

Scrutiny Panel Meeting

**Online Meeting,
Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 18:00**

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

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

You have the right to observe all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet including those which may be conducted online such as by live audio or video broadcast / webcast. You also have the right to see the agenda (the list of items to be discussed at a meeting), which is usually published five working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available here:

<https://colchester.cmis.uk.com/colchester/MeetingCalendar.aspx>.

Occasionally certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual have to be considered in private. When this is the case an announcement will be made, the live broadcast will end and the meeting will be moved to consider the matter in private.

Have Your Say!

The Council welcomes contributions in the form of written representations from members of the public at most public meetings. Each representation may be no longer than three minutes (or 500 words, if a written submission). Written submissions must be submitted via the form accessed by this link, before noon on the working day before the meeting date: [Scrutiny Panel Have Your Say!](#) If you wish to speak in person to the Panel, you must register your wish by noon on the previous working day, by emailing democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk, and include a written copy of what you wish to say, in case technical difficulties prevent you joining the meeting. The Chairman will invite members of the public to make their representations at the start of the meeting.

If you would like to submit representations to a meeting and need to find out more, please refer to the Have Your Say! arrangements here:

<https://colchester.cmis.uk.com/colchester/HaveYourSay.aspx>.

E-mail: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk
www.colchester.gov.uk

Scrutiny Panel – Terms of Reference

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

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

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

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

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Scrutiny Panel
Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 18:00

The Scrutiny Panel Members are:

Councillor Kevin Bentley
Councillor Lewis Barber
Councillor Tina Bourne
Councillor Paul Dundas
Councillor Chris Hayter
Councillor Mike Hogg
Councillor Sam McCarthy
Councillor Lorcan Whitehead

Chairman
Deputy Chairman

The Scrutiny Panel Substitute Members are:

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

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

Please note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally dealt with briefly.

Live Broadcast

Please follow this link to watch the meeting live on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ColchesterCBC>

1 Welcome and Announcements (Virtual Meetings)

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors to the meeting and remind those participating to mute their microphones when not talking. The Chairman will invite all Councillors and Officers participating in the meeting to introduce themselves. The Chairman will, at regular intervals, ask Councillors to indicate if they wish to speak or ask a question and Councillors will be invited to speak in turn by the Chairman. A vote on each item of business will be taken by roll call of each Councillor and the outcome of each vote will be confirmed by the Democratic Services Officer.

2 Substitutions

Councillors will be asked to say if they are attending on behalf of a Committee member who is absent.

3 Urgent Items

The Chairman will announce if there is any item not on the published agenda which will be considered because it is urgent and will explain the reason for the urgency.

4 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 pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

5 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Councillors will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meetings held on 27 July and 17 August 2020 are a correct record.

Minutes of Scrutiny Panel meeting 27 July 2020 9 - 14

Minutes of Scrutiny Panel meeting 17 August 2020 15 - 22

6 Have Your Say! (Virtual Meetings)

Members of the public may make representations to the meeting. Each representation may be no longer than three minutes (500 words). Members of the public may register their wish to address the meeting by registering online by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting date. In addition a written copy of the representation will need to be supplied for use in the event of unforeseen technical difficulties preventing participation at the meeting itself.

7 Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

The Councillors will consider any decisions by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder which have been taken under Special Urgency provisions.

8 Cabinet or Portfolio Holder Decisions called in for Review

The Councillors will consider any Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decisions called in for review.

