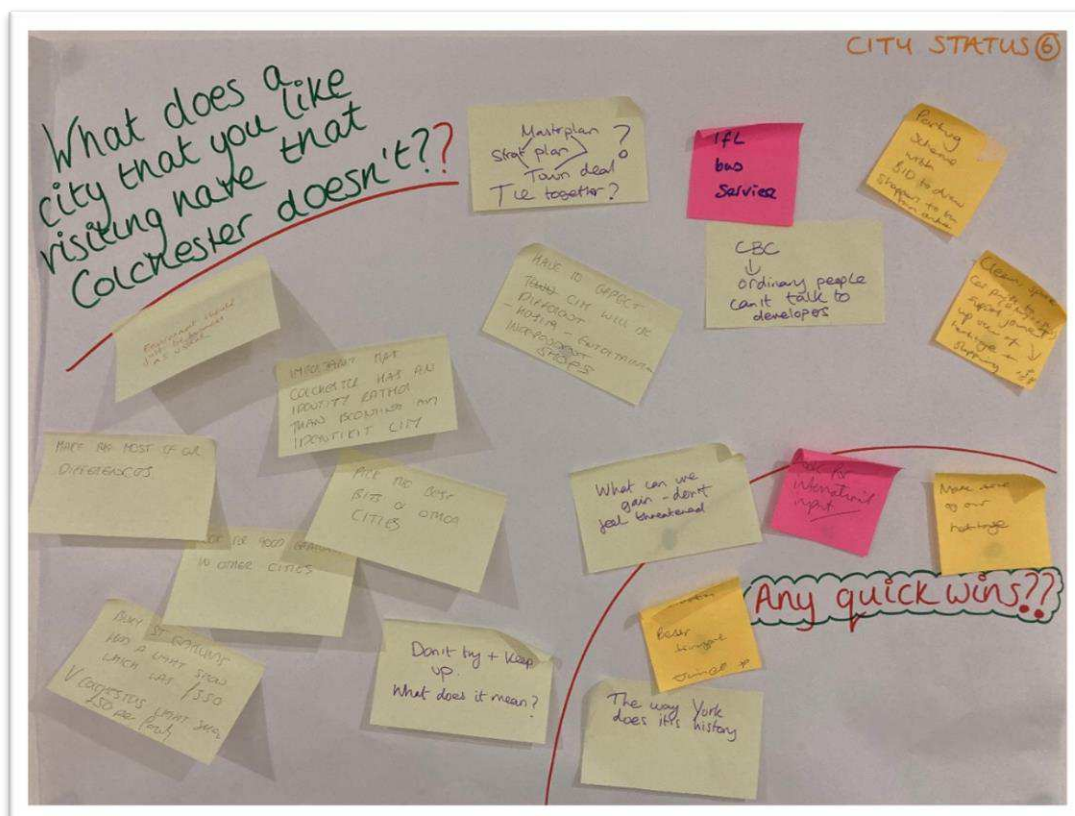
Members and councillor's views of city status

Comments from members and Parish Councillors 35 comments left in total. All comments random, verbatim and anonymous.	
Positive/Neutral Comments	Negative Comments
<p>"a flourishing future for Colchester"</p> <p>"A higher national profile resulting in business wanting to come here bringing high wage jobs"</p> <p>"Lowering the council tax and helping the homeless"</p>	<p>"I don't agree with city status and disagree it will bring any opportunities"</p> <p>"none keep it as a Town"</p>

Discussion group - city status

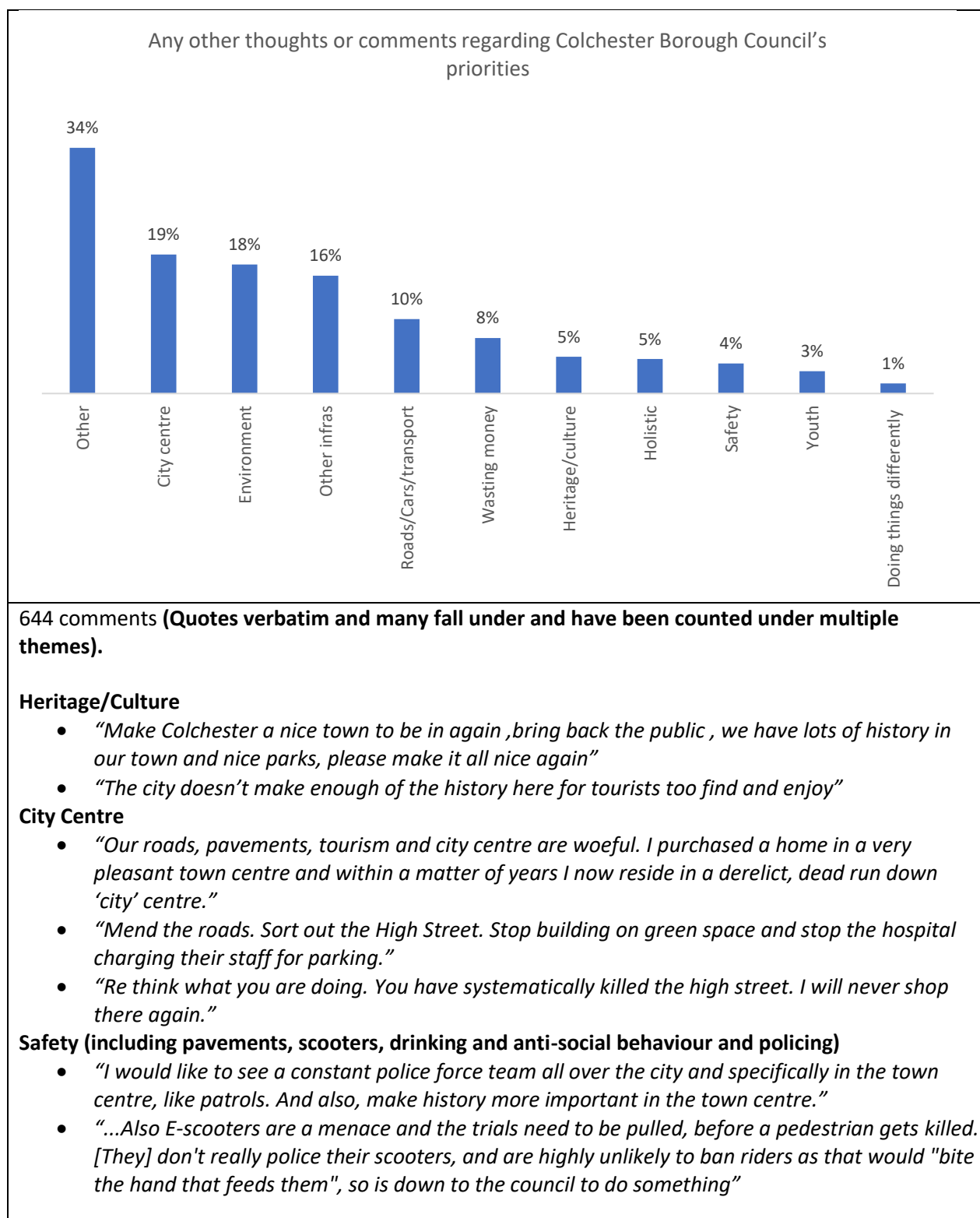
Points to note from residents;

- Colchester needs to have an identity now that it's a city, with the different boroughs, areas, parishes within Colchester. How do you bring those together, so you have an identifiable City?
- Try and gain from what other cities are doing
- We should make the most of our differences (historical sites and galleries for example)
- Look at how York/Bury St Edmonds/ Norwich etc runs its heritage/history
- [We] Like the independent pedestrianised shopping areas of Norwich - independent shops, cafes, filtering bus lane, outdoor market, cultural bits
- Have more housing in the centre of Colchester
- More entertainment venues – make Colchester an experience
- There are so many different meetings and consultations. It's confusing and they need to be joined up - it's hard to keep track of them all.



Final thoughts

Other thoughts or comments regarding Colchester borough/city council priorities from residents
A wide variety of other comments were made. The themes echoed much of what was said across other comment boxes. New themes, such as 'Holistic' (needing a joined up approach) were given further context discussion groups.



Wasting Money

- *"Get the basics done right, before wasting money on publicity stunts. Invest in the youth of Colchester. No more housing without more local services. Schools, hospitals, GPs"*
- *"Stop wasting money on cycle lanes and park and ride as residents don't care for either scheme. People have cars and will always continue to drive them, the council just needs to wake up to the fact and accept it."*
- *"They must ensure that money is spent carefully"*

Environment (including green spaces, Middlewick Ranges, housing developments on green land, parks, recycling and air pollution/green transport).

- *"Priorities should always be people and nature."*
- *"And I will repeat for emphasis - Your treatment of Climate Change as just one of a set of things the council might / might not do demonstrates that you have not understood the situation facing us. Reducing climate damage needs to be 'baked in' to the way the council runs (like equality, or violence in the workplace), not an optional part if it can be bothered."*
- *"Simplify doorstep recycling."*

Youth

- *"I believe the council are doing there best but there priories are not in the right place. There need to be more done for the younger generation and keeping the town centre a place to go - stop allowing shops to close et marks and Spencer's"*
- *"At times the town is beholden to a vociferous minority of an often older generation. Successful towns and cities are built upon a strong economy attracting young, vibrant, highly skilled people and their families to them. Not only do we need to encourage these types of business we need to be a town/city that those young people want to come and live in..."*

Holistic (mentioning and including other local stakeholders such as the police and ECC and/or the need for a more 'joined up approach' in general)

- *"It would be excellent if colchester could assume responsibility for our roads."*
- *"I would like to see a constant police force team all over the city and specifically in the town centre, like patrols. And also, make history more important in the town centre."*
- *"Break away from Essex county council. Stop having elections every year it's a waste of money & people are fed up of it"*

Roads/Cars/transport

- *"Safe areas with less crime, cheaper public transport"*
- *"Potholes are everywhere"*
- *"I feel strongly that we need to look at the road network. The accessibility of the town centre is killing it and breaking our road network. We need a plan to seriously improve the state of the town centre."*

Doing Things Differently

- *"Visit other successful towns. Question what happens in Colchester. Don't accept the same habits. Challenge everything"*
- *"I think the general idea is on right track, the execution needs to be improved, try to innovate and experiment with new projects"*
- *"The current council needs to start thinking outside the box. They don't work together but seem to want to promote their own individual priorities but don't reflect what most people want."*

Other (Comments which are unable to be themed, 'other' infrastructure not included in 'road' theme)

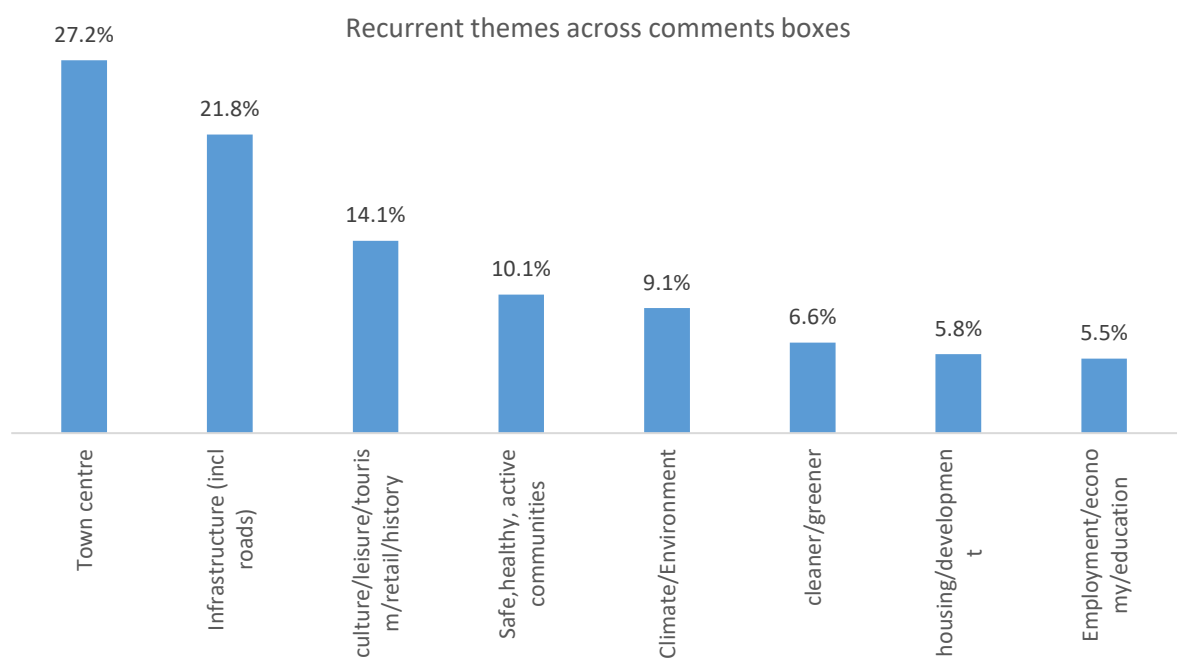
- *"Just fix things when broken, roads, barriers. Play areas fixed."*
- *"Another priority should be schools and catchment areas. More schools need to be built and catchment areas better governed. There is so much traffic every morning and afternoon caused by parents having to drive their children across town"*
- *"I think homelessness and begging should be prioritised a small it often seems that charities and church groups have to pick up this help for people."*

Final thoughts from member & councillors

Final thoughts from members and parish councillors 15 comments (random, verbatim and anonymous)
<i>"Ask the residents for THEIR priorities"</i>
<i>"Simplify them. Communicate more."</i>
<i>"Zone teams working in the community and with the community"</i>
<i>"Looks are everything, if the city looks smart, it looks prosperous and people will take a pride in it, visitor numbers will increase. Make Colchester easy to access by whatever means. At the moment the bus stops are confusing. We need to insist of high quality architectural design on all"</i>
<i>"I worry that the new found city status will see the council look towards 'vanity' projects, rather than creating the foundations on which to build from."</i>
<i>"Don't forget the rural parishes which often feel left out."</i>
<i>"I would like to see more autonomy for Parishes to manage local affairs"</i>

Recurrent themes across comment boxes

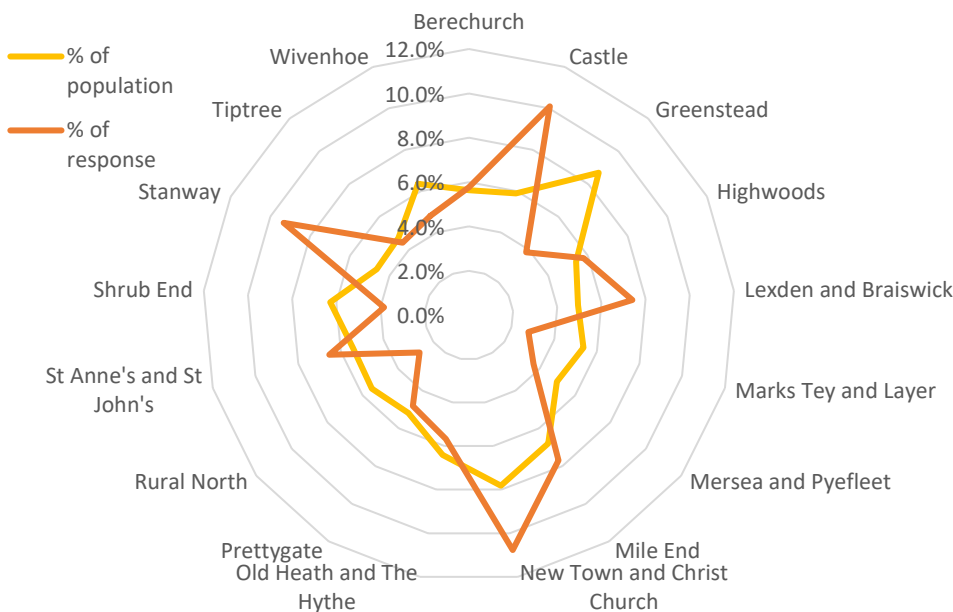
Overall, the town centre was mentioned most frequently. Across all open text boxes (totalling 3208 comments) the Town centre was mentioned by 27% of respondents (in 874 open text boxes). Other recurring themes included Infrastructure (incl roads); culture/leisure/tourism/retail/history; Safe, healthy, active communities; climate/environment; cleaner/greener; housing/development and employment/economy/education...



Achieved sample of residents

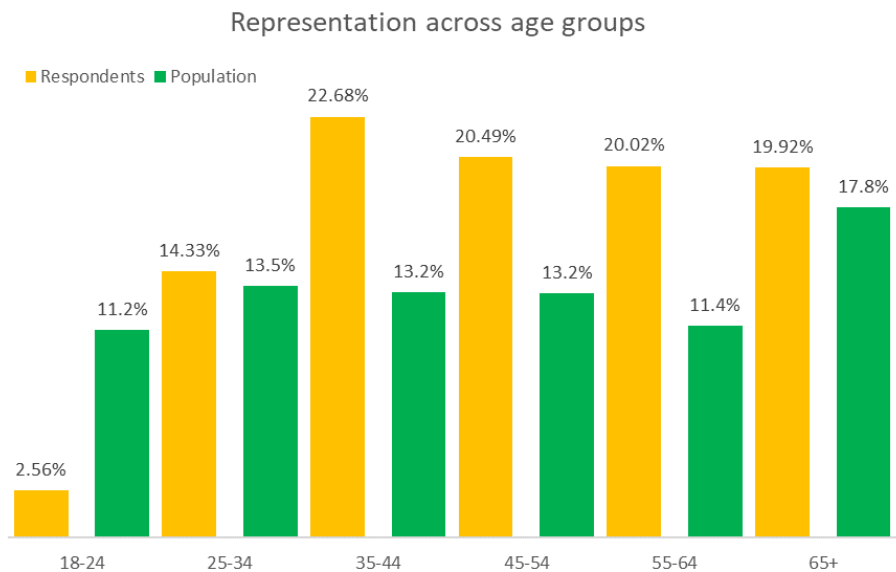
Respondents by ward

- There was some over representation in some wards (Stanway, Lexden & Braiswick, New Town & Christ church, and Castle)
- There was a underrepresentation in Greenstead, Mersea & Pyfleet and the Rural North.



Respondents by Age and Gender

- Good representation in the 25 to 34 and 65+ age groups.
- More females (63%) than males responded to the survey.



Respondents by Ethnicity and Disability

- 4.9% of survey respondents said they were of black or minority ethnic background, this is lower than the general population (12.5%). 8.7% preferred not to say.

	Respondents %	Population (2021 census) %
BAME	4.9%	13.0%
Prefer not to say	8.7%	
White British	86.4%	87.0%

- 12% of respondents said they considered themselves to have a disability.
- This is lower than the estimate for the Eastern region (23%)² but could be due to under reporting (those who do not consider their disability as such).

Members & Councillors by ward

Members and councillors responded from a variety of wards to the member/councillor version of the survey. Wards with a higher number of respondents contain a higher number of parishes. E.g. the Rural north has 11 parishes.

Ward	%	Count
Berechurch	2.63%	1
Castle	2.63%	1
Greenstead	5.26%	2
Lexden & Braiswick	2.63%	1
Marks Tey and Layer	10.53%	4
Mersea and Pyefleet	2.63%	1
Mile End	7.89%	3
New Town and Christchurch	2.63%	1
Prettygate	5.26%	2
Rural North	21.05%	8
Shrub End	2.63%	1
St Anne's and St John's	2.63%	1
Stanway	2.63%	1
Tiptree	2.63%	1
Wivenhoe	5.26%	2
not given	18.42%	7
not known	2.63%	1
Grand Total	100.00%	38

² [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2020-to-2021)

Appendices of tables

Appendix 1 - I feel a sense of community in the area of Colchester

AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	(BLANK)	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	15%	6%	5%	6%	9%	9%	57%	40%	10%
DISAGREE	19%	20%	17%	21%	18%	24%	17%	20%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	26%	24%	29%	28%	34%	27%	17%	20%	28%
AGREE	41%	44%	39%	36%	33%	33%	9%	20%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	0%	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	0%	0%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

GENDER	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	(blank)	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	8%	0%	56%	17%	10%
DISAGREE	22%	18%	25%	12%	21%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	27%	32%	0%	14%	17%	28%
AGREE	36%	36%	75%	16%	38%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	8%	6%	0%	2%	8%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	didn't answer	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	35%	13%	16%	10%
DISAGREE	19%	22%	22%	21%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	28%	24%	34%	24%	28%
AGREE	39%	20%	23%	31%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	7%	0%	9%	7%	7%

DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

ETHNICITY	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	CHINESE	MIXED	OTHER ETHNIC GROUP	PREFER NOT TO SAY	WHITE	DIDN'T ANSWER	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%	0%	0%	6%	0%	37%	7%	40%	10%
DISAGREE	5%	13%	0%	12%	40%	14%	21%	7%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37%	13%	80%	29%	20%	28%	27%	27%	28%
AGREE	37%	50%	20%	29%	40%	21%	37%	13%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	16%	25%	0%	24%	0%	0%	7%	13%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

I feel a sense of community in the area of
Colchester

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREF ER NOT to Say	(bl an k)	Grand Total
Stro ngly Dis agr ee	15%	6%	5%	6%	9%	9%	57%	40%	10%
Disa gree	19%	20%	17%	21%	24%	24%	17%	20%	20%
Neit her Agr ee nor Dis	26%	24%	22%	22%	27%	27%	17%	20%	28%

agree										
Agree	41%	44%	39%	36%	33%	9%	20%	35%		
Strongly Agree	0%	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	0%	0%	7%	
Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Gender	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	(blank)	Grand Total				
Strongly Disagree	6%	8%	0%	56%	17%	10%				
Disagree	22%	18%	25%	12%	21%	20%				
Neither Agree nor Disagree	27%	32%	0%	14%	17%	28%				
Agree	36%	36%	75%	16%	38%	35%				
Strongly Agree	8%	6%	0%	2%	8%	7%				

Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%													
Grand Total				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
WARD	BERECHURCH	CASTLE	GREENSTEAD	HIGHWOODS	LEXDEN AND BRAISWICK	MARKS TEY AND LAYER	MERSEA AND PYEFLEET	MILE END	NEW TOWN AND CHRIST	OLD HEATH AND THE	PRETTYGATE	RURAL NORTH	SHRUB END	ST ANNE'S AND ST	STANWAY	TIPTREE	WIVENHOE	(BLANK)	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	8%	4%	13%	10%	4%	7%	8%	5%	8%	10%	4%	0%	7%	10%	5%	9%	8%	49%	10%
DISAGREE	23%	15%	18%	25%	22%	17%	14%	18%	11%	27%	24%	41%	19%	33%	22%	13%	22%	16%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	28%	21%	33%	37%	38%	31%	39%	29%	22%	14%	33%	24%	35%	15%	35%	29%	30%	14%	28%
AGREE	28%	45%	35%	25%	31%	38%	33%	38%	49%	34%	35%	24%	34%	33%	33%	47%	36%	20%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	10%	14%	3%	3%	5%	7%	6%	10%	11%	15%	2%	10%	4%	8%	4%	2%	4%	1%	7%
DON'T KNOW	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Appendix 2 I enjoy living/working in Colchester

I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE		4%	1%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%
DISAGREE		11%	9%	8%	11%	10%	12%	10%
DON'T KNOW		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE		15%	14%	14%	17%	17%	23%	20%
AGREE		52%	58%	52%	50%	47%	40%	48%
STRONGLY AGREE		19%	19%	24%	20%	22%	20%	20%

GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
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I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY GENDER	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	2%	4%	0%	0%	3%
DISAGREE	10%	9%	0%	7%	10%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	17%	17%	0%	69%	20%
AGREE	49%	50%	75%	21%	48%
STRONGLY AGREE	21%	20%	25%	3%	20%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY ETHNICITY	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	3%
DISAGREE	11%	0%	20%	6%	20%	12%	10%	10%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	16%	13%	20%	24%	20%	51%	16%	20%
AGREE	47%	50%	60%	41%	20%	31%	50%	48%
STRONGLY AGREE	21%	38%	0%	29%	40%	5%	21%	20%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3%	2%	3%	3%
DISAGREE	8%	11%	16%	9%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	16%	47%	23%	19%
AGREE	51%	35%	43%	49%

STRONGLY AGREE	22%	5%	16%	20%														
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%														
I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY WARD	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettuate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tiptree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3%	2%	5%	3%	0%	7%	11%	1%	2 %	5%	2%	3 %	1 %	3%	3 %	2 %	2 %	3 %
DISAGREE	8%	4%	8%	10%	9%	7%	14%	14%	9 %	14%	4%	28 %	6 %	15%	1 0 %	9 %	10 %	10 %
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0 %	0%	2%	0 %	0 %	0%	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	20%	9%	23%	20%	18%	17%	25%	11%	17 %	19%	8%	14 %	19 %	21%	1 9 %	22 %	24 %	17 %
AGREE	47%	50%	40%	50%	55%	52%	42%	55%	51 %	39%	68 %	38 %	51 %	38%	4 7 %	53 %	52 %	50 %
STRONGLY AGREE	22%	35%	25%	17%	18%	17%	8%	19%	21 %	24%	16 %	17 %	22 %	23%	2 1 %	13 %	12 %	21 %

Appendix 3 I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester

I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	18.5%	2.6%	5.0%	7.0%	9.7%	8.8%	56.6%	9.5%
DISAGREE	3.7%	13.9%	10.9%	15.0%	17.9%	20.5%	15.1%	15.2%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37.0%	25.2%	23.8%	25.2%	22.7%	26.8%	9.4%	24.3%
AGREE	22.2%	43.7%	44.8%	41.6%	39.6%	32.7%	18.9%	39.0%
STRONGLY AGREE	18.5%	14.6%	15.5%	11.2%	10.1%	10.7%	0.0%	12.0%
DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%

GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY GENDER	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total			
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6.3%	7.5%	25.0%	51.7%	9.2%			
DISAGREE	15.4%	15.0%	0.0%	17.2%	15.3%			
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	25.8%	23.4%	25.0%	13.8%	24.4%			
AGREE	38.9%	42.6%	50.0%	17.2%	38.9%			
STRONGLY AGREE	13.5%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%			
DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%			
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY ETHNICITY	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Enthnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%	37.2%	6.6%	9.3%
DISAGREE	15.8%	12.5%	40.0%	5.9%	40.0%	18.1%	14.8%	15.2%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	21.1%	12.5%	20.0%	17.6%	20.0%	19.1%	25.3%	24.4%
AGREE	31.6%	37.5%	40.0%	47.1%	20.0%	24.5%	40.6%	39.0%
STRONGLY AGREE	15.8%	37.5%	0.0%	23.5%	20.0%	1.1%	12.6%	12.0%
DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%										
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total															
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6.7%	33.9%	10.4%	8.7%															
DISAGREE	13.3%	19.6%	22.6%	14.7%															
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	23.9%	23.2%	31.3%	24.7%															
AGREE	42.7%	23.2%	27.8%	39.8%															
STRONGLY AGREE	13.4%	0.0%	7.8%	11.9%															
DON'T KNOW	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%															
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%															
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY WARD	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Hythe	Old Heath and The	Prettygate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tiptree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3.4%	2.9%	7.7%	8.3%	1.3%	10.3%	21.6%	5.1%	7.2%	8.5%	6.1%	10.3%	5.9%	12.5%	9.4%	4.4%	10.0%	7.1%	
DISAGREE	13.6%	10.7%	10.3%	15.0%	23.4%	6.9%	10.8%	8.9%	13.5%	25.4%	14.3%	31.0%	17.6%	17.5%	15.6%	15.6%	16.0%	15.3%	
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37.3%	20.4%	28.2%	28.3%	24.7%	31.0%	32.4%	21.5%	19.8%	16.9%	28.6%	6.9%	25.0%	15.0%	31.3%	28.9%	28.0%	24.9%	
AGREE	28.8%	45.6%	35.9%	31.7%	41.6%	44.8%	29.7%	49.4%	45.0%	33.9%	44.9%	37.9%	44.1%	45.0%	32.3%	46.7%	42.0%	40.4%	
STRONGLY AGREE	16.9%	20.4%	15.4%	16.7%	9.1%	6.9%	5.4%	15.2%	14.4%	15.3%	6.1%	13.8%	7.4%	10.0%	11.5%	4.4%	4.0%	12.2%	

DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester by Central/urban wards															
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettygate	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Wivenhoe	Grand Total	
Strongly Disagree	3.4%	2.9%	7.7%	8.3%	1.3%	5.1%	7.2%	8.5%	6.1%	5.9%	12.5%	9.4%	10.0%	6.4%	
Disagree	13.6%	10.7%	10.3%	15.0%	23.4%	8.9%	13.5%	25.4%	14.3%	17.6%	17.5%	15.6%	16.0%	15.3%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	37.3%	20.4%	28.2%	28.3%	24.7%	21.5%	19.8%	16.9%	28.6%	25.0%	15.0%	31.3%	28.0%	24.7%	
Agree	28.8%	45.6%	35.9%	31.7%	41.6%	49.4%	45.0%	33.9%	44.9%	44.1%	45.0%	32.3%	42.0%	40.4%	
Strongly Agree	16.9%	20.4%	15.4%	16.7%	9.1%	15.2%	14.4%	15.3%	6.1%	7.4%	10.0%	11.5%	4.0%	13.0%	
Don't Know	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester by Rural/outer wards					
Row Labels	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Rural North	Tiptree	Grand Total
Strongly Disagree	10.3%	21.6%	10.3%	4.4%	11.4%
Disagree	6.9%	10.8%	31.0%	15.6%	15.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	31.0%	32.4%	6.9%	28.9%	25.7%
Agree	44.8%	29.7%	37.9%	46.7%	40.0%
Strongly Agree	6.9%	5.4%	13.8%	4.4%	7.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix 4 - Priorities

PRIORITY 1 BY AGE

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	19.2%	25.2%	41.0%	38.6%	35.3%	36.2%	12.2%	34.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	23.1%	25.2%	29.7%	22.2%	21.2%	20.3%	6.1%	23.0%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	7.7%	5.0%	6.8%	12.2%	10.9%	11.9%	63.3%	12.1%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	30.8%	20.9%	10.8%	9.0%	14.1%	14.1%	4.1%	13.3%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	19.2%	23.7%	11.7%	18.0%	18.5%	17.5%	14.3%	17.2%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY AGE

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	26.9%	35.3%	27.9%	28.0%	26.6%	30.5%	32.7%	29.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	3.8%	15.8%	20.7%	13.2%	13.0%	18.1%	16.3%	16.0%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	34.6%	23.0%	29.3%	29.1%	20.7%	15.8%	36.7%	24.8%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	19.2%	15.8%	10.4%	18.0%	22.8%	21.5%	2.0%	16.7%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	15.4%	10.1%	11.7%	11.6%	16.8%	14.1%	12.2%	13.0%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 1 BY GENDER

	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	36.8%	34.0%	25.0%	16.7%	34.8%

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	22.7%	24.8%	25.0%	11.1%	22.7%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	8.9%	10.2%	0.0%	57.4%	12.0%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	14.3%	12.6%	25.0%	3.7%	13.2%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	17.3%	18.4%	25.0%	11.1%	17.3%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY GENDER

	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.3%	25.0%	33.3%	29.2%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	16.7%	15.3%	25.0%	14.8%	16.2%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	25.4%	23.1%	50.0%	29.6%	25.1%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	16.7%	18.7%	0.0%	3.7%	16.5%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	12.3%	13.6%	0.0%	18.5%	13.0%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY1 BY ETHNICITY

	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	52.9%	33.3%	66.7%	18.8%	40.0%	20.9%	35.8%	34.6%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	18.8%	20.0%	19.8%	24.1%	23.2%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	20.0%	38.4%	9.1%	11.6%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	5.9%	16.7%	33.3%	12.5%	20.0%	7.0%	14.0%	13.3%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	23.5%	50.0%	0.0%	43.8%	0.0%	14.0%	17.0%	17.3%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY ETHNICITY

	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	11.8%	33.3%	33.3%	37.5%	40.0%	33.7%	29.1%	29.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	35.3%	16.7%	0.0%	18.8%	20.0%	8.1%	16.5%	16.1%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	35.3%	0.0%	33.3%	18.8%	0.0%	29.1%	24.6%	24.8%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	11.8%	50.0%	33.3%	6.3%	40.0%	10.5%	17.3%	16.8%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	18.8%	0.0%	18.6%	12.6%	12.9%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PRIORITY 2 BY DISABILITY								
	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total				
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	36.2%	18.5%	31.1%	34.4%				
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	23.3%	20.4%	18.9%	22.6%				
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	9.3%	38.9%	12.3%	11.5%				
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	13.3%	9.3%	20.8%	13.9%				
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	17.9%	13.0%	17.0%	17.5%				
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%				
PRIORITY 2 BY DISABILITY								
	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total				
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.6%	34.0%	29.5%				
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	16.5%	14.8%	17.0%	16.5%				
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	24.6%	25.9%	18.9%	24.0%				
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	16.5%	13.0%	21.7%	16.9%				
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	13.6%	16.7%	8.5%	13.1%				
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%				

PRIORITY1 BY WARD																		
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christchurch	Old Heath and The Bottom	Prettygate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tipree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	34.6%	30.4%	40.5%	39.6%	31.9%	40.7%	26.5%	37.1%	32.3%	26.9%	41.3%	22.2%	37.3%	47.2%	38.5%	49.5%	36.5%	36.5%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	11.5%	25.0%	13.5%	24.5%	25.0%	29.6%	35.3%	25.7%	26.0%	19.2%	19.6%	29.6%	25.4%	16.7%	21.5%	27.5%	28.5%	24.5%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	11.5%	8.7%	8.1%	7.5%	6.9%	11.1%	11.8%	11.4%	9.4%	5.8%	10.9%	14.8%	8.5%	8.3%	12.5%	2.5%	13.5%	9.5%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	15.4%	19.6%	21.6%	15.1%	13.9%	7.4%	14.7%	4.3%	17.7%	23.1%	8.7%	11.1%	13.6%	13.9%	12.5%	10.5%	11.5%	14.5%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	26.9%	16.3%	16.2%	13.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.8%	21.4%	14.6%	25.0%	19.6%	22.5%	15.3%	13.5%	17.5%	12.5%	13.5%	17.5%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PRIORITY2 BY WARD																		
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christchurch	Old Heath and The Bottom	Prettygate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tipree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.3%	35.1%	24.5%	29.2%	25.9%	32.4%	34.3%	29.2%	28.8%	17.4%	37.0%	30.5%	36.1%	33.5%	22.5%	28.5%	29.5%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	13.5%	12.0%	5.4%	20.8%	12.5%	40.7%	14.7%	24.3%	19.8%	15.4%	13.0%	14.8%	15.3%	16.7%	13.5%	17.5%	17.5%	16.5%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	28.8%	20.7%	27.0%	26.4%	30.6%	7.4%	32.4%	18.6%	14.6%	23.1%	30.6%	37.0%	16.9%	19.5%	26.5%	27.5%	34.5%	24.5%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	17.3%	16.3%	29.7%	20.8%	11.1%	7.4%	17.6%	12.9%	14.6%	19.2%	23.9%	7.4%	15.3%	16.7%	21.5%	27.5%	17.5%	17.5%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	11.5%	21.7%	2.7%	7.5%	16.7%	18.5%	2.9%	10.0%	21.9%	13.5%	15.2%	3.7%	22.0%	11.5%	8.5%	7.5%	4.5%	13.5%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 1 BY CENTRAL/URBAN														
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettygate	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	34.6%	30.4%	40.5%	39.6%	31.9%	37.1%	32.3%	26.9%	41.3 %	37.3 %	47. 2%	38. 4%	36. 2%	35. 6%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	11.5%	25.0%	13.5%	24.5%	25.0%	25.7%	26.0%	19.2%	19.6 %	25.4 %	16. 7%	20. 9%	27. 7%	22. 4%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	11.5%	8.7%	8.1%	7.5%	6.9%	11.4%	9.4%	5.8%	10.9 %	8.5%	8.3 %	11. 6%	12. 8%	9.4 %
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	15.4%	19.6%	21.6%	15.1%	13.9%	4.3%	17.7%	23.1%	8.7%	13.6 %	13. 9%	11. 6%	10. 6%	14. 5%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	26.9%	16.3%	16.2%	13.2%	22.2%	21.4%	14.6%	25.0%	19.6 %	15.3 %	13. 9%	17. 4%	12. 8%	18. 0%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100 .0%	100 .0%	100 .0%	100 .0%
PRIORITY 1 BY RURAL/OUTSKIRTS														
	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Rural North	Tiptree	Grand Total									
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	11.1%	11.8%	14.8%	2.4%	9.3%									
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	40.7%	26.5%	22.2%	48.8%	35.7%									
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	7.4%	14.7%	11.1%	9.8%	10.9%									
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	11.1%	11.8%	22.2%	12.2%	14.0%									
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	29.6%	35.3%	29.6%	26.8%	30.2%									
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%									

PRIORITY 2 BY CENTRAL/URBAN														
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettygate	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	11.5%	21.7%	2.7%	7.5%	16.7%	10.0%	21.9%	13.5%	15.2 %	22.0 %	11. 1%	8.1 %	4.3 %	13. 9%
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.3%	35.1%	24.5%	29.2%	34.3%	29.2%	28.8%	17.4 %	30.5 %	36. 1%	32. 6%	27. 7%	29. 6%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	17.3%	16.3%	29.7%	20.8%	11.1%	12.9%	14.6%	19.2%	23.9 %	15.3 %	16. 7%	20. 9%	17. 0%	17. 4%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	28.8%	20.7%	27.0%	26.4%	30.6%	18.6%	14.6%	23.1%	30.4 %	16.9 %	19. 4%	25. 6%	34. 0%	23. 6%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	13.5%	12.0%	5.4%	20.8%	12.5%	24.3%	19.8%	15.4%	13.0 %	15.3 %	16. 7%	12. 8%	17. 0%	15. 5%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100 .0%	100 .0%	100 .0%	100 .0%
PRIORITY 2 BY RURAL/OUTSKIRTS														
	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Rural North	Tiptree	Grand Total									
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	25.9%	32.4%	37.0%	22.0%	28.7%									
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	40.7%	14.7%	14.8%	17.1%	20.9%									
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	7.4%	32.4%	37.0%	26.8%	26.4%									
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	7.4%	17.6%	7.4%	26.8%	16.3%									
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	18.5%	2.9%	3.7%	7.3%	7.8%									
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%									

Appendix 5 – Budget spend

Budget spend ranked 1 or 2

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
ARTS AND TOURISM	7%	9%	5%	6%	10%	9%	16%	8%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	30%	24%	26%	27%	33%	37%	12%	28%
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	11%	15%	13%	16%	12%	10%	2%	13%
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
ENVIRONMENT	78%	83%	87%	88%	88%	92%	43%	85%
MUSEUMS	11%	10%	6%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	30%	47%	48%	38%	41%	35%	69%	43%
SPORT AND LEISURE	15%	4%	6%	9%	3%	2%	8%	6%
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	19%	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%	41%	8%
Gender	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say				
ARTS AND TOURISM	7%	10%	0%	14%				
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	29%	32%	0%	7%				
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	15%	8%	50%	9%				
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	1%	1%	0%	0%				
ENVIRONMENT	88%	87%	75%	47%				
MUSEUMS	7%	10%	25%	7%				
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	44%	36%	50%	75%				
SPORT AND LEISURE	4%	7%	0%	5%				

SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	5%	9%	0%	35%				
	200%	200%	200%	200%				
Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black Britis h	Chinese	Mixed	Other Enthic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
ARTS AND TOURISM	14%	20%	0%	7%	20%	11%	7%	8%
BUILDING MAINTENANC E	36%	60%	50%	20%	0%	13%	30%	29 %
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	7%	0%	0%	40%	20%	10%	13%	13 %
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
ENVIRONMEN T	79%	100%	75%	87%	100%	62%	88%	86 %
MUSEUMS	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	12%	8%	8%
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	36%	0%	50%	33%	20%	62%	41%	43 %
SPORT AND LEISURE	7%	0%	0%	7%	20%	6%	5%	5%
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	21%	0%	0%	7%	20%	24%	6%	8%
Disability	No	Prefe r Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total				
ARTS AND TOURISM	8%	15%	8%	8%				
BUILDING MAINTENANC E	29%	27%	32%	29%				
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	11%	5%	23%	12%				
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	1%	0%	0%	1%				
ENVIRONMEN T	87%	64%	88%	86%				
MUSEUMS	7%	9%	11%	8%				

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	43%	55%	38%	43%													
SPORT AND LEISURE	6%	2%	2%	5%													
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	8%	24%	0%	8%													
Ward	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettygate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tiptree	Wivenhoe
ARTS AND TOURISM	6%	15%	5%	2%	9%	7%	9%	4%	9%	11%	15%	4%	7%	3%	5%	2%	11%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	39%	29%	41%	31%	26%	25%	34%	36%	32%	29%	17%	33%	20%	27%	32%	32%	18%
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	4%	6%	14%	7%	22%	14%	14%	16%	12%	18%	17%	19%	10%	11%	9%	17%	18%
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%
ENVIRONMENT	85%	88%	86%	95%	86%	82%	83%	88%	89%	77%	85%	89%	88%	89%	88%	98%	84%
MUSEUMS	7%	14%	11%	9%	6%	11%	6%	8%	6%	9%	4%	15%	12%	19%	1%	2%	7%
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	43%	41%	24%	53%	41%	39%	31%	37%	42%	43%	47%	30%	47%	49%	50%	34%	47%
SPORT AND LEISURE	7%	1%	8%	0%	4%	7%	9%	7%	5%	5%	9%	4%	8%	3%	5%	10%	7%
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	9%	4%	11%	4%	7%	14%	11%	4%	4%	5%	6%	7%	7%	0%	10%	2%	7%

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

- Colchester's Strategic Plan 2023-26.