9 Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members

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

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

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

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|----|---|--------------|
| 10 | <p>Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast</p> <p>Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider the 14 October 2022 Cabinet report and make recommendations to the Cabinet meeting.</p> | 23 - 38 |
| 11 | <p>Covid-19 Recovery – Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme</p> <p>This report provides the Cabinet report giving details of a Budget Strategy that will deliver a balanced budget in 2021/2022 and start identifying savings required by the Medium-Term Financial Forecast in future years. Cabinet will consider this report on 14 October 2020. The report explains proposals to make budget savings through improving efficiency, reviewing models of service provision, becoming more commercial and harnessing the potential of our communities.</p> | 39 - 100 |
| 12 | <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme 2021 - 2022</p> <p>Colchester Borough Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme provides a reduction in Council Tax Liability for eligible residents. Each year the scheme is reviewed, and proposals are formulated to potentially update the scheme or to maintain the scheme in its existing form.</p> <p>This report provides details of the proposal for the scheme effective from 1 April 2021.</p> | 101 -
104 |
| 13 | <p>Work Programme 2020-21</p> <p>This report sets out the current Work Programme 2020-2021 for the Scrutiny Panel. This provides details of the reports that are scheduled for each meeting during the municipal year.</p> | 105 -
126 |
| 14 | <p>Exclusion of the Public (Scrutiny)</p> <p>In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt</p> | |

information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Part B
(not open to the public including the press)

SCRUTINY PANEL

27 July 2020

Present: - Councillor Barber, Councillor Bentley, Councillor Bourne, Councillor Dundas, Councillor Hayter, Councillor Hogg, Councillor McCarthy, Councillor Whitehead

Substitutions: - None.

Also present: - Councillor Cory, Councillor Goacher, Councillor Jowers, Councillor Moore.

273. Cabinet or Portfolio Holder Decisions called in for Review - Call in of Response to Bradwell B Stage One Consultation

Councillor Bentley (by reason of being a resident of Mersea Island) and Councillor Cory (by reason of having spoken at past events on behalf of ‘Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group’) declared non-pecuniary interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 (5).

The Chairman laid out the call-in process which was being followed and the options available for the Panel, highlighting that the Panel and speakers must stay focussed upon the subject of the call-in, rather than the wider considerations relating to nuclear power generation. The Chairman gave an overview of the mediation session which had been held between the lead councillor on the call-in, Councillor John Jowers, and the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, Councillor Mike Lilley, on 22 July.

Andrew Weaver^s, Monitoring Officer, explained that the Council currently had no formal policy opposing the Bradwell B site as a potential site for future nuclear power generation.

Councillor Peter Banks, of West Mersea Town Council, addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). Councillor Banks argued the inadequacy of the Stage 1 consultation exercise, with the Borough Council having encountered propaganda and a need to commit significant focus to responding to the Covid-19 situation. West Mersea Town Council had written to present its concerns regarding the impact of curtailing elements of the consultation exercise. It was noted that this matter would affect the whole Borough and neighbouring local authorities. Virtual engagement had been offered, but Councillor Banks argued that proper information gathering had been rendered impossible at the current time.

Councillor Banks argued that some content of the Council's consultation response was posited on the publicity material and claims put out by the Sizewell B Project, further arguing that the Council had a duty to manage area evacuation plans, in

addition to raising environmental concerns. Waste storage was proposed for within two miles of the Borough's border and Councillor Banks reasoned that the Council had a duty to submit a Colchester-centric response to the consultation.

Councillor John Akker, of West Mersea Town Council, addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) in order to read a submitted statement by Mr Ian Clarke. Ian Clarke described his difficulty in reconciling the perceived change in response from the Council, compared to its earlier review of the subject, and argued that a failure to object could be perceived as implying acceptance of the Sizewell B proposals.

The statement referenced the recent decision, of the Maldon District Council Planning Committee, to refuse permission to an application for site investigations to be carried out and stated that the final planning decision would be taken by a Planning Inspector, rather than a local authority, citing this as a reason why Colchester Borough Council had a right to object formally.

The concern was raised that the current ONR [Office for Nuclear Regulation] evacuation protocol would not now work, especially in light of additional development on Mersea Island, and urged the Council to ensure the health and safety of residents and visitors to the area.

Councillor Akker urged the Council to withdraw its consultation response and resubmit with an unequivocal statement of opposition to the Sizewell B proposals, which would make clear the Council's view to the Planning Inspector who would then assess the future planning application for the site.

Councillor Jane Baker addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) in order to question the urgency of the Sizewell B project, citing her perception of a power surplus being currently in evidence, and to question the need for a new power station. Councillor Baker explained the concern that the outline of a new station and the container ships serving it would mar the outlook at Bradwell.

Councillor Baker echoed concerns as to how evacuation of Mersea Island could be carried out safely, given an increase in housing.

Councillor Baker summarised concerns regarding Huawei and 5G infrastructure provisions, stating that this would have an effect on technical systems at the proposed power station, and concerns that a new power station would harm local fishing and entail concerns regarding the safety of any new systems used on the power station.

Professor Andrew Blowers addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to express his disappointment in the Council's submission, which he viewed as not reflecting the Council's position of the last ten years, or of conversations held by the Council or the 2010 statement on the issue by the then Scrutiny Panel. The consultation response did not present an objection to the Bradwell B concept as a whole.

Professor Blowers argued that the site was unsuitable for future nuclear power generation and that the current statement of government commitment ran only until 2025. The proposed plan was more intrusive and dominating than the previous power station and Professor Blowers detailed the structures, port facilities, earthworks and under-estuary piping that would be necessary. Professor Blowers argued that a full environmental view and impact assessment was required and offered to assist with this.

Councillor Mark Goacher attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel to raise his concern that the report did not reference environmental implications for the Blackwater Estuary. In response, Councillor Mark Cory, Leader of the Council, noted that the full response did cover impacts on the environment and Blackwater Estuary.

Councillor Patricia Moore attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel to ask if any revised response should be brought back for further Scrutiny, or circulated to all councillors, before being put forward for approval.

Councillor John Jowers addressed the Panel, as lead councillor on the call-in, and explained that conversations and Council discussions over the years had led members to believe that there was a Council policy to oppose any new nuclear power generation at Bradwell.

Councillor Jowers argued that, without being given the Council's political position on the matter, the officers tasked with producing the report and consultation response were given an impossible task as they were not in a position to communicate a stance on the Bradwell B proposal. Officers should not be expected to guess the Council's view without the Council first giving clear direction.

Councillor Jowers raised a number of concerns, including the fact that the Blackwater Estuary was a Marine Conservation Zone, the Maldon District Council Planning Committee decision to refuse permission for site investigations and that no overlay of the proposed structure was available for comparison to the old structure. A new structure would harm the historic Blackwater and destroy the surroundings of local heritage assets such as the historic nearby church [Chapel of St Peter-on-the-Wall].

Councillor Jowers did not consider Bradwell a potentially suitable site for a new power station and stressed that, whilst Government would take the decision, they would want to see a clear view and policy from the Council.

Councillor Mark Cory, Leader of the Council, voiced agreement with all that Councillor Jowers had said. Like many members, he had also thought that the Council had a clear policy and that it had only been after officer research was carried out before this meeting that it was found that no formal policy had been set by Council in the past. Work had been carried out in the past to contribute to the Government's SSA [Strategic Siting Assessment] consultation, giving the clear view of the Council that it opposed the siting of nuclear power production at Bradwell.

The Leader agreed with comments regarding the curtailment of face-to-face consultation due to the Covid-19 situation and argued that more such consultation would be needed once lock down restrictions had ended.

The Leader also agreed with environmental concerns raised regarding the Sizewell B site, being of the view that the Estuary was already under pressure from current and past uses. The dangers of bleaching, chlorination and release of warm waste water were highlighted as examples of dangers to the ecosystem.

The Panel were briefed that officers had unavoidably needed to focus on the response to Covid-19 and this had reduced capacity for other work, such as production of consultation responses. The Leader offered to bring a rewritten consultation response to a new extraordinary full Council meeting, alongside a motion for Council to approve, to agree a rewritten consultation response and to agree to set a clear formal policy for the Council to oppose nuclear power production at the Bradwell site. The Leader was happy to consider stronger response to the consultation and the wording of a strong formal policy opposing use of the Bradwell site, especially in light of the environmental impacts detailed in the wider report on this subject. This would make clear to any future Planning Inspector that the Council strongly opposed the Bradwell B proposals.

Ian Vipond, Strategic Director of Policy and Place, clarified that Council should look to revise and resubmit the representation, rather than withdraw and replace it. This owed to the fact that the deadline for submission had passed and new submissions would not be possible. The submission had been made by the deadline, but with the caveat that it was subject to the call-in process and that this may necessitate amendments. An undertaking had been received that the consultation would consider any amendments to the response. The Strategic Director notified the Panel that there would be future rounds of consultation, in which the Council could reinforce its view expressed.