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- This plan sets out the direction and future potential for our borough. As a Council we have an ambitious range of priorities and goals.
- The Strategic Plan 2023-26 sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast and its Capital Programme.
- These priorities are kept under review to ensure they remain relevant and take account of changing needs and issues locally, as well as the changing legislative, financial and policy context for local government.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- All Council areas and activities.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

- This is will update the Council's policy framework.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- All residents, customers, businesses and partners
- Visitors to the borough.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- Colchester has a rich heritage and an ambitious future. The Strategic Plan 2020-23 sets out five key themes to build on this, and the outcomes will be based on achieving these themes, which are:
- Develop modern services for a modern city
- Respond to the climate emergency
- Tackle health, well-being and happiness
- Deliver homes for those most in need
- Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits
- Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture

The Strategic Plan will have a delivery plan which will set out the specific actions needed to achieve this.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- All Council services
- Colchester Borough Homes
- Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd - parent company to Colchester Amphora Trading, Colchester Amphora Homes and Colchester Amphora Energy
- Town and Parish Councils
- Partners in the public, private, community, voluntary and education sectors
- Businesses
- Employers
- Essex borough/district councils
- Essex County Council
- Essex Police
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- NHS
- North Essex Garden Communities
- Government departments and agencies.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

The Strategic Plan is informed by a range of relevant information, data, surveys or consultations including:

[Census data](#), [ONS data sources](#), [Essex Open Data](#), [Public Health Profiles](#), [indices of deprivation](#), [Colchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) profile 2019](#).

We have also used the wide range of research and statistics which are shown on the Council's website [here](#) (or follow the pathway [www.colchester.gov.uk/Our Council>Local Research and Statistics>Colchester Statistics or >Census](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/Our%20Council%20Local%20Research%20and%20Statistics%20Colchester%20Statistics%20or%20Census)) which include [key statistics for Colchester](#).

This longer term view is important in ensuring that the Strategic Plan takes due account of future needs such as population growth and diversity.

We also referred to the results of a recent consultation shown here.

As priorities are developed, so the objectives and outcomes will be shared and views sought, from potential partners, key stakeholders, councillors and the public. To deliver these shared priorities, the contribution of local stakeholders and other agencies will be particularly important where the Council must work with others and where their help and contributions may be sought.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'¹ and those who do not²
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.³

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the 'general duty':

The Strategic Plan's broad themes, priorities and goals will all play their part in helping to further or facilitate our 'general duty'.

- The Strategic Plan is a key part of setting the direction and future potential for our City, with its themes providing support in achieving this aim. In summary:
 - Living in welcoming, tolerant and diverse communities helps to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Living in a thriving and prosperous place helps to advance equality of opportunity for everyone in fulfilling their potential.
 - Encouraging communities to meet and interact helps people to know and understand each other better, and it can support joint working on practical solutions.

A positive encouragement towards helping individuals, families and communities to flourish in the borough whatever their circumstances has been a key part of the Council's Strategic Plans since their introduction in 2002. This is backed by:

- The "Tackle health, well-being, and happiness and " theme, and its priority to "Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable
- The "Deliver homes for those most in need theme", and its priorities to "Increase the number and quality and types of homes and Meet our duty to prevent or assist those facing homelessness"
- The "Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits" theme

¹ The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

² This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	√	The Strategic Plan is designed to work with and influence people in showing tolerance and in changing behaviours, to enable and create better local communities and better understanding. A welcoming and supportive borough will benefit all residents, whatever their personal circumstances or protected characteristics.	None identified	See 10. below
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)				
Disability	Physical		As "Age" above. It aims to create opportunities for all residents in fulfilling their potential. It helps ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place that embraces tolerance and diversity. This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as disability harassment.		
	Sensory				
	Learning				
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁴	White		As "Age" above. It helps ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place that embraces tolerance and diversity. This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as racial harassment.		
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>please state</i>				
Language	English not first language	As "Age" above.			

⁴ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		It aims to address the increasing population – the borough's growth must be matched with opportunities for jobs, homes, infrastructure and community life, now and in the future.		
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	√	<p>The Strategic Plan is designed to work with and influence people in showing tolerance and in changing behaviours, to enable and create better local communities and better understanding.</p> <p>This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as sexual harassment.</p>	√	
Sex	Men				
	Women				
Gender Reassignment ⁵	Transgender/ Transsexual				
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership				

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- Not applicable. The Strategic Plan is an “overarching vision” for the borough. Individual policies and practices will support its implementation, and equality impact assessments will be part of this process. Negative impacts are more likely to be identified at that point – when the detail of implementation is being assessed. Any such negative impacts can then be considered to see how they can be minimised or removed.

⁵ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as “a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. NB: It is generally held that transgender people disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas transsexual people wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

11. Could the policy discriminate⁶ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁷?

- No.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Richard Block, Chief Operating Officer.

14. Date of completion:

- January 2023

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- Not applicable – EQIAs are undertaken on a three-year basis, and that matches the 'life' of this Strategic Plan 2020-23. It will however be reviewed if circumstances demand.

⁶ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.



Cabinet

25 January 2023

Item
8(i)

Report of	Head of Finance and Srction 151 Officer	Author	Paul Cook ☎ 505861 Darren Brown ☎ 282891
Title	Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report recommends the 2023/24 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28.

2 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and revised Medium Term Financial Forecast as set out Appendix A.
- 2.2 To note the Local Government Act 2003 Section 25 budget resilience statement and forecast level of balances set out in Appendix B.
- 2.3 To approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix C
- 2.4 To recommend to Council the 2023/24 revenue budget requirement of £25.285m
- 2.5 To recommend to Council Colchester's element of the Council Tax at £211.59 per Band D property being an increase of £6.12.
- 2.6 To approve £400k capital grant funding from the Right to Buy retained receipts reserve as set out in Section 10.7 of this report.

3 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To balance the 2023/24 budget and revise the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

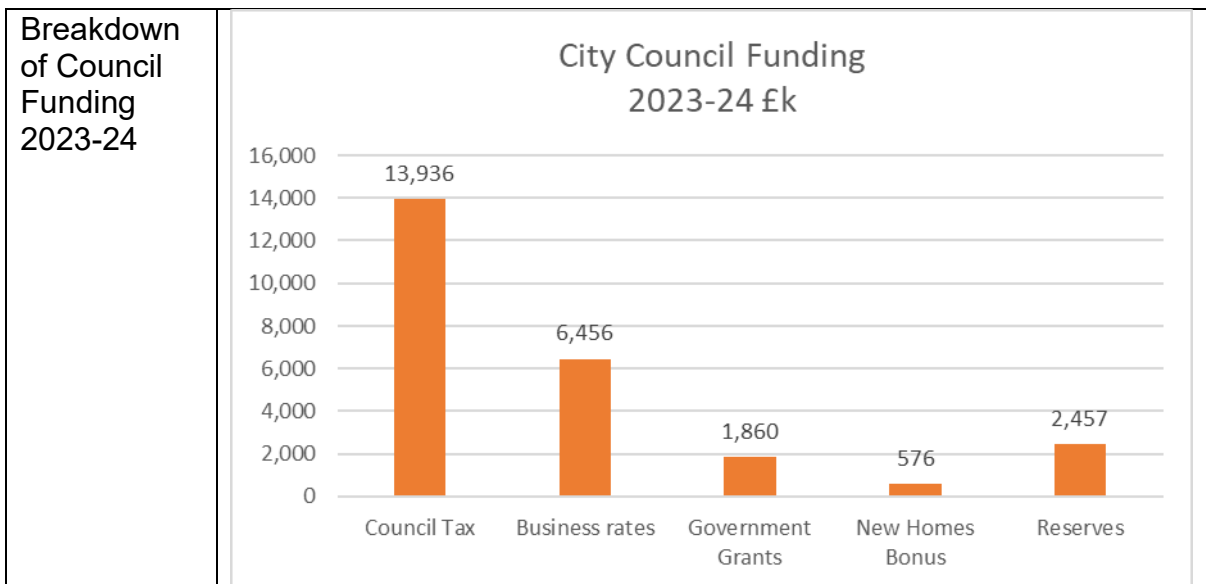
4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5 Summary of Council Funding

- 5.1 The table sets out a summary of the normal funding of Council services. This sets the budget recommendations in context.

Revenue	These are running costs and income, including salaries, supplies and services and sales fees and charges.
Capital	One-off investment in land and buildings, plant and equipment.
Housing Revenue Account	Council houses and flats. It is ringfenced and self-financing for both revenue and capital.
General Fund	Non-Housing Revenue Account services accounted for in the General Fund such as waste collection, museums, sport and leisure, democratic services for example.
The 23/24 Budget	General Fund Revenue financial plan for next year 2023/24.
Medium Term Financial Forecast	Our financial plan for the next five years on General Fund or Medium Term Financial Forecast.
Net Budget requirement	A technical budget setting calculation the Council must make in accordance with complex rules set by the Government. Running costs, sales fees and charges and grants for individual services.
Net Budget	Circa £21.9m (excluding North Essex Parking Partnership). £86.6m costs less £64.7m income, as set out in Appendix E.
Government funding	Since 2012 funding comes mainly from retained business rates.
Business rates	We collect about £50m a year of which we expect to retain around £6.5m in 2023/24. Business rates are set nationally.
Council tax	We collect the council tax, most of which relates to Essex County Council services. Of £130m+ we expect to retain £13.936m in 2023/24. The district council tax will be increased by just under £6.12p per annum in 2023/24. This is the maximum increase without needing approval in a local referendum.
Collection Fund	Business rates and council tax are accounted for in a separate collection fund. This is used to distribute total income to the government, county council and police and fire as well as our own requirements. Also used to share surpluses or deficits compared to budget. This is a complex calculation over a number of financial years. The business rates reserve is used to smooth the impact of changes from year to year.

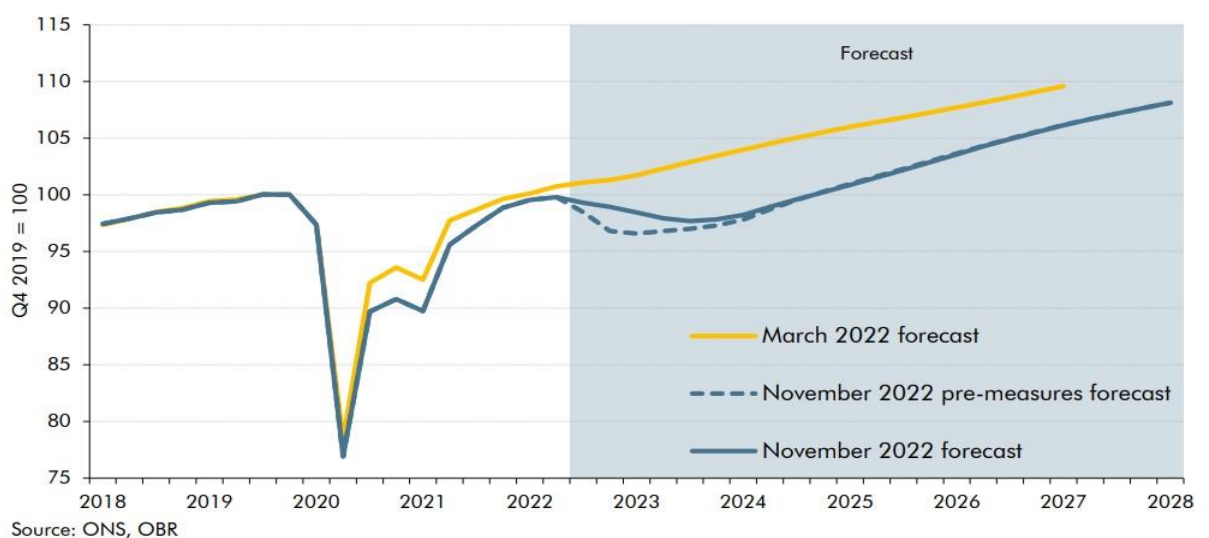


6 Macro-economic context December 2022

- 6.1 Inflation is the dominant consideration in setting the 2023/24 budget. Interest rates are also an important factor both for new City Council borrowing and for investment income. City Council spending and income from sales, fees and charges are likely to be influenced by the general level of economic activity.
- 6.2 Economic forecasts by the Office of Budget Responsibility are set out in the charts below. The charts demonstrate the considerable negative impacts of the 2022 Autumn mini budget.

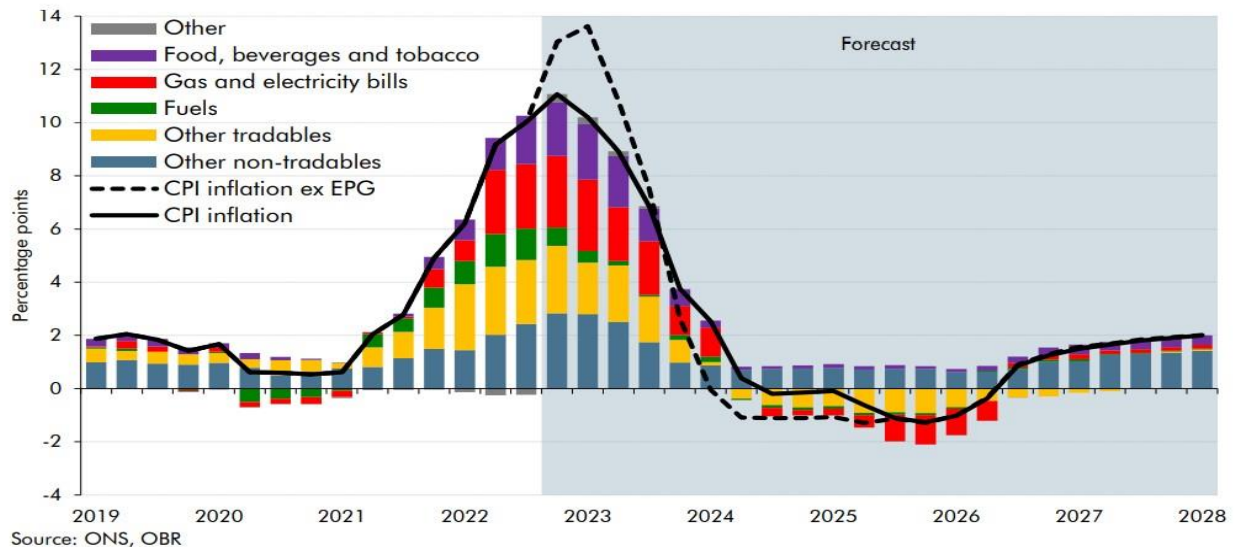
OBR GDP Forecasts Nov 22

Chart 1: Real GDP



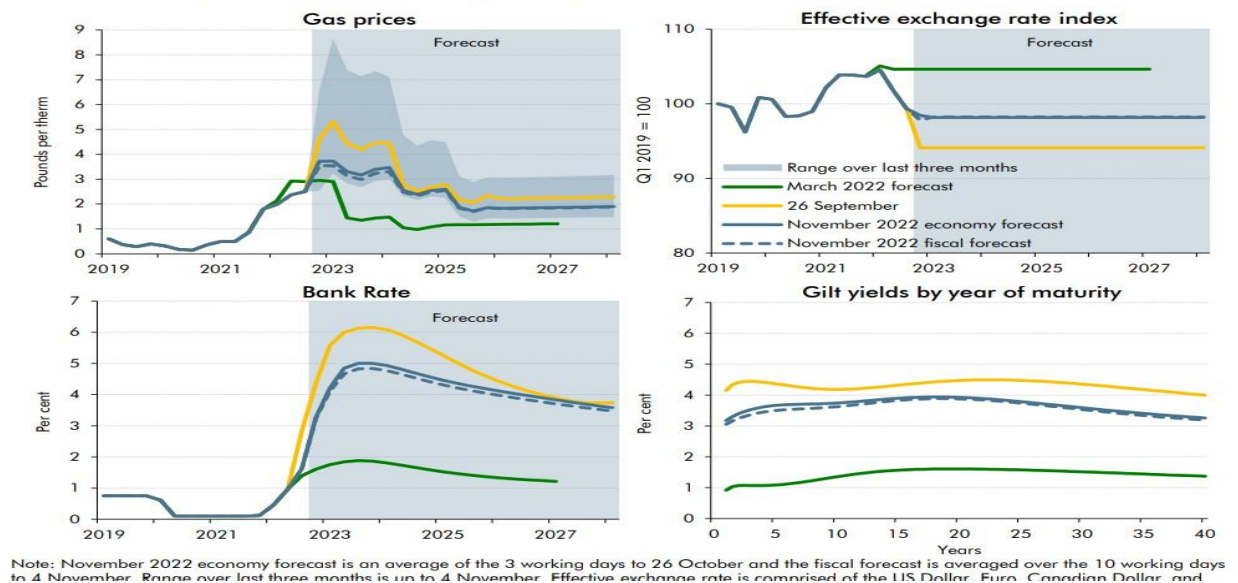
OBR CPI Forecast Nov 22

Chart 4: Contributions to CPI inflation



OBR Gas £ Bank Rate Gilts Nov 22

Chart 3: Gas prices, the exchange rate, Bank Rate and gilt yields



7 The Council's Budget Setting Strategy

- 7.1 The inflation and supply chain pressures arising from the pandemic were evident by Spring 2022, as well as the risk they might be compounded by the war in Ukraine and disruptions to trade and global oil and gas supplies. With inflation rising by some 11%, we recognised resident spending power would be reduced, impacting our income. And with council tax capped at an increase of 3%, and limited other help from Government, we faced a large and widening budget gap. An acute cost-of-living crisis for local government made more difficult by

short lived Government budget changes and consequential hikes in borrowing costs.

7.2 In these unprecedented circumstances Colchester City Council took immediate action to relieve in year and likely 2023/24 and future year budget pressures. These included:

- **Income generation** – A new model for the mid-year and annual review of fees and charges; a review of commercial activities for Colchester Museums and Castle Park; reviews of possible future year garden waste collection and recycling containers/bags services and possible charges (like many other councils), and a review of and support to the Council's Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd.
- **Transforming services** – Senior Management Team redesign; a new and more efficient service model for Sport and Leisure and Colchester Museums; a new recycling and waste strategy; a review of non-statutory neighbourhood services; more efficient digital payment, booking and telephone systems; consolidation of some housing services and work with partners to deliver community initiatives with their support.
- **Savings** – Reducing energy costs and customer service centre operating hours, a recruitment freeze for non-essential posts; a reduction in overtime budgets and spend; offering staff temporary reduced working hours and looking for efficiencies and better ways of working, working with staff and partners.

7.3 Three principles guided the Council's approach.

- Long term financial stability must be secured.
- Statutory and other key services that deliver against the Strategic Plan and that residents value most must be preserved, including help to those most at risk from the cost-of-living crisis.
- That the best decisions are made by working with others, with those most affected, including partners and our staff, and with all political parties. This is informed by independent best practice advice, such as from the Local Government Association Peer Challenge.

7.4 The Council has also sought to ensure a closer match between resources and the Council's Strategic Plan, which subject to full Council approval has been adjusted to ensure it is affordable and realisable, whilst addressing the key challenges of our time, including the climate emergency and our environment and quality of life.

7.5 The Council whilst responding to budget pressures recognise it is right to invest where that brings commercial and or social benefits. To include the administration's May 22 priorities of help to those most in need and affected by the cost-of-living crisis, and our environment. To support young people and acknowledge our voluntary sector and to respond to opportunities as they arise, like City status. And to progress master planning for the City Centre working with Essex County Council, to ensure Colchester remains a great place to live work and visit.

7.6 Risk and volatility were addressed throughout the budget setting process by working up three scenarios each with different assumptions, macro-economic and Council specific, modelling and testing and taking a central case to assumptions set out in Section 8 of this report and in Appendix A.

7.7 The Budget reflects the priorities in the Council's Strategic Plan, **Modern Services for a Modern City** set out elsewhere on this agenda.

- Respond to the climate emergency
- Deliver Modern Services for a Modern City
- Improve health, well-being, and happiness
- Deliver homes for those most in need
- Grow our economy so everyone benefits
- Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture

8 **Pay, Energy and Inflation**

8.1 Employee costs are the biggest element of Council expenditure. In December 2022 the City Council agreed to increase the 2022/23 local pay award by

- Backdating the October 2022 Real Living Wage increase to April 2022.
- Paying all staff on lower grades a minimum £1,925 increase from April 2022

8.2 The 2023/24 Budget provides for the revised 2022/23 pay award and a further 4% increase. This is a total provision for pay inflation of £1,996k.

8.3 The Medium Term Financial Forecast then assumes 3% for increased pay in 2024/25 and 2% in each financial year thereafter.

8.4 The City Council is a large energy user and expects to experience greatly increased costs in 2023/24.

8.5 The 2023/24 Budget provides an additional £1,533k for energy costs in 2023/24.

8.6 There is no additional provision for energy inflation in 24/25 and the budget is expected to reduce in £500k annual steps thereafter.

8.7 £1,004k is provided for other inflation in 23/24.

9 **Provisional 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement**

9.1 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published 19 December 2022. The consultation closed 16 January 2023. [Provisional local government finance settlement: England, 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2023-to-2024)

9.2 The settlement is mainly for 2023/24 financial year only, but there are some commitments into 2024/25 (see below). In particular the Core Spending Power Guarantee is for 2023/24 only. It would not be prudent to assume 2023/24 funding levels will apply in 2024/25.

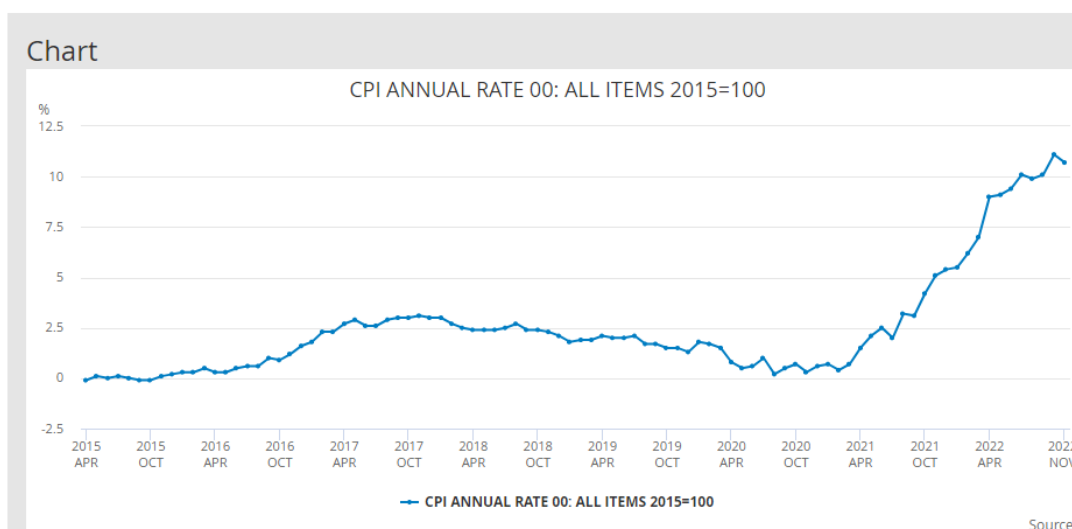
9.3 The provisional settlement guarantees the City Council a 3% increase in Core Spending Power compared to 2022/23. The comparison between the two years is set out in the table. The Core Spending Power 3% guarantee is made with the Consumer Price Index having increased by 10.7% in the year to November 2022. Bank rate was increased to 3.5% from 14 December 2022. The Core Spending

Power 3% guarantee only applies to 2023/24, there is no commitment into 2024/25.

Element	2022/23	2023/24
	£ millions	£ millions
Settlement Funding Assessment	4.328	4.693
Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier	0.442	0.765
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts	13.300	13.850
New Homes Bonus	1.954	0.576
Lower Tier Services Grant	0.198	0.000
Services Grant	0.298	0.168
Grants rolled in	0.204	0.000
Funding Guarantee	0.000	1.692
Core Spending Power	20.724	21.744

9.4 The table below shows Core Spending Power changes since 2015-16. These are cash figures. From April 2015 to November 2022 CPI rates in the second table demonstrate the loss of spending power in real terms.

CORE SPENDING POWER									
Please select authority									
Colchester									
Illustrative Core Spending Power of Local Government:									
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions	£ millions
Settlement Funding Assessment	7.2	5.9	5.0	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.7
Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.8
Council Tax Requirement excluding parish precepts ¹	10.4	10.6	11.0	11.5	12.1	12.5	12.6	13.3	13.8
Improved Better Care Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Homes Bonus	4.6	5.7	4.8	3.4	3.4	3.6	2.4	2.0	0.6
New Homes Bonus returned funding	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transition Grant	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adult Social Care Support Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Winter Pressures Grant ²	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Care Support Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Social Care Grant ³	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund ⁴	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lower Tier Services Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.0
ASC Discharge Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Services Grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2
Grants rolled in	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0
Funding Guarantee	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
Core Spending Power	22.5	22.6	21.1	19.6	20.1	20.8	20.4	20.7	21.7
Change since 2015-16 (£ millions)									-0.8
Change since 2015-16 (% change)									-3.5%
¹ This calculation assumes council tax flexibilities of 3% for fire authorities, 2% for the GLA, and £10 for GLA's police element. The Government intends to provide flexibilities of £5 for fire authorities, £23.55 for the GLA's non-police precept, and £15 for GLA's police element; this will be reflected in the Final Settlement. ² From 2020-21, Winter Pressures Grant allocations were rolled into the Improved Better Care Fund, and no longer ringfenced for alleviating winter pressures. ³ From 2020-21, Social Care Support Grant allocations were rolled into the Social Care Grant. ⁴ From 2023-24, Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund allocations were rolled into the ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund. Please see the Core Spending Power Explanatory note for details of the assumptions underpinning the elements of Core Spending Power. The figures presented in Core Spending Power do not reflect the changes to Settlement Funding Assessment made for authorities with increased Business Rate Retention arrangements. For information about authorities with increased Business Rates Retention Arrangements see the Explanatory Note. For Settlement Funding Assessment figures									



- 9.5 The business rates multiplier is frozen for 2023/24. This will save the City Council around £160k as a business rates payer. The reduction in collection fund income will be compensated by government grants.
- 9.6 The maximum increase without a referendum for the district element of the council tax has been reset. This will be £5 or 3% whichever is the higher (previously £5 or 2% in 2022/23.)
- 9.7 Services Grant allocations have been reduced to reflect the withdrawal of planned increases in employer national insurance contributions. (Was £298k in 2022/23, will be £168k in 2023/24.)
- 9.8 The 2023/24 New Homes Bonus of £576k is a single year settlement with no legacy payments in future years. However New Homes Bonus is part of Core Spending Power guarantee calculations. The City Council has therefore been compensated in 2023/24 for loss of New Homes Bonus compared to 2022/23. It should be noted that the Core Spending Power Guarantee applies to 2023/24 only. It would be imprudent to assume this level of funding is available in 2024/25.
- 9.9 Government has asked local government to look to reserves to meet the funding situation. The City Council is planning to do so, and reserve calculations are set out elsewhere in this report.
- 9.10 Business Rates Pools will continue to operate in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The City Council has already confirmed its membership of the Essex Business Rates Pool.
- 9.11 The long planned national review of relative needs and resources has been deferred until the next Parliament.
- 9.12 In 2024/25 a new funding stream will be available to waste collection authorities. Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging is a new levy on packaging producers. Around £1.2BN nationally will be redistributed to collection authorities. Government plans to review lower tier funding accordingly; further details are awaited.

10 The City Council's Budget

- 10.1 The City Council's net budget requirement is calculated from the gross cost of services less sales fees and charges and some government grants. The net budget requirement is broadly equivalent to the Council's core spending power.
- 10.2 As described at Section 7 of this report the City Council has continued to take a progressive approach to spending priorities with investment to support to those most in need, whilst pursuing cost reduction, service transformation and efficiencies.
- 10.3 The City Council has allowed £10.028m for cost pressures and growth items in 2023/24. Some of the main items being;
- Inflation allowance (including fuel and utilities) - £4.533m
 - Waste service - £864k
 - Pension 3-year deficit payment - £836k
 - Minimum Revenue Provision and Interest - £731k
 - March 2022 pension actuarial review - £550k
- 10.4 To help balance its budget, the City Council has made savings of £4.661m for 2023/24, and an additional £3.050m in 2024/25.
- 10.5 To balance the budget taking account of income changes, and savings and cost growth pressures, as above, the City Council has also made an appropriate one-off use of reserves to a value of £1.7m. A full statement on reserves is provided in Appendix G.
- 10.6 Other issues include the City Council's review of its Capital Programme. Pending completion, the 2023/24 budget assumes the funding costs previously agreed in setting the 2022/23 budget. The 2023/24 capital programme and capital strategy will be reported in Q1 of 2023/24.
- 10.7 Provision is being made in the capital programme to provide £400k of grant funding to an Almshouse Charity for redevelopment within Colchester, providing additional units of affordable accommodation. This will make the development financially viable and will fund the additional 6 homes that have been added to this site. For information, current scheme costs for the Charity of this development are predicted to be around £3.3million. The £400k City Council funding will come from the Council's Retained Right-to-buy receipts reserve and therefore will not have any revenue implications on the City Council's capital financing budget.
- 10.8 £1.4m of the core spending power funding guarantee grant for 23/24 provides one-off funding as set out in Appendix D5. It will be used to support and enable transformation and change bringing benefits for the longer term.
- 10.9 The 2023/24 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast allow for the financing costs of the provisional Capital Programme.
- 10.10 The City Council has reviewed most sales fees and charges and made necessary increases. This is unavoidable given the need to finance essential services.

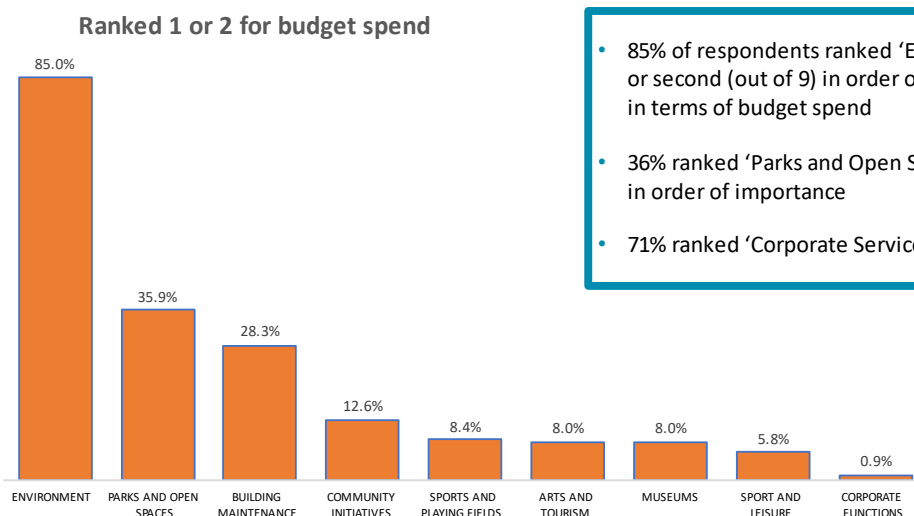
Sales, fees and charges were agreed by November 2022 Cabinet, and will be updated regularly during the financial year ahead.

- 10.11 The 2023/24 budget assumes a £6.12 Colchester council tax increase and the Medium Term Financial Forecast assumes the same increase is made in future financial years. This is the maximum permissible increase under referendum rules.
- 10.12 A 99% council tax collection rate is assumed. The approved Local Council Tax Support Scheme is reflected in the council tax base. Growth in the council tax base is assumed to be 1% per annum.
- 10.13 The Medium Term Financial Forecast also assumes £200k of the gain from the Council's membership of the Essex Business Rates Pool.
- 10.14 The Medium Term Financial Forecast and the assumptions used are set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 10.15 To take forward the Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast a programme of continuing and radical transformation will be required.

11 Medium Term Financial Forecast Consultation

- 11.1 The budget strategy and timetable have ensured that information is available for Scrutiny Panel and input from all Members.
- 11.2 Budget workshops were held on 6 October 2022 and 14 December 2022 so that all members could share in the task of meeting the budget challenge. Budget Alumni meetings were held 20 October 2022 and 6 December 2022.
- 11.3 The Leader of the Opposition is also able at any stage of the budget process to meet with officers to assist with his understanding of the budget and the consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 11.4 The statutory consultation with business ratepayers will take place on 21 February 2023. The results of the consultation will be reported to the Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet.
- 11.5 Other budget consultation on the Strategic Plan is set out in a report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 11.6 The results of external consultation on the City Council's Strategy are summarised in the chart below. These priorities have been reflected in the Council's Budget Strategy and the expenditure on services shown in appendix F.

Budget priorities



- 85% of respondents ranked 'Environment' either first or second (out of 9) in order of importance to them in terms of budget spend
- 36% ranked 'Parks and Open Spaces' first or second in order of importance
- 71% ranked 'Corporate Services' 8th or 9th (out of 9)

12 Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The 2023-24 Budget reflects current assumptions but will be subject to rigorous monitoring during the 2024-24 financial year.
- 12.2 Modelling has been undertaken with service managers to assess the potential range of impacts before adopting the assumptions described within the report.

13 Financial implications

- 13.1 As set out in the report.
- 13.2 No changes are necessary to the 2020 Financial Regulations.

14 Climate Emergency and Environment

- 14.1 All budget measures are assessed for their likely environmental impact, reflecting the Council's commitment to be 'carbon neutral' by 2030. Environment and Climate Change is an essential cross-cutting theme in the Council's recovery planning and a core theme of the new Strategic Plan.

15 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 15.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

16 Other Standard References

- 16.1 There are no direct Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.

Appendices

A	2023-28 Medium Term Financial Forecast and Assumptions
B	Budget Robustness Statement
C	Treasury Management Strategy Statement
D	Technical reconciliations of budget requirement 2023/24
E	Summary Budget 2023/24
F	2023/24 General Fund Budgets
G	Reserves, Provisions and Balances
H	Allocation of New Homes Bonus
J	Transformation Savings

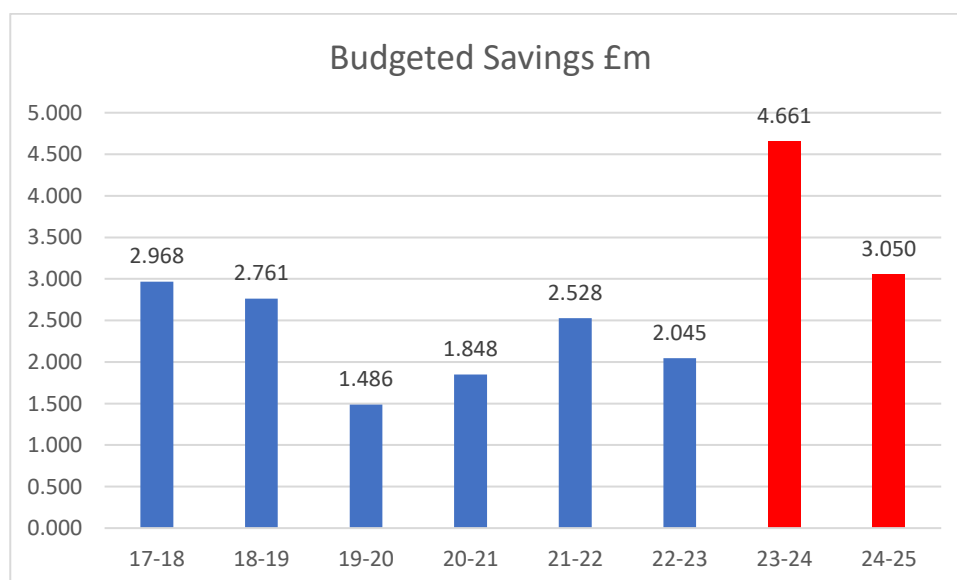
Appendix A – 2023-28 Medium Term Financial Forecast and Assumptions

2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast	23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000	26/27 £'000	27/28 £'000
Previous year's budget	21,875	25,285	21,958	21,432	22,332
One-off Items	(1,179)	(836)	0	0	0
Cost pressures and growth items	9,297	400	200	1,400	1,550
Capital financing	731	385	(276)	(300)	(303)
Income losses	0	(200)	(200)	(200)	0
Savings	(4,661)	(3,050)	(250)	0	0
Use of new homes bonus for one-off investment	(778)	(26)	0	0	0
Current year's budget	25,285	21,958	21,432	22,332	23,579
Business rates	(6,456)	(6,003)	(5,550)	(5,098)	(4,646)
Government Grant	(1,860)	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(576)	(550)	(550)	(550)	(550)
Council Tax	(13,936)	(14,483)	(15,039)	(15,604)	(16,182)
Previously planned use of reserves	(757)	79	79	79	279
One-off use of reserves	(1,700)	(200)	(200)	0	0
Budget Gap Cumulative	0	801	172	1,159	2,480

Medium Term Financial Forecast Assumptions	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
Council Tax collection	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Growth in council tax base	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
District council tax increase	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12	£6.12

Appendix B – Budget Robustness Statement

- 1 In 2022/23 the City Council is expected to overspend the approved budget by a net £392k. The main factors in the overspend are
 - overspending in the Environment Service
 - reflects increased interest earning on City Council investments.
- 2 A decision was subsequently made in December 2022 to increase the previously agreed pay award (£700k)
- 3 The City Council will need to monitor 2023/24 spending diligently and take prompt management action to avoid overspends. Medium Term Financial Forecasts assume the planned budget in 2023/24 is delivered. Particular attention will need to be given to:
 - The delivery of new savings within agreed timescales
 - More effective monitoring of dividends and other income from Council companies
- 4 The value of new savings planned for 2023/24 and 2024/25 is higher than the level of savings achieved in recent financial years (see red bars on the below chart). Whilst the Council is making every effort to transform its services to achieve a balanced and sustainable budget in the longer term the planned level of savings is a very demanding target. The delivery of planned savings will therefore need to be monitored quarterly with immediate effect. Any significant adverse variation from savings plans will necessitate corrective action if the City Council is to deliver these high value savings targets.



- 5 The Council's capital programme is currently under review. The Medium Term Financial Forecast budgets for minimum revenue provision and net general fund interest are those of 2022/23 budget setting. Any additional borrowing commitments following the capital programme review will require to be fully funded.
- 6 The development of Colchester Northern Gateway is a major undertaking bearing significant financial risks. Given economic and business changes following Covid

ongoing financial appraisal of the project is being undertaken to ensure the risks and rewards remain appropriate given the size of the Council's net budget.

- 7 The Council will need to carefully monitor the impact of inflation during 2023/24 in both pay and other areas.
- 8 The Council's existing borrowing is largely in long maturity borrowing at fixed rates. New borrowing in 2023/24 and 2024/25 will likely be at higher rates than experienced for some years. Increasing short term interest rates may lead to additional investment income. Given heightened levels of interest rate risk the Council will monitor its Treasury activity and prudential indicators more frequently (quarterly) from 2023/24 onwards.
- 9 The Council has a good record of delivering agreed savings. The 2023/24 savings proposals were developed by the Transformation Board and assessed by the Finance Business Partners.
- 10 The Council has in place revenue and capital monitoring processes enabling it to take corrective action in the event of unexpected budget variations. The Council has demonstrated sound finance and performance monitoring processes in past financial years. Recent and forthcoming changes to senior management roles have necessitated a restatement of budget responsibilities. The S151 Officer and the Chief Executive must monitor that these new budget requirements are being fulfilled.
- 11 The Council is relying on £1.700m use of balances to deliver its core services in 2023/24. Given the exceptional situation locally and nationally this is appropriate.
- 12 The budget process allows for the review of budget proposals by the Scrutiny Panel and this has applied to the 2023/24 proposals.
- 13 The Council's use of resources judgment by BDO in the 2019/20 audit was satisfactory, following an assessment of the Council's approach. The 2020/21 use of resources judgment is not available due to external audit delays
- 14 There is an effective risk management process in place in the Council.
- 15 The 2023/24 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was more favourable than expected. However, there are significant financial risks for 2024/25 onwards as 2023/24 was a one-year settlement. The level of savings committed into 2024/25 demonstrates the City Council is essential to offset potential government funding losses in that financial year. Losses are likely to include the removal of the Core Spending Power guarantee, and this is reflected in the Medium Term Financial Forecast.
- 16 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy resilience index has yet to be updated.
- 17 In order to maintain financial planning, monitoring and accounting at a robust level given all the risks and changes outlined above, the Finance resource and capacity within the City Council needs to be maintained and any additional accounting requirements appropriately resourced. An additional capital accounting business

partner has been added and recruited to in 2022/23, and two long vacant Finance Specialist posts were also filled. The staffing position in Finance needs to be carefully monitored in 2023/24 for the impact of any vacancies and any new and additional accounting requirements.

- 18 It appears therefore that the 2023/24 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast are robust and the reserves and balances adequate as set out in the succeeding tables. However, the impact of pay, energy costs and interest rates will require careful monitoring in 2023/24 in order to identify and manage down any financial risks.

Appendix C

Treasury Management Strategy Statement Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Statement includes the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy.
- 1.2 The City Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Treasury management ensures that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the City Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 1.3 The second main function of treasury management is funding the City Council's Capital Programme. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the City Council. This longer-term cash flow planning ensures that the City Council can meet its capital spending obligations. The management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any existing debt may be restructured to manage City Council risks and costs.
- 1.4 The contribution that treasury management makes to the City Council is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. Treasury management balances the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits. Since cash balances primarily result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will result in a loss to the General Fund.
- 1.5 Loans to third parties will impact on the treasury function. These activities are classed as non-treasury activities arising from capital expenditure and are separate from day-to-day treasury management activities.
- 1.6 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code defines treasury management as:

The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

- 1.7 Local authorities are required to adopt a Capital Strategy to provide focus on long term capital investment plans. The Council's capital programme is currently under review. The Capital Strategy for 2023-24 will be reported in Q1 of 2023-24. Transparent reporting for non-treasury investments including loans to third parties and the purchase of investment properties or commercial activity is required under the Localism Act 2011.

Reporting requirements

- 1.8 Following the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement by Budget Council, Governance and Audit Committee will receive quarterly updates and an outturn report.

Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy

- 1.9 The 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy Statement is recommended to Budget Council by 25 January 2023 Cabinet. The 24 January 2023 Scrutiny Panel also considers the recommended strategy as part of its review of the Budget. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement covers:
- Capital plans (including prudential indicators)
 - Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time)
 - Treasury Management Strategy (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators
 - Investment strategy (the parameters within which investments are to be managed).
- 1.10 Quarterly Treasury Management reports to Governance and Audit Committee update on the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether any policies require revision.
- 1.11 The annual Treasury Report after the financial year end to Governance and Audit Committee reports actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

Training

- 1.12 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code requires the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer to ensure that Members with responsibility for treasury management or scrutiny receive adequate training in treasury management. Training is provided in one or more presentations to members by the City Council's Treasury Advisers Link Asset Management. Training for councillors will take place on 30 January 2023. Training dates for 2023/24 will be notified when the Municipal Calendar is set. The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed.

Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24

1.13 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 covers two main areas:

Content of Treasury Management Strategy	
Capital	Prudential Code prudential indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates of Capital Expenditure (2.2) • Actual Capital Expenditure (2.2) • Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement (2.5) • Actual Capital Financing Requirement (2.5) • Authorised Limit (5.7) • Operational Boundary (5.5) • Actual external debt (5.7) • Gross debt and capital financing requirement (5.4) • Financing costs as a % of net revenue stream (3.8) • Estimates of net income from commercial and service investments as a % of net revenue stream (3.9) • Actual net income from commercial and service investments as a % of net revenue stream (3.9)
	Treasury Management Code prudential indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liability Benchmark (2.6) • Maturity Structure of Borrowing (5.12) • Long-term treasury management investments (the City Council has none.) Treasury Management Code locally determined prudential indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest Rate exposures (5.11 to 5.15) • Credit Risk (See 6 for Annual Investment Strategy) • Price Risk (See 6 for Annual Investment Strategy)
	minimum revenue provision policy
Treasury management	current treasury position
	treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council
	prospects for interest rates
	borrowing strategy
	policy on borrowing in advance of need
	debt rescheduling
	investment strategy
	creditworthiness policy
	policy on use of external service providers

1.14 These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003; The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Prudential Code; The Department of Levelling-Up Minimum Revenue Provision Guidance; The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code Treasury Management Code; and Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities Investment Guidance.

Treasury management consultants

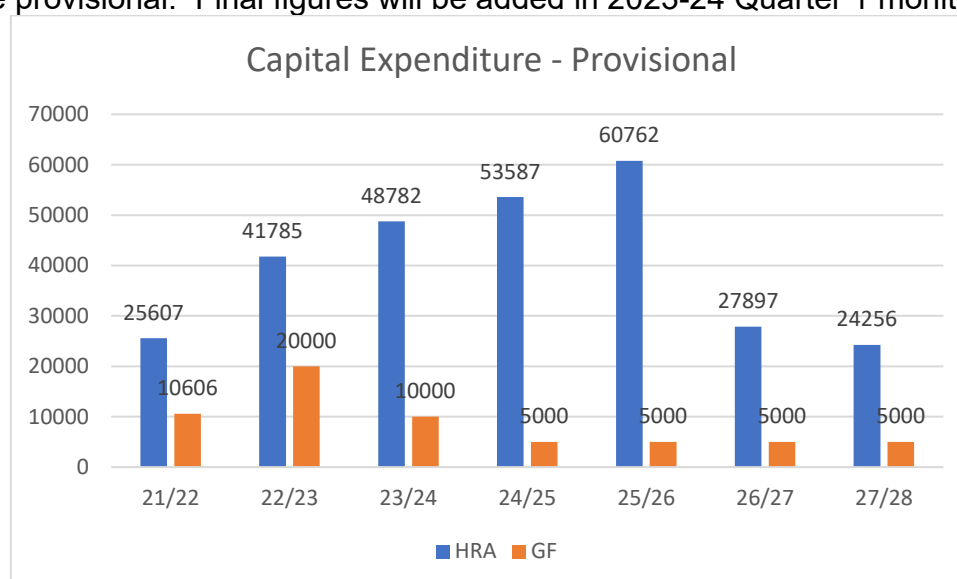
- 1.15 The City Council uses Link Asset Services as its external treasury management advisors.
- 1.16 Responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council and undue reliance is not placed upon external advisors. Decisions use available information including external advice.

2 The Capital Prudential Indicators 2021/22 – 2027/28

- 2.1 The City Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury. The output of the capital expenditure plan is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

Capital expenditure

- 2.2 This prudential Indicator is a summary of the City Council's capital expenditure plans. Given the current review of the City Council's capital programme the figures are provisional. Final figures will be added in 2023-24 Quarter 1 monitoring.

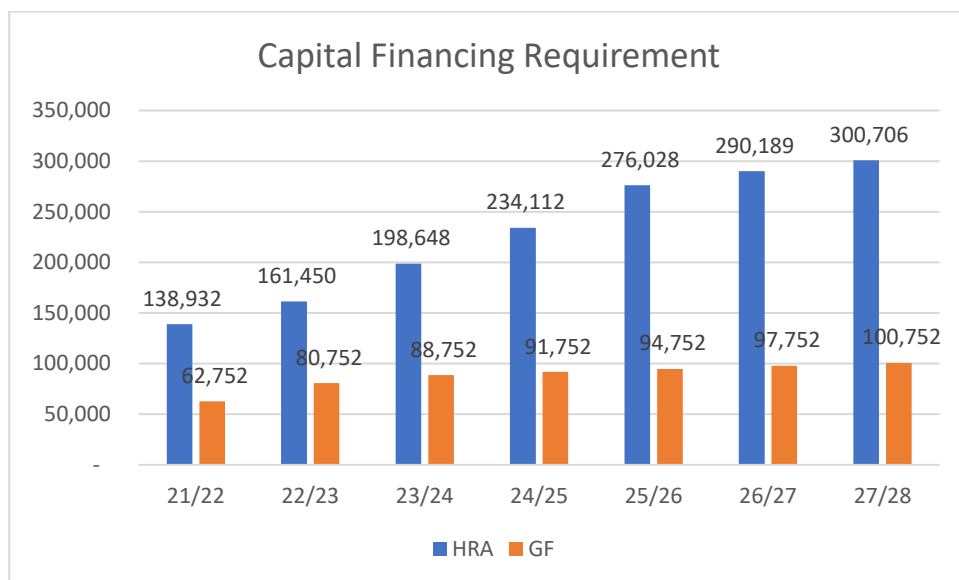


The Council's Borrowing Need (The Capital Financing Requirement)

- 2.3 The second prudential indicator is the City Council's Capital Financing Requirement. The Capital Financing Requirement is the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the City Council's indebtedness and so of its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure above, which has not immediately been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, will increase the Capital Financing Requirement.
- 2.4 The Capital Financing Requirement decreases by the annual minimum provision made. Minimum revenue provision is the statutory annual revenue charge that

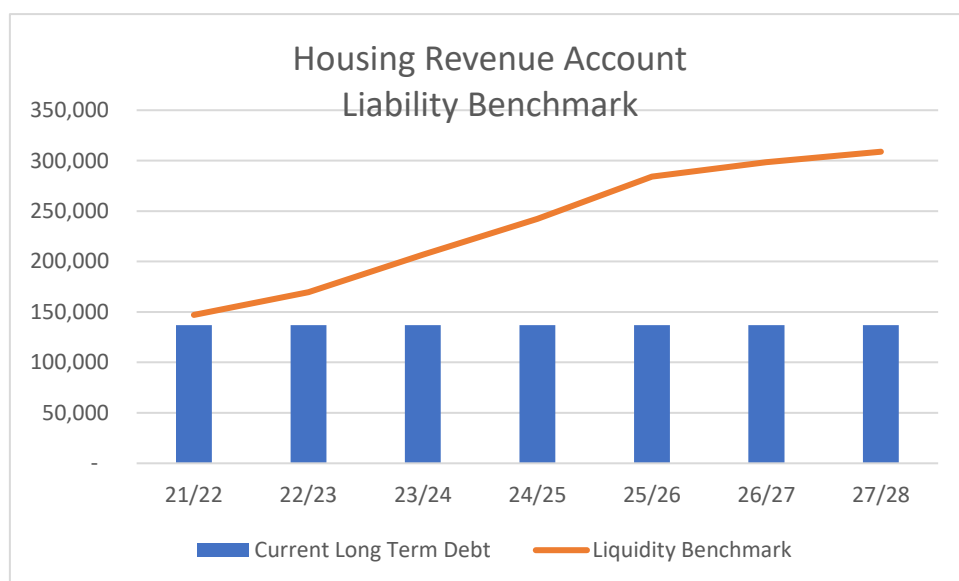
reduces indebtedness over each asset's life. Minimum revenue provision charges reflect the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.

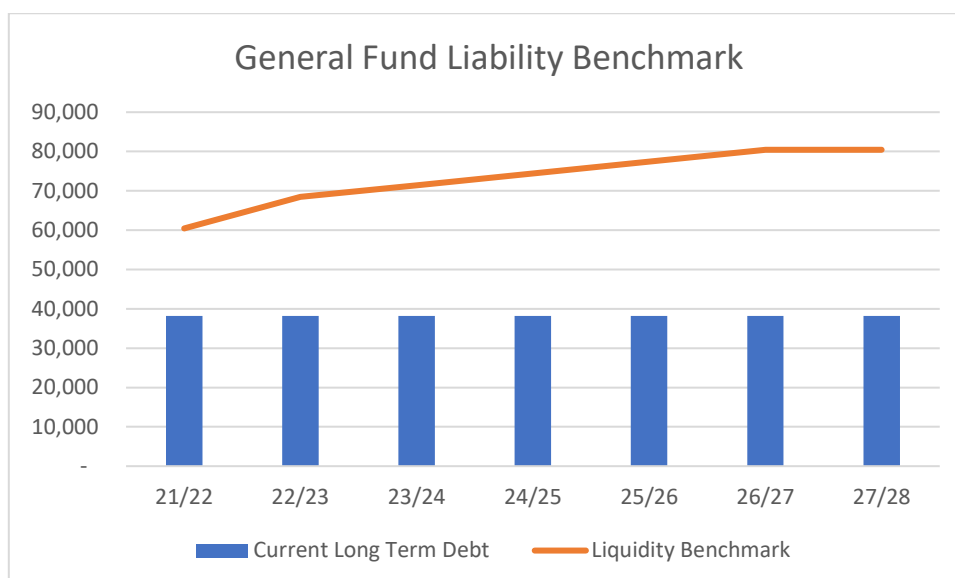
- 2.5 The Capital Financing Requirement includes some long-term liabilities other than borrowing (for example finance leases). Whilst these increase the Capital Financing Requirement, and therefore the City Council's borrowing requirement, these types of schemes include a borrowing facility by the lease provider and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes.



The Liability Benchmark

- 2.6 This is a new prudential indicator for 2023/24. It compares the Council's debt profile with assessed liquidity requirements. Current long-term debt is constant due to the long maturity profile of current debt. The liquidity benchmark reflects the increasing capital financing requirement and a £10m liquidity allowance. The benchmark demonstrates that the City Council will need to borrow in future years.





3 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement

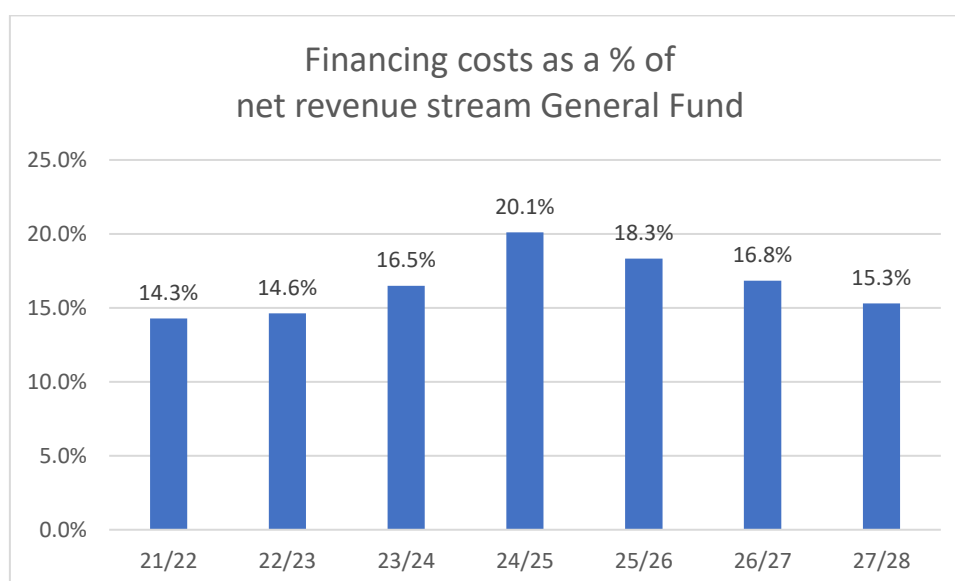
- 3.1 The City Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required.
- 3.2 Government regulations require the full Council to approve a Minimum Revenue Provision Statement in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. The City Council is recommended to approve the following Minimum Revenue Provision Statement. This is unchanged from 2022/23.
- 3.3 For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 and subsequent Supported Capital Expenditure, the policy will allow for the borrowing need to be repaid on an equal instalment basis over a period of 50 years. (Supported capital expenditure is a legacy issue and no new approvals are issued under the prudential finance system that has applied since 2003.)
- 3.4 From all prudential borrowing (including finance leases) the Minimum Revenue Provision policy will be calculated by the Asset Life Method. Minimum Revenue Provision will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with City Council accounting policies and Government regulations. This provides for a uniform reduction in the City Council's borrowing need over the asset's life. Repayments under finance leases are applied as Minimum Revenue Provision.
- 3.5 There is no requirement in the Housing Revenue Account to make minimum revenue provision but there is a requirement for a charge for depreciation to be made.
- 3.6 The Head of Finance in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Resources will keep the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy under review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in relation to City Council borrowing requirements.

Affordability Prudential Indicators

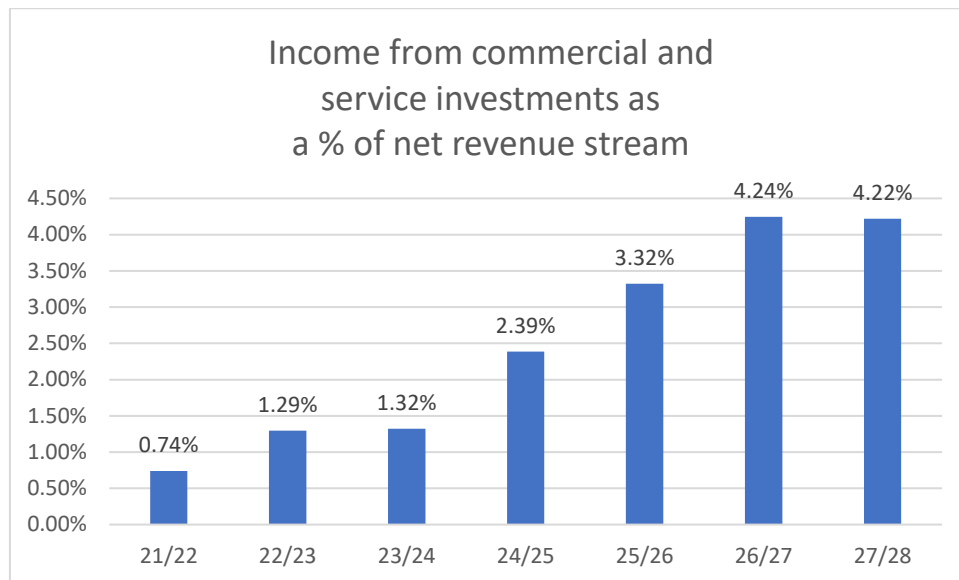
- 3.7 The previous sections of this report cover the overall capital, and control of borrowing prudential indicators, but within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability to the general fund of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the City Council's overall finances.

The ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream is an affordability indicator. This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long-term obligation costs net of investment income) against the City Council's net revenue stream. The affordability is based on current Medium Term Financial Forecast budgets and will be recalculated following the capital programme review.

3.8



- 3.9 A further prudential indicator is the net income from commercial and service investments as a % of net revenue stream. The Council has an investment of £1.5m in Colchester Amphora Housing Ltd, and £80k in Colchester Amphora Energy Limited. Based on 2023-24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast dividend forecasts the income stream as a proportion of the net revenue stream is set out in the table below.



4 Economic Outlook provided by Link Asset Services

- 4.1 The Council has appointed Link Asset Services as its treasury advisor and part of the service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. This section of the Strategy is provided by Link.

Economic Summary UK

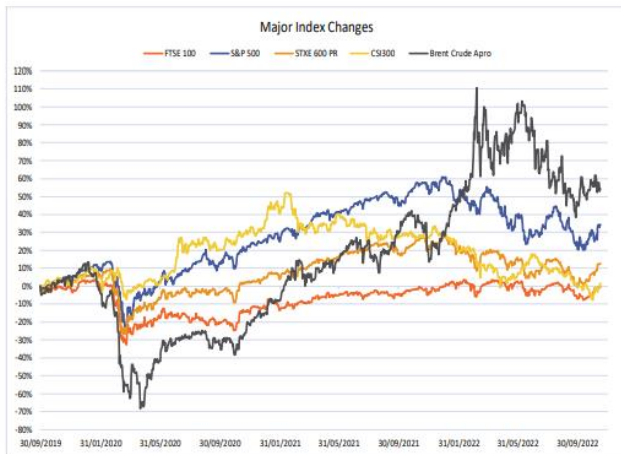
- The Bank of England voted by a majority of 6-3 to raise interest rates by 50 basis points to 3.5 percent during its December meeting, pushing the cost of borrowing to the highest level since late-2008, as policymakers try to contain inflation amid fears of a looming economic recession. Two MPC members preferred to maintain rates unchanged, and one member preferred to increase them by 75 bps, to 3.75 percent.
- In the MPC's November Monetary Policy Report projections, conditioned on the elevated path of market interest rates at that time, the UK economy was expected to be in recession for a prolonged period and CPI inflation was expected to remain very high in the near term. Inflation was expected to fall sharply from mid-2023, to some way below the 2% target in years two and three of the projection. This reflected a negative contribution from energy prices, as well as the emergence of an increasing degree of economic slack and a steadily rising unemployment rate. The risks around that declining path for inflation were judged to be to the upside.
- The British economy expanded 2.4% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2022, the lowest reading since the contraction in Q1 2021, but slightly above market expectations of 2.1%, preliminary estimates showed. On a monthly basis, the British economy expanded 0.5% in October from September of 2022, the biggest increase in nearly a year and above forecasts of 0.4%. The British economy grew 1.5% year-on-year in October of 2022, slightly above market forecasts of 1.4%, and following a 1.3% rise in September. The British economy shrank 0.3% in the three months to October of 2022, the biggest drop since early 2021, but slightly less than market forecasts of a 0.4% fall.
- The S&P Global/CIPS United Kingdom Composite PMI rose to 49.0 in December 2022, up from 48.2 in the previous month and above market expectations of 48.2, a preliminary estimate showed.
- The annual inflation rate in the UK eased to 10.7% in November of 2022 from 11.1% in October which was the highest since October 1981. Figures came below market forecasts of 10.9%, with the largest downward contribution made by transport (7.2% vs 8.9%), particularly motor fuels (17.2% vs 22.2%) and second-hand cars (-5.8% vs -2.7%). Prices also slowed for clothing and footwear (7.5% vs 8.5%), recreation and culture (5.3% vs 5.9%), and communication (2.6% vs 3.2%). Food inflation meanwhile, edged higher to 16.5% from 16.4%, hitting the strongest since 1977, led by the cost of bread and cereals.
- The number of people in work in the UK fell by 52,000 in the three months to September, more than twice the market forecast of a 25,000 drop and following a 109,000 decline in the previous month. The unemployment rate in the UK edged higher to 3.7% in the three months to October of 2022 from 3.6% in the previous period, matching market forecasts. The number of people claiming for unemployment benefits in the UK rose by 30,500 in November of 2022, the biggest increase since February last year.
- Average weekly earnings including bonuses in the UK increased by 6.1% y/y to £624 in the three months to October of 2022, above a 6.0% gain in the three months to September but below market forecasts of 6.2%. Regular pay which excludes bonus payment also went up 6.1%, the most since July 2021, exceeding forecasts of 5.9% and after an upwardly revised figure of 5.8% in the previous period.

Economic Summary US, Europe & China

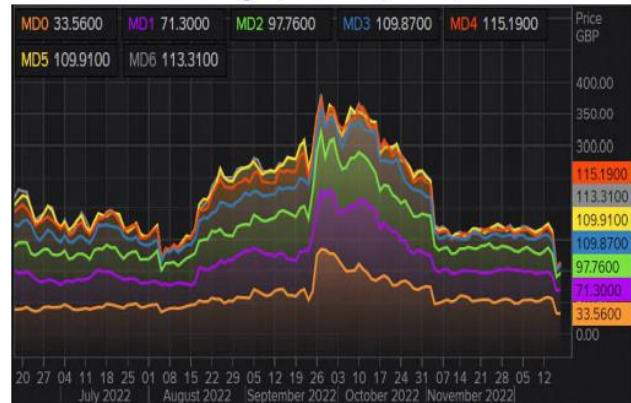
- The US economy unexpectedly added 263K jobs in November of 2022, beating market forecasts of 200K, and following an upwardly revised 284K in October. It is the lowest job gain since April last year, as the labour market is normalizing after the pandemic shock.. The unemployment rate in the US was unchanged at 3.7 percent in November 2022, matching market expectations and remaining close to September's 29-month low of 3.5 percent. The US economy contracted an annualised 0.6% q/q in Q2 2022, matching the second estimate, and confirming the economy technically in a recession, following a 1.6% drop in Q1. The S&P Global US Composite PMI fell to 44.6 in December 2022 from 46.4 in the previous month, signalling the joint-fastest decline in business activity for over two-and-a-half years, a preliminary estimate showed.
- The Federal Reserve raised the fed funds rate by 50bps to 4.25%-4.5% during its last monetary policy meeting of 2022, pushing borrowing costs to the highest level since 2007, and in line with market expectations. It was a seventh consecutive rate hike, following four straight three-quarter point increases. Policymakers reinforced that ongoing hikes in the target range will be appropriate in order to attain a stance of monetary policy that is sufficiently restrictive to return inflation to 2%. The Fed now expects interest rates to reach 5.1% next year, 4.1% in 2024, and 3.1% in 2025, a higher level than previously indicated.
- The S&P Global Eurozone Composite PMI increased to 48.8 in December of 2022 from 47.8 in November, beating market forecasts of 48, preliminary estimates showed. The **Eurozone** quarterly economic growth was revised slightly higher to 0.3% in the third quarter from preliminary estimates of 0.2%, and following a 0.8% expansion in the previous three-month period. Annual inflation rate in the Euro Area eased to 10% in November of 2022 from a record high of 10.6% in October, beating market forecasts of 10.4%, preliminary estimates showed. The inflation slowed for the first time since June last year, which could offer some early signs that price pressures have peaked. Annual core inflation rate in the Euro Area was steady at a record high level of 5% in November of 2022, in line with forecasts, preliminary estimates showed.
- The ECB raised interest rates by 50 bps during its last monetary policy meeting of 2022, marking a fourth rate increase, following two consecutive 75bps hikes. That takes the deposit facility to 2%, the refinancing rate to 2.5% and the marginal lending to 2.75%, a level not seen in fourteen years. Policymakers also said rates are expected to rise further due to a substantial upward revision to the inflation outlook.
- The **Chinese economy** expanded a seasonally adjusted 3.9% q/q in the three months to September, beating market forecasts of 3.5% and shifting from a revised 2.7% contraction in the previous quarter. This was the strongest quarterly pace of growth since the second quarter of 2020, buoyed by a series of policies and stimulus from Beijing to revive economic activity.
- The Caixin China General Composite PMI fell to 47.0 in November from 48.5 in October, pointing to the lowest print since May whilst the Chinese economy was bracing for a third wave of COVID infections. The official NBS Manufacturing PMI declined to 48.0 in November 2022 from 49.2, below market forecasts of 49.0. This was the second straight month of contraction in factory activity and the steepest pace since April, amid a new wave of COVID cases and tough restrictions in some large cities. The official NBS Non-Manufacturing PMI for China dropped to 46.7 in November 2022 from 48.7 a month earlier, due to the same COVID related issues.

Current Market Movers

Equity Markets & Oil Prices



Market Expectations on near-term UK Bank Rate Change (in basis points)



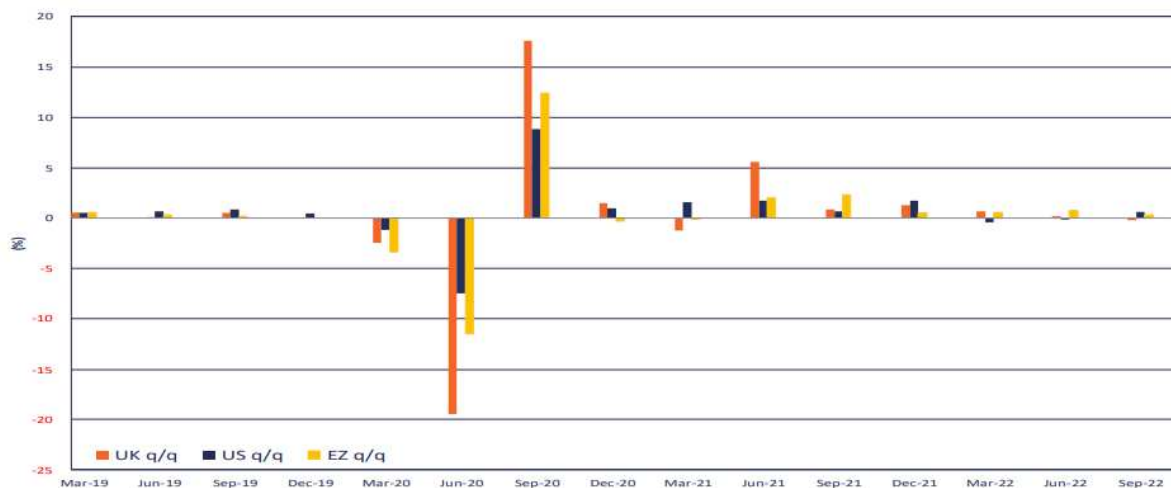
Source: Reuters Eikon

*MD0 = Change in Bank Rate expected at MPC meeting to be held February 2023, MD1 = Mar-23, MD2 = May-23, MD3 = Jun-23, MD4 = Aug-23, MD5 = Sep-23, MD6 = Nov-23

- Major stock market indices and oil prices initially traded sharply lower at the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. However, both subsequently rebounded strongly, partly reflecting the initial success of the roll-out of vaccination programmes. More recently, however, equity markets have been negatively impacted by the fall-out from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Concerns have focussed on supply side shocks in respect of oil, gas, wheat and other mainstream commodities, whilst global economic growth may also slow significantly.
- The Bank of England voted by a majority of 6-3 to raise interest rates by 50 basis points to 3.5 percent during its December meeting, pushing the cost of borrowing to the highest level since late-2008, as policymakers try to contain inflation amid fears of a looming economic recession. Two MPC members preferred to maintain rates unchanged, and one member preferred to increase them by 75 bps, to 3.75 percent. Officials noted that the labour market remained tight and inflation and wage growth were still high, which justified a forceful policy response.

GDP Growth

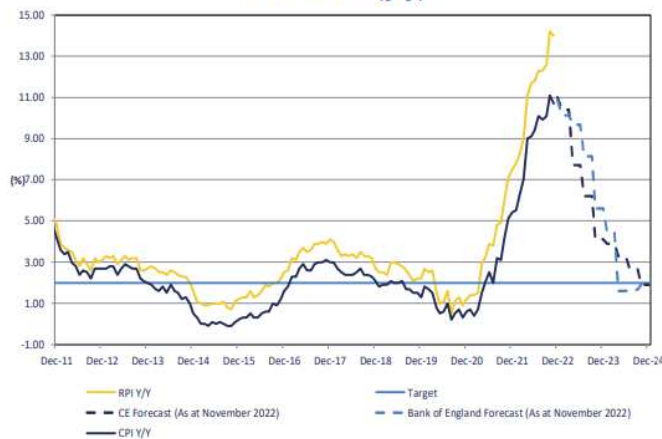
UK, US and EZ GDP Growth



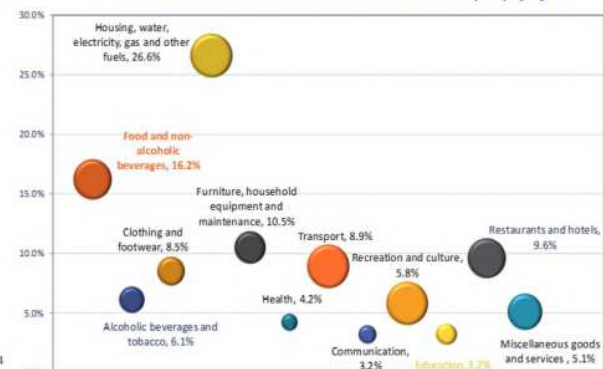
- The UK economy shrank 0.2% q/q in Q3, the first contraction in one and a half years but less than market forecasts of a 0.5% drop, preliminary estimates showed.
- The US economy grew an annualised 2.6% q/q in Q3 2022, exceeding forecasts of a 2.4% rise and rebounding from a contraction in the first half of the year.
- The Eurozone quarterly economic growth was revised slightly higher to 0.3% in the third quarter from preliminary estimates of 0.2%, and following a 0.8% expansion in the previous three-month period.

UK Inflation

CPI & RPI (y/y)



UK CPI Breakdown – October (%) y/y



- The annual inflation rate in the UK eased to 10.7% in November of 2022 from 11.1% in October which was the highest since October 1981. Figures came below market forecasts of 10.9%, with the largest downward contribution made by transport (7.2% vs 8.9%), particularly motor fuels (17.2% vs 22.2%) and second-hand cars (-5.8% vs -2.7%). Prices also slowed for clothing and footwear (7.5% vs 8.5%), recreation and culture (5.3% vs 5.9%), and communication (2.6% vs 3.2%). Prices in restaurants and hotels rose at a record 10.2% (vs 9.6%), mainly pushed by alcohol served in restaurants, cafes and pubs. Food inflation meanwhile, edged higher to 16.5% from 16.4%, hitting the strongest since 1977, led by the cost of bread and cereals.
- The Bank of England voted by a majority of 6-3 to raise interest rates by 50 basis points to 3.5 percent during its December meeting, pushing the cost of borrowing to the highest level since late-2008, as policymakers try to contain inflation amid fears of a looming economic recession. Two MPC members preferred to maintain rates unchanged, and one member preferred to increase them by 75 bps, to 3.75 percent. Officials noted that the labour market remained tight and inflation and wage growth were still high, which justified a forceful policy response.

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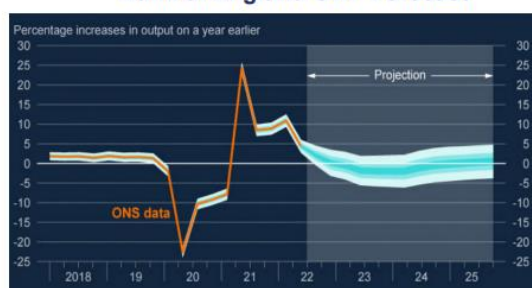
CPI Inflation v UK Wage Growth



- Average weekly earnings including bonuses in the UK increased by 6.1% year-on-year to £624 in the three months to October of 2022, above a 6.0% gain in the three months to September but below market forecasts of 6.2%. Regular pay which excludes bonus payment also went up 6.1%, the most since July 2021, exceeding forecasts of 5.9% and after an upwardly revised figure of 5.8% in the previous period.
- Earnings growth was previously boosted by the effect of lower paid workers losing their jobs during the pandemic and the impact of the furlough scheme.
- The annual inflation rate in the UK eased to 10.7% in November of 2022 from 11.1% in October which was the highest since October 1981. Figures came below market forecasts of 10.9%, with the largest downward contribution made by transport (7.2% vs 8.9%), particularly motor fuels (17.2% vs 22.2%) and second-hand cars (-5.8% vs -2.7%). Prices also slowed for clothing and footwear (7.5% vs 8.5%), recreation and culture (5.3% vs 5.9%), and communication (2.6% vs 3.2%). Food inflation meanwhile, edged higher to 16.5% from 16.4%, hitting the strongest since 1977, led by the cost of bread and cereals.