A member of the Panel welcomed the Leader's offer of an extraordinary full Council meeting, and the wording of his proposed motion. This would allow a debate of the issue and for a firm line to be given by Council, which would be easily understood by Government. This view gained agreement from other members of the Panel, who echoed the importance of affirming a strong Council view.

The Panel considered the concerns regarding the need to have an effective evacuation plan for Mersea Island, especially in light of the scale of planning applications which had been approved for the area. One Panel member noted that the current evacuation plan dated back to 2009/10, when population density had been far lower.

A Panel member noted that only three members of the Panel had been councillors at the time this subject was last discussed and suggested that it would be useful for all members to be briefed on the findings of the task and finish group on Bradwell that had operated in the past.

The Leader suggested that the Panel refer the decision back to Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, Councillor Mike Lilley, with a

recommendation that an extraordinary full Council meeting be called in order to set a formal policy to oppose the use of the Bradwell B site for nuclear power generation, and to agree the rewriting of the consultation response. The Chairman further suggested that a formal letter should be written to the Bradwell B consultation to inform them of the situation and confirm that amendment it possible.

The Panel discussed the submission of Council responses to consultations, how the call-in process was applied and whether this had led to changes in past consultation responses at any time. The Strategic Director of Policy and Place confirmed that the Council always aimed to meet consultation deadlines but could not always guaranteed that the call-in period would end before the deadline was reached. The Council was always clear to emphasise its statutory duties regarding democracy, scrutiny and transparency, as shown by the call-in process.

The Chairman asked for confirmation as to whether there would be enough time to conduct an extraordinary full Council meeting, production of a new policy and a rewritten consultation response to reflect it. The Leader of the Council explained that he would seek the necessary number of councillors to approve the request for a full Council meeting, starting with the group leaders on the Council and pledged to write to the consultation to explain the situation as a matter of urgency.

Councillor John Jowers voiced his support for the approach suggested by the Leader of the Council and welcomed the use of a full Council meeting to clarify the Council's view on proposals to use the Sizewell B site for future nuclear power generation.

The Chairman thanked the Panel, officers and visiting councillors for contributing to the call-in process and the meeting.

RESOLVED that the decision WEL-001-20 ('Response to Bradwell B Stage One Consultation'), be referred back to the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety with the recommendation that the Portfolio Holder consider:-

- (a) Writing to the Bradwell B Stage 1 Consultation to inform them of the Panel's recommendations, and that an amended response will be submitted following an extraordinary meeting of the Council; and
- (b) Calling an extraordinary meeting of the Council in order for the Council to set a formal policy regarding proposals for new nuclear power generation on the Bradwell B site; and
- (c) Amending the consultation response as set out in decision WEL-001-20, to bring it into line with the new formal policy, as set at the extraordinary meeting of the Council.

SCRUTINY PANEL

17 August 2020

Present: -

Councillor Barber, Councillor Bourne, Councillor Dundas, Councillor Hayter, Councillor Hogg, Councillor McCarthy, Councillor Whitehead.

Substitutions: -

Councillor Willetts for Councillor Bentley.

Also present: -

Councillor King, Councillor Julie Young.

274. North Essex Garden Communities Project and NEGC [North Essex Garden Communities] Ltd Update and Financial Information

Councillors King and Julie Young (by reason of being the Council-appointed director of NEGC Ltd and alternative Council-appointed director respectively) declared non-pecuniary interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 (5).

Ian Vipond, Strategic Director, Policy and Place, (by reason of being a director of two subsidiaries of NEGC Ltd, for Braintree/Colchester Borders and Colchester/Tendring Borders) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 (5).

Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, laid out the background of the NEGC project and the context to the formation of NEGC Ltd. This had been a multi-partner project, supported by Government with around £100 million of funding. The Portfolio Holder noted that representatives and officers from the other partners, being the County Council, District Councils and Central Government, had not been invited to attend. The Panel were asked to recognise the successes which had been achieved, including infrastructure commitments and funding from central governments.

The Panel were notified that the housing supply challenge had now nearly doubled, with a target now set by government of around 1,600 new homes per year for the Borough. The garden community expected to go ahead on the Colchester/Tendring border had the potential to provide up to a quarter of the decade's new housing for the Borough.

Ian Vipond, Strategic Director of Policy and Place, related the history of the NEGC project, from its instigation by Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council in 2013, to the formation of a shadow board, including Essex County Council, in 2015. The first government grant, of £640k, had been

received in 2015/16 and in January 2016, Colchester Borough Council had agreed to act as banker for the project. In late 2016 Cabinet agreed to approve the formation of NEGC Ltd and to start development vehicles to start looking at land acquisitions. In December 2016 this was noted and endorsed by full Council, with full Council approving funding.

It was explained that no funds went through the company until the managing director was appointed. NEGC Ltd had never held project funds as these were held by the Council as the project's banker.

Paul Cook, Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer, notified the Panel that, following agenda publication, it had been estimated that, with extra savings and income, including a return of funds that had been put into the Essex County Council pension scheme, the winding up of NEGC Ltd would leave a £400k surplus in funds held by Colchester Borough Council as banker for the NEGC project. The Head of Finance then explained the content of the appendices. The expenditure figures and partner funding were explained. More detail was offered regarding the costs of consultation exercises, and it was clarified that officer costs were lower in 2019/20 as the Planning and Programme Officers salaries had started to draw on existing reserves during the year. It was noted that additional carrying costs, outside the information requested, had been provided to give a full picture.

Councillor Julie Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance and Deputy Leader of the Council, welcomed the briefing and emphasised the support for the project by the local authority partners and central government. This included the £99m of government funding for infrastructure work for the Tendring/Colchester borders community, and the recent award of £272m for infrastructure improvements and works to the A12 to the West of Colchester, in preparation for the proposed Braintree/Colchester borders community. The Deputy Leader noted that this £272m had been confirmed too late to be considered by the Planning Inspector in his deliberations.

The Chairman confirmed that the other local authority partners had not been invited as the decision had been taken for the Panel to discuss this subject internally within the Council first, looking to learn lessons and any ways to improve decision making. A member of the Panel gave the counterview that an investigation of the decision making and the learning of lessons would be more effective if this was discussed with the partners. This was how the Crime and Disorder Committee and One Colchester Partnership operated.

The Panel welcomed the briefing on the NEGC project's history and asked why Colchester had been appointed to act as banker for the project. The Strategic Director explained that Colchester Borough Council had a reputation for effective financial management and that Colchester was the most central of the local authorities and involved with more of the proposed garden communities than the other partners.

A Panel member stressed the importance of learning lessons in order to improve operations, such as any project with Tendring District Council to proceed with the Tendring/Colchester borders garden community. The member posited that this was

not a conventional limited company and ventured that there had appeared to be much groupthink and a lack of contingency planning or consideration of what would happen if the project failed.

The approach to accounting for full Council's vote to reject payment of £350k to the project in 2019/20 was queried by one member, with an objection being made that this had then been left off both sides of the balance sheet, showing both a removal of the proposed payment and the removal of that amount from the carry costs. It was considered by the Panel member that it was inappropriate to record this as if the Council, as debtor, had written off the instalment of funding it owed to the NEGC project, and that the actual closedown figure should be shown as -£173k. The Head of Finance confirmed that he was content as to how the lack of £350k payment from Colchester Borough Council had been accounted for.

It was asked what advice was given by the Council to NEGC Ltd regarding the likelihood of receiving the £350k payment, after this had been removed from the Council's 2019/20 budget, and whether there had been any changes to the NEGC Ltd budget and expenditure following the Council's refusal to pay £350k into the project funds. The Head of Finance clarified that full Council had voted not to release the payment, rather than to refuse it absolutely. The Strategic Director, Policy and Place, clarified that the £350k was in the 2019/20 budget, with the release of it dependent on full Council, which then later refused this release.