Bank of England Forecast

Bank of England GDP Forecast



Bank of England Inflation Forecast

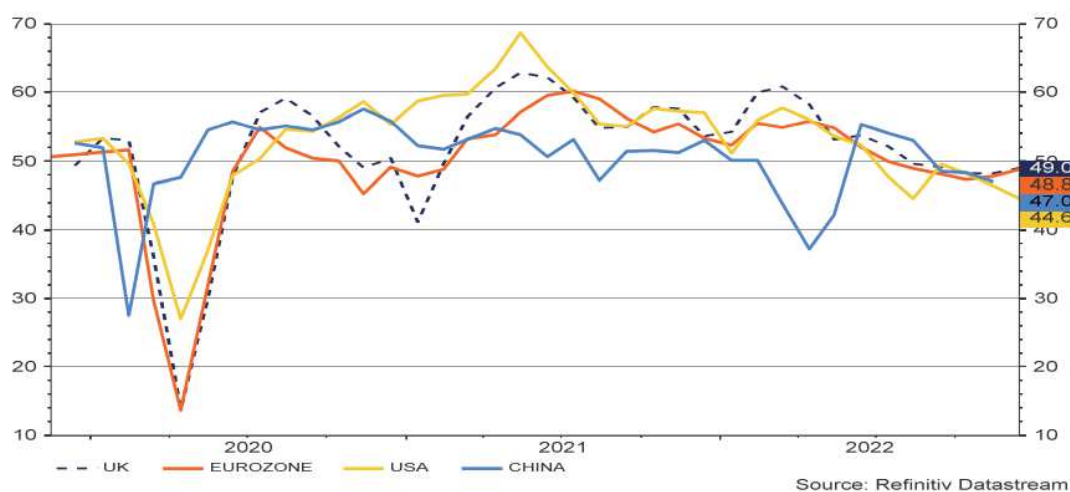


	2022 Q4	2023 Q4	2024 Q4	2025 Q4
GDP (c)	0.2 (0.1)	-1.9 (-1.2)	-0.1 (0.1)	0.7
CPI inflation (d)	10.9 (13.1)	5.2 (5.5)	1.4 (1.4)	0.0
LFS unemployment rate	3.7 (3.7)	4.9 (4.7)	5.9 (5.7)	6.4
Excess supply/Excess demand (e)	¼ (-¼)	-2½ (-2½)	-3 (-3¼)	-3
Bank Rate (f)	3.0 (2.4)	5.2 (2.9)	4.7 (2.4)	4.4

The Bank of England voted by a majority of 6-3 to raise interest rates by 50 basis points to 3.5 percent during its December meeting, pushing the cost of borrowing to the highest level since late-2008, as policymakers try to contain inflation amid fears of a looming economic recession. Two MPC members preferred to maintain rates unchanged, and one member preferred to increase them by 75 bps, to 3.75 percent.

In the MPC's November Monetary Policy Report projections, conditioned on the elevated path of market interest rates at that time, the UK economy was expected to be in recession for a prolonged period and CPI inflation was expected to remain very high in the near term. Inflation was expected to fall sharply from mid-2023, to some way below the 2% target in years two and three of the projection. This reflected a negative contribution from energy prices, as well as the emergence of an increasing degree of economic slack and a steadily rising unemployment rate. The risks around that declining path for inflation were judged to be to the upside.

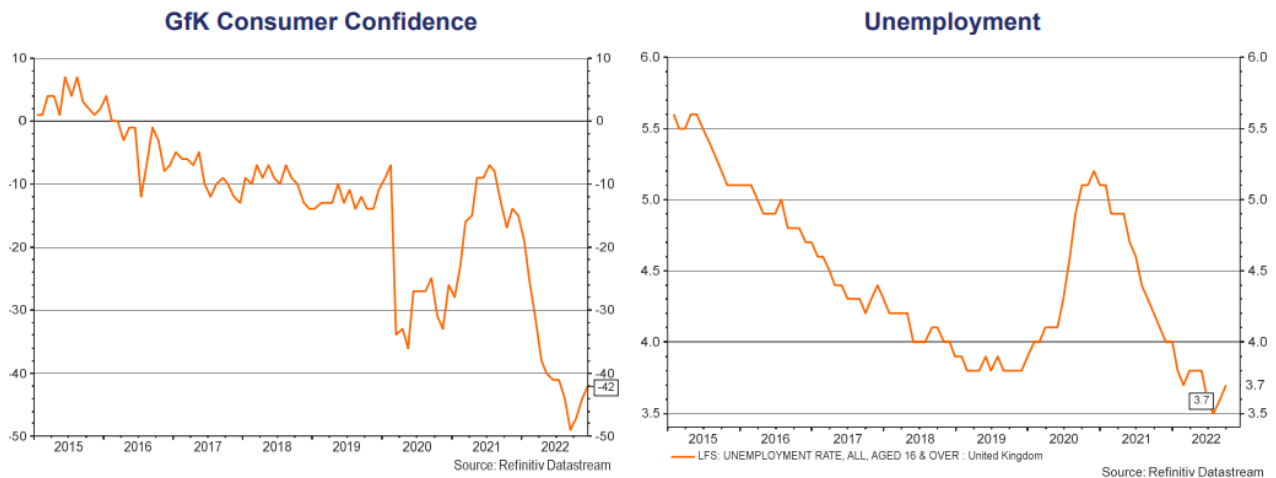
UK, EZ, USA & China Composite PMI



Source: Refinitiv Datastream

- The S&P Global/CIPS United Kingdom Composite PMI rose to 49.0 in December 2022, up from 48.2 in the previous month and above market expectations of 48.2, a preliminary estimate showed.
- The S&P Global Eurozone Composite PMI increased to 48.8 in December of 2022 from 47.8 in November, beating market forecasts of 48, preliminary estimates showed.
- The S&P Global US Composite PMI fell to 44.6 in December 2022 from 46.4 in the previous month, signaling the joint-fastest decline in business activity for over two-and-a-half years, a preliminary estimate showed.
- The Caixin China General Composite PMI fell to 47.0 in November from 48.5 in October, pointing to the lowest print since May whilst the Chinese economy was bracing for a third wave of COVID infections.

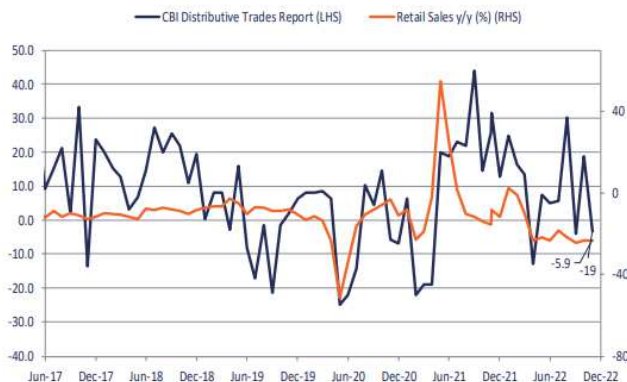
UK Employment and Consumer Confidence



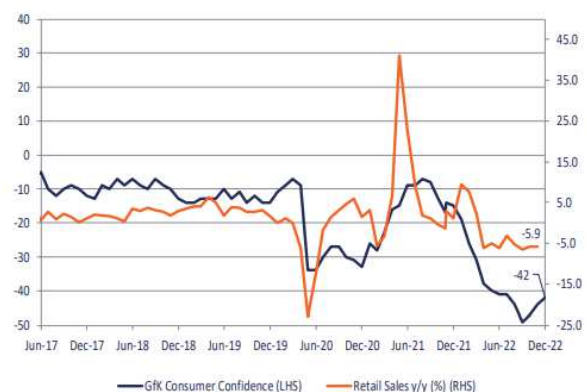
- The unemployment rate in the UK edged higher to 3.7% in the three months to October of 2022 from 3.6% in the previous period, matching market forecasts. Average weekly earnings including bonuses in the UK increased by 6.1% year-on-year to £624 in the three months to October of 2022, above a 6.0% gain in the three months to September but below market forecasts of 6.2%. Regular pay which excludes bonus payment also went up 6.1%, the most since July 2021, exceeding forecasts of 5.9% and after an upwardly revised figure of 5.8% in the previous period.
- The GfK Consumer Confidence indicator in the United Kingdom rose slightly to -42 in December 2022, improving for the third straight month but remaining near a record low of -49 reached in September as high inflation continued to erode household income and as the country braces for a prolonged recession.

UK Retail Sales

ONS Retail Sales & CBI Distributive Trades Report



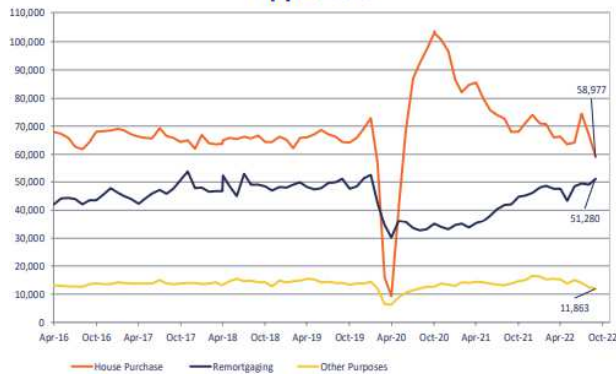
Retail Sales & Consumer Confidence



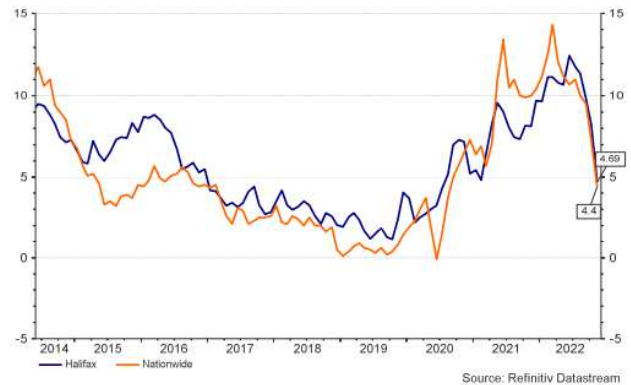
- Retail sales in the UK unexpectedly declined 0.4% month-over-month in November of 2022, after jumping an upwardly revised 0.9% in the previous month when there was a bounce back from the impact of the additional Bank Holiday in September for the State Funeral. Retail Sales in the United Kingdom decreased 5.9% year-on-year in November of 2022, slightly worse than market forecasts of a 5.6% decline.
- The CBI distributive trades survey's retail sales balance in the UK slumped 37 points to -19 in November 2022, pointing to a sharp decline in sales, according to the CBI's latest quarterly Distributive Trades Survey. In addition, firms anticipated a similar rate of sales decline next month.
- The GfK Consumer Confidence indicator in the United Kingdom rose slightly to -42 in December 2022, improving for the third straight month but remaining near a record low of -49 reached in September as high inflation continued to erode household income and as the country braces for a prolonged recession.

UK Housing

Historical Breakdown of Mortgage Approvals



UK House Price Changes y/y

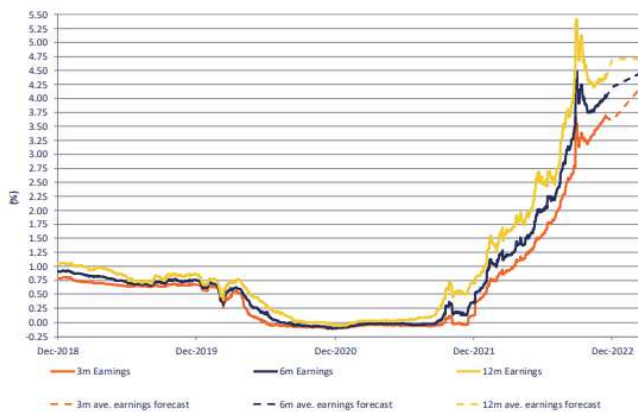


- House prices in the UK increased 4.7% y/y in November, the least since July 2020, following an 8.2% rise in October, data from Halifax showed. On a monthly basis, average house prices in the UK fell 2.3%, the biggest drop since October 2008, and marking the third straight month of declines.
- The Nationwide House Price Index in the UK increased 4.4% y/y in November 2022, less than 7.2% in October and below market expectations of 5.8%. Compared to the previous month, prices dropped 1.4%, the second straight month of decline and the biggest fall since June 2020.
- Approvals for house purchases in the United Kingdom, an indicator of future borrowing, dropped sharply to 58,977 in October 2022, down from a revised 65,967 in the previous month and below market expectations of 60,200. This was the lowest level of approvals since the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak in June 2020, amid rising borrowing costs and a looming economic recession. Meanwhile, approvals for remortgaging, which only capture remortgaging with a different lender, rose slightly to 51,280 in October from 49,491 in September. The 'effective' interest rate, the actual interest rate paid, on newly drawn mortgages increased by 25 basis points, to 3.09% in October. The rate on the outstanding stock of mortgages increased by 5 basis points, to 2.29%.

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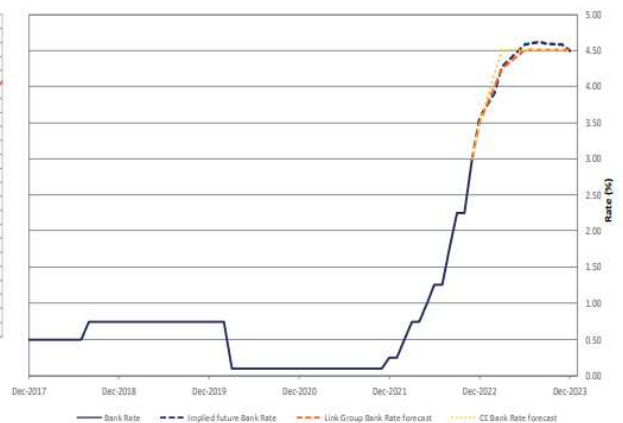
UK Bank Rate Forecast

Average Earnings Forecast



*Historic earnings data reflects LIBID rates until 03/01/22 and SONIA rates thereafter.

Bank Rate Forecast



Link Group Interest Rate View														
	Now	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Bank Rate	3.50%	3.50%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.00%	3.75%	3.50%	3.25%	3.00%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%
3 month ave. earnings	-	3.60%	4.30%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.00%	3.80%	3.30%	3.00%	3.00%	2.80%	2.50%	2.50%
6 month ave. earnings	-	4.20%	4.50%	4.60%	4.50%	4.20%	4.10%	3.90%	3.40%	3.10%	3.00%	2.90%	2.60%	2.60%
12 month ave. earnings	-	4.70%	4.70%	4.70%	4.50%	4.30%	4.20%	4.00%	3.50%	3.20%	3.10%	3.00%	2.70%	2.70%

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UK Interest Rate Forecast

Bank Rate														
	NOW	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	3.50%	3.50%	4.25%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.00%	3.75%	3.50%	3.25%	3.00%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%
Capital Economics	3.50%	3.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%	4.25%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	-	-	-	-

5yr PWLB Rate														
	NOW	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.18%	4.30%	4.30%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.20%	3.10%
Capital Economics	4.18%	4.10%	4.00%	3.80%	3.70%	3.50%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.30%	-	-	-	-

10yr PWLB Rate														
	NOW	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.26%	4.50%	4.50%	4.40%	4.30%	4.20%	4.00%	3.90%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.30%	3.20%
Capital Economics	4.26%	4.10%	4.00%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.40%	3.40%	3.30%	-	-	-	-

25yr PWLB Rate														
	NOW	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.61%	4.70%	4.70%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%	4.30%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.70%	3.60%	3.50%	3.50%
Capital Economics	4.61%	4.60%	4.40%	4.20%	4.00%	3.80%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.60%	-	-	-	-

50yr PWLB Rate														
	NOW	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
Link Group	4.27%	4.30%	4.40%	4.30%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.40%	3.30%	3.20%	3.20%
Capital Economics	4.27%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%	3.80%	3.70%	3.60%	3.60%	-	-	-	-

Please note – The current PWLB rates and forecast shown above have taken into account the 20 basis point certainty rate reduction from the new Standard Loan rate of 100bps over Gilts effective as of the 26th November 2020.

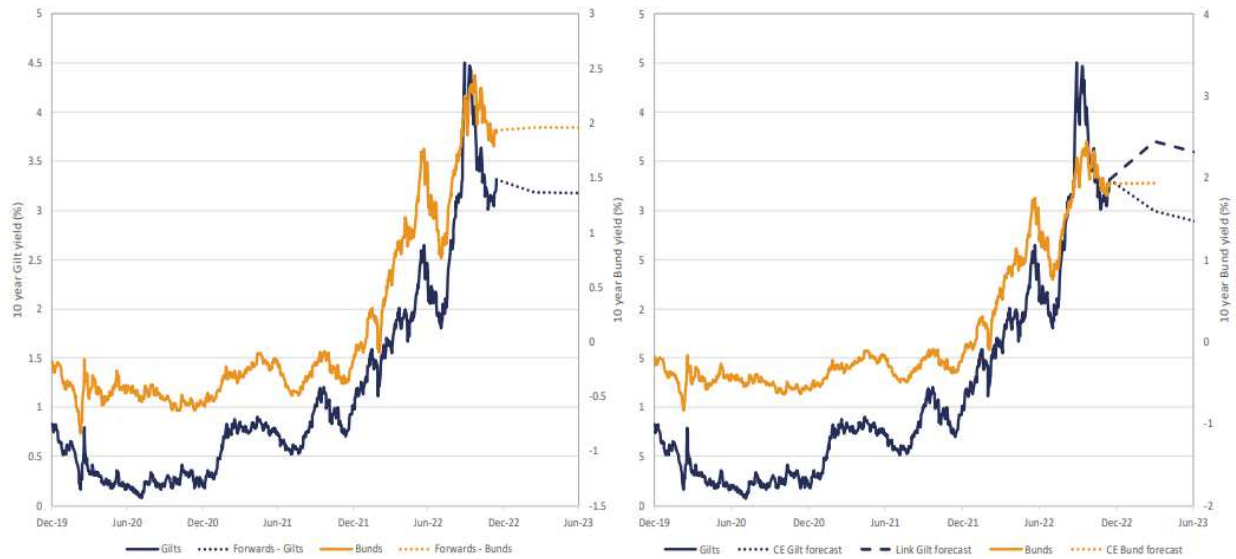
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PWLB Trends



- The Bank of England voted by a majority of 6-3 to raise interest rates by 50 basis points to 3.5 percent during its December meeting, pushing the cost of borrowing to the highest level since late-2008, as policymakers try to contain inflation amid fears of a looming economic recession. Two MPC members preferred to maintain rates unchanged, and one member preferred to increase them by 75 bps, to 3.75 percent.
- On 26th November 2020 the certainty rate was reduced by 100 bps to 80 bps over the Gilt yield.

Relative Movements in 10 year Gilts and Bunds



- Yields on 10 year Gilts and German Bunds initially fell during the first quarter of last year, as signs emerged that the COVID-19 virus would become a global pandemic.
- Movements in Gilt and Bund yield changes have become increasingly synchronised since September 2020, consistent with yields in both markets being influenced by common factors, such as the Brexit agreement, then similar positions in respect of COVID-19 driven lockdowns and, of late, inflation concerns.

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Sovereign Bond Yield (10yr Benchmark)



18

UK Banks 5 Year Senior Debt CDS Spreads



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Asset Class Returns – 2005 to November 2022

Asset Class (IA Sector unless stated)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YTD - Nov. 2022	Average Annual Return
UK All Companies	21.40%	18.05%	2.18%	-31.81%	30.71%	17.10%	-3.73%	15.81%	26.66%	0.75%	4.90%	11.19%	14.08%	-11.18%	22.50%	-8.22%	17.12%	-8.25%	8.79%
UK Equity Income	20.92%	18.32%	-0.99%	-28.29%	24.43%	15.26%	-3.00%	14.63%	25.70%	3.48%	6.41%	8.84%	11.39%	-10.50%	19.90%	-10.76%	18.42%	-1.42%	7.90%
Mixed Investments 40-55% Shares	14.92%	10.69%	4.92%	-22.20%	21.01%	13.15%	-5.66%	10.48%	15.04%	4.96%	2.60%	13.32%	10.18%	-6.11%	15.96%	5.16%	11.16%	-8.80%	7.40%
Mixed Investments 20-40% Shares	14.92%	8.24%	2.21%	-17.16%	17.36%	10.24%	-2.54%	9.06%	9.37%	5.08%	1.53%	10.80%	7.19%	-5.11%	12.21%	3.50%	7.45%	-8.93%	5.55%
Mixed Investments 0-35% Shares	10.21%	5.59%	1.88%	-9.84%	13.78%	8.29%	1.19%	7.01%	4.88%	5.23%	0.55%	9.07%	4.99%	-3.38%	8.84%	3.80%	2.93%	-9.95%	4.41%
UK Property (MSCIAREF, UK PFI Other Balanced Funds)*	18.80%	19.80%	-5.40%	-26.00%	-3.60%	12.20%	6.70%	0.30%	9.00%	16.30%	12.40%	2.80%	9.70%	7.40%	1.80%	-1.00%	18.00%	6.26%	5.84%
UK Index Linked Gilts	8.78%	2.09%	7.98%	3.33%	5.99%	8.26%	21.33%	0.23%	0.03%	18.61%	-1.29%	25.30%	2.25%	-0.54%	5.87%	12.04%	3.95%	-31.20%	7.31%
£ Corporate Bond	7.99%	0.48%	0.70%	-8.95%	16.14%	8.93%	5.58%	14.16%	1.41%	10.57%	0.26%	9.75%	5.13%	-2.16%	9.51%	7.75%	-1.90%	-14.96%	5.02%
Bloomberg Barclays £ 0-5yr Corporate Bond Index			4.84%	1.06%	9.22%	5.69%	1.83%	10.46%	3.34%	4.35%	1.49%	4.89%	2.32%	-0.06%	4.46%	3.52%	-0.50%	-5.82%	3.79%
HS Markit iBoxx GBP Liquid Invest Grade Ultrashort Index			5.48%	4.56%	2.98%	0.88%	1.29%	1.69%	0.61%	0.88%	0.67%	0.94%	0.61%	0.69%	1.20%	0.92%	0.19%	0.93%	1.57%
UK Gilts	7.84%	0.18%	4.43%	12.88%	-1.59%	7.03%	15.61%	1.94%	-4.91%	14.89%	0.00%	11.58%	1.74%	-0.06%	6.90%	9.00%	-5.28%	-20.70%	4.85%
FTSE Conventional Gilt up to 5yr Index	5.05%	2.60%	6.75%	9.92%	2.72%	3.57%	4.70%	0.98%	-0.55%	2.90%	0.97%	2.58%	-0.25%	0.34%	1.12%	1.52%	-1.63%	-4.07%	2.55%
Money Market Funds	4.72%	4.71%	5.73%	5.27%	1.12%	0.66%	0.77%	0.69%	0.49%	0.52%	0.56%	0.53%	0.35%	0.65%	0.83%	0.36%	0.08%	1.24%	1.65%
Compounded 3 month SONIA (backward-looking)																	0.05%	0.90%	0.05%
Compounded 12 month SONIA (backward-looking)																	0.06%	0.40%	0.06%
RPI*	2.20%	4.40%	4.00%	0.90%	2.40%	4.80%	4.80%	3.10%	2.70%	1.60%	1.20%	2.50%	4.10%	2.70%	2.20%	1.20%	7.50%	14.20%	3.08%

Equity Assets

Multi-Asset

Physical Assets

Fixed Income Assets

Money Market Assets

Economic data Index

Source: Lipper Investment Management, Property Fund Manager and iMoneyNet.

Figures are gross (all) and non-annualised (except for Money Market Assets). Please note the data for the 'IHS Markit iBoxx GBP Liquid Invest Grade Ultrashort Index', was internally calculated until 2013.

* UK Property figures are showing for October 2022 as figures are reported every quarter with a 2 month lag on data being released

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5 Investment and borrowing rates

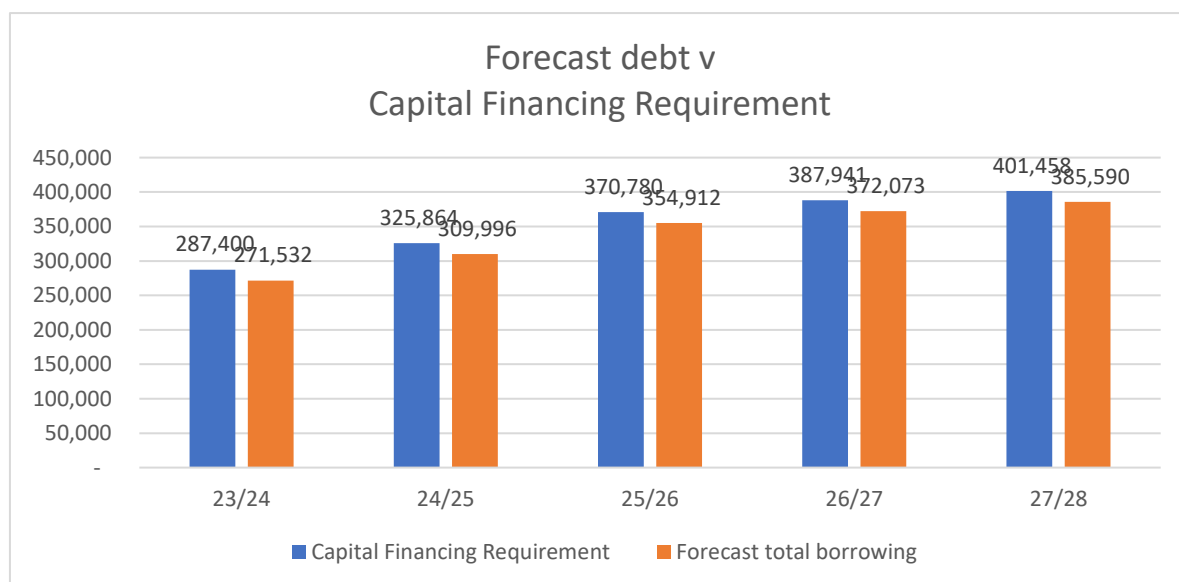
- 5.1 The policy of avoiding the interest cost of new borrowing by using available cash balances has served well over the last few years. However, this needs to be kept under review to avoid incurring high borrowing costs in the future when the Council may require new external borrowing to finance capital expenditure or for the refinancing of maturing debt.
- 5.2 There will remain a cost of carry to any new long-term borrowing that causes a temporary increase in cash balances as this position will, most likely, incur a revenue cost - the difference between borrowing costs and investment returns.

Capital Financing Requirement

- 5.3 The Council's capital programme is currently under review. The Capital Strategy for 2023-24 will be reported in Q1 of 2023-24.. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity and the Council's capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt position and the annual investment strategy.

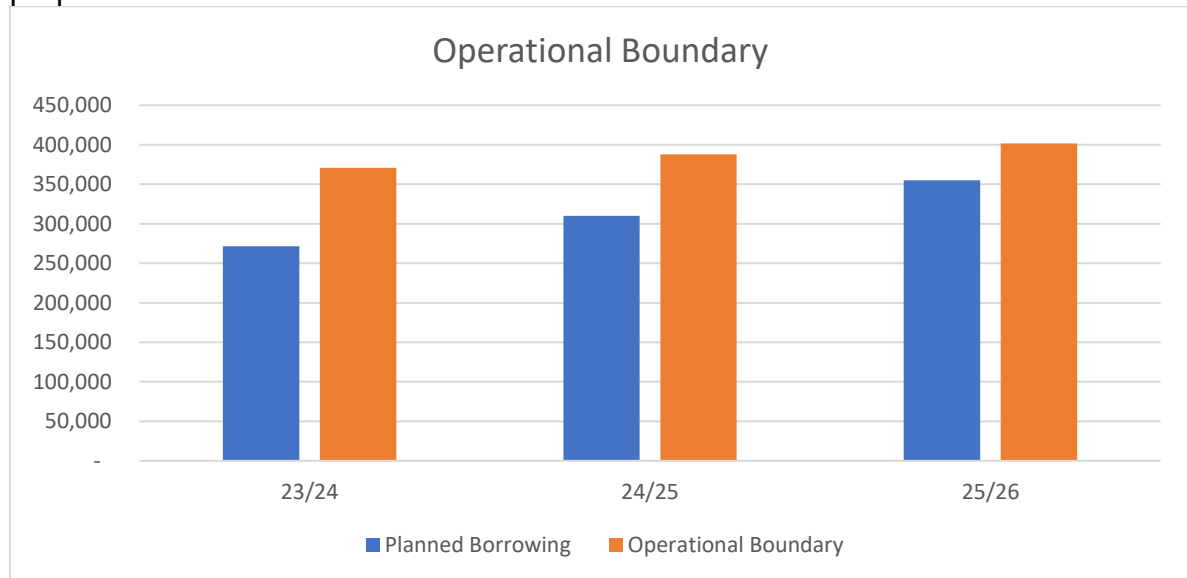
Current portfolio position

- 5.4 The Council's treasury portfolio position with forward projections is summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt against the underlying capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), highlighting any over or under borrowing.



- 5.5 Within the prudential indicators there are key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt does not, except in the short-term, exceed the

total of the Capital Financing Requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional Capital Financing Requirement for 2023/24 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes.

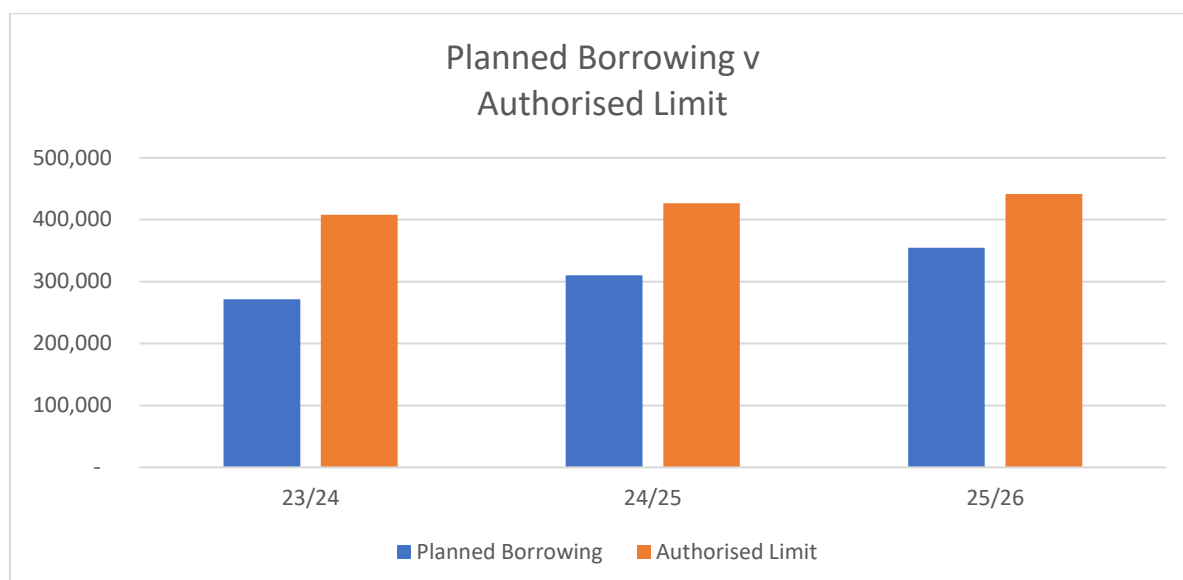


- 5.6 The Head of Finance and S151 Officer confirms that the Council complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future allowing for current commitments and the reset capital programme.

Treasury Indicators: Limits to Borrowing Activity

- 5.7 The Operational Boundary is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. Planned external debt is well within the operational boundary limit.

The **Authorised Limit** for external debt represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This is a statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003. This limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short-term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. The chart shows that planned external debt is well within the authorised limit sought. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.



Borrowing Strategy

- 5.8 The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure.
- 5.9 The Head of Finance and S151 Officer will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:
- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in rates, (e.g., due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long-term borrowing will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short-term borrowing will be considered.
 - if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short-term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from an acceleration in the start date and in the rate of increase in central rates in the USA and UK, an increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are lower than they are projected to be in the next few years.
- 5.10 Any major long term borrowing activity will be reported to the Governance and Audit Committee at the next available opportunity.

Treasury Management Limits on Activity

- 5.11 There are three debt-related treasury activity limits. The purpose of these is to restrain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates. However, if these are set to be too restrictive, they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs / improve performance. The indicators are:
- Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments.
 - Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure. This is similar to the previous indicator and covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates.

- 5.12 Variable Interest Rate Exposure. This limit is an upper bound on the Council's actual borrowing carried in variable rate loans. Variable rate loans are offered by the Public Works Loans Board. The minimum duration is one year, the maximum is 10 years. Authorities may choose 1, 3 or 6 monthly interest repayments. Premature redemptions of variable rate loans are discounted at the equivalent newly offered rate. Variable rate loans are also available from other local authorities or money markets.
- 5.13 High proportions of variable rate loans put interest costs at risk. Conversely borrowing in variable rates may enable the authority to benefit from reductions in variable rates generally. The recommended limits would allow the Council to fulfil borrowing requirements in variable rates pending a general income rate reduction.

Variable interest rate exposure		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0%	50%
12 months to 2 years	0%	25%
2 years to 5 years	0%	10%
5 years to 10 years	0%	5%

- 5.14 Fixed Interest Rate Exposure. Conversely a high proportion of fixed rate borrowing protects the authority from interest rate increases, but mean it is unable to benefit from interest rate reductions. Virtually all the City Council's current borrowing is in fixed rates.

Fixed interest rate exposure		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	50%	100%
12 months to 2 years	75%	100%
2 years to 5 years	90%	100%
5 years to 10 years	95%	100%
10 years to 20 years	100%	100%
20 years to 30 years	100%	100%
30 years to 40 years	100%	100%
40 years to 50 years	100%	100%

- 5.15 Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large, fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

Maturity structure of borrowing 2023/24		
	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0%	15%
12 months to 2 years	0%	15%
2 years to 5 years	0%	15%
5 years to 10 years	0%	15%
10 years to 20 years	0%	40%
20 years to 30 years	0%	40%
30 years to 40 years	0%	40%
40 years to 50 years	0%	10%

Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 5.16 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds. Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

Debt Rescheduling

- 5.17 Where short-term borrowing rates become considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long-term debt to short-term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of debt repayment (premiums incurred). The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:
- the generation of cash savings or discounted cash flow savings.
 - helping to fulfil the treasury strategy.
 - enhance the balance of the portfolio by amending the maturity profile or the balance of volatility).
- 5.18 Consideration will also be given to identify if there is any residual potential for making savings by running down investment balances to repay debt prematurely as short-term rates on investments are likely to be lower than rates paid on current debt.
- 5.19 Any rescheduling will be reported to the Scrutiny Panel or the Governance and Audit Committee at the earliest meeting following its action.

Housing Revenue Account borrowing

- 5.20 As part of the Housing Revenue Account reform arrangements in April 2012, the Council decided to follow the 'two pool' approach to allocating existing debt, considering those loans that were originally raised for a specific purpose. This assumed that the Housing Revenue Account would be fully borrowed, however the Housing Revenue Account is now in a position where it may need to borrow to fund the Housing Investment Programme.
- 5.21 As the Council is maintaining an under-borrowed position, the HRA will be recharged for the cost of any new borrowing requirement based on the average balance of unfinanced Housing Revenue Account borrowing during the year, using the Public Works Loan Board variable rate as at 31 March of the previous year. In an environment of low investment returns and relatively stable borrowing rates, this provides a recharge that is beneficial to both the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund and can be reasonably forecast from early in the financial year. This approach will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and projected investment returns.

6 Annual Investment Strategy

Investment Policy

- 6.1 The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Government and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy have extended the meaning of 'investments' to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with financial investments, (as managed by the treasury management team). The Council's capital programme is currently under review. The Capital Strategy for 2023-24 will be reported in Q1 of 2023-24.
- 6.2 In accordance with the above guidance, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council applies minimum acceptable credit criteria in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Short-term and Long-term ratings.
- 6.3 Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution, and it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as Credit Default Swaps and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- 6.4 Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.
- 6.5 Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in the Appendix, which includes Counterparty, time and monetary limits. These will cover both 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments.
- 6.6 Such investments are treated as expenditure for treasury management and prudential borrowing purposes even though they do not create physical assets in the Council's accounts. Appropriate budgets in respect of these activities are agreed as part of the Council's budget setting and ongoing monitoring processes and considered as part of the Investment Strategy.
- 6.7 Specified Investments are sterling denominated investments of not more than one-year maturity, meeting the minimum 'high' criteria where applicable. These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. Non-Specified Investments are those that do not meet the specified investment criteria. A limit of £20m will be applied to the use of Non-Specified Investments (this will partially be driven by the long-term investment limits).

Creditworthiness policy

- 6.8 This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's, and Standard & Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:
- "watches" and "outlooks" from credit rating agencies.

- Credit Default Swap spreads that may give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings.
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

6.9 This modelling approach combines credit ratings, and any assigned Watches and Outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads. The product of this is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will, therefore, use counterparties within the following durational bands

- Yellow 5 years *
- Dark pink 5 years for Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.25
- Light pink 5 years for Ultra-Short Dated Bond Funds with a credit score of 1.5
- Purple 2 years
- Blue 1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
- Orange 1 year
- Red 6 months
- Green 100 days
- No colour not to be used

Y	Pi1	Pi2	P	B	O	R	G	N/C
1	1.25	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7
Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 2yrs	Up to 1yr	Up to 1yr	Up to 6mths	Up to 100days	No Colour

6.10 The creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings. Furthermore, by using a risk weighted scoring system, it does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.

6.11 Typically, the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council uses will be a Short-term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of F1, and a Long-term rating of A-. There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances, consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use.

6.12 All credit ratings will be monitored monthly. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the creditworthiness service. Any rating changes, rating watches (notification of a likely change), rating outlooks (notification of a possible longer-term change) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swap spreads against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a daily basis via its Passport website, provided exclusively to it by Link Asset Services. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

6.13 Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition, the Council will also use market data and market information, and information on any external support for banks to help support its decision-making process.

Country limits

- 6.14 The Council will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA-, based on the lowest available rating. However, this policy excludes UK counterparties. The list of countries that qualify using this credit criteria as at the date of this report are shown in the Appendix. This list will be amended by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.
- 6.15 In addition:
- no more than £15m will be placed with any non-UK country at any time.
 - the limits will apply to a group of companies.
 - sector limits will be monitored regularly for appropriateness.

Investment strategy

- 6.16 The Council will manage all its investments in-house. Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short to medium term interest rates.

Investment treasury indicator and limit

- 6.17 The limit for the total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days is set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end. The Council is asked to approve a limit of £10m for 2021/22 and subsequent years.

£000	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Max. principal sums invested > 365 days	£10,000	10,000	10,000

End of year investment report

- 6.18 At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity to the Governance & Audit Committee as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

Specified Investments – These investments are sterling investments of not more than one year maturity, or those which could be for a longer period but where the Council has the right to be repaid within 12 months if it wishes. These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small.

Organisation	Min. Credit Criteria	Money Limit	Maturity Limit
Banks and Building Societies (including term deposits, CDs or corporate bonds)	Yellow	£10m	1 years
	Purple	£10m	1 years
	Orange	£10m	1 year
	Blue	£10m	1 year
	Red	£7.5m	6 months
	Green	£5m	100 days
	No colour	Not to be used	
UK Government Gilts	UK sovereign rating	£10m	1 year
UK Government Treasury Bills	UK sovereign rating	£10m	1 year
UK Local & Police Authorities	N/A	Unlimited	1 years
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	AAA	Unlimited	6 months
Money Market Funds	AAA	£10m	Liquid
Enhanced Money Market Funds	Dark Pink / Light Pink / AAA	£10m	Liquid
Bonds issued by Multilateral Development Banks	AAA	£3m	6 months

Non-Specified Investments – These are investments that do not meet the specified investment criteria. A limit of the lesser of £20m or 50% of the portfolio will be held in aggregate in non-specified investments.