It was queried whether the spending of £85k in 2019/20 on consultation and feedback exercises had been wasted, given the recent judgement given by the Planning Inspector assessing the NEGC project. A request was made for comment on the use of outside consultants relating to the hearings on the project held at the start of 2020 and as to whether this had been satisfactory. The Strategic Director of Policy and Place explained that there had been criticism regarding the perception of a lack of consultation and that the project partners felt that additional consultation would be of use. It was likely that elements of this consultation would still be of use. It was noted that officers providing planning evidence to the Planning Inspector had been impressed by the legal advice received from consultants, and that the Inspector had largely accepted this evidence; the Inspector's concerns were rather concerning the viability of the garden communities.

Responding to the questioning of consultation, the Deputy Leader explained that NEGC Ltd had acted to respond to criticisms and local needs that were raised and had carried out additional local consultation sessions. It was felt that the second round of hearings went better, with the team able to prepare.

Regarding the capacity funding bids, it was asked if the directors of NEGC Ltd had been presented with any budget variances or virements, altering spending from what had been stated in the bids, and asked to approve them. The Head of Finance explained that these funds were not ring-fenced grants and explained the processes involved, giving assurance that the grants made were fully expended. It was further explained that authority to decide on how grants were spent was delegated by the project partners (by Cabinet, in the Council's case) to a project steering group with representatives including Homes England, who represented central Government.

The Head of Finance was asked to confirm as to whether carry costs were being accrued from April on to the present. It was confirmed that full carrying costs were shown at Appendix D and that the allocation of any surplus would need to be agreed between the partner local authorities. The Panel discussed a member's suggested recommendation to Cabinet that the administration had no authority to write off any carry costs and that these are shown on any relevant financial documents or balance sheets. The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources cautioned that the NEGC project accounts must be reconciled as part of the winding-up of NEGC Ltd. The Head of Finance emphasised that the accounts in question were held on behalf of all the partners, who would decide how to allocate their funds, and that it would be questioned how the Council could insist on a share of this, in the light of full Council refusing to allow the £350k 2019/20 contribution to the project to be made.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources warned that the full Council decision to withhold the expected £350k payment to the project was likely to damage the Council's reputation with its partners and that not discharging a perceived duty would have an effect. It was noted that Tendring District Council had made it clear that it would hold Colchester Borough Council to account in the future, even though the shareholder agreement did not explicitly require the funding payments to be made. The Portfolio Holder noted that the full Council vote to withhold payment could be viewed as not being in line with the Council's shareholder duties.

A Panel member gave the view that the lack of cross-chamber support for setting up the project should be learned from and that future such decisions should be made so that broader support can be gathered for long term projects and make them resilient to changes in membership of the Council. The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources ventured that the focus would need to be on how to engage with future partners effectively, noting that lessons had been learned in that future shareholder agreements would be less simplistic and more comprehensive.

The Panel discussed the projected £400k remaining in the project's funds, and what would happen to these. It was explained that this would be up to the partner authorities to decide, decided upon by their respective portfolio holders. It was expected that the authorities would expect their respective share of the reserves. Whilst around half of the project's funding had come from central government grants, it was shown that all such funding had been allocated and spent. A Panel member stated that it would have helped to have invited representatives of the other local authority partners, in order to gain wider views and benefit from the thoughts of others. It was queried what their views might be.

The Strategic Director of Policy and Place confirmed that all the local authority partners' officers had been ambitious and had wanted to ensure an approach which would guarantee necessary infrastructure and avoid poor-quality developments. The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources further added that the politicians of the partner authorities likewise desired to improve local developments through this project. The ambition still remained, and the Portfolio Holder opined that it would be easier to find a consensus to agree the remaining single garden community which the Planning Inspector had judged could be viable. The Deputy Leader restated the expectation that Tendring District Council would require Colchester Borough Council

to sign up to a more watertight shareholder agreement, having stated that it was not possible to trust Colchester Borough Council.

A Panel member who had been on Cabinet during the early days of the project detailed its beginnings, the aims to manage growth in the area and assist Tendring District in attracting greater business whilst improving the relationships betwixt the partner authorities. This had led to greater collaborative work between the authorities. The importance of maintaining these relationships was stressed and members moved on to discuss the need for more rigorous shareholder agreements, and the need to lay out potential exit clauses, should political representation at the partner authorities change. This led to a querying as to whether there was an expectation that commitments be honoured, even when these were not codified in a formal agreement.

Another member of the Panel praised the current administration's approach to building consensus and informing members about the project, in contrast to the approach previously taken, and directed the Panel to focus on whether the project had achieved value for money, and whether decision-making had been carried out well. The member criticised the Panel as having not succeeded in achieving clarity regarding spending, decision-making, the project's risk matrix/register and value for money. Three areas of financial questioning were raised, relating to the commissioning of work towards the Local Plan, commissioning of work relating to the NEGC project, and regarding the role of the Council as project banker.

The 2016 commissioning, by Cabinet, of the Kerslake review of the Local Plan was raised by the Panel member, stating that this had questioned the viability of two of the garden communities and that the project had not followed the conclusions of the review. The member noted that there had been a series of planning and project management actions and costs which had been carried out, questioned what audit objectives had been set over these, and stated that the Scrutiny Panel would need to see the project plans and details of payments and costs, in order to assess value for money. Concern was raised that the perception was that the project had not been properly scrutinised, that spending was not properly programmed or justified, with a lack of transparency over decision making. In the Panel member's view, the terms of scrutiny at this meeting had been set too narrowly and that a full scrutiny of the NEGC project should be carried out by the Panel, or by external auditors, if the Panel was unwilling to do so. The Panel member proposed that Cabinet could be asked to request that all project partners agree to, and cooperate with, an independent audit of the project by the National Audit Office [NAO]. The Panel queried what an NAO audit would cost, fearing the cost would be considerable.

The cost of work to secure land deals, including £152k spending on legal support, was raised and it was noted that no land purchases had been carried out.

The Deputy Leader clarified that the overall funding figures on the project covered all contributions from each of the project partners, not just the Council's contributions. If the Panel wished to scrutinise all funding and spending then it should invite representatives from each of the partners, and including central government, to participate.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources agreed that the value for money of any project should be scrutinised, but cautioned that this was not simple for complicated projects. There had been a process of publishing project plans and risk registers. Regarding value for money, the Portfolio Holder ventured that most tests related to decisions made and their outcomes. The project had produced a number of positive outcomes, including significant government investment in infrastructure and the go-ahead for one garden community, but lessons had also been learned through the project, especially at its end.

A Panel member disagreed with the view that the Panel had not scrutinised the NEGC project, noting that the Panel had held five sessions to scrutinise it in the last two municipal years. The scope had been set by the Chairman who had always been a member of the opposition. Recommendations had been made, both critical and in praise.

It was noted that there had been many additional Scrutiny Panel meetings already held in 2020-21 and that the real challenge for scrutinising such a project was that local authorities always faced difficulty in scrutinising complex projects, especially where government funding was involved. Experience amongst members could be limited and a Panel member recommended that workshops and briefings be held for members to increase knowledge, skills and confidence, as well as to identify what could and couldn't be effectively scrutinised and how to set the scope for successful scrutiny.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources affirmed his support for the Scrutiny Panel and its role in improving governance. The administration remained democratically accountable and had answered all questions tabled within the scoping of this meeting, providing all requested information and ensuring officers were present to provide information.

The Portfolio Holder gave his priority as ensuring the practical winding up of NEGC Ltd and the successful setting up of future projects, and his fear that a large-scale external audit would derail future actions, due to the stretching of limited officer time in order to accommodate such an audit. The Chairman noted that the Local Plan and proposed developments were of huge importance and needed to be faced by councillors. This would include the central issue as to who future project shareholders would be.

The Panel requested confirmation as to what, if any, contractual necessity required the Council to make the contribution of £350k for 2019/20 which had been withheld. Clarity was asked as to who had ultimate decision-making regarding this, and about the duties owed to other partners. This was put forward as being of especial interest, given mixed views across the Council Chamber.