Organisation	Min. Credit Criteria	Money Limit	Maturity Limit
UK Local & Police Authorities	N/A	£10m	5 years
Banks and Building Societies (including term deposits, CDs or corporate bonds)	Yellow / Purple	£10m	5 years
UK Government Gilts	UK sovereign rating	£10m	5 years
UK Government Treasury Bills	UK sovereign rating	£10m	5 years
Property fund	AAA	£5m	5 years

Notes:

- Non U.K. country limit of £15m
- Limit in all Building Societies of £10m

The use of property funds can be deemed capital expenditure, and as such will be an application of capital resources. The Council will seek guidance on the status of any fund it may consider using. Appropriate due diligence will also be undertaken before investment of this type is undertaken.

The criteria in this appendix are intended to be the operational criteria in normal times. At times of heightened volatility, risk and concern in financial markets, this strategy may be amended by temporary operational criteria further limiting investments to counterparties of a higher creditworthiness and / or restricted time limits.

This list is based on those countries that have sovereign ratings of AA- or higher and also have banks operating in sterling markets, which have credit ratings of green or above in the Link Asset Services credit worthiness service.

AAA	Australia
	Denmark
	Germany
	Netherlands
	Norway
	Singapore
	Sweden
	Switzerland
AA+	Finland
	Canada
	U.S.A.
AA	Abu Dhabi (UAE)
	France
AA-	Belgium
	Qatar
	UK

Appendix D – Technical reconciliations of budget requirement 2023/24

Table D1 – Technical reconciliation of budget requirement		
	Element	£'000
1	Revenue expenditure requirement for 2023/24	25,285
2	Collection fund deficit (business rates and Council Tax)	5,661
3	New Homes Bonus	(576)
4	Use of balances / reserves for pensions payment	(557)
5	Use of Business Rates Reserve	(5,661)
6	Use of Business Rates Pooling gain	(200)
7	Use of balances	(1,900)
8	Budget Requirement	22,052
9	Funded by:	
10	Government Grant (Services and Funding Guarantee)	(1,860)
11	Business Rates Baseline Funding	(4,693)
12	Business Rates Improvement	(1,563)
13	Council Taxpayers requirement (before Parish element)	(13,936)
14	Total Funding	(22,052)

Table D2 – Technical reconciliation of Band D Council Tax		
1	Council Taxpayers requirement (before Parish element)	13,936
2	Council Tax Base – Band D Properties	65,863
3	Council Tax at Band D	211.59

Table D3 – Technical reconciliation of 2023/24 Base Budget		
1	Base Budget	21,875
2	One-off items	(1,179)
3	Cost Pressures	8,628
4	Growth Items	1,400
5	Change in use of New Homes Bonus for one off investment	(778)
6	Savings	(4,661)
7	Forecast Base Budget	25,285

Table D4 – Technical reconciliation of 2023/24 savings		
1	Income from budgets overperforming in recent financial years	(550)
2	Recruitment Freeze	(500)
3	Neighbourhoods Discretionary Services reduction	(300)
4	Technical items - GF/HRA recharges	(259)
5	Recycling Kit new policy	(230)
6	CCHL Mgt fee reduction to reflect additional project mgt fees	(200)
7	Organisational Design	(200)
8	Garden Waste Charging	(200)
9	1.25% NI Reduction (Employers Rate)	(198)
10	Turnstone income	(100)
11	23/24 Fees & Charges growth reflecting higher inflation	(100)
12	Commercial review of existing income generating services	(100)
13	Overtime reduction	(100)
14	Contact & Support – service reduction	(100)
15	Consolidation of GF Housing Services	(100)
16	Reduce Energy Consumption	(100)
17	Castle Park Cricket Club Grounds Maintenance	(82)
18	Eudo Road Sports Ground rental	(80)
19	CBH SLA income from tri-annual review	(80)
20	Various Asset Management Initiatives (easements, lease regears)	(75)
21	Museums - review of service model & utilise external funding	(60)
22	Northern Gateway Sports Park increased income assumptions	(56)
23	Rowan House Refurbishment - re-profiling/cost update	(56)
24	Local Fast Fibre Network reduced income assumptions	(50)
25	Removal of Amphora Sport & Leisure Strategic Management Fee	(50)
26	Review of Tree Maintenance SLA with ECC	(50)
27	22/23 Fees & Charges mid-year review feeding into 23/24 base budget	(50)
28	Review all Fixed-Term contracts	(50)
29	Allow staff to reduce hours	(50)
30	AVC scheme & reduction in ER's NI contributions	(50)
31	Sports & Playing Fields - review GM standards & enable/empower others	(50)
32	Environmental Health – service reduction	(50)
33	Revs & Bens New Burdens Grant	(50)
34	Arts Council funding increase (21/22 budget setting)	(40)
35	Community Initiatives - utilise further external funding	(35)
36	Reduction in Community Enabling Team	(30)
37	Property Group 1 easements	(30)
38	Property Group 3 Lettings (Rent)	(30)
39	Countryside sites - commercial opportunities/model of management	(25)
40	Property Group 5 (Service Charge & NNDR)	(23)
41	Castle Park café (21/22 budget setting)	(20)
42	Payment processing system	(20)
43	Amphora dividend (Memoirs)	(15)
44	Heckworth House business rates saving (21/22 budget setting)	(15)

45	Council tax penalties	(12)
46	Car park markets and events (21/22 budget setting)	(10)
47	Property Group 0 lease regear	(10)
48	Property Group 4 (Service Charge & NNDR)	(10)
49	Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	(10)
50	Total Savings	(4,661)

Table D5 – Technical reconciliation of 2023-24 cost pressures and growth items		
1	General Inflation (pay, contractual etc)	3,000
2	Utilities/Energy Inflation	1,533
3	Support for transformation & future budget savings	1,400
4	Waste Service - various cost pressures	864
5	Pensions (3 year up-front deficit payment)	836
6	Net Impact of Minimum Revenue Provision and Interest	731
7	2022 Actuarial Review Impact	500
8	Fuel	270
9	Sport and Leisure - various cost pressures	206
10	Council Tax Sharing Agreement	200
11	Elections	157
12	Audit Fees	150
13	Banking Charges	65
14	Insurance	51
15	Voluntary Sector Grants	35
16	Asset Valuations	16
17	Payroll System costs	14
18	Total cost pressures and growth items	10,028

Appendix E - Summary Budget 2023/24

	Adjusted Base Budget	One-Off Items	Cost Pressures	Growth Items	Technical Items	Total Savings	Detailed 22/23 Budgets
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate & Democratic Core	(448)		415				(33)
Executive Management Team	794		47			(7)	834
Corporate & Improvement	6,986		365			(167)	7,184
Community	1,493		434			(445)	1,482
Customer	1,931		436			(178)	2,189
Environmental (excl NEPP)	5,878	(363)	2,236			(1,192)	6,559
Place & Client	3,351	(686)	2,331	3		(1,301)	3,698
Total General Fund Services	19,985	(1,049)	6,264	3	0	(3,290)	21,913
Technical Items							
<i>Corporate Items / sums to be allocated to services</i>							
Procurement Savings	(108)						(108)
Investment Allowance funded by New Homes Bonus	1,323			(781)			542
Previously agreed funding for Strategic Priorities	(94)						(94)
Digital Roadmap	100						100
Fees & Charges Review & Growth	0					(250)	(250)
Senior Management Restructure	0					(200)	(200)
Inflation yet to be allocated	96	(130)	797				763
Improved Establishment Control	(10)						(10)
Rowan House	65					(65)	0
General Fund Housing Services Review	0					(100)	(100)

Energy consumption reduction	0					(136)	(136)
Overtime reduction	0					(100)	(100)
Fixed Term contracts review	0					(50)	(50)
Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme	0					(50)	(50)
Reduced staffing hours	0					(50)	(50)
Revs & Bens New Burdens Grant	0					(50)	(50)
Council tax Penalties	0					(12)	(12)
Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	0					(10)	(10)
Payment processing system	0					(20)	(20)
Support for transformation & future budget savings	0			1,400			1,400
<i>Non-Service Budgets</i>							
CLIA (net interest)	1,025		101				1,126
Repairs & Renewals Contribution	300						300
Minimum Revenue Provision	2,123		630				2,753
Pensions	366		836				1,202
Contribution to Bad Debts Provision	20						20
GF/HRA/NEPP Adjustment	(3,316)					(278)	(3,594)
Sub-Total	1,890	(130)	2,364	619	0	(1,371)	3,372
Total incl Below the line	21,875	(1,179)	8,628	622	0	(4,661)	25,285
<i>Funded by:-</i>							
Use of balances	(125)	125			0		0
Contribution to balances	935	(935)			279		279
Use of other Earmarked Reserves	0				(836)		(836)
Use of Reserves - Covid 19	(522)	522			(1,900)		(1,900)
Use of NNDR reserve	(4,908)	4,908			(5,661)		(5,661)
Govt - CSP Funding Guarantee Grant	0	0			(1,692)		(1,692)

Govt - Lower Tier Grant	(198)	198			0		0
Govt - Services Grant	(298)	298			(168)		(168)
Business Rates Baseline	(4,343)				(350)		(4,693)
NNDR Growth above Baseline	(1,870)				307		(1,563)
Business Rates Pooling	(200)						(200)
Council Tax	(13,300)				(636)		(13,936)
Collection fund Transfer	4,908	(4,908)			5,661		5,661
New Homes Bonus	(1,954)				1,378		(576)
Total	(21,875)	208	0	0	(3,618)	0	(25,285)

Appendix F - 2023/24 General Fund Budgets

		Direct Budgets			Non-Direct Budgets	
	Area	Spend	Income	Net	Net	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Corporate & Democratic Core	537	(570)	(33)	2,908	2,875
	Total	537	(570)	(33)	2,908	2,875
	Executive Management Team					
	EMT	834	-	834	(834)	-
	Total	834	-	834	(834)	-
	Community					
	Assistant Director	174	-	174	(174)	-
	Licencing, Food & Safety	545	(583)	(38)	314	276
	Community Safety	100	-	100	3	103
	Environmental Health Services	415	(66)	349	124	473
	Building Control	464	(564)	(100)	266	166
	Community Initiatives	351	(1)	350	184	534
	Private Sector Housing	552	(174)	378	103	481
	Bereavement Services	1,159	(2,024)	(865)	273	(592)
	Cultural Services	631	(96)	535	1,054	1,589
	Colchester Museums	33	(594)	(561)	39	(522)
	Subtotal	4,424	(4,102)	322	2,186	2,508
	Colchester & Ipswich Museums	2,420	(1,260)	1,160	799	1,959
	Total	6,844	(5,362)	1,482	2,985	4,467
	Customer					
	Assistant Director	169	-	169	(169)	-
	Accounts & Debt	797	(165)	632	(632)	-
	Local Taxation & NNDR	615	(750)	(135)	627	492
	Benefits & Hub	928	(188)	740	(740)	-
	Contact & Support Centre	1,112	(30)	1,082	(1,082)	-
	Electoral Services	562	(3)	559	76	635
	Customer Digital & Systems	174	-	174	(174)	-
	Land Charges	147	(299)	(152)	152	-
	Subtotal	4,504	(1,435)	3,069	(1,942)	1,127
	Benefits - Payments & Subsidy	32,491	(33,371)	(880)	656	(224)
	Total	36,995	(34,806)	2,189	(1,286)	903
	Environment					
	Assistant Director	168	-	168	(168)	-
	Neighbourhood Services	13,878	(4,877)	9,001	3,072	12,073
	Car Parking	1,089	(3,699)	(2,610)	888	(1,722)
	Subtotal	15,135	(8,576)	6,559	3,792	10,351

		Direct Budgets				Non-Direct Budgets	
	Parking Partnership (NEPP)	4,301	(4,340)	(39)		81	42
	Total	19,436	(12,916)	6,520		3,873	10,393
	Place & Client						
	Assistant Director	163	-	163		(163)	-
	Place Strategy	658	-	658		115	773
	Housing	2,887	(1,341)	1,546		(190)	1,356
	Planning	1,297	(1,415)	(118)		701	583
	Sustainability & Climate Change	274	(16)	258		14	272
	Subtotal	5,279	(2,772)	2,507		477	2,984
	<i>Company Related:-</i>						
	Client - Commercial Company	1,846	(302)	1,544		(1,846)	(302)
	Corporate Asset Management	2,221	(308)	1,913		(1,835)	78
	Commercial & Investment	1,252	(4,343)	(3,091)		2,517	(574)
	Sport & Leisure	6,857	(6,032)	825		2,075	2,900
	Total	17,455	(13,757)	3,698		1,388	5,086
	Corporate & Improvement						
	Assistant Director	153	(129)	24		(153)	(129)
	Finance	1,164	(211)	953		(953)	-
	ICT	2,864	(464)	2,400		(2,400)	-
	People and Performance	854	(164)	690		(726)	(36)
	Governance	3,126	(442)	2,684		(2,624)	60
	Communications	663	(230)	433		(433)	-
	Total	8,824	(1,640)	7,184		(7,289)	(105)
	Total (excl. NEPP)	86,624	(64,711)	21,913		1,664	23,577

* Non-direct budgets reflect recharges between service areas and technical accounting charges. These are shown to present the full cost of services

Appendix G - Reserves, Provisions and Balances

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Actual	Forecast	Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Balance	2,160	2,160	2,160
Future budget reserve	6,862	2,117	1,217
Redundancy Provision	1,000	750	500
Risk Allocation - Available for revenue purposes	515	515	515
NEPP/CIMS Ring-Fenced Reserves etc	252	252	252
Pension Fund Deficit	2,279	2,279	1,722
Repairs & Renewals Fund	3,182	3,182	2,658
Insurance Reserve	739	739	739
Capital Expenditure Reserve	516	516	516
Gosbecks Reserve	114	114	114
Revenue Grants Unapplied	4,869	4,869	4,869
Decriminalisation Parking Reserve	336	336	336
Business Rates Reserve	9,918	10,918	6,918
Revolving Investment Fund Reserve	2,056	2,056	2,056
Other Reserves	305	305	305
Total General Fund Reserves	35,103	31,108	24,877
Housing Revenue Account Balance	4,555	4,555	4,555
Housing Revenue Account Retained Right To Buy Receipts – Replacement & Debt	7,712	6,637	5,338
Total Housing Revenue Account Reserves	12,267	11,192	9,893
Total Reserves	47,370	42,300	34,770

Appendix H – Allocation of New Homes Bonus

	Allocation of New Homes Bonus	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
1	New Homes Bonus	576	550	550	550	550
2	Allocated to:-					
3	Feasibility costs	250	250	250	250	250
4	Affordable housing allocation	34	50	50	50	50
5	Support to Tendring Colchester Borders & Local Plan	250	250	250	250	250
6	Support for one-off schemes (see below)	42	0	0	0	0
7	Total allocation	576	550	550	550	550
	Use of NHB allocation for one-off schemes					
8	Support for one-off schemes	42	0	0	0	0

Appendix J

Transformation Budget Savings 2023/24 onwards. Non-transformational see Appendix D4.

Strategy Theme	Council wide staffing		
Introduction	£25.8m of the Council's spend is on staffing. Savings can be made across the whole organisation through initiatives to manage the staffing budgets. The following workstreams will reduce staffing expenditure.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Recruitment freezes for external appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff turnover rate 15% (ex H&S and income generation). Freeze the recruitment of external appointments except for roles required for health and safety, income generation, are fully externally funded or in specialist technical areas. We will encourage and help staff on permanent contracts to be flexibly employed and re-trained where required to move around and within the organisation where needed. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reprioritise activities or reduce quality-of-service delivery 	500	0
Review all fixed term contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have numerous fixed term contracts that will be reviewed on an individual and service basis to reduce the number that need to be extended. Use external funding to pay for permanently employed staff (risk if external funding ceases). Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As fixed term contracts end areas of work will need to be reduced or reprioritised. Loss of external funding Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	50	0
Reduce overtime budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review all overtime budgets and spend Reduce budgets if work could be reduced or reprioritised Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	100	0
Reduction of staffing hours worked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow staff to reduce paid hours in a fair and flexible way Need commitment for a full year's reduction in hours Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in capacity for service delivery 	50	0
Reduce employers NI contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option for staff to make Additional Voluntary Contributions to their pension through a new salary sacrifice scheme This in turn will reduce employers NI contribution and results in a saving. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take up uncertain 	50	0
Sub total:		750	0

Strategy Theme	Collaboration across service and system partners		
Introduction	Empower, support, and enable system partners and communities to use their agility, resources, and skills to find solutions themselves and build self-reliance. We recognise that with appropriate resources they may be able to deliver more efficiently at a local level. This will allow us to minimise or co-produce services within a citizen led model resulting in system partners and communities fostering a sense of independence, pride, and possibilities.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Review maintenance SLA with ECC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the ECC service level agreement to maintain verges and trees so that it is no longer subsidised. (E.g. the SLA funding provided is for two cuts in urban areas per year. We currently undertake 12-14 cuts per year). Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiries about standards by public and members (Visibility splays will be cut frequently to maintain safety.) Requires ECC support. 	50	50
Reduce Community Enabling Team resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Enabling Team external funding raised Through our Community Can approach (ABCD), we work with partners to empower and enable residents Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External funding not available medium to longer term. Reduction in capacity whilst maintaining service delivery 	65	0
Reduce spend on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise cost recovery from DFG grant A Home Improvement Agency (as other councils). Resource still needed to monitor contract performance Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost recovery will be investigated in business case Loss of experienced staff (hard to recruit area) 	0	68
Reduce CCC spend on countryside sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use commercial opportunities and mode of management / ownership; consideration of increasing commerciality of Mersea Beach Huts and Mersea Pontoon. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach Hut agreement changes require 12-month notice. 	25	25
Reduce CCC spend on sports and playing fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review standards of grounds maintenance. Enable and empower Parish Councils/Sports Clubs to take on management or ownership with an appropriate payment. Risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criticism of standards Groups' 23/24 budgets already set. Mitigated by the Council providing some start-up funding. 	50	50
Sub total:		190	193

Strategy Theme	Funding Strategy and Reserves		
Introduction	We pay a core management fee to our Amphora subsidiaries, as well as project management fees. We will review these arrangements to ensure there is no duplication and that value for money is maintained.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Reduce project management fee to Amphora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the core management fee to Amphora to reflect additional project management fees paid to subsidiaries Risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income to Amphora 	200	0
Sub total:		200	0

Budget Strategy Theme	Fees and Charges / Commercialising CCC Services		
Introduction to Theme	We will review our ability to provide discretionary services that have previously been free of charge or below the market rate. Fees and charges will be increased or introduced to maintain these services. We will focus on our commercial activities to enable us to be sustainable and self-sufficient based on an income generating capability and ensure our fees and charges keep pace with inflationary pressures.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
2022/23 mid-year review of fees and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-year review has happened to reflect inflationary factors • Additional income 22/23 then allows us to increase the baseline income assumptions for 23/24 Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for services falls due to increased fee charged. Mitigated by reviewing each fee and charge individually. 	50	0
2023/24 review of fees and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase fees and charges for 23/24 by inflation • Currently assume a 2.5% increase Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for services falls due to increased fee charged. Mitigated by reviewing each fee and charge individually 	100	0
Commercial review of existing income generating services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas identified for additional income are activities in Colchester Museum and commercial opportunities in Castle Park, Café, Boating Lake and Bowling Club Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue or capital costs for some proposals to improve commercial offering and legal compliance 	100	100
New income from Eudo Road Tennis Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now rented out part of the Eudo Road Sports Ground • With full planning approval additional 25-50% rent income Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of income depends on whether the Padel Tennis provider can get planning permission • First 3 months will be rent free affecting income 23/24 	80	0
Charge for Garden Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging for discretionary services currently provided free of charge. • Budget assumes 5% take-up in Season 1 (2023/24), and 21% in 2024/25. • Budget is income less Credit Claim, based on above percentage assumptions. • The budget assumes revenue costs remain the same (i.e. fuel and staffing), until such time as the customer base is stabilised and routes are re-optimised Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income forecast has been based on numerous assumptions and will be subject to change. • The current economic climate may impact take-up, considering this is discretionary spend. • Consultation on the Environment Act 2021 has not ended. If the act does not allow charging in future years new burdens funding is likely to be offered. 	200	725

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fly tipping of green waste may initially increase 		
Charge residents for Recycling Kit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and introduce a new policy for the provision of recycling kit. All options to be explored Residents can use any suitable items to contain and present recycling. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling kit costs fluctuate. The current economic climate may impact sales. Credit claim may reduce if recycling tonnages reduces. The Environment Act 2021 (as above). 	230	0
Revs and Bens New Burdens Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is anticipated income for the administration of Business Grant reconciliation work, Council Tax rebates and new alternative energy schemes <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is one off income in 2023/24 	50	0
Council Tax penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Council Tax penalties for residents claiming discounts and exemptions which they no longer qualify for. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some residents may find it difficult to pay penalties 	12	0
Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the Shared Prosperity Fund admin grant can be used as income The admin work that is being done internally can be absorbed within current workloads. The remainder of the admin grant is needed for external consultancy work. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is low risk one off income in 2023/24 	10	0
Sub total:		832	825

Strategy Theme	Service Rationalisation and Organisational Development		
Introduction to Theme	<p>Over the years we have provided a broad range of high quality statutory and discretionary services. Our financial challenges mean we can no longer provide such a broad range at the same levels, and we now need to reprioritise these. We will review services and provide what is essential at acceptable levels to meet our statutory requirements and deliver against our Strategic Plan.</p> <p>As an organisation we have become more streamlined and less hierarchical, making continued efficiencies.</p> <p>We are making further savings in the workstreams detailed in this section.</p>		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Organisational Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management Team (SMT) structure has been reviewed, redesigned to a new Senior Board Structure. The resulting team has reduced from nine roles to six roles with an overall saving of £200K. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team has reduced by a third so there is less overall capacity and resilience, but this has been mitigated by distributing leadership and decision making to service delivery leads. 	200	0
Sport and Leisure - New service model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and Leisure will create a more efficient staffing structure and service model • There is confidence that service levels and associated income can be maintained <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The savings will rely on a further service review and the implementation of a new technology system for sport and leisure 		200
New refuse and recycling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new refuse and recycling strategy will be developed with anticipated reduced running costs. • It will be a strategy fit for a modern and green city • We will look at options to improve staff welfare and provide a resilient service, whilst aiming to improve recycling rates • Numerous options to be considered in a phased approach. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Act 2021 (see above). • Depending on the model capital and revenue investment may be needed. 		1000
Neighbourhood Services - Discretionary service reductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review will be undertaken, and the services will be reprioritised and a new service plan created matching the new levels of capacity. • There will need to be reductions in staff to deliver this saving <p>Risks:</p>	300	0

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is likely to result in an overall reduction in service quality and level. • Staff will be less able to take on partnership, community, or engagement activities • There may be redundancies and associated cost. 		
Contact and Support - service reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review is being done on current opening hours for the telephone contact centre which will include response rates for telephony and emails. It is likely that there will be an improved pattern of opening hours and increased response rates. • New customer service standards will be developed and published which will include new opening times and updated response times. <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to implement the new service approach. 	100	100
Consolidation of housing functions in CCC and CBH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will consolidate some General Fund housing services which are currently distributed across both CBH and CCC in multiple departments • By consolidating them, duplication and management costs can be reduced <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts need to be identified and risks will be mitigated by generating efficiencies from management and reduced duplication 	100	100
Museums - service reorganisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase income targets, utilise business rate savings and improve income generation through digitisation and fundraising <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship management 	60	0
Museums – service remodelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our service model to improve efficiency <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship management 	0	100
Environmental Health - service reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review to reduce the FTE in Environmental Protection and Food Safety by 0.5 FTE each • Increase income for PSH by £17K <p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy and reduced capacity. 	50	0
Sub total:		810	1,500

Strategy Theme	Asset Management		
Introduction to Theme	CCC owns a significant number of land and property assets which can be used to bring in income. By proactively managing these assets, income can be maximised, and costs reduced.		
Identified savings			
Title of saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Property Group 0 lease Re-gear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">One off premium Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	10	0
Property Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning permission has been grantedOne off £30K premium agreed if it proceeds Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	30	0
Property Group 2 Other asset management initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Arising in year includes easement requests, lease re-gears Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	75	0
Property Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3 units available Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	30	0
Property Group 4 lettings service charge and NNDR income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Service charge and NNDR income on 3 units to be let Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	10	0
Property Group 5 service charge and NNDR income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">NNDR saving of £8K per annum and Service charge of £15K income on property to be let Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Normal commercial considerations.	23	0
Reduce energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We are currently recruiting an Energy Manager to identify opportunities to reduce energy usageEarly innovation ideas could include speed/RPM control motor for pool heating at Leisure World which will reduce energy use Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Inevitably some savings will require capital investment first, e.g. sub-metersSome options may require a reduction in opening times for services, or more attention to patterns of use and energy “awareness”	100	100
Sub total:		278	100

Strategy Theme	Digital Innovation		
Introduction	We have been ahead of the curve in local government in digital development and transformation. We have been upgrading internal infrastructure and using new cloud-based systems to run and deliver our services. We have been (and still are) replacing old legacy systems which have become expensive and no longer supported. Next generation digital solutions are being fully implemented and adopted which will enable us to optimise and automate our services. This will also enable shared services with other LA's.		
Saving	Benefits, Issues, Risks and Impact	23/24 £000's	24/25 £000's
Payment processing system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the costs of processing payments and the assessment has found potential savings of £40K Merchant services transfer process will be fully managed and paid for by Lloyds Bank Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement and Legal requirements to finalise 	20	20
Sport and Leisure system review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all Sport and Leisure systems and options which will be modern and should be more efficient New Sport and Leisure systems should also enhance and enable increased income for the service Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure staff are trained and able to run/develop new systems for resilience and digital focus. 	0	50
Contact and Support telephony automation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The replacement of an outdated and limited-support contact centre (Voice Only) with a full Contact Centre (Voice / Email / Chat Bot / Agent Chat) will enable more automation and should lead to resource efficiencies. There will be more options to develop and build automation and optimisation for customer contact Phase 1 early 2023 Voice, Email, and Secure Pay. Phase 2 Chat Bot, Agent Chat, Social Media 23-24. Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact and Support large change programme 	0	20
New Finance system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a procurement saving as we implement a new finance system Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other demands on scarce finance team resources 	0	25
New Finance system process efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New system more efficient processes and automation New processes to illuminate data input and duplication Processes and e-communications will cut out costs in staff resources and print and post Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other demands on scarce finance team resources 	0	25

Sub total:	20	140
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Total: (£000's)	3,080	2,758
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Appendix K

Transformation Savings EIAs for:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Council wide staffing | pages 2-13 |
| 2. Reduce Community Enabling resource | pages 14-21 |
| 3. Reduce CCC spend on Countryside sites | pages 22-26 |
| 4. Reduce CCC spend on Sports and Playing fields | pages 27-31 |
| 5. Charge for Garden Waste | pages 32-36 |
| 6. Charge residents for Recycling Kit | pages 37-42 |
| 7. Council Tax Penalties | pages 43-47 |
| 8. Organisational Design | pages 48-54 |
| 9. Contact and Support service reduction | pages 55-63 |
| 10. Environmental Health Service reduction | pages 64-68 |

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed:

1. What is the main purpose of the policy? **Council wide staffing**

A large proportion of the council's spend is on staff resources and, in adopting some initiatives to manage the staffing budgets, savings can be made across the whole organisation. We aim to reduce spend on our staff resources budget in a carefully reviewed and managed way through the following workstreams:

- Recruitment freeze for external appointments
- Review all fixed term contracts
- Reduce overtime budgets
- Reduction of staffing hours worked
- Reduce employers NI contributions through promotion of AVCs for the pension scheme

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- Recruitment

- Overtime
- Flexible working
- LGPS Pension guidance

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

There are HR policies that cover the above i.e. flexible working policies and guidance, overtime, recruitment and pension guidance. The transformation budget savings council wide staffing theme brings together all these policies into one plan to deliver budget efficiencies and reduce staffing costs.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

The policies and guidance documents listed above are relate to managers, staff, potential and current employees. There is a link to service provision and our customers as the overall theme in the budget plan is to reduce staffing costs. A reduction in staff costs can only be delivered by reducing staff which may impact on the level of service and/or customer standards that can be provided to our residents.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

A total of £750k in budget savings has been allocated against this theme broken down as follows:

- Recruitment freeze - £500k
- Review of fixed term contracts - £50k
- Reduction in overtime budgets - £100k
- Reduction in staffing hours through offering flexible working/retirement - £50k
- Reduction in national insurance contributions through promotion of pension AVCs - £50k.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

Although this theme sits with People and Performance, the budget efficiencies will only be delivered through a collective effort of service managers led by GMTs.

The council works in partnership with several agencies to delivery services and support communities. There will be many opportunities to deliver services differently by working as a system. Although not part of this theme directly, some of reduction in the workforce may be mitigated by working more effectively in a system partnership.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

There are EQIA's available for each of the HR policies linked to this theme

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

The 3 principle duties of the Equality Act will be keenly observed when developing guidance, policies and processes to deliver this budget theme and will ensure that our practices do not discriminate in respect of the protected characteristics enshrined within the Equality Act and employment law.

¹Click on [Customer Insight](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local data on the 'protected characteristics' is available [on this page](#) of Sharepoint.

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a 'protected characteristic' that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

There is no direct connection to improving/reducing health inequalities for residents under this budget theme. However, reducing staffing in the Council to deliver budget savings could potentially impact on the support we can give to residents to improve/reduce health inequalities in our communities, and we will need to be mindful of the impact service reductions and have due regard to our duty under the Equality Act 2010 when making decisions on staff reductions.

⁵ The King's Fund: [The district council contribution to public health: a time of challenge and opportunity, 2015](#)

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	Yes	Under the theme reducing staffing hours by offering flexible working, staff over 55+ may be able to flexibly retire and access their LGPS pension early whilst continuing employment although certain criteria related to pension costs will apply under the councils pension discretionary policy.	Yes	The pension discretionary policy states that any pension strain arising from flexible retirement must be paid within 3 years through a reduction in salary/hours. If this criteria is not met then flexible retirement will not be an option.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression.	Yes	The recruitment freeze may impact on younger people who wish to start a career in local government or through an apprenticeship scheme. The review of fixed term contracts may mean that staff may need to leave the council at the end of the contract. This will apply across the board but may impact on younger staff more who are likely to be on short term contracts.
Disability	Physical	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may	Yes	The recruitment freeze may impact on people who have a physical, sensory , learning disability or poor mental health and who have the skills to work in the
	Sensory				
	Learning				

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Mental health issues		open up other opportunities and progression.		<p>council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p> <p>Existing staff who have poor mental health may be impacted by the reduction in staffing and this will have to be managed robustly to ensure poor mental health is not exacerbated. The council has a duty to protect the wellbeing of their staff.</p>
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for ethnic minority staff.	Yes	<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on people with an ethnic background who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Language	English not first language	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for staff whose English is not their first language.	Yes	<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on people whose English is not their first language and who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	Yes	Staff who are pregnant or recently given birth will be protected from the impact of staff reductions under the Equality Act and employment law.	Yes	Staff who are in late stages of pregnancy or on maternity leave may not be believe they are able to benefit from the development opportunities that may arise from the recruitment freeze.
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for staff with a particular religious belief or none.		<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on people with a particular religious belief (or non) and who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Sex	Men	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for male staff.	Yes	<p>Overtime tends to be worked in our operational services where the workforce tend to be mainly male. A reduction in overtime may impact more on male staff than female staff.</p> <p>The Council's frontline operational services tend to have more male staff working in them. The opportunity to work more flexibly and reduce hours is more limited in the council's operational services.</p>
	Women	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for female staff.	No	

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for transgender/transsexual staff.	Yes	<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on Transgender/transsexual people and who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for bisexual/ gay/lesbian and heterosexual staff.	Yes	<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on bisexual/gay or lesbian or heterosexual people and who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>

⁷ The 'protected characteristic' of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex." This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	Yes	The recruitment freeze will necessitate the training and development of our workforce to enable staff to be re-deployed into priority roles. This may open up other opportunities and progression for staff married or in civil partnerships.	Yes	<p>The recruitment freeze may impact on candidates who are married or in a civil partnership who have the skills to work in the council, as recruitment and new opportunities may be limited.</p> <p>The recruitment freeze will impact on the EDI priority to become a more inclusive organisation that represents the communities we serve.</p>

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

The council will need to have due regard to its public duty under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'⁸ and those who do not in the implementation of the budget plans.

Each decision will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure that detriment is not experienced by staff/candidates with a protected characteristic, is not discriminatory and can be objectively justified.

The impact of the reduction on staffing will need to be monitored closely to ensure staff with protected characteristic are not disadvantaged compared with those who do not have a protected characteristic.

If staffing is significantly reduced in a service that support vulnerable residents or those with a particular characteristic, a full EQIA should be conducted to assess the impact of the decision.

⁸ The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

2. Could the policy discriminate⁹ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly¹⁰?
No the policy should not discriminate against any protected characteristic.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Jessica Douglas, Strategic People and Performance Manager

15. Date of completion:

⁹ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

¹⁰ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete the following section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

30 December 2022

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹¹:

30 December 2023

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please: (a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

¹¹ This is normally three years, but not always: You may know that the policy itself will be reviewed earlier in which case the EqlA should be reviewed at that time. Or, in the case of a five year strategy, you may want to have a review date of five years. In the case of a “one off” decision, such as closing a service, a review date may not be needed - in which case you should indicate ‘N/A’. In any event, the review date should be brought forward if you receive information or feedback which raises new concerns, or if the public policy context changes. You can speak to the [Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator](#) for more advice.

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed:

Transformation Budget Savings – **Community Enabling Team Resource**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

To reduce the baseline budget across the service by £65k by introducing new ways of working and maximising externally funding

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The Community Enabling Team that cover the below main functions:

- S106
- Voluntary Welfare Grants
- Locality Budgets
- Resettlement & Asylum Seeker Schemes
- Local Delivery Pilot
- Public Health
- Reducing inequalities
- Member and Community engagement
- Crisis management – e.g Covid response & Homes 4 Ukraine
- Armed Forces support & advice
- Alliance Neighbourhood support
- Asset Based Community Development – Communities Can..
- One Colchester and System Wide support

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

This is a new approach to ways of working in these service areas.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

The team work closely with Residents, Communities and their leaders, Partner organisations, Members, Senior Leadership Team and teams across the Council and Colchester Borough Homes.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

To ensure we continue to provide a professional service to residents, partners & Council team in a more streamline way maximising all external funding opportunities and sharing system resources.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

The team work closely with Communities and their leaders, Partner organisations, Members, Senior Leadership Team and teams across the Council. So any reduction in service provision will have a wide impact and a reduction to the support offered across the System in Colchester.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹² which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

Positive informal feedback from Essex County Council and other partner organisations and community groups.

¹²Click on [Customer Insight](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local data on the 'protected characteristics' is available [on this page](#) of Sharepoint.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'¹³ and those who do not¹⁴

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not¹⁵

The 3 principles duties of the Equality Act will be observed when developing a new look team to deliver this budget theme.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- N/A

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- N/A

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- N/A

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)¹⁶. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

¹³ The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

¹⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a 'protected characteristic' that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

¹⁵ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

¹⁶ The King's Fund: [The district council contribution to public health: a time of challenge and opportunity, 2015](#)

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

This teams plays a key role in improving/reducing health inequalities for residents so any reduction will have an impact on how we assist partners and work with Communities to make Colchester City a better place to live, work and visit.

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction into the CCC contribution to the Age Well & Die Well domains and our general work supporting the older residents of Colchester
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction into the CCC contribution to the Start Well domain and our general work supporting the younger residents of Colchester
Disability	Physical	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction into the CCC contribution to the Feel Well domain and our general work supporting residents with disabilities in Colchester
	Sensory				
	Learning				
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ¹⁷	White	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting
	Black				

¹⁷ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Chinese				Faith Groups and Resettlement/Asylum Seeker schemes as a City of Sanctuary.
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting Faith Groups and Resettlement/Asylum Seeker schemes as a City of Sanctuary
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction into the CCC contribution to the Start Well domain and our general work supporting new families in Colchester
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting Faith Groups and Resettlement/Asylum Seeker schemes as a City of Sanctuary.
Sex	Men	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting all residents
	Women	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting all residents

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Gender Reassignment ¹⁸	Transgender/ Transsexual	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting all residents
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting all residents
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	There is no benefit to this group of the proposed saving	Yes	The reduction in staffing will mean a reduction in general work supporting all residents

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

We will continue to investigate and implement different ways of working to minimise the impact to residents

12. Could the policy discriminate¹⁹ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly²⁰?

¹⁸ The 'protected characteristic' of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex." This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to.

¹⁹ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

²⁰ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete the following section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

No, this change will not directly discriminate but will reduce our capacity to assist and advice to make improvements

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Michelle Tarbun, Group Manager – Communities

15. Date of completion: 11/1/23

16. Date for update or review of this screening: NA

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Reduce CCC spend on Countrywide sites**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

A review will be undertaken to identify commercial opportunities and mode of management / ownership; this will include the consideration of increasing commerciality of Mersea Beach Huts and Mersea Pontoon.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

It is proposed that commercial arrangements around Mersea Beach Huts and the usage of Mersea Pontoon are explore, with a view to generate additional revenue.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

Yes – we currently do not have a policy of charging users of the Pontoon. We do currently charge beach hut users however any further policy changes will be subject to the review.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Residents who rent a beach hut
- Non – residents who rent a beach hut
- Commercial users of beach huts
- Residents and non-residents who would want to secure their tenders to the pontoon
- Visiting boat owners who would want to moor their boats for a short period of time to the pontoon
- Commercial users mooring tenders on the pontoon

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

A total of £25k in additional revenue has been allocated against this theme

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

- Contact and support
- Invoice management

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

No

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- N/A

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)		None identified		None identified
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		None identified	X	Increased costs to clubs that currently use the pontoon for free.
Disability	Physical		None identified		None identified
	Sensory		None identified		None identified
	Learning		None identified		None identified
	Mental health issues		None identified		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White		None identified		None identified
	Black		None identified		None identified
	Chinese		None identified		None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified		None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified		None identified

	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language		None identified		None identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		None identified		None identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified		None identified
Sex	Men		None identified		None identified
	Women		None identified		None identified
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual		None identified		None identified
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		None identified		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		None identified		None identified

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		None identified	X	Increased costs to clubs that currently use the pontoon for free.
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Understand the current usage of the pontoon and offer a concession for education and training purposes. Consider charges to only be applicable at certain times of the day.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? (Yes/No)

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.

C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Nick Christo

Parks, Countryside and Greening Operations Manager

15. Date of completion:

12th January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰: 11th January 2026

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Reduce CCC spend on Sports and Playing fields**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

A review will take place on the maintenance undertaken by the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contractor with regards to Sports Pitches during the playing season and in the off season. The review will also incorporate the transfer of management and / or ownership to others (Parish Councils / Sports Club) with an appropriate payment.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

It is proposed that works associated with maintenance of Sports Pitches will be reviewed including:

- Grass cutting frequency during the season
- Renovation works during the off season
- The number of sports pitches and sites available may reduce
- Parish Councils or Sports Clubs may not be able to fund / take over the management of sports pitches

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

No – further policy changes will be subject to the review changes.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Residents
- Sports Clubs
- Schools
- Council's Grounds Maintenance contractor

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

A total of £50,000 in budget savings has been allocated against this theme which can be achieved by the Council reducing its spend on sports pitches.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

- The Council's Grounds Maintenance contractor Idverde.
- Colchester City Council's Sport and Leisure Services

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

Usage data on sports pitches is held by another service and can be obtained upon request.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- It is not held this policy change will impact on this duty

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- This policy will help sustain health and physical activities by continuing to provide adequate numbers of sites and sports pitches, maintained to an acceptable standard

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Disability	Physical		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Sensory		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Learning		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.

	Mental health issues		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Other – <i>specify</i>			X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Ethnicity ⁶	White		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Black		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Chinese		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce. Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Sex	Men		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
	Women		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		None identified	X	Number of pitches accessible may reduce.
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11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

Other sports pitches will continue to be accessible for those wanting to book.

Sports clubs and Parishes will be approached to seek sharing or taking on management of sites.

Language	English not first language		None identified	X	Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.
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Website information can be translated via online translation websites/tools. Customers which first language is not English can request that letters or leaflets are provided in a preferred language. Officers have access to a range of translation tools including text translation, instant telephone translation and face-to-face translation services.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? (Yes/No) NO

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Nick Christo, Parks, Countryside & Greening Operations Manager

15. Date of completion:

12th January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰: 11th January 2026

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Charge for Garden Waste**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

Provide an optional chargeable Garden Waste Service for kerbside Colchester City residents with private gardens

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

Fortnightly Collection of Garden Waste with a scheduled winter break

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

Currently there is a free universal Garden Collection service based on a mix of Garden Sacks and Wheeled Bins. The new service will be optional, chargeable and be delivered solely with Wheeled Bins.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

All residents with a private garden

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

There is a need to move from a free universal service to a chargeable one to generate a new revenue stream for Recycling and Waste.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

**Customer Service Team
Essex County Council
Neighbourhood Services Team
Digital and online teams**

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

No consultation has been commissioned as of this time.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- **It is not held that that this policy/ service will specifically help us to meet this aim.**

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- **It is not held that that this policy/ service will specifically help us to meet this aim.**

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- **It is not held that that this policy/ service will specifically help us to meet this aim.**

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- **n/a**

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)	X	Many Residents prefer the better containment offered by Wheeled bins to Garden Sacks	X	Some older people may have particular difficulty in manoeuvring wheeled bins.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	X	Many Residents prefer the better containment offered by Wheeled bins to Garden Sacks		None identified
Disability	Physical	X	The Assisted Collection service will continue to benefit this group.		None identified
	Sensory	X	The Assisted Collection service will continue to benefit this group.		None identified
	Learning	X	The Assisted Collection service will continue to benefit this group.		None identified
	Mental health issues	X	The Assisted Collection service will continue to benefit this group.		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White		None identified		None identified
	Black		None identified		None identified
	Chinese		None identified		None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified		None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified		None identified

	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language		None identified	X	Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	X	The Assisted Collection service will continue to benefit this group.	X	Individuals within this group may have particular difficulty in manoeuvring wheeled bins.
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified		None identified
Sex	Men		None identified		None identified
	Women		None identified		None identified
Gender Reassignment?	Transgender/ Transsexual		None identified		None identified
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		None identified		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		None identified		None identified

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

Older people (60+) X Some older people may have particular difficulty in manoeuvring wheeled bins.

The Assisted Collection Service will continue to help customers who have particular difficulty in presenting their waste on the boundary of their property. This will extend to assisting with wheeled bins where appropriate.

English not first language X Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.

Website information can be translated via online translation websites/tools. Customers which first language is not English can request that letters or leaflets are provided in a preferred language. Officers have access to a range of translation tools including text translation, instant telephone translation and face-to-face translation services.

Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks X Individuals within this group may have particular difficulty in manoeuvring wheeled bins.

The Assisted Collection Service will continue to help customers who have particular difficulty in presenting their waste on the boundary of their property. This will extend to assisting with wheeled bins where appropriate.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? (Yes/No) **No**

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

John Kellett
Business Improvement Manager

15. Date of completion:

10th January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

9th January 2026

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please:(a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Charging residents for Recycling Kit**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

The review of charging for some recycling equipment is intended to help address the impact of Inflation on the fixed Recycling Equipment Budget rather than continue to operate with a very significant Budget pressure.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The review will cover all Recycling Equipment currently provided free of charge to residents including Wheeled Bins, Recycling Boxes, Kerbside and Kitchen Caddies, White Garden Sacks and Clear Recycling Bags

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

- **Introduction of charges to Residents for Recycling Equipment except:**
 - **Potential to provide New Builds with free of charge New Build Recycling kit**
 - **Potential to provide Home Movers with any required kit Free of Charge**
 - **Potential to make the first roll of Clear Recycling Bags free each financial year**
- **All Kitchen Caddies to be chargeable**
- **Possibility to allow a Resident to bring in a broken item to a CCC office for free exchange**
- **Colchester City Council to retain provision and ownership of Black Wheeled Bins**
- **Brown Wheeled Bins to be chargeable where a customer needs them**
- **Exemption Black Bins to remain free of charge**
- **Potential to introduce charges for home deliveries**
- **Assisted Customers to be offered local collection as an option**
- **Prices to be set regularly based on Market price of last purchase**
- **Payments to be made online as part of the process**

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

All residents

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

Ability to continue to provide Customers with Recycling Equipment

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

Contact & Support

Dynamics and TaskSmart Support Teams

Online Payments Engine

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

None

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- **It is not held that that this policy/ service will specifically help us to meet this aim.**

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- **Service Options will continue to be available for all residents whether they have access to the internet or not**
- **Residents without Internet Access could be offered the option to pay online via Customer Service Team and then collect from an Outlet to avoid Delivery Charges or else could pay for a Home Delivery.**

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- **It is not held that that this policy/ service will specifically help us to meet this aim.**

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- **Black Wheeled Bins would continue to be available free of charge**

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		None identified		None identified

Disability	Physical	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
	Sensory		None identified		None identified
	Learning		None identified		None identified
	Mental health issues		None identified		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White		None identified		None identified
	Black		None identified		None identified
	Chinese		None identified		None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified		None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language		None identified	X	Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified		None identified
Sex	Men		None identified		None identified
	Women		None identified		None identified
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual		None identified		None identified
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		None identified		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		None identified		None identified

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

Older people (60+)	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
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Currently Residents with an Assisted Collection receive a free delivery. It is proposed to allow Residents with an Assisted Collection the choice of whether to collect for free or pay for Home Delivery

Residents without Internet Access could be offered the option to pay online via Customer Service Team and then collect from an Outlet to avoid Delivery Charges or else could pay for a Home Delivery.

Physical	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
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Currently Residents with an Assisted Collection receive a free delivery. It is proposed to allow Residents with an Assisted Collection the choice of whether to collect for free or pay for Home Delivery

English not first language		None identified	X	Printed and online information is provided in English which could impact negatively upon this group.
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Website information can be translated via online translation websites/tools. Customers which first language is not English can request that letters or leaflets are provided in a preferred language. Officers have access to a range of translation tools including text translation, instant telephone translation and face-to-face translation services.

Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	X	Home Delivery remains available for residents with an Assisted Collection	X	Delivery Charge Introduced for Home Delivery
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Currently Residents with an Assisted Collection receive a free delivery. It is proposed to allow Residents with an Assisted Collection the choice of whether to collect for free or pay for Home Delivery

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? (Yes/No) **No**

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
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14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

John Kellett
Business Improvement Manager

15. Date of completion:

10th January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

9th January 2026

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please:(a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Council Tax Penalties**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- To introduced penalty charges for households falsely claiming Council Tax Single Person Discount. It aims to deter residents from claiming the discount where they are not eligible.
- To introduce a perpetual annual Single Person Discount review, requiring residents in receipt of the discount to re-confirm their status annually.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The Council's administration of Council Tax accounts.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

n/a

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

This affects all households liable for Council Tax.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

The changes aim to deter households from claiming Council Tax discounts that they aren't or are no longer eligible for. The expected outcomes include:

- A reduction in the overall number of single person discount claimants
- A fairer approach to Council Tax, ensuring that those claiming discounts incorrectly are identified and where appropriate issued with penalty fines
- Increase in the amount of collectable Council Tax, supporting the funding of local services.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

Precepting authorities (Essex County Council, Fire and Police) have an interest in the Council maximising Council Tax Collection.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

n/a

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

n/a

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

n/a

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

n/a

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

n/a

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)	Fair collection of Council Tax	Preventing people from claiming discounts for Council Tax where they are not eligible will improve funding available for local services.	x	
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	As above	As above	x	
Disability	Physical	As above	As above	x	
	Sensory	As above	As above	x	
	Learning	As above	As above	x	
	Mental health issues	As above	As above	x	
	Other – <i>specify</i>	As above	As above	x	
Ethnicity ⁶	White	As above	As above	x	
	Black	As above	As above	x	
	Chinese	As above	As above	x	
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	As above	As above	x	
	Gypsies/ Travellers	As above	As above	x	
	Other – <i>specify</i>	As above	As above	x	
Language	English not first language	As above	As above	x	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have	As above	As above	x	

	given birth in last 26 weeks				
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	As above	As above	x	
Sex	Men	As above	As above	x	
	Women	As above	As above	x	
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	As above	As above	x	
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	As above	As above	x	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	As above	As above	x	

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

None

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Sam Preston – Group Manager

15. Date of completion:

13/01/2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

13/01/2026

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please: (a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

This EQIA considers the impact of the review and introduction of new senior management arrangements, aimed at resetting and aligning the organisation to reflect resource pressure changes and working arrangements to support residents effectively.

1. What is the main purpose of the review? **Organisation Design**

Under the new arrangements, the Senior Management Team will operate as a Senior Board to provide leadership to the organisation.

The number of posts has been reduced by 2, providing £200k in savings.

The new Strategic Director roles within the senior team will be different to the Assistant Director roles. The focus will no longer be on leading a set of defined services but to be responsible for the Council's strategic priorities and outcomes and provide strategic leadership over key drivers including resources, organisational culture, environmental sustainability and reducing inequalities.

The arrangements will involve Group Managers becoming service delivery heads with full autonomy to operate services whilst being accountable to the senior leadership team.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- Strategic leadership of the council

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

The new senior management arrangements will necessitate a change to the Scheme of Delegation as roles and accountabilities of the Senior Board and GMT within the wider leadership team are redefined.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the review?

Cabinet, councillors, managers and staff.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the review?

A total of £200k has been achieved from the changes in the senior management arrangements.

The creation of the Senior Leadership Board will mean the Board will focus on delivering the strategic priorities and outcomes and provide strategic leadership over key drivers including resources, organisational culture, environmental sustainability and reducing inequalities.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

This is an internal review of the council's management arrangements. It has been informed by the Red Quadrant review which identified the principles that should underpin the leadership structure as follows:

- Fluidity and flexibility without hierarchy
- Distributed and inclusive leadership
- Outward looking focus
- Agreement on common purpose, outcomes and priorities
- Clearer accountability, more autonomy, cross organisational working
- Drive a progressive, inclusive and diverse culture
- Remain open to dynamic change
- Enable leaders to lead with discretion

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

The 3 principal duties of the Equality Act will be at the forefront of the Senior Management Board in terms of advancing equal opportunity for staff and residents, fostering good relations and eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

The focus of the Board is to provide strategic leadership over key drivers including resources, organisational culture, environmental sustainability and **reducing inequalities**.

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)	Yes	Reducing inequalities within our communities and workforce will be one of the key objectives for the new Board. A new strategic lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been put in place.	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to older people.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	Yes	Reducing inequalities within our communities and workforce will be one of the key objectives for the new Board. A new strategic lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been put in place.	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to younger people. The profile of the senior management team is older than 17-25 years but this might be expected in terms of knowledge, experience and skills needed for senior roles. The key will be ensuring that the senior management team ensure there is engagement with younger residents and the workforce to understand their challenges and needs.
Disability	Physical	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to disabled people.
	Sensory				
	Learning				
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				

					There is a People priority to ensure the council is more diverse and inclusive and plans will soon be in place to improve diversity across the council.
Ethnicity ⁶	White	Yes	As above	None	<p>The ethnicity of the senior leadership team is not diverse.</p> <p>There is a People priority to ensure the council is more diverse and inclusive and plans will soon be in place to improve diversity across the council.</p>
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to people where english is not the first language.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	Yes	As above	None	<p>There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to pregnant staff or those on maternity.</p> <p>Well established policies are in place to prevent discrimination.</p>
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to religion.
Sex	Men	Yes	<p>The profile of the senior leadership board is 2 males and 4 female leaders.</p> <p>The wider leadership team (GMT) has 6 male and 6 female managers.</p>	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to sex..
	Women	Yes	<p>The profile of the senior leadership board is 2 males and 4 female leaders.</p> <p>The wider leadership team (GMT) has 6 male and 6 female managers.</p>	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to sex..

Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to gender reassignment. There is a People priority to ensure the council is more diverse and inclusive and plans will soon be in place to improve diversity across the council.
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to sexual orientation.. There is a People priority to ensure the council is more diverse and inclusive and plans will soon be in place to improve diversity across the council.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	Yes	As above	None	There are no disproportionate equality impacts of the implementation of the new senior management arrangements with regard to marriage and civil partnership.

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

The council will need to have due regard to its public duty under the Equality Act 2010 and in particular to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic⁸' and those who do not in the implementation of the budget plans.

Each decision will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure that detriment is not experienced by staff/candidates with a protected characteristic, is not discriminatory and can be objectively justified.

The impact of the reduction on staffing will need to be monitored closely to ensure staff with protected characteristic are not disadvantaged compared with those who do not have a protected characteristic.

If staffing is significantly reduced in a service that support vulnerable residents or those with a particular characteristic, a full EQIA should be conducted to assess the impact of the decision.

2. Could the policy discriminate⁹ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly¹⁰?

No the policy should not discriminate against any protected characteristic.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Jessica Douglas, Strategic People and Performance Manager

15. Date of completion:

13.January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹¹:

Not applicable – this is a standalone review. If the senior management arrangements are reviewed again a new EQIA will be completed.

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

Contact and Support Service Reduction

- Telephony And Email contact – Contact and Support Team (CST).

NB: 'Policy' is meant broadly to mean policy, strategy, service, function, activity or decision.

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- To assess the impact of the following proposed service changes.
 - Reduction of telephony and email service times to four days per week.
 - Introduction of new Customer Contact System.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- Customer contact with the CST

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

- Review of the following EQIA in conjunction with the proposed service changes.
- [Sharepoint Online](#)

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Residents
- Businesses
- Councillors
- External Partners

- Staff

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- To ensure the proposed service changes generate no negative impact / minimised impact on the service users in relation to Equality and Diversity.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

The CST works closely with external partners such as Essex County Council (ECC) and Colchester borough Homes (CBH) and internal service areas such as Recycling and Rubbish, Planning, Licensing etc. The proposed changes will be discussed with all partners.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations²¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

Feedback on key services including telephony services are periodically reviewed and has been taken into account in shaping this service.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'²² and those who do not²³
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not²⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

²¹Click on [Customer Insight](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local data on the 'protected characteristics' is available [on this page](#) of Sharepoint.

²² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

²³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a 'protected characteristic' that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

²⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

The policy helps us to ‘eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation’ in the following way(s):

- By providing a telephony and email service for four days per week and online services 24/7.

The policy helps us to ‘advance equality of opportunity...’ in the following way(s):

- By providing a telephony and email service for four days per week and online services 24/7.

The policy helps us to ‘foster good relations...’ in the following way(s):

- By providing a telephony and email service for four days per week and online services 24/7.

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents’ health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its ‘core functions’ (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its ‘enabling roles’ (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)²⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the ‘protected characteristics’ of age and disability.

“Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are.”

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- By using additional technologies such as text phone, our services can be accessed by a wider audience.
- The new Customer Contact System will allow us to implement other contact channels such as WhatsApp, Chatbot, Social Media etc.

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the ‘protected characteristics’.

²⁵ The King’s Fund: [The district council contribution to public health: a time of challenge and opportunity, 2015](#)

The proposed change to reduce service times to four days per week will not have an isolated negative effect on the protected characteristic groups listed below.

The proposed change to introduce a new Customer Contact System will have a positive effect on all service users by introducing new contact channels in addition to the existing telephony and email service.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	New telephony system Queue management High resolution rates	Telephony system is being updated using data from customer interactions; ensure the automation is accurate to our customers' needs. Working to reduce customer wait times and give alternatives, such as online resolution and a call back service. Future roll out of other contact channels will further improve queue management. The CST delivers above expectations on resolving a call at first point of contact.	X	Older people are more likely to have a disability – see comments below.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	As above	As above	X	None identified
Disability	Physical	As above	As above	X	This group may be more likely to find automated options more difficult to use.
	Sensory	As above	As above	X	As above

	Learning	As above	As above	X	As above
	Mental health issues	As above	As above	X	As above
	Other – <i>specify</i>				

‘Protected characteristic’ group Ethnicity ²⁶		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	White	New telephony system Queue management High resolution rates	Telephony system is being updated using data from customer interactions; ensure the automation is accurate to our customers’ needs. Working to reduce customer wait times and give alternatives, such as online resolution and a call back service. Future roll out of other contact channels will further improve queue management. The CST delivers above expectations on resolving a call at first point of contact.	X	None identified
	Black	As above	As above	X	None identified
	Chinese	As above	As above	X	None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	As above	As above	X	None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers	As above	As above	X	None identified
	Other – <i>please state</i>			X	

²⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

Language	English not first language	As above	As above	X	This group may not be able to access the service without assistance.
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'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	New telephony system Queue management High resolution rates	Telephony system is being updated using data from customer interactions, ensure the automation is accurate to our customers' needs. Working to reduce customer wait times and give alternatives, such as online resolution and a call back service. Future roll out of other contact channels will further improve queue management. The CST delivers above expectations on resolving a call at first point of contact.	X	None identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	As above	As above	X	None identified
Sex	Men	As above	As above	X	None identified
	Women	As above	As above	X	None identified
		As above	As above	X	None identified

Gender Reassignment ²⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual				
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'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	As above	As above	X	None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	As above	As above	X	None identified

11.If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- **May find automated options confusing**

- Automated options are continuously reviewed with any feedback taken into consideration to ensure they are easily understandable
- **There are times when wait times may be longer than customer expectation.**
 - We offer a call back service
 - We are working to encourage channel shift where possible to minimise wait times

- **May not understand Advisors or automated telephone menus**

²⁷ The 'protected characteristic' of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex." This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to.

- We have a text phone service
- Customers can gain access to language line and other translation services may be offered.
- **Availability of Telephony service will be reduced by one day.**
 - Online services will be available.
 - Emergencies can be reported as per the current out of hours process.

12. Could the policy discriminate²⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly²⁹? (Yes/No)

No.

²⁸ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

²⁹ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete the following section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Phil Charles - Contact and Support Manager.

15. Date of completion:

- January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening:

- TBD

2. Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

1. Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: **Environmental Health Service Reduction**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

To reduce the baseline budget across the service by £50k by introducing new ways of working and enabling greater income generation

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

Private Sector Housing enforcement

Environmental Protection

Food and Safety

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

This is a new approach to ways of working in these service areas.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

Local residents and businesses

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

To ensure we continue to meet our statutory requirements by working in a different way.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

No

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

No

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- N/A

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- N/A

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- N/A

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- N/A

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
3. Age	Older people (60+)	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Disability	Physical	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Sensory	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Learning	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Mental health issues	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Black	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Chinese	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics

	Gypsies/ Travellers	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Sex	Men	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
	Women	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	X	No benefit to this group	N	There will be a reduction in the level of service which will affect all groups regardless of protected characteristics

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

We will continue to investigate and implement different ways of working to minimise the impact to residents and businesses.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹? No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:
Melanie Rundle, Safety and Protection Manager

15. Date of completion:
11th January 2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client	Author	Karen Turnbull ☎ 282275
Title	Colchester's new Economic Strategy 2022-25		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Colchester's new Economic Strategy is due for publication.

The strategy sets out the role Colchester Borough Council and our partners will play in maintain and boosting the strength of our economy. It:

- highlights the key assets and challenges of Colchester's economy
- sets out our vision and priorities, along with principal objectives
- provides case studies to illustrate the type of work we will encourage to achieve our priorities
- highlights the factors that influence the economy
- describes how we will work with partners.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 To adopt the new Economic Strategy 2022-25 for Colchester.

2.2 To recommend to full Council that the Economic Strategy be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 With Colchester recently honoured with city status as part of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, Colchester's new Economic Strategy is timely.

Colchester is a hot-spot for innovation and investment. Employment levels are high and businesses have proved their resilience. However, the combined impact of the pandemic, the UK's departure from the EU, the situation in Ukraine and climate change are presenting unprecedented economic challenges.

This Strategy aligns strongly with partners and their strategies to coordinate our efforts to support an inclusive economy. It charts a course to take Colchester's economy forward in partnership:

- supporting the economy to survive and thrive
- enabling Colchester to compete for future talent, investment and influence; and
- improving people's lives and tackling inequalities through gaining and improving skills, encouraging jobs growth, influencing health and transport choices; and delivering more effective digital connectivity and improved personal and commercial prospects from this.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 To not adopt the Economic Strategy. There are however clear risks to not having a robust evidence based strategy in place such as not achieving local priorities, not being able to evidence and articulate Colchester Borough Council's wider vision for the economy and not providing a strong focus to our partners about their contribution to meeting our priorities and helping economic recovery.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 This is Colchester's second Economic Strategy. The first covered the period from 2015-21 and focussed on sectoral development.
- 5.2 Following a detailed consultation and strategy development process as set out in 8. below, this strategy takes a themed approach based on four key priorities and clear aims associated with each of them.
- 5.3 Key Priorities

Colchester's Economic Strategy 2022-25 sets out our vision, four priorities for change and objectives to be achieved.

Vision: Colchester: unlocking our city's potential

Theme	Priority	Objectives
People	We support inclusive economic growth by encouraging business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation and new businesses• Work with partners and stakeholders to address skills shortages• Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills• Sustain the local economy with high quality business support, information and guidance• Encourage a higher wage economy
Place	We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage inward investment in the City, and facilitate improved infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and secure funding to enhance Colchester and boost the economy.• Identify and pursue projects which support key sector development.• Support and encourage inward investment. Develop a new Digital Strategy as a competitive edge and to enhance skills• Capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city• Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place.
Partnerships	We engage widely with partners and anchor institutions at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with partners to promote Colchester's economic interests.• Support the work of partners in offering business support to enable recovery and growth.• Mobilising the opportunity around our anchor institutions in community wealth building.• Help develop a more connected and influential place
Planet	We work with partners to improve the environment of our place, accelerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support initiatives to enhance the quality of the environment.

	the decarbonisation of Colchester economy and reduce the environmental impact of business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help local businesses reduce their carbon emissions. • Support development of local green technology businesses • Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy'
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In keeping with the Colchester Can approach, this strategy prioritises an enabler/facilitator approach. Colchester's partnership arrangements are mature and effective, and through the pandemic our partnerships have strengthened with CBC being seen as a trusted anchor.

Delivery Plan

The Delivery Plan for the new Strategy is in development and will set out the actions the Council, its partners and stakeholders will undertake to achieve the priorities. It will be accessible and meaningful so that local people can see opportunities which apply to them and how they can participate.

Workstreams and projects include:

- Developing a Shared Prosperity Funding Investment Plan
- Developing and delivering Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid
- Developing a Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment Plan
- The Colchester Skills Programme led by The Colchester Ambassadors Group
- New Digital Strategy in partnership with Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd.
- Delivering the project programme for the Town Deal

5.4 Monitoring and Review

The strategy will be a live document that will achieve its aims and objectives through the implementation of a 3-year Delivery Plan, which will be updated by Colchester Borough Council on a regular basis.

5.4 The plan will be monitored and progress reported to the Portfolio Holder.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment on the Economic Strategy has been completed and a link to the document can be found here [Economic Strategy 2022 2025 EQIA Nov 2022.docx](#)

6.2 There are no Human Rights implications

7. Strategic Plan References

7.1 The priorities in the new Economic Strategy will deliver against the Council's current Strategic Plan 2020-23 priorities in particular the pledge to "Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits". Specifically this means:

Priorities

Goals

Enable economic recovery from

- Ensure our borough becomes stronger post Covid-19 by supporting businesses to recover, adapt and build resilience.

Priorities

Goals

Covid-19
ensuring
all
residents
benefit
from
growth

- Work with partners to facilitate a high skill, high wage, low carbon workforce.
- Develop opportunities to ensure the new economy is greener, sustainable and more resilient.
- Work with our partners to enable Colchester town centre to be a more vibrant, resilient and adaptable to future change.
- Transform the Northern Gateway as a hub for improved wellbeing, physical activity, jobs, housing and renewable energy.
- Address the inequality of access to Gigabit Broadband in communities.
- Tackle local skills shortages working with businesses, University of Essex, Colchester Institute and other partners.

Work with partners
to deliver a
shared vision
for a vibrant
town

- Agree a Town Deal with partners and the Government to attract significant new investment.
- Collaborate with the town centre Business Improvement District (BID).
- Continue to regenerate Colchester Town Centre using Council assets, aligned private investment, the Town Deal and Town Investment Plan.

Create an
environment
that attracts
inward
investment to
Colchester
and help
businesses
to flourish

- Ensure our strategy for inclusive economic growth supports the ambitions outlined in the North Essex Growth Strategy, the Local Industrial Strategy and our Town Deal.
- Ensure a good supply of employment land and premises to attract new businesses and allow existing firms to expand and thrive.
- Encourage green technologies and innovative solutions to the Climate Emergency.
- Maximise the Social Value benefits derived from third party contracts.
- Ensure the Council's assets continue to contribute to economic growth and opportunity.

8. Consultation and Strategy Development

- Two consultation workshops were held with external partners and stakeholders as well as internal business facing services which both helped to shape the new Economic Strategy.
- Insights from local business surveys and other public consultations with residents on projects like the Town Deal and on subjects like the future of the town centre have been sought and included.
- Data and analysis from partner strategies and monitoring of official datasets and reports to understand macro-economic trends have also contributed to developing the

Strategy. The accompanying Data Digest is a summary of this deeper and more comprehensive evidence base.

- The draft Economic Strategy has been circulated to Officers for their comments.
- The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Transformation and the Portfolio Holder for Strategy have been given the opportunity to review the documents.
- The Cabinet have had the opportunity to review and requested new content, which has been included.
- The responses to consultations have been positive. Where comments, amendments and suggestions have been made these have been incorporated where appropriate.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Economic Strategy documents will be published on the Council's website. A communications plan is being developed to publicise the Strategy and generate interest and commitment to the Delivery Plan.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The strategy sets out a challenging and ambitious vision for the economy which will be delivered against a backdrop of significant reduction in funding for local government. In the current financial climate of reduced resources, the Council will need to look carefully at how it will use these resources to deliver the strategy from existing budgets.

The Council will work to encourage its partners to commit their resources to meeting the priorities set out in the strategy. As many of the organisations are partners, they have already helped to shape the strategy and have shown their commitment to its delivery.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Colchester is facing significant population and housing growth, demanding more jobs, more skills and more businesses to create an expanding economy to match. A strong economy is vital for Colchester to provide residents with the jobs, income, health and purpose they need; to allow businesses to flourish; to provide the infrastructure a growing place relies on and to keep our Borough vibrant and attractive.
- 11.2 The Government's Levelling Up agenda places a renewed emphasis on inclusive economic growth so that existing inequalities are reduced.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 There are no risk management implications

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 Environmental and sustainability implications have been considered throughout the development of the new Economic Strategy. The need for cleaner growth is increasingly

critical to manage and reduce our impacts on the environment as we work toward sent Zero.

Appendices

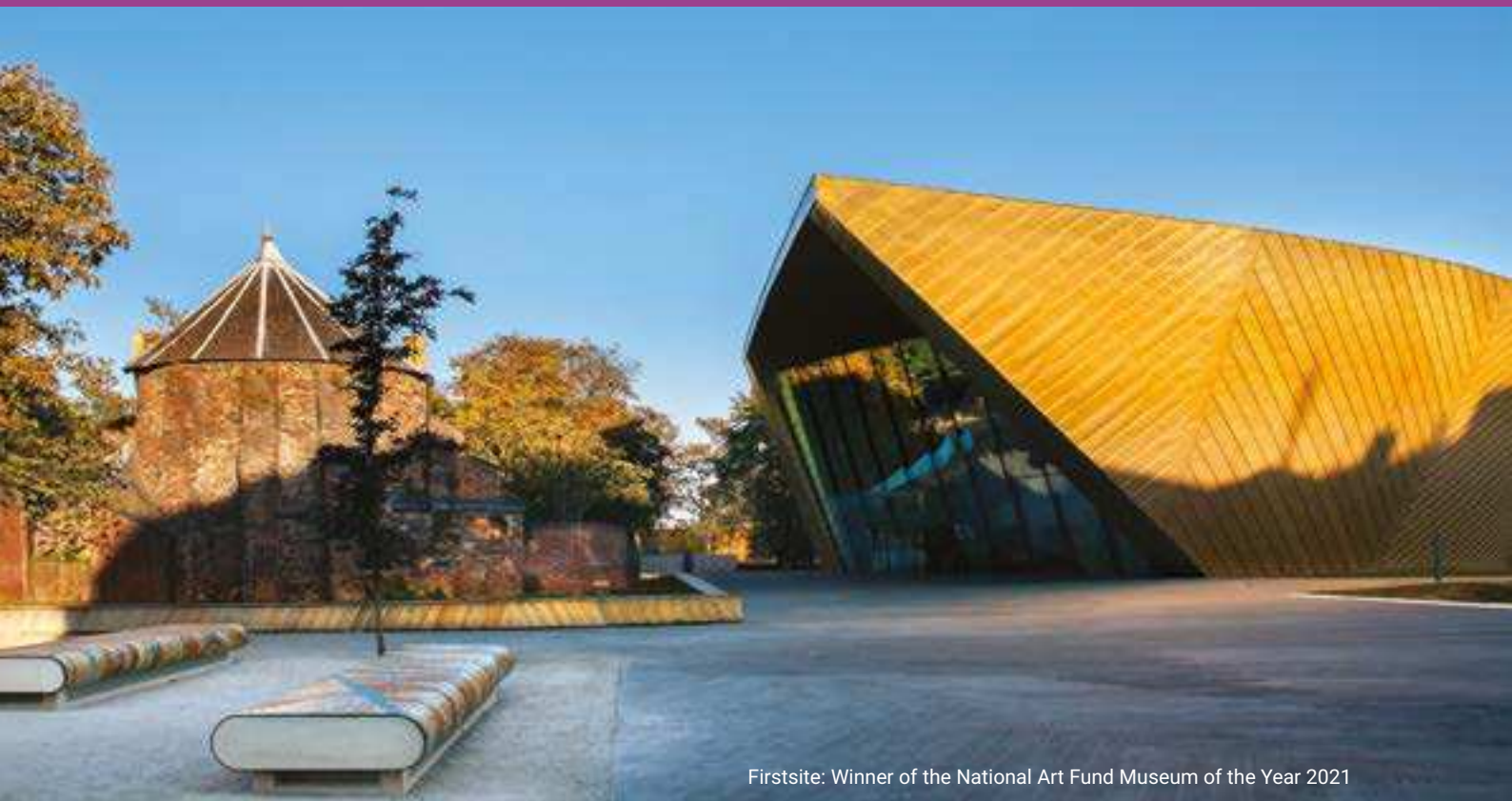
Appendix A Colchester's Economic Strategy 2022-25

Appendix B Economic Strategy Data Digest

COLCHESTER'S

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential



Firstsite: Winner of the National Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021

2022-25



Colchester
City Council



Colchester
Ultra Ready for Business

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Preface

Councillor David King
Leader, Colchester Borough Council

With Colchester being honoured with City Status by Her Majesty, The Queen, as part of her Platinum Jubilee celebrations, Colchester's new Economic Strategy has never been more relevant or timely. Colchester is a hot-spot for innovation and investment. Employment levels are high, and businesses have proved their resilience. However, the combined impacts of the pandemic, the UK's departure from the EU, the situation in Ukraine and climate change are presenting unprecedented challenges. For some sectors such as health and care it is a time of opportunity, albeit with severe constraints, for others in sectors like retail, tourism, leisure, and hospitality, it continues to be a time of great challenge. This strategy has been developed over a period of economic turbulence. The challenge for the Council and its partners will be to be sufficiently nimble to address fast emerging issues and to take advantage of new opportunities.

I believe that a period of rapid economic and social change drives technological innovation. Indeed, we are seeing the growing importance of artificial intelligence and the data-driven economy, and the skills needed to support and develop it. The need for 'cleaner growth' is increasingly critical to manage and reduce our impacts on the environment as we work towards Net Zero. Social and demographic change is driving demand for new goods and services delivered in revolutionary ways and in Colchester, significant population and housing growth are demanding more jobs,

more skills, and more businesses to create an expanding economy to match. While painting a picture of opportunity and potential, I also recognise that the combination of these strategic risks combines with underlying long-term economic trends which are disrupting existing jobs and business models, creating a sea-change in how our small enterprises do business, challenging their resilience and capacity.

This Economic Strategy charts a medium-term course to take Colchester's economy forward in partnership into recovery:

- ▶ putting it in the best possible position to survive and thrive
- ▶ enabling Colchester to compete for future talent, investment, and influence; and taking a more holistic approach to
- ▶ improving people's lives and prospects through better skills, jobs, health and transport choices; and more effective digital connectivity so that economic growth is more inclusive.

Recovery can be realised by helping entrepreneurs to achieve their ambitions, creating more and better job opportunities, developing skills, attracting investment, and providing transport and digital infrastructure to help businesses to thrive.

Our partnerships and relationships are stronger now, sharpened through the crises of the past two years. There is a mutual understanding and insight which is deeper than before, one which will provide a firmer footing as we face the challenge of recovery together.

In addition, we'll be working with other major institutions (know an 'Anchors'), which are also invested in Colchester and the wellbeing of our community, to help make the economy inclusive for everyone and to champion the Real Living Wage.

Executive Summary

A **strong economy** is vital for Colchester. Vital to provide residents with the jobs, income, health, and purpose they need; to allow businesses to flourish; to provide the infrastructure a growing place relies on; and to keep our borough vibrant, and attractive.

The Government's Levelling Up agenda places a renewed emphasis on inclusive economic growth so that existing inequalities are reduced. It also includes new possibilities for devolved power which we will want to harness for Colchester's benefit.

This Strategy sets out the role Colchester City Council and our partners will play in ensuring our economy includes everyone and to championing the Real Living Wage. It:

- ▶ Highlights the key assets and challenges of Colchester's economy
- ▶ Sets out our vision and priorities, along with principal objectives.
- ▶ Explains the thinking behind some of our aspirations
- ▶ Provides case studies to illustrate the type of work we will encourage to achieve our priorities
- ▶ Highlights the factors that influence us
- ▶ Describes how we will work with partners

Colchester's economy is dominated by **small and micro businesses** representing 93% of businesses in the Borough. The core sectors creating jobs and growth in Colchester are **tourism, advanced manufacturing, financial services, and retail**. Growth sectors include **creative/digital/tech, care, green energy, and construction**.

Colchester is characterised by its:

- ▶ **Business diversity** – no one sector or employer dominates the Colchester economy.
- ▶ **Quality of place** – Colchester has a rich mix of heritage, museums, galleries, open spaces and leisure choices.
- ▶ **Growth potential** – By 2030 the Borough's population is projected to be over 214,000.
- ▶ **Business resilience** – Colchester's businesses demonstrated impressive adaptability during the crisis phase of the pandemic.
- ▶ **Connectedness** – Key partners work together in established relationships to capitalise on economic opportunities
- ▶ **Strong infrastructure investment** – Good road and public transport links are complimented by Ultrafast Broadband and 5G
- ▶ **Ambition** - Colchester is keen to realise its potential as a city to live, work, study, visit and do business.

However, the data and our engagement show our economy faces challenges we need to work together to overcome. These include:

- ▶ **Skills Gaps** – Colchester has lower levels of employees with higher level NVQs compared to the regional and national averages.
- ▶ **Polarisation of incomes** – Colchester's strengths in tourism, hospitality and care tend to be at the lower end of the pay spectrum compared to commuter salaries in The City.
- ▶ **Competition from other places** – As well as the need to capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city, there is a need to invest in Colchester to further modernise its digital and transport infrastructure, protect its appeal, and attract and retain businesses and the people who work in them.
- ▶ **Climate emergency** – Colchester's economy will be affected by the climate emergency and by the need to decarbonise. However, the shift to greener energy presents opportunities as well as challenges.

We have adopted a new vision and four priorities for Colchester:

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential

PEOPLE:

We support inclusive economic growth by encouraging business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage.

- ▶ Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation and new businesses.
- ▶ Work with partners and stakeholders to address skills shortages.
- ▶ Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- ▶ Sustain the local economy with high quality business support, information and guidance.
- ▶ Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.

PLACE:

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage inward investment in the City, and facilitate improved infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

- ▶ Identify and secure funding to enhance Colchester and boost the economy.
- ▶ Identify and pursue projects which support key sector development.
- ▶ Support and encourage inward investment.
- ▶ Develop a new Digital Strategy as a competitive edge and to enhance skills.
- ▶ Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place.

PARTNERSHIPS:

We engage widely with partners and anchor institutions at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

- ▶ Engage with partners to promote Colchester's economic interests.
- ▶ Support the work of partners in offering business support to enable recovery and growth.
- ▶ Help develop a more connected and influential place.
- ▶ Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building.

PLANET:

We work with partners to improve the environment of our place, accelerate the decarbonisation of Colchester economy and reduce the environmental impact of business activities.

- ▶ Support initiatives to enhance the quality of the environment.
- ▶ Help local businesses reduce their carbon emissions.
- ▶ Support development of local green technology businesses.
- ▶ Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy' businesses.

What is Inclusive Economic Growth?

'Inclusive Economic Growth' is rising prosperity that includes everyone, that reduces inequalities, and is sustainable. We will work to achieve more inclusive growth in all our work. It takes a more holistic approach to improving people's lives because a fairer economy is a stronger economy which narrows inequalities.

Following the adoption of this strategy, we will develop annual action plans to ensure our work is directed to achieve our priorities.

We have not developed this strategy in a vacuum. Instead, we are actively involved in partnerships covering a wide range of issues, both economic and social, and have developed mature relationships with partner agencies. As a result, we have developed this strategy:

- ▶ By engaging with a local business, and with local and regional stakeholders
- ▶ Based on evidence emerging from relevant statistics and reports
- ▶ To align with the priorities of our neighbours and partners

Our engagement has taken the form of surveys of local businesses, 1-to-1 conversations, and engagement workshops. This has allowed us to test current thinking, explore opportunities and challenges, and identify possible priorities. It has confirmed that a new strategy is timely, and our enabling approach is appropriate.

More than 500 businesses responded to our surveys; and consultation workshops included representatives from the BEST Growth Hub, Colbea, Colchester BID, Essex County Council, Essex University, and Let's Do Business plus other Council teams, including Amphora Trading, Business Rates, Communications, Housing, Licensing, Planning, and Climate Change.

Themes which were stressed during these engagement workshops included the positive mindsets of most businesses, the skills challenge and how it differs between sectors, the importance of inclusive economic growth, the need for translation and support with the 'green challenge', and the support for working together to attract new investment. Analysis of partner strategies also confirms these general themes to be reflective of current key issues and thinking.

The typical comments from the consultations below coalesce around emerging priority areas.

"Businesses are facing unprecedented pressures. They need hand-holding if they are to go greener, they can't do it by themselves."

"There's a lot of people moving sectors right now. We are facing real difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Skills development and keeping those skills in the business is a real priority for us now as we can't buy new people in as easily as before."

"The pandemic has really brought home that business is about people and trust. It has brought home how vital partnerships are in delivering our own ambitions. We need to create, sustain and build on that virtuous circle."

"The past 18 months has shown how Colchester is out-performing other places. We need to capitalise on this. Everything is here to make that happen now. We should be more confident about that."



The oyster fisheries at Mersea supply demand from around the world.

Colchester's Economic Context

Colchester's economic assets

Our appreciation of the key assets of Colchester's economy has informed our choice of priorities. By recognising these and building on them we can amplify our impact. Colchester's key assets include:

Construction is one of Colchester's core economic sectors and one where skills are in great demand.

- ▶ **BUSINESS DIVERSITY** – no one sector or employer dominates the Colchester economy. 93% of Colchester's businesses are micro/small. This has helped Colchester to weather economic shocks such as the financial crisis of 2008/9.
- ▶ **QUALITY OF PLACE** – Colchester has a rich mix of heritage and archaeology, award-winning parks and open spaces including the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, unique communities such as Mersea Island plus nationally recognised cultural offers at Firstsite and the Mercury Theatre. Colchester Borough is truly unique and offers a high quality of life. Colchester and the surrounding area are increasingly appreciated by visitors. Recent

years have seen an additional 6 new hotels expanding visitor choice and changing Colchester from a daytrip to a short-break destination. Visitor figures demonstrate its increasing popularity: 6.6m trips were taken in the Borough in 2019 and the visitor economy was worth some £394m and supported more than 5400 jobs.

- ▶ **GROWTH POTENTIAL** – By 2030 the Borough's population is projected to be over 214,000. That's higher than the current populations of Norwich and Aberdeen. This growth presents economic opportunities, especially for key sectors like construction. The Borough has been open to growth and attracted an estimated £336m investment between 2014-2021.

- ▶ **BUSINESS RESILIENCE** – Colchester's business community demonstrated impressive adaptability during the crisis phase of the pandemic. Businesses, joined together, supported each other, and pivoted business models to online and home deliveries, often within days.
- ▶ **CONNECTEDNESS** – The pandemic has drawn the key players in Colchester together like never before. Established relationships have been built on trust, with a willingness to work together showing results such as the £19.2m Town Deal regeneration programme. Colchester works together in partnerships which deliver meaningful connections into their respective networks. We look forward to continuing to work with We Are Colchester, the University of Essex, Colbea, the Our Colchester BID, the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses to maximise the economic value from these connections.
- ▶ **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT** – with good road and public transport links, a strong transport investment pipeline plus a £48m further rollout of Ultrafast Broadband and 5G Colchester will be able to compete effectively, inspiring innovation, delivering more tech jobs and enabling people to improve their IT skills and employability prospects.
- ▶ **AMBITION** – Colchester is keen to realise its potential as a city to live, work, study, visit and do business. and work with our anchor institutions to make the economy inclusive for everyone and to champion the Real Living Wage.



Artist's impression of St Nicholas Square regeneration project in Colchester town centre, encouraging dwell time and improving the experience of the town.



Colchester has significant gigabit broadband reach and this is set to expand with a further investment of £48m of private investment from Swedish fibre installation specialist, VX Fiber.



The reimagined £11m Mercury Theatre which reopened during 2021 providing a welcome boost to the town centre following multiple pandemic lockdowns.

Confidence in Colchester: Recent Investments

supporting growth and core sectors through inward investment. Bringing more businesses, more jobs and more choice to Colchester.

Colchester is an **investment hot-spot**. Between 2015 and 2021 £333.8m has been invested by the private and public sector. They brought new jobs, new opportunities for learning, added choice, improved quality of the experience of Colchester and made it even more investable. The previous

Colchester Economic Growth Strategy 2015-21 identified 8 core and growth sectors in Colchester's economy. This table identifies headline projects which have been delivered in this time period to showcase how these sectors have been supported, often with inward investment.

1 TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & LEISURE – INVESTING IN BRITAIN'S OLDEST RECORDED TOWN AND FIRST CITY
£86.4m which brought a redisplayed Castle Museum, 6 new/refurbished hotels, David Lloyd Leisure and new Sports Centre and cycle circuit at Northern Gateway and the reimagined Mercury Theatre.

2 CREATIVE, DIGITAL AND TECH
 The **£2.6m** Creative Business Centre was opened in the former old Police Station in Queen Street. It is operated by SPACE Studios and offers workspace for over 40 businesses.

3 HEALTH AND CARE
 Partnerships have been formed to explore the potential around this sector. Given the ageing population in north Essex there is potential for more technological solutions to be explored. This is a long running project with high aspiration which will continue into the next iteration of the strategy.

4 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR HOMES AND BUSINESSES AT THE NORTHERN GATEWAY
 Our flagship Government funded **£3.5m** energy project sees the construction of a carbon-cutting,

District Heat Network at Colchester Northern Gateway to supply heat and hot water to the developments' homes and businesses.

Reducing our carbon emissions is an important part of meeting climate change goals and the Heat Network will significantly reduce carbon emissions caused by heating homes and offices and will generate a source of hot water to replace boilers in the new homes being built.

It also means better value for households as district heat networks offer competitive and stable energy prices over the long term.

5 SUPPORTING RETAIL

Town Centre transformation – £55.1m which delivered the new Fenwick store, the new Primark store, Ultrafast gigabit broadband, upgrade of Priory Street car park, a new public space around The Mercury Theatre and 9 'Parklet' wooden seats in the High Street and other projects in the pipeline.

New retail routes to market and skills development – working in partnership with other local authorities the Council commissioned Click it Local to work with the Our Colchester BID and local independent retailers to extend their skills to offer their products online free of charge through a universal shopping basket like Amazon. It has also helped new home-based businesses to test effective routes to market giving them the best possible start.

New Retail beyond the Town Centre offering shopping choice for a growing population **£72m** new retail centre at Stane Park, Stanway.



The £12m Innovation Centre at the University of Essex, providing work and collaboration space for 50 tech companies.

6 CONSTRUCTION

The majority of these projects support the construction sector and its lengthy supply chains, including many local businesses. In addition, there was:

- ▶ **New Office Spaces** for start-up and young businesses **£7.3m** which delivered Amphora I and II in Sheepen Road and the Creative Business Centre at 37 Queen Street.
- ▶ **Investment in the Student Experience** at the University of Essex and Colchester Institute – a strong skills pipeline for Colchester **£85.5m** which delivered a new STEM Centre at both institutions, the Essex Business School and Silberrad Student Centre at the University and a new Care Skills Centre at the Institute.
- ▶ **New Businesses Encouraged** to locate University at The Knowledge Gateway to capitalise on a global academic talent pool **£27m** which brought Parkside Office spaces and the Innovation Centre.



Replenishh is part of the Rapid Electronics group and is playing a vital role in supporting the Electronic Vehicles industry to build the UK's EV charging network.

7 FINANCIAL SERVICES

The lack of high quality office space was identified as a need in the previous strategy. This was partly addressed with the construction of two office builds constructed by the Council's sister company, Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd, which both support the financial services sector. Birkett Long LLP now operates from

the prestigious **£2.7m** Amphora Place shortly followed by insurance merger Aston Lark's neighbouring **£2m** office space.

8 ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Very specialist and a mature sector in Colchester. The Ultrafast broadband digital infrastructure project supports the growth of this sector.

These major investments in Colchester over the past four years has come from both public and private investors. Their investment has: driven economic growth delivering significant numbers of new jobs, raised the ceiling value of commercial rents, improved the image and reputation of Colchester and has made it a better place to live, work, study, visit and do business.

The forward pipeline is positive too with 2022 promising to deliver **more multi-million pound projects** including:

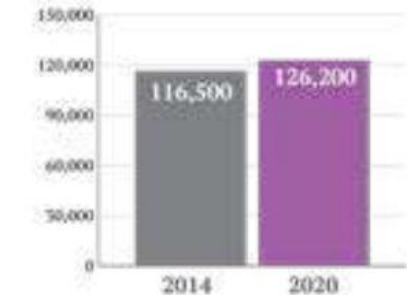
- ▶ the expansion of Ultrafast Broadband,
- ▶ a new teaching and business facility at Colchester Hospital,
- ▶ further expansion of the Parkside Office Village at the University of Essex,
- ▶ various projects commencing from the £19.2m Town Deal programme,
- ▶ and the installation of a 5G network.

Colchester's Economic Profile



WORKING AGE POPULATION

The working age population has grown by 8.3% over this time. It's also clear that considerable growth is taking place beyond the working age population, particularly in the older age groups.

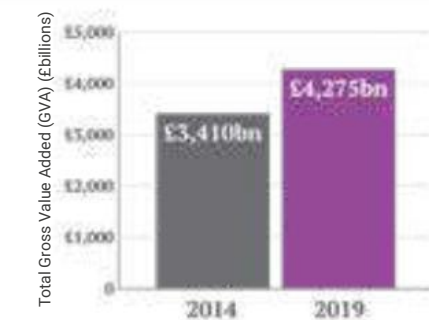


Source: Nomis ONS



GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA)

A measure of the Borough's total productivity. From 2014 to 2019 the Borough's GVA or productivity rose by 25.4%.



Source: EEFM



INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

The Indices provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small local areas with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households across England. Colchester is characterised as having relatively low levels of deprivation.

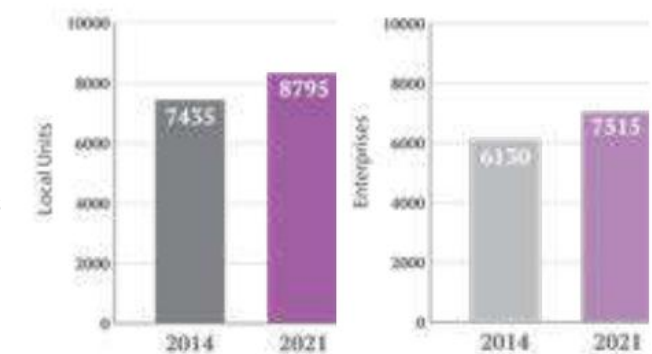


Source: Department of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019



NUMBER OF BUSINESSES

The difference between local units and enterprises can be explained by chain businesses. Tesco for instance is one business (enterprise) but has multiple units in Colchester (local units). There was an 18.3% increase in the number of local units over this period compared with a 22.6% increase in the number of enterprises.



Source: ONS

Colchester's Economic Challenges



Our priorities will address the principal challenges the data and our engagement have highlighted. They are:

► **SKILLS GAPS** Colchester has lower levels of employees with higher level NVQs compared to the regional and national averages. Apprenticeships numbers are also falling. In addition, 17 neighbourhoods in Colchester are among the most deprived 40% in England for education, skills and training. Yet local employers have an increasing need for skilled employees who can adapt and flex as the needs of businesses change.

There is a rapidly increasing need for improved digital and tech skills, health and care skills and the need for innovation in delivering them. Colchester's strength in the creative industries combined with multi-million-pound investments in providing digital infrastructure and £1m training facilities at the former Wilson Marriage Centre provide a strong foundation to develop and retain these key skills.



The Business School at the University of Essex, providing highly skilled graduates into the workforce and helping companies through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.



Woods Air Movement is a global player in building ventilation, fire safety and bespoke industrial projects.

► **POLARISATION OF INCOMES** The tourism, hospitality and care sectors which are strong in Colchester, tend to be lower paid compared to the higher paid work available to commuters to London. However, Colchester has an opportunity to attract more higher paid work through its investment in digital infrastructure and innovation in training opportunities. Projects such as the conversion of the old Bus Depot in St Botolph's Street into a £5.6m Digital Hub are intended to put Colchester on the leading edge of Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality technologies.

► **COMPETITION FROM OTHER PLACES** As well as the need to capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city, there is a need to invest in Colchester to further modernise its digital and transport infrastructure, provide more homes for a growing population, protect its appeal as a great place to live and work, and attract and retain businesses. Colchester is a strategic location for business in the region. Significantly, it also has well-located land available which adds to the inward investment

offer. However, businesses are facing difficult decisions to keep their business viable and to navigate their way through this challenging economic climate.

► **CLIMATE EMERGENCY** Businesses are facing the increasingly urgent need to meet the challenges of the climate emergency. The adaptations required to meet targets to decarbonise, as to capitalise on the opportunities these present, create a need for specialist business support. The Government's Ten Point Plan aims to support up to 250,000 jobs by 2030 for engineers, fitters, construction workers and many others engaged in supporting clean energy so there are significant skills gaps here too. The Government has announced over £5 billion to support a green recovery and enable the UK to meet the overall Government commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Local consultation found businesses need help adapting to this agenda.

This Strategy acknowledges new economic realities at play. These compliment and challenge the traditional economy of companies and firms producing goods and services, employing people and needing skills, space, and land to do so:

- ▶ **Circular Economy** of recycling and upcycling
- ▶ **Sharing Economy** where purchase of new is replaced by the renting/ sharing/bartering and swapping of existing products
- ▶ **Local Economies:** economic impact of working from home, the potential for developing 'The 20 Minute Neighbourhood'
- ▶ **Online Economy** - last mile deliveries and 'Lockdown Entrepreneurialism'
- ▶ **The Gig Economy** - Traditional 9-5 jobs are declining and those that had them are leaving the labour market. Now we have the gig economy and portfolio incomes, especially for younger people. Previous strategies emphasised

core and growth sectors. However, The Pandemic has affected people; their ability to work, work productively and their future prospects across gender and age bands – so the socio-economic dimension needs to be included as does social value.

- ▶ **New forms of community power**, ownership and influence alongside the traditional private and public sector approach. Social entrepreneurship would include Community Interest Companies CICs, Social Enterprises VCSEs, Foundation Trusts – new forms of supply of products and services to meet demand from the community and beyond.



Colchester's e-cargo bikes capitalising on the rising demand for home deliveries and helping local independent businesses and the environment at the same time.

Our Strategy

AN OVERARCHING VISION FOR COLCHESTER HAS BEEN ADOPTED:

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential

FOUR PRIORITIES HAVE BEEN ADOPTED:

PEOPLE:

We support inclusive economic growth by encouraging business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage

Where we will

- ▶ Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation and new businesses.
- ▶ Work with partners and stakeholders to address skills shortages.
- ▶ Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- ▶ Sustain the local economy with high quality business support, information and guidance.
- ▶ Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.

PLACE:

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage inward investment in the City, and facilitate improved infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

Where we will

- ▶ Identify and secure funding to enhance Colchester and boost the economy.
- ▶ Identify and pursue projects which support key sector development.
- ▶ Support and encourage inward investment.
- ▶ Develop a new Digital Strategy as a competitive edge and to enhance skills.

- ▶ Capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city.
- ▶ Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place.

PARTNERSHIPS:

We engage widely with partners and anchor institutions at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

Where we will

- ▶ Engage with partners to promote Colchester's economic interests.
- ▶ Support the work of partners in offering business support to enable recovery and growth.
- ▶ Help develop a more connected and influential place.
- ▶ Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building.

PLANET:

We work with partners to improve the environment of our place, accelerate the decarbonisation of Colchester economy and reduce the environmental impact of business activities.

Where we will

- ▶ Support initiatives to enhance the quality of the environment.
- ▶ Help local businesses reduce their carbon emissions.
- ▶ Support development of local green technology businesses.
- ▶ Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy'.

PEOPLE

There's a lot of people moving sectors right now. We are facing real difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Skills development and keeping those skills in the business is a real priority for us now as we can't buy new people in as easily as before.

PRIORITY

We support inclusive economic growth by **encouraging** business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage.

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation amongst local businesses and to attract cutting-edge businesses to the borough.
- ▶ Work with partners and stakeholders to develop a Skills Programme which will link the needs of businesses with the improved skills of local people.
- ▶ Sustain the local economy by retaining and developing existing businesses with high quality business support: information, advice and guidance.
- ▶ Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- ▶ Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.

CASE STUDY | THE COLCHESTER AMBASSADORS' GROUP

The Colchester Ambassadors' Group are a group of inspirational business people who run many of the borough's key organisations and share a vision and passion for the Borough. With members from industry together with representatives from education, the group is well-placed to understand the importance of acquiring and retaining skills in the workplace. This has been brought into sharp focus recently as the labour market is experiencing major supply issues as people move sectors, there are difficulties in recruitment and retention and new ways of

working are demanding rapidly changing skill sets. The Ambassadors' Group is working with Colchester Borough Council and its partners to establish strengths and existing work programmes which support the local skills pipeline. The task now is to identify a series of local actions which will meet the requirements of the imminent Skills and Post-16 Education legislation. It is hoped that this work will make it easier for local businesses to access the talent they need to recover and survive and improve local people's lives through improving their skills and prospects.

By adopting this strategy we seek to:

▶ Address the key challenges Colchester's economy faces

▶ Build on the strengths and assets of Colchester's economy and its new status as a city

▶ Harmonise our work with partners and their strategies

▶ Help positively shape our Place

▶ Capitalise on the new opportunities for devolution contained in the Levelling Up White Paper

▶ Help businesses play their role

▶ Mobilise the opportunity around Colchester's anchor institutions

▶ Aspire to a higher wage economy

▶ Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast growing place

PLACE

“The past 18 months has shown how Colchester is out-performing other places. We need to capitalise on this. Everything is here to make that happen now. We should be more confident about that.”

PRIORITY

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage **inward investment** in the City, and facilitate **improved** infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Identify and secure funding to enhance our place and boost the economy (such as the Shared Prosperity Fund)
- ▶ Identifying and pursuing projects which support key sectors in the economy to emerge, develop and grow
- ▶ Support initiatives to encourage inward investment, especially on designated available land
- ▶ Work with partners to develop a new Digital Strategy which delivers competitive infrastructure to enable the growth of our borough and enables the development of digital skills of people within the workforce
- ▶ Capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city
- ▶ Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place



Wivenhoe House Hotel: home to The Edge Hotel School, developing future leaders of the hospitality industry by offering valuable, practical experience of running a 4* country house hotel whilst studying for a Degree

CASE STUDY | **THE TOWN DEAL** REGENERATION PROGRAMME

March 2021 saw Colchester awarded £19.2m from the Government's Town Deal regeneration fund. The bid was led by We Are Colchester, a group of local stakeholders and partners who worked with Colchester Borough Council to identify where the need was and develop a series of projects for the funding to address those needs.

Colchester's Digital Strategy was launched in 2017 with an ambition to further its economic growth plans through improving connectivity. The Strategy set out its intention to become the best-connected place in the Eastern region making it a magnet for creative, digital, technology and IT businesses. Capable of competing with the better-known tech clusters around the UK like Edinburgh, Cambridge and Bristol.

The Town Deal funding has a project stream which will deliver:

- ▶ **Queen Street Digital Working hub** – which will provide high quality, local workspace on the site of the old Bus Depot in Queen Street. This will help to nurture local talent and put Colchester on the international map for leading tech, digital and creative businesses.

- ▶ **Wilson Marriage Centre** – will be redeveloped as a digital skills hub. This will support training, development, provide access to digital facilities and offer community activities. This will give adults across Colchester increased opportunities to re-skill and re-train so as to be better able to meet the needs of local employers.

- ▶ **5G provision** – this massive leap in technological capability delivered through mobile phones will transform our lives even further. This investment will give Colchester a competitive advantage, encouraging employers into the town, new businesses to be set up and enabling existing businesses to exploit new business opportunities.

These projects will transform places in and around Colchester by making them more accessible, more supportive of their communities and make Colchester a place known for its leadership in digital connectivity.

PARTNERSHIPS

“The pandemic has really brought home that business is about people and trust. It has brought home how vital partnerships are in delivering our own ambitions. We need to create, sustain and build on that virtuous circle.”

PRIORITY

We engage widely with **partners and anchor institutions** at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Engage with partners and anchor institutions such as ECC, NEEB, the University of Essex and the NHS to promote Colchester's economic interests in their work
- ▶ Support the work of local partners to ensure that information, advice, and guidance for the Borough's businesses is sustained to enable economic recovery and growth
- ▶ Help develop a more connected and influential place
- ▶ Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building

CASE STUDY | THE OUR COLCHESTER BID LEISURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

The Our Colchester Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led partnership that enables coordinated investment in the management and marketing of a defined area. In Colchester's case it is the town centre and the BID has a membership of around 500 businesses. Recognising that the town centre has a 24-hour economy and the impact that the Pandemic is having on tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses, the BID led on the development of a Leisure Recovery Strategy.

The Strategy is based on research with residents, visitors, students, businesses, public bodies, voluntary organisations and other valued stakeholders. The plan includes core strategies, objectives, actions and progress indicators to support the recovery of the town's leisure sector over the next 5-10 years.

Plans are taking shape as the Strategy is in the final stages of formation but it's clear that many businesses will need business support to stabilise and navigate into recovery.

Connections are being made so that duplication of effort is spotted and stopped, ensuring that the right experience and advice is given at the right time. When combined with the ability to come together and mobilise quickly to apply for funding the essence of partnership working is at its most effective.

It is hoped that these interventions will help leisure businesses to take their place in Colchester's leisure economy, offering customers a wide choice of places to go, things to see and do which are such asset to the people who live, work and visit the Borough.

PLANET

“Businesses are facing unprecedented pressures. They need hand-holding if they are to go greener, they can't do it by themselves.”

PRIORITY

We work with partners to improve the **environment** of our place and accelerate the **decarbonisation** of Colchester economy.

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Support initiatives to enhance the quality of our environment
- ▶ Work with partners to support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions to achieve net zero goals
- ▶ Support the development of green technology businesses in the borough
- ▶ Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy'

CASE STUDY | THE RACE TO NET ZERO BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

November 2021 saw the UK host COP26 – The 26th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. World leaders met negotiate international agreements to limit greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. But what can be done at local level?

Businesses are aware of the need for change and many are willing to make changes but Covid impacts are dominant currently and for many sectors it's about survival at the moment. Chains and large companies arguably have more capacity and are actively working for change than SMEs through their **Environmental and Social Governance policies** (ESG). But the majority of Colchester's businesses are small and micro enterprises who need support if they are to make meaningful change.

Colbea, the **Colchester Business Enterprise Agency**, has 40 years' experience in providing business support to Colchester businesses.

It is a well-respected organisation which has risen to the challenge of providing high quality business support, funded by CBC, over the past year. It has made a positive difference to Colchester's economic response to the pandemic and now it has the opportunity to do the same for green growth by providing a local business support programme which will take our SME business base through a targeted programme of positive environmental impact transition. It is hoped that this programme will enable local businesses to understand the scope of action needed, identify costs and savings associated with those actions, discover opportunities for new/ adapted products and services and target those markets which need them. Ultimately, reducing their environmental impacts across the board including waste, energy, materials, supply chain contributions, contract procurement competitiveness and carbon emissions in the race to Net Zero.

A DEEPER DIVE INTO SOME ECONOMIC ASPIRATIONS FOR COLCHESTER



Aspirations for a Higher-Wage Economy

The Minimum Wage came into effect in 1988. It is a legal requirement for those aged under 23. For those aged over 23 the National Living Wage applies. However, in recent years the concept of the Real Living Wage has emerged. This is an independent calculation of the cost of living based on a basket of household goods and services.

We recognise that employers are facing unprecedented cost pressures at the moment, but our ambition for Colchester is for a higher wage economy where all employers *that can afford to do so*, pay the Real Living Wage as a minimum.

Research from [The Living Wage Foundation](#) shows that adopting the Real Living Wage:

- ▶ improves company reputation
- ▶ enhances attractiveness when recruiting, especially in a competitive market
- ▶ increases motivation and staff retention
- ▶ is a point of difference from the competition
- ▶ improves relations between management and staff



The Importance of Anchor Institutions in the Colchester Economy

Anchor Institutions are large, non-profit organisations which are the foundation of the local economy. Examples include local Councils, Universities and schools which have fixed assets, often employ local people and need substantial budgets to operate.

Anchor Institutions have a practical and leadership role in community wealth building through their procurement policies to benefit local businesses and places. They could redirect flows of wealth into locally rooted businesses which share the wealth they create with their employees, communities and consumers.

Understanding the Future Infrastructure Needs of a Fast-Growing Place

The importance of infrastructure is highlighted in national planning policy and needs to meet the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. This states that there's a need to engage with infrastructure providers and that plans should make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat) and community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure) and emergency services.

Colchester City Council will be undertaking an audit of infrastructure provision and identifying gaps in provision. This will help the Council and other stakeholders to understand and prioritise the allocation of resources, deliver services in future and prepare investment plans. It will also support future bids for funding.

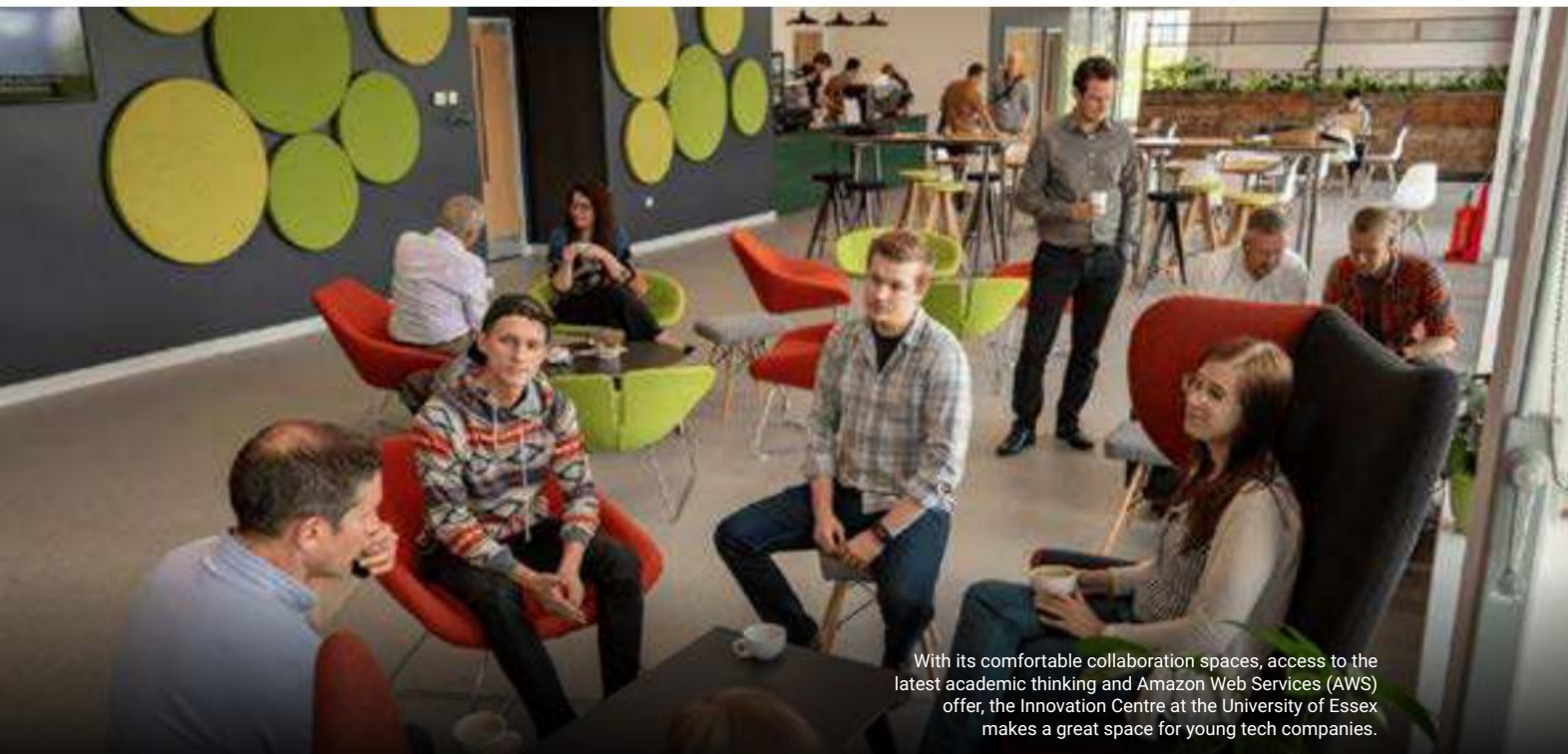


How We Work

Influences, Drivers and Partnerships

We work with partners from local to national and align with their strategies to achieve the **best for Colchester**. We use these strategies to help identify opportunities to attract investment for Colchester, often in the form of grants such as from the **Government's Towns' Fund**.

Nationally the **Government** plans to support economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation and to 'level-up' ([Build Back Better](#)).



With its comfortable collaboration spaces, access to the latest academic thinking and Amazon Web Services (AWS) offer, the Innovation Centre at the University of Essex makes a great space for young tech companies.

Regionally, we work with the **South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)**. This is one of 38 LEPS, established to provide the vision to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation. LEPS were set up by the Government to be the key body determining strategic economic priorities while making investments and delivering activities to drive growth and create jobs.

[Working Together for a Faster, Smarter and More Sustainable Economic Recovery](#)

We are an active member of the **North Essex Economic Board (NEEB)**. The NEEB is a partnership covering Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon, Tendring and Uttlesford districts, and Essex County Council. It aims to ensure the area can rise to the economic challenges and opportunities we face. Spanning 2020 to 2040, NEEB's ambitious strategy is the first bespoke economic strategy covering North Essex. Through the NEEB we have pooled resources to offer increased business support and skills training.

[North Essex Economic Strategy 2019](#)

Essex County Council (ECC) aims to stimulate growth in Essex over the next 15 years through its new Sector Strategy [ECC Sector Strategy](#)

It aims to:

- ▶ Make Essex a centre of **innovation** and **entrepreneurial** spirit where the benefits of this growth are felt within the county
- ▶ Create an **Economy for Everyone** - ensuring every resident of Essex has the opportunity to gain the skills and experience to succeed in the future economy regardless of their background and identity
- ▶ Shape an **Economy Fit for the Future** - centring green growth as intrinsic to all future growth to ensure we meet our target for a net-zero county by 2035

It identifies:

- ▶ **Enabler Sectors** - construction and digital
- ▶ **Heartbeat Sectors** - care, ageing population
- ▶ **Moonshot Stars** - predictors for growth: advanced engineering, manufacturing, space
- ▶ **Investment and market opportunities** what contributes to our district goals
- ▶ **Catalysts and caveats** - indirect benefits and supply chain impacts

[Colchester Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#)

The Council's key goals are:

- ▶ [Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability](#)
- ▶ [Creating safe, healthy, and active communities](#)
- ▶ [Delivering homes for people who need them](#)
- ▶ [Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits](#)
- ▶ [Celebrating our heritage and culture](#)
- ▶ [Achievements and next steps](#)

HOW WE WORK



Drone technology being used to monitor crop production to help farmers increase yields.



Health and care is a growth sector in north Essex due to its ageing population. Partnerships are forming to meet the challenge and the potential commercial opportunity.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with stakeholders. As well as setting out our priorities, it is intended to offer a framework for partners to inform decisions and investments.

This strategy forms part of a web of strategies and programmes which all contribute to driving economic and community development. For example, actions to address specific issues in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector are threaded through the Cultural Strategy, the Leisure Recovery Strategy, the BID's emerging Retail Strategy, the emerging Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, the Town Deal Investment Programme and our Levelling Up Fund bid.

Other contributing strategies and plans:

[The Our Colchester BID](#) – town centre promotion, business support and lobbying including the Leisure Recovery Strategy.

[Colbea Business Plan](#) – business support, advice and guidance, preparing companies to become greener, preparing companies for procurement opportunities, skills and employability training.

We Are Colchester [Town Deal Investment Plan](#) – place shaping and skills.

[The South East Local Enterprise Partnership \(SELEP\)](#) – is a partnership for growth between business, government, and education.

[The BEST Growth Hub](#) - Growth Hubs are government-funded, which enables them to provide support that is free at the point of delivery. BEST is the Growth Hub for Essed and works closely with Colbea to support local businesses.

[Local Transport Strategy](#) – ability to get to work or study.

[Anchor institutions](#) – are typically large, usually non-profit, public sector organisations whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the communities they serve. Anchor institutions can be galvanised to maximise economic benefit locally: jobs, skills, supply chains, procurement.

[Essex County Council Everyone's Essex Plan](#) and [South East Local Economic Partnership Skills Strategy](#) – integration and development in association with Colbea and employers.

[North Essex Economic Board Strategy / Success Essex Prosperity and Productivity Plan](#)

[Haven Gateway Partnership vision and objectives](#)

[The Colchester Ambassadors' Group](#)

[University of Essex](#) – international ambitions, talent retention opportunity, business development aspect through knowledge transfer partnerships.

[Colchester Institute](#) – skills pipeline for key sectors.

[Essex Chambers of Commerce](#)

[Federation of Small Business](#)

[ECC Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy](#) – This public health strategy prioritises work that empowers people's ability to work.

Essex Employers [Family Friendly Charter](#). This charter commits organisations to develop and agree principles that govern effective family friendly employment practice across the county. Signatories will gain a charter-mark to them promote family friendly practice in the employment market and wider supply chains.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

[Climate Emergency strategy and action plan](#)

[Communities Can](#) community enabling strategy.

North Essex Parking Partnership [Positive Parking Strategy](#) – affects Colchester's competitiveness as a place to shop, visit and work.

[Asset Management Strategy](#) – strategic land purchase for commercial (employment) use

[Housing and Homelessness Strategy](#) – security of tenure is a key factor in ability to work. Pandemic rent arrears and debt will increase poverty.

[Cultural Strategy](#) – importance in place shaping, image and reputation as well as quality of life in attracting families to invest their lives here (920 new homes a year), a different take on inward investment but arguably still valid.

[Colchester's Digital Strategy](#) - its impact on place competitiveness, new products, new markets, ability to work from home – inward investment opportunity.

[Licensing Policy](#) – affects business.

[Waste Vision and Strategy](#) – affects businesses

COMMUNITY

Community Wealth Building: to include the [One Colchester](#) strategy, the [Livewell Campaign](#), the Suffolk and North Essex ICS [Integrated Care System](#) work, CBC's [Greenspace Strategy](#) for social prescribing and economic and social wellbeing.

The Mercury Theatre addressing skills shortages through helping young people with personal development and technical skills development so that more gigs, festivals and productions can take place around the region and beyond.

Our Approach

At a time of limited resource for local government, we want to have as big a positive impact on Colchester's economy as possible. **We are open-minded to new opportunities, but our work is evidence driven.** We seek to make much more happen than we could directly do ourselves by working as envisaged in the Council's Communities Can approach:

- ▶ Constantly scanning the horizon to understand local need and what opportunities exist.
- ▶ Developing strong relationships to allow us to collaborate with others productively.
- ▶ Participating in effective partnerships to amplify the effect of our efforts.
- ▶ Encouraging partners to play to their strengths.
- ▶ Focusing on the borough's strengths rather than deficits to capitalise on opportunities.
- ▶ Using existing assets to leverage new investment, and
- ▶ Concentrating on our role as catalyst and facilitator rather than trying to 'do' everything ourselves.
- ▶ Understanding infrastructure needs around active travel, Ultrafast gigabit broadband infrastructure, 5G WiFi and the connectivity platforms required.



WHAT WE DO

Influence

Collaborate

Partner

Research

Facilitate

Catalyse

Invest

In particular, we have developed strong and trusting relationships with local agencies such as the **BID** and **Colbea**; are active members of effective partnerships such as **One Colchester**, **We Are Colchester**, and the **North Essex Economic Board (NEEB)**; and are strengthening existing ties by agreeing shared priorities such as with our anchor institutions and particularly with the **University of Essex** through a new Civic-University Agreement.

CASE STUDY | THE NORTH ESSEX ECONOMIC BOARD (NEEB)

– bridging the span between Government and District Councils through helping businesses when they need it most

Over recent years several councils across north Essex have been working increasingly closer together and never more so than during the Pandemic.

A strategic view was taken across the north Essex business landscape as Government grants came in during 2020/21. Realising that there would be a need to support businesses indirectly as they emerged into recovery, 10% of each district's grant fund was pooled to procure a variety of business support contracts across north Essex.

Each was put out to competitive tender and the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (Colbea) was awarded five of these contracts. Ashleigh Seymour-Rutherford, Colbea Chief Executive, said: "Working with local councils to provide the best outcome for their businesses and residents is what we do best". "Colbea is delighted to be delivering a well-rounded and extensive suite of support and advice for new and growing business; we recognise that behind every business is a person needing the tools to succeed and we provide the space to work learn and grow."



The training on offer is:

- ▶ **First Steps to Start-up Success** – an online comprehensive training course for those starting up or developing a new business. Split over two bite-sized sessions, this course takes you through the process of setting up and structuring your business.
- ▶ **Introduction to Finance** – an online course helping you to understand the fundamentals of finance and tax within your business.
- ▶ **Digital Skills** – six online sessions covering social media, project management, online sales, and your website.
- ▶ **Cyber Security** – an online session helping to protect you and your business from cyber threats and online fraud.
- ▶ **Import / Export Training** – six training courses available for those companies who are looking to start importing/exporting, or who are already in the industry and would like to enhance their skills.
- ▶ **Net Zero Business Support Programme** – offering a programme of business support activities to help SMEs across north Essex understand and lower their carbon emissions.

Most courses will be repeated throughout the year, so even the busiest schedules can be accommodated. Further information on all the courses will be available on the Colbea website: colbea.co.uk/business-training

To complement the training courses, one-to-one advice sessions for those looking to start a business are also available with Colbea's expert advisors, as well as more specialised advice for the import/export sector.

Cllr Tom Cunningham, from the North Essex Economic Board, encourages businesses to sign-up for the support.

"We are collectively funding this support because we know firms have had a tough time over the past two years, and the business landscape is ever changing," Cllr Cunningham said. *"There is so much opportunity in our growing area that we want to support local small and medium enterprises to really make the most of that – and what better way than to sharpen your skills and offer through this support."*

The North Essex Economic Board is also funding a skills programme, to ensure businesses can attract the right people to work for them, and other business support such as specialist sessions on key sectors.

Implementation and monitoring

This **Economic Strategy** has a life span of **three years** and sets out our **high-level priorities**. Each year we will produce an action plan to detail how we will work to achieve these priorities.

We will use existing partnerships as well as convening project groups to pursue specific actions.

Particular **monitoring** arrangements are in place for some projects (such as for the Town Deal) and we will use these to monitor and report progress on them. Many of these are inclusive partnerships such as **We are Colchester**.

We will **support** annual surveys of local businesses to add local intelligence to quantitative economic data to understand emerging need, opportunities as well as the impact of our work.

On top of this we will **report progress** against each year's actions plan to senior managers and to the relevant Portfolio Holder.

The Colchester Prospectus: a New City with Ambition and Potential

The conversation about Colchester has long been framed around the importance of its history and heritage. City status presents an opportunity to re-frame that conversation, to take a future view, to raise our gaze and discuss the kind of place it could and should be and how we might work with business to collectively realise its true potential.

Colchester is:

Extending and Intensifying its Enabling Digital Infrastructure

Colchester has long been a leader in investing in its digital infrastructure. The town has already secured more than £50m of government and private sector investment to build a large, open-access fibre network across much of the urban footprint. Gigabit connectivity is available in all the major residential and business clusters, with planned expansion closely interlinked with the exciting 5G and AR/VR programmes now taking shape.

Tim Robinson, Chief Executive of TechEast, the regional body responsible for accelerating growth of the digital and tech economy, said: *"Year after year 'team Colchester' is adding strategic new elements to its digital tech infrastructure and its new Angel network is already playing a key role in dealflow. As befits one of the UK's newest cities the range of digital skills support, startup incubators and plans for cross-sector innovation hubs is impressive and creates the conditions for the next wave of startups to form and then scale".*

Taking a view across these projects it's easy to see that Colchester has many of the ingredients fundamental to a tech cluster. A strong University majoring in computer science, data analytics, business leadership, incubation facilities at the Innovation

Centre on The Knowledge Gateway, a burgeoning creative sector and significant investment and delivery in a digital infrastructure.

It is also growing its own tech talent too and this, combined with flexible office space and significant housing growth and culture, heritage, sport leisure, shops, cafes, restaurants and bars and easy access to the coast and countryside, makes a compelling Colchester prospectus to attract further inward investment from all kinds of technology firms.

Such improved connectivity will enable the Internet of Things - devices and appliances connected together, 5G will bring much faster and more capable WiFi, improved cybersecurity, enable Blockchain technology development and sector specific tech developments.

But in the tech world it's often a breakthrough product which defines a link with its location. By nurturing and enabling tech start-ups and facilitating growth, skills and digital infrastructure Colchester is putting itself in a very strong position to become better known as a 'tech city.'

An Investment Hot-Spot

Between 2015-21 an estimated £333.8m had been invested in Colchester by the private and public sector. They brought new jobs, new opportunities for learning, added choice, improved quality of the experience of living, working, studying and visiting Colchester and made it even more investable.

Confidence continues. June 2022 saw the announcement that Colchester would be the global base for the new The AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation. This new centre will be built on the site of the former bus depot in Queen Street. It will become a world focus for all immersive innovations – the Metaverse

Formed in Colchester by Daniel Colaiani, who studied at the University of Essex, AIXR is an internationally respected

voice in the immersive industry. It is associated with global tech giants like Google, Microsoft, Oculus, hp, and Nvidia. Its purpose is to educate the world about XR – extended reality (an umbrella term for all immersive technologies), and what it can do for business.

The new centre will see Colchester as a global focus for all immersive Innovations in the XR industry and will form AIXR's base of international operations, institutionalising the technology for decades to come. It will be one central location, open to all within the community who want to learn about XR, grow within XR and connect with the most passionate people within the immersive world.



Designing New Places Offering a Blank Canvas for Business

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is a joint project between Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council. Given the national shortage of housing, Garden Communities are planned new communities designed to meet anticipated local growth, which will be a sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit. The TCBGC is based on the Garden Community principles.

The Garden Community will be delivered through a genuine partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward are shared and community empowerment enabled. The plan is for 7,500 – 9,000 homes (to be built over many years out to the 2050s), and is part of a long-term vision of Colchester and Tendring in partnership with Essex County Council to help meet the future growth of the area in a more strategic way.

A new Garden Community provides the opportunity to develop a community of sufficient scale to deliver and be served by new schools, health facilities, and job opportunities with good public transport links to existing town centres and employment areas.

The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced fundamental shifts to working patterns

that can be expected to result in lasting increases to home working and the need for supporting services in nearby centres. The Garden Community model is well-suited to support these new ways of working and we will provide high speed and reliable broadband to enable this.

The Garden Community is also well located, with the University of Essex nearby as well as international gateways with Stansted Airport and the ports at Harwich and Felixstowe along the A120 corridor. The TCBGC includes an allocation of 25 hectares of employment land and economic assessments have shown the equivalent of one job per new home built in the Garden Community is achievable. The 'one job per household' refers to both jobs within the Garden Community itself and within a sustainable commuting distance, so the employment area is wider than just the Garden Community.

And with new growth locations at the University of Essex's Parkside development at The Knowledge Gateway and at Colchester's Northern Gateway with easy access to the A12 trunk road and multiple opportunities to develop in the city centre, Colchester offers great choice for business location.





Building New Homes for a Growing Population

Colchester's ambition continues around housing and has seen more new housing completions than any other of the 13 Local Authorities in Essex.

Colchester's build rate reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward. This growth will continue with a further 920 new homes a year being built out to 2033.

But it's not all about the numbers. There is a concern also to ensure quality of place so that communities can emerge and develop solid foundations too. With an Adopted Local Plan, a visionary approach to developing the new Tendring/ Colchester Borders Garden Community and a commitment to developing affordable housing and a high quality of life, Colchester offers a strong housing offer for people to invest their lives here.



Investing in Skills Development

Colchester is working with partners in education and business to help build the skills the local workforce needs to take advantage of personal opportunities in the future and to enable businesses to compete effectively.

A known gap nationally is IT and Digital Skills and Colchester will be delivering a new:

- ▶ Digital Working Hub and grow-on space for the creative industries at the new AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation in the old bus depot in Queen Street
- ▶ Digital Skills Hub - developing the Wilson Marriage Centre to offer improved and transformed digital adult learning opportunities
- ▶ A range of projects funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund to address sectoral skills needs

As well as offering a series of management and business training through the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency it is hoped that this will help to:

- ▶ Upgrade skill levels
- ▶ Offer more career choice for local people
- ▶ Provide a supply of talent to local businesses
- ▶ Raise wage levels in the local economy
- ▶ Enable local businesses to innovate and compete for business

Increasing Business Support

Developing new spaces for businesses to grow to retain skills and talent to help businesses face the challenge and opportunity of growth, especially in the creative and digital sector. The new AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation in Queen Street will also offer larger spaces for business as well as access to latest technologies.

The Colchester Business Enterprise Agency and other support organisations are working to enable businesses to access information, advice and guidance in ever new ways to enable businesses to survive, recover and compete effectively.

Improving Transportation Links

Unlocking the full economic potential of transport corridors to improve access into and out of London.

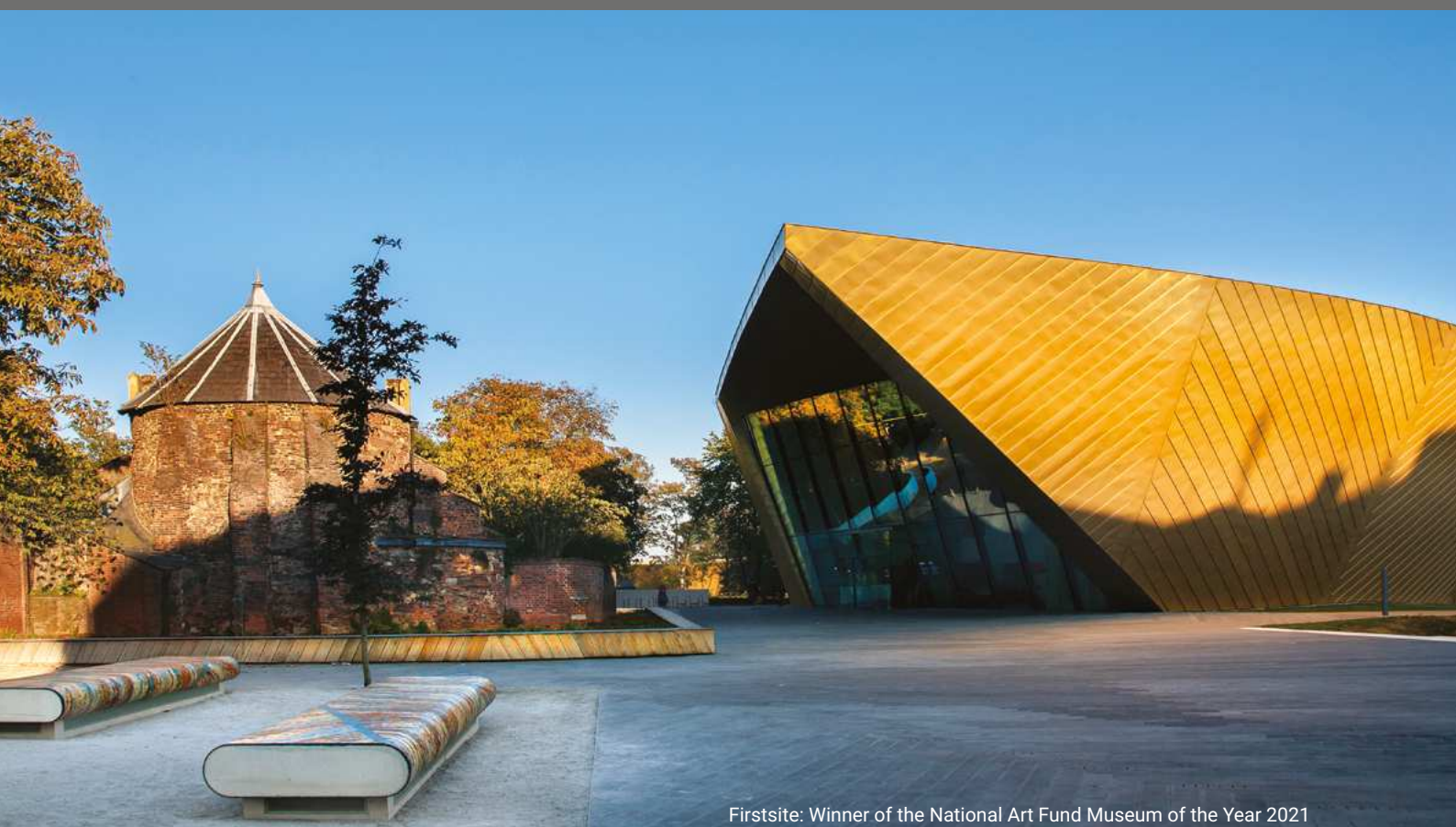
- ▶ A120 Haven Gateway - London Stansted Airport - Harwich
- ▶ A12 Brentwood - Chelmsford - Colchester
- ▶ Great Eastern Mainline Rail improvements

Find out more about how Colchester can help your business to meet your aspirations.
Contact: karen.turnbull@colchester.gov.uk Tel: 01206 282915.

Colchester Borough Council
Economic Development
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Summer 2022

COLCHESTER'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY

DATA DIGEST



Firstsite: Winner of the National Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021

2018-22



Contents:

Colchester's new Economic Strategy is due for publication in 2022. It has been developed from a comprehensive evidence base. This includes insights from local business surveys and other consultations, qualitative feedback from workshops, data and analysis from partner strategies, and monitoring of official datasets and reports to understand macro-economic trends.

This digest is a summary of this evidence base and includes:

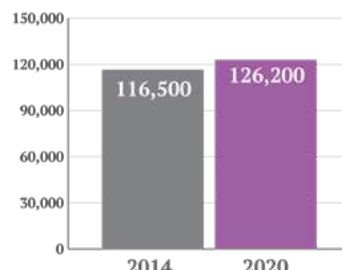
- ▶ A data dashboard of Colchester's economy
- ▶ Key statistics from our consultation with local businesses
- ▶ Information and data on sector specific drivers for growth, and
- ▶ A summary of key macro-economic issues affecting Colchester businesses.

Data Dashboard of Colchester's Economy



WORKING AGE POPULATION

The working age population has grown by 8.3% over this time. It's also clear that considerable growth is taking place beyond the working age population, particularly in the older age groups.

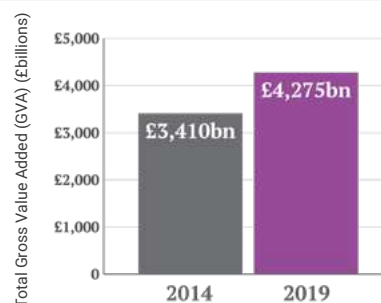


Source: Nomis ONS



GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA)

A measure of the Borough's total productivity. From 2014 to 2019 the Borough's GVA or productivity rose by 25.4%.



Source: EEFM



INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

The Indices provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small local areas with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households across England. Colchester is characterised as having relatively low levels of deprivation.



Source: Department of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019



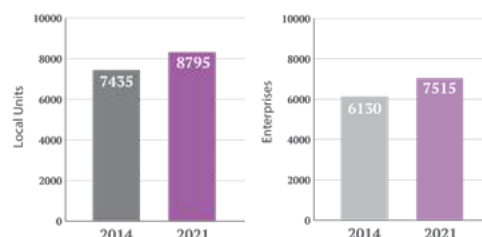
NATURE OF BUSINESSES

93% are Colchester's businesses are micro/small enterprises (with under 50 employees)



NUMBER OF BUSINESSES

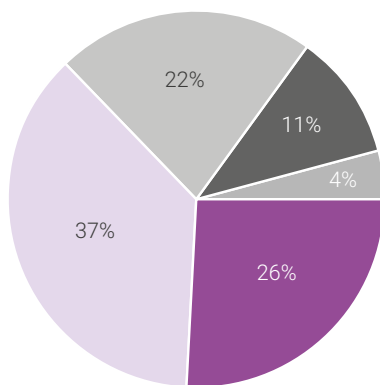
The difference between local units and enterprises can be explained by chain businesses. Tesco for instance is one business (enterprise) but has multiple units in Colchester (local units). There was an 18.3% increase in the number of local units over this period compared with a 22.6% increase in the number of enterprises.



Source: ONS

Key Statistics from Colchester Businesses

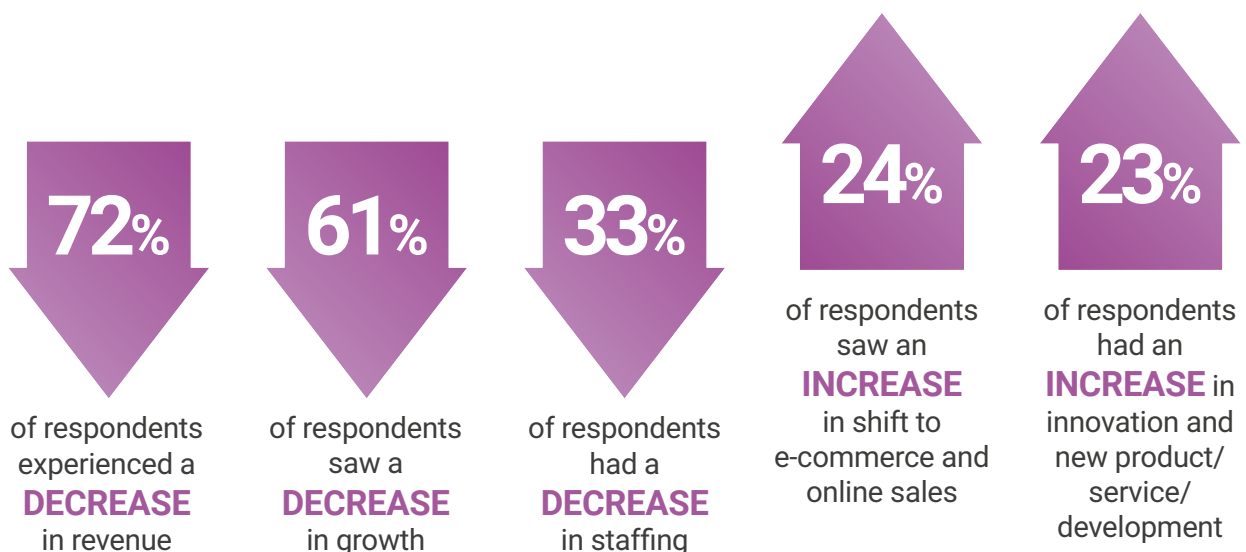
Consultation with businesses in September 2021 revealed that Covid has impacted the economy by driving change to business models and working practices but there is still confidence in Colchester as a place to do business.

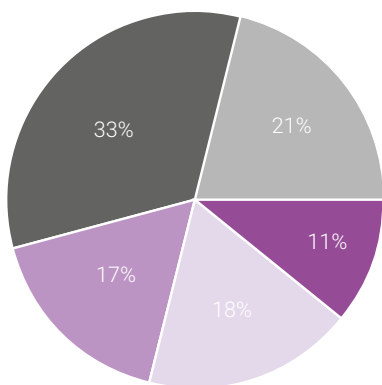


CHANGES TO BUSINESS MODELS

- ▶ **26%** of respondents made **NO** changes to their business model
- ▶ **37%** of respondents made **MINOR** adaptations to products offered, markets targeted, and distribution channels
- ▶ **22%** of respondents made **SIGNIFICANT** adaptations to products offered, markets targeted and distribution channels used
- ▶ **11%** of respondents had to take a **MAJOR** new approach to products, markets and distribution
- ▶ **4%** of respondents introduced a **NEW** model with new products, markets and/or distribution channels

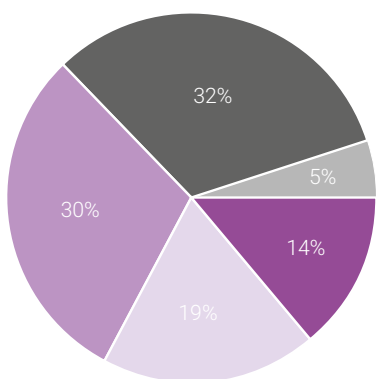
OTHER EFFECTS ON BUSINESS IN THE YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2021





CONFIDENCE AROUND BUSINESS RECOVERY (and this picture also reflected confidence levels around sector recovery)

- ▶ 11% of respondents said **NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 18% of respondents said **SLIGHTLY CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 17% of respondents were **NEUTRAL**
- ▶ 33% of respondents said **FAIRLY CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 21% of respondents were **VERY CONFIDENT**



CONFIDENCE AROUND THE RECOVERY OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

- ▶ 14% of respondents said **NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 19% of respondents said **SLIGHTLY CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 30% of respondents were **NEUTRAL**
- ▶ 32% of respondents said **FAIRLY CONFIDENT**
- ▶ 5% of respondents were **VERY CONFIDENT**



TOP 6 CONCERNS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

(@ September 2021, before the Ukrainian invasion)

FINANCIAL: REVENUE, CASHFLOW, COSTS	AVAILABILITY OF STOCK, MATERIALS, SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES	FURTHER COVID OUTBREAKS
RECRUITMENT, RETAINING, SUPPORTING AND TRAINING SKILLED EMPLOYEES	OLD CUSTOMERS RETURNING/FINDING NEW CUSTOMERS	PEOPLE RETURNING TO THE HIGH STREET/ TOWN CENTRE

Sector Specific Drivers for Growth

Colchester has four main growth sectors and four core sectors which have seen significant investment over the life of the current Economic Growth Strategy, eg: new hotels in the tourism sector, or have planned investment through the Town Deal, eg: the Digital Hub in the former Bus Depot in Queen Street.

► **GROWTH SECTORS:** construction, creative and digital, alternative energy and health and care

► **CORE SECTORS:** advanced manufacturing, financial services, retail and tourism

ECC's emerging Sector Development Strategy (2022) identifies five sectors with significant growth potential that could be realised in the county. They are: Construction and Retrofit; Clean Energy; Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering; Digitech; and Life

Sciences (including med-tech and care-tech)

Colchester's, strong cultural sector and visitor economy will also have an important role in building the profile of north Essex as an attractive place to visit, live, and do business to secure inward investment. Colchester's significant investment in the future development of 5G and Ultrafast Broadband will place it at the forefront of the tech opportunities identified within many of these sectors below.



CONSTRUCTION:

KEY DRIVERS OF SECTOR GROWTH WILL BE:

- **HOUSEBUILDING TARGETS** – ECC forecast over 40,000 houses will be built in Essex over the next five years, with the construction of six new garden communities over the next 15 years adding 55,000 on top of a further 93,000 homes allocated in local plans up to 2036. Colchester has an annual target to build 920 new homes a year to 2033 including the new Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community.
- **MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS** – there are a number of significant projects both within the county and nearby that will drive demand in the sector, including the Lower Thames Crossing; and the creation of two new freeports at Freeport East (Harwich/Felixstowe) and Thames Freeport (London Gateway, Tilbury and Dagenham). Colchester has significant infrastructure investment planned or in delivery, including the £19.2m Town Deal investment plan and the £48m investment in digital infrastructure.

- ▶ **CLEAN ENERGY** – there are a number of important offshore wind projects that will draw on the construction sector such as Harwich (North Falls and Five Estuaries) and a number of solar opportunities throughout the county.
- ▶ **RETROFIT** – there is an estimated £1-1.75b economic opportunity to deliver retrofit across Essex.



GREEN ENERGY:

KEY DRIVERS OF SECTOR GROWTH WILL BE:

- ▶ The UK holds a leading global position in offshore wind capacity and the sector is expected to experience significant growth, with increase in demand for workers and skills ahead of the government's goal of 40 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind by 2030.
- ▶ By 2026 nationally, the sector could employ around 70,000 workers (40,000 direct jobs and 30,000 jobs in the supply chain) compares to around 26,000 presently.
- ▶ The government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener sets out the ambition for:
 - ▶ Supporting up to 59,000 jobs in 2024 and up to 120,000 jobs in 2030 across all elements of the sector, from innovative hydrogen production to offshore wind, as well as mobilising additional public and private investment of £150-270 billion
 - ▶ Deliver 5 GW of hydrogen production capacity by 2030, whilst halving emissions from oil and gas
 - ▶ Fully decarbonising the UK's power system by 2035

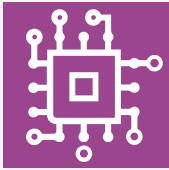


ADVANCED MANUFACTURING:

A GROWTH SECTOR AS WELL AS AN ENABLING SECTOR

- ▶ Essex has a rich history in engineering and manufacturing electronic devices, especially complex ones. Today Essex boasts a burgeoning and growing sector which specialises in the manufacture and use of different electronics used in space, from solar panels on the Hubble Space telescope to sensors and items used on the Mars rover. Colchester's long history of manufacturing is evolving to meet new opportunities. For example: Rapid Electronics is diversifying into supplying charging infrastructure for electronic vehicles through its subsidiary, Replenishh.
- ▶ The sector will be crucial to help build a more resilient and self-sufficient Essex economy to enable and support the planned growth in green energy, construction and retrofit sectors.
- ▶ The space industry is an important sub-sector for Essex with significant potential opportunities – the UK Government has an ambition to capture 10 billion of the global space industry by 2030, worth an estimate £40 billion per annum, and the Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) and UK Space Agency have already identified a number of Essex businesses which are already operating within the sector.

- ▶ Essex is ideally placed to exploit the opportunity and create future sector growth, growing existing businesses, creating new highly paid and highly skilled jobs and attracting new businesses from UK and overseas to locate in Essex aligning with the strength of the space and satellite applications Sector.
- ▶ Essex-based space businesses play a key role in monitoring and predicting climate change; providing key components for the Copernicus and CO2m programmes which measure the levels of CO2 on earth. A future growth industry is predicted: businesses report on emissions, Essex is primed as one of the world's leading places to manufacture the sensors to enable this.



DIGI-TECH:

A GROWTH SECTOR AS WELL AS AN ENABLING SECTOR.

Industry 4.0 is driving demand for digital applications and software in traditionally offline industries. There are unique opportunities in some areas for Essex, in particular:

- ▶ Agri-tech – North Essex has a strong potential for growth in agri-tech, with a focus on agricultural use of land for food production and other uses. The University of Essex has developed partnerships with leading academic research centres, and recently opened the EPIC (Essex Plant Innovation Centre) which focuses on research in a broad range of plant science areas, including agri-tech (such as agricultural robotics which are being piloted at Wilkins in Tiptree).
- ▶ Digital health and care – There are wide ranging applications of digital technologies to support patients, clinicians, and non-clinical staff. Colchester is a hub for care services firms and ECC through its statutory role for social care can use this to leverage public investment to develop and deliver care-tech enabled services. Essex County Council has already established a new care-technology partnerships, and both University of Essex and ARU carry out research in this area. There are a number of examples of existing and developing digital technologies that could also bring benefit for Essex businesses, such as:
 - ▶ The internet of things – digital solutions beyond a single element or individual task, integrating into existing systems, linking them up with computers calculating the optimal processes, alongside the potential to automate those processes with robotics
 - ▶ Artificial intelligence (AI) – helping businesses across all industries to gain automated insights from complex data sets faster than in the past, enabling end-to-end efficiency, improved accuracy, and decision-making
 - ▶ Quantum computing – will play an increasing role in powering machine learning systems and AI platforms to better improve, understand, and interpret large datasets and calculations.



LIFE SCIENCES (INCLUDING MED-TECH AND CARE-TECH): KEY DRIVERS FOR GROWTH WILL BE:

- ▶ Care and care-tech are important areas for whole-system partners such as the NHS. We have an ageing population and want to ensure that they can age and live well. Care and care-tech are an important part of that and represent real opportunity as well as challenge for the county. Colchester Borough Council is currently working with partners to explore the concept of a Care Tech and Med Tech testbed facility. This would enable researchers and entrepreneurs to test and develop new Care Tech and Med Tech products in an actual care-giving environment or range of environments.
- ▶ Essex has a rich history of developing, commercialising, and manufacturing key components and products for the med-tech sector. Building on these strengths there is a growing demand for med-tech products for diagnostics, digital health, and assisted living support that could be capitalised upon in the county. For example, home diagnostics is a burgeoning market, fast gaining popularity in a world battling the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ▶ The aging population and prevalence of chronic diseases have resulted in rising demand for home healthcare services in the UK.
- ▶ According to UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS), It is projected that there will be an additional 7.5 million people aged 65 years and over in the UK in 50 years' time.



Five Wider Economic Issues Facing Businesses Today

1

CLIMATE CHANGE – Climate change affects most business operations from energy and water consumption, waste generated, consumer demand, supply chain procurement requirements and availability of raw materials among others. Research in 2019 by Deloitte revealed that there is an increasing pressure to act from a broad range of stakeholders:



- ▶ companies' climate responses focus mainly on measures that have a short-term cost-saving effect
- ▶ a thorough understanding of climate risks to the business is rare
- ▶ few companies have a governance, steering and monitoring mechanisms in place to develop and implement comprehensive climate strategies
- ▶ targets for carbon emission reductions are usually not aligned with the Paris Agreement

Closer to home a study commissioned by the British Business Bank (2022) revealed that:

- ▶ almost half (44%) of key decision makers at small firms believe the terminology and information around emissions reduction is overcomplex.
- ▶ more than half (58%) said they would find more information and advice about taking action to measure and reduce their business' carbon emissions helpful, while
- ▶ 42% want advice on measuring their carbon footprint.
- ▶ just under half (48%) do not know which information sources on reducing their carbon emissions to trust.

2

GLOBAL PANDEMIC – The Covid-19 pandemic has affected businesses and the local economy in a range of ways. Three national lockdowns in addition to more cautious behaviour by the public has had a significant adverse effect on footfall and custom. Changed migration patterns during the pandemic have affected labour supply, particularly key roles such as HGV drivers, in the hospitality sector, and seasonal workers. Changes to working patterns, such as an increase in home-working, presents businesses with both challenges and opportunities.



The easing of restrictions, whilst attractive to hard-hit sectors like aviation, have come with their own complications, with a rise in staff absence due to Covid infections leading to some airlines cancelling flights for example. Similarly, it is affecting the ability to service customer facing businesses such as tourism, retail, leisure and hospitality; sectors which were also worst hit during 2020/21.

3

RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is adding to existing issues within global supply chains resulting from the pandemic, and other factors. It is affecting industries ranging from semiconductors to cars and food. Locally, Fairfield Crisps for instance, relied on Ukrainian rapeseed oil to produce its crisps and now sees the price of this oil and any substitute oils rising dramatically. The war may accelerate the shift from global to regional sourcing. But given China's dominance in manufacturing especially, the shift will only happen gradually and will require Government support. If further sanctions are introduced in response to pressure to manage the use of Russian oil and gas, the UK economy would continue to grow but the pace of growth would be significantly slower.



4

BRITAIN'S EXIT FROM THE EU

Whilst other economies are seeing recovery from the pandemic in terms of exports, the UK is lagging behind. The Office of Budget Responsibility states that world exports are recovering from Covid growing 8.2%, while the UK has fallen 14% in 3 months to January 2022. EU exit affected trade with the EU. It has also affected labour supply as many EU nationals are not now working in the UK. The OBR claims UK productivity will be reduced by 4% over next 15 years.



BUSINESS COSTS – UK businesses face double challenge of rising costs and lower sales (as at April 2022)



ENERGY – A fortnight into the Russian invasion of Ukraine and gas and oil prices peaked over 200% and 50% above their end-2021 levels respectively. Prices have since fallen back but remain well above historic averages. (Office of Budget Responsibility, March 2022)

INFLATION – If wholesale energy prices remain as high as markets expect, energy bills are set to rise around another 40% in October 2022, pushing inflation to a 40-year high of 8.7% towards the end of this year. Higher inflation will erode real incomes and reduce consumption, cutting GDP growth this year from the 6.0% originally forecast last October to 3.8%. With inflation outpacing growth in earnings and tax rises taking effect, real living standards are set to fall by 2.2% in 2022-23 – their largest financial year fall on record – and not recover their pre-pandemic level until 2024-25. This will affect consumer and business to business demand from Colchester's companies and beyond. (Office of Budget Responsibility, March 2022)

TAX RISES (The Chancellor's Spring Statement March 2022) – more future focussed than immediate support, lack of clarity around self-employed and non-premises based businesses and little to stimulate consumer demand which would help business cashflow, profitability and the ability to invest in the business for future growth.

- ▶ The 1.25% increase in National Insurance contributions from April 2022 is actually 2.5% for employed owner/managers paying PAYE as it applies to both employer and employee contributions.
- ▶ Business Rates – The Chancellor re-iterated the 50% business rates discount for the retail, leisure and hospitality sector as of 1 April but with a cap of £110,000 per company.

THE UK LABOUR MARKET – Staff costs rising due to skills and staff shortages (Bank of England, April 2022). The UK labour market has been buffeted by large changes in supply and demand as we emerge from the pandemic.

- ▶ **Labour supply falling** – There are around 350,000 fewer people in the labour market due to changes in work and life preferences as a result of the pandemic. Inward migration has also fallen, either as a result of the pandemic or Brexit. Migration data over the past two years suggest that net migration into the UK fell to around 35,000 people in 2020, compared to more than 250,000 in 2019.
- ▶ **Labour demand rising** – the pandemic increased the demand for labour in some sectors, particularly health. The number of employees on payrolls is now some 700,000 higher than before Covid, half of which are in health, social work, education or public administration. Some of this reflects a shift away from self-employment.

- Overall, the picture in the labour market coming out of Covid is a story of weak labour supply and strong labour demand which is pushing pay rates up and therefore adding to business costs. Pay has been growing faster than pre-pandemic rates since the final quarter of 2020. In the three months to January 2022 whole economy total pay grew at 4.8%, with private sector regular pay – perhaps a better measure of labour market strength – growing at over 4%. The majority of firms are likely to pass at least some of these increases into prices over the coming year, which will add to inflationary pressures.

SUPPLY CHAIN COSTS RISING – Manufacturers are indicating that ongoing supply shortages, greater caution among clients, escalating inflationary pressures and geopolitical tensions are all hampering economic recovery. There were also slower upturns in both stocks of purchases and employment and a lengthening of average supplier lead times. At the same time, input prices rose for the twenty-eighth consecutive month, with the rate of increase hitting a three-month high. Finally, business confidence fell to a 14-month low amid concerns about rising geopolitical tensions, inflationary pressures and labour shortages. (Markit Economics for the UK Purchasing Managers' Index, February 2022)



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Cabinet

Item
10(i)

25th January 2023

Report of	Corporate and Improvement	Adam Wood, Samantha Preston & Paul Cook
Title	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24	
Wards affected	All wards	

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) is one of the largest financial support mechanisms for Colchester residents on a low income. The “Cost of Living” crisis continues to impact all residents, but overwhelmingly those who are on a low-income. To ensure low-income residents receive the financial support they require, we propose the maximum entitlement (80%) for working age claimants is increased within the LCTS scheme in 2023/24.

2.0 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 The following elements are to be included within the Local Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24:
- Increase the maximum entitlement to 85% for working age claimants
 - Disregarding certain crisis payments paid to taxpayers (Local Welfare Provision)
 - Disregarding emergency increase in national welfare benefits
- 2.2 The Local Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24 be referred to Full Council for approval and adoption.

3.0 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To provide more financial support to low-income households throughout the City.

4.0 Alternative Options

- 4.1 No changes are made to the scheme for 2023/24.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 What is Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)?

- LCTS is a means-tested Benefit that supports around 8,900 residents throughout Colchester. Around 5,500 of these residents are working age.
- LCTS for working age residents is a locally designed scheme which Colchester City Council (CCC) has full influence over. LCTS for pension age residents is set by Central Government using Prescribed Regulations – CCC has no influence over this scheme design.

5.2 Colchester City Council's Current Scheme

5.3 The scheme has remained the same since 2018. The key features of the working age scheme include:

- A maximum entitlement of 80% for low-income residents
- Capped at Band D equivalent
- A minimum entitlement of £2.00 per week
- Capital limit of £6,000
- A £12.00 flat-rate non-dependant deduction

5.4 How does Colchester compare to other Essex Authorities?

Authority	Maximum Entitlement (%) – 2022/23
Colchester	80
Epping Forest	75
Rochford	72
Chelmsford	77
Maldon	80
Uttlesford	87.5
Castle Point	70
Thurrock	75
Harlow	76
Basildon	75
Braintree	76

5.5 A 5% increase in our scheme for 2023/24 would solidify Colchester as one of the most generous LCTS schemes in Essex, closely behind Uttlesford, when assessing them on their maximum entitlements.

5.6 Financial Considerations

5.7 The current cost of the LCTS scheme is £8.76m (June 2022). The cost of the scheme is shared between the preceptors as follows:

- Essex County Council – 73.52%
- Essex Police – 11.43%
- Colchester City Council – 11%
- Essex Fire and Rescue – 4.05%

As such, the scheme currently costs CCC £960k.

In 2023/24, we estimate a 5% increase in the cost of the scheme, this is in-line with an estimated 5% increase in chargeable Council Tax. This will increase the overall cost of the scheme to £9.2m in 2023/24.

5.8 Caseload

5.9 Between 2013 and 2020, LCTS caseload decreased year-on-year. Due to the pandemic, caseloads increased in 2021 but have now settled to pre-covid levels.

The current caseload is 8892 (June 2022) with 5500 of those cases being working age.

We anticipate caseloads to remain stable in 2023/24. The reason for this is due to the ongoing cost of living crisis.

In 2024/25, we estimate a decrease in caseload by 2%. This follows the trend of previous years (excluding 2021).

6.0 LCTS Expenditure vs. Chargeable Council Tax

6.1 When analysing the chargeable amount of Council Tax against the cost of LCTS from 2014. It is clear the cost of LCTS is not increasing in-line with the rate of chargeable Council Tax.

In 2014/15, LCTS expenditure was 7.6% of the chargeable Council Tax. For 2023/24, we estimate this to be 5.7%.

7.0 Increasing the Maximum Entitlement

7.1 As explained above the maximum entitlement for a working age resident is 80%. We recommend the maximum entitlement is increased to help further support low-income residents.

7.2 Why increase the maximum entitlement?

- An increase in financial support for low-income residents to help combat the increases in cost of living
- By far the biggest lever in the scheme when it comes to varying entitlement for all working age claimants
- A straightforward change to the scheme which residents can understand
- Less likelihood of claimants falling into arrears with their Council Tax – may lead to improved recovery rates / less write-offs
- Less reliance on other sources of funding, in particular Discretionary / Exceptional Hardship Payments
- Simple implementation – no additional resource required

7.3 Other options – no changes to the scheme

7.4 The scheme for 2023/24 could remain static which may give residents some certainty but will not help combat the increases in cost of living. No public consultation would be required.

8.0 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 8.1 An EIA has been completed in line with the policy/change being proposed to the Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2023/24.
- 8.2 A link to the completed EIA can be found here – <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments/local-council-tax-support-23-24/>

9.0 Standard References

- 9.1 There are no particular references to the community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

10.0 Strategic Plan References

- 10.1 There are no references to the Strategic Plan, however, it is in line with cabinets new priorities regarding addressing the “cost of living” crisis.

11 Consultation

- 11.1 CCC carried out a 6-week public consultation, asking for feedback and comments on the proposed changes to the scheme for 2023/24.

- 11.2 Key findings from the public consultation:

1. Do you agree with increasing the maximum level of support for working age applicants to 85%? (111 responses)
 - Yes – 62.16%
 - No – 25.23%
 - Don't know – 12.61%
2. Do you agree with the scheme disregarding certain crisis payments paid to taxpayers (Local Welfare Provision)? (98 responses)
 - Yes – 76.53%
 - No – 17.35%
 - Don't know – 6.12%
3. Do you agree with the scheme disregarding emergency increases in national welfare benefits? (95 responses)
 - Yes – 78.95%
 - No – 15.79%
 - Don't know – 5.26%

- 11.3 For the full results of the consultation, see appendix item A.

12.0 Publicity Considerations

- 12.1 A communications plan would be key in publicising the proposed changes to the scheme for 2023/24. The CCC website and social media channels would be key methods of publicising the proposed changes to the LCTS scheme.

The use of phone-line messaging and direct mailings would also play a key role in promoting the new scheme.

13.0 Financial implications

- 13.1 Increasing the maximum entitlement of LCTS will raise the cost of the scheme. Based on current preceptor shares, CCC will be liable for 11% of any increased costs.

Increasing the maximum entitlement in 5% increments increases the overall cost of the scheme by £350k. This means CCC's share of the cost would increase by an estimated £40k for per 5% increase in the maximum entitlement.

Any increase in LCTS is likely to be offset by an increase in Council Tax.

Appendices

Item A – LCTS Public Consultation results

[Item B – Draft LCTS Policy 2023/24](#)