The Panel discussed the merits and drawbacks of engaging an external audit of the project. One view given was that limited outcomes from previous scrutiny sessions indicated that there was a need for external scrutiny, and that an independent audit could invite participation by partners and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [MHCLG], and could seek answers to outstanding questions. It

was noted that councillors carried out scrutiny, but often had a lack of experience and faced limits to what they were able to do.

A Panel member suggested that an alternative route could be to seek an independent LGA [Local Government Association] peer review, as there were a number of local authorities in the East of England with experience of major projects. The County Council also had a dedicated major projects team. The methodology of an LGA peer review was explained, led by someone experienced in major projects and involving information gathering from the partners' executives, councillors, officers and central government. Previous peer reviews had been found to be rigorous and useful.

Dan Gascoyne, Chief Operating Officer, advised that the Panel should ensure that any recommendations had usefulness and the ability to be executed. It was cautioned that it would be difficult to obtain approval from the project partners and MHCLG. All would need to approve for the audit to be possible. It was likely that an NAO audit would cost around £100k and the Panel was informed that an LGA peer review had already been looked at regarding a different matter, albeit that this had been delayed by the Covid-19 outbreak. A Panel member stated that the Panel should be involved in setting the terms of reference for any review and this was discussed. The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources suggested that any peer review should be focused on looking at what would help improve the setting-up and running of any future development vehicle, but feared that it would be difficult to obtain partner approval for any review or external audit. The Panel discussed the proposed wording for a recommendation on this matter, especially to reflect the Panel playing a role in setting audit/review terms of reference but recognising that other partners would want to have input on this, if they agreed to an audit/review. The Deputy Leader asked the Panel to work collaboratively with the administration to set any terms of reference.

RECOMMENDED to CABINET that: -

- (a) Following the setting of the 2019/2020 budget by Full Council on 20 February 2019 and subsequent votes in Full Council on 5 December 2019 and 15 July 2020, there is no authority to write-off or disregard any carried costs owed to CBC, and that any accounts or final budgetary position by NEGC should show those amounts as outstanding; and
- (b) Cabinet invite all North Essex Garden Communities [NEGC] Limited's shareholder local authorities and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to take part in an independent external audit and/or a Local Government Peer Review of the NEGC Project, with terms of reference agreed with the Scrutiny Panel.

Report of	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	Author	Paul Cook ☎ 505861 Darren Brown ☎ 282891
Title	Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast (MTFF)		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider the 14 October 2020 Cabinet report and make recommendations to the Cabinet meeting.

2 Reason for Scrutiny

- 2.1 To review progress to date on the 2021/22 Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast.
- 2.2 To comment on the report to the 14 October 2020 Cabinet meeting.

3 Reason for Cabinet Report

- 3.1 To balance the 2021/22 budget and revise the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council is obliged to balance its budget on an annual basis. There are no alternatives.

5 Overview

- 5.1 See Cabinet Report attached.

6 MTFF Consultation

- 6.1 The Budget Strategy and timetable have ensured that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members.
- 6.2 The Task and Finish Group reviewed the introduction of green waste collection charges and its recommendations were considered at 19 August 2020 Cabinet.
- 6.3 Budget workshops were held on 4 August 2020; 26 August 2020 and 5 October 2020 so that all members could share in the task of meeting the budget challenge.
- 6.4 The Leader of the Opposition has been offered the opportunity to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 6.5 The normal statutory consultation with business ratepayers and parish councils will take place.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 As set out in the Cabinet report.

8 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 8.1 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.

9 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 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.

10 Other Standard References

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

Report of	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	Author	Paul Cook <input type="checkbox"/> 505861 Darren Brown <input type="checkbox"/> 282891
Title	Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out the current position on the 2021/22 budget and Medium-Term Financial Forecast 2021/22 to 2024/25.

2 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the revised Medium-Term Financial Forecast and MTFF assumptions 2021/22 to 2024/25 as set out in the Appendix to this report.
- 2.2 To grant delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Resources in liaison with the Head of Finance to determine the most advantageous business rate pooling arrangements for 2021/22 as set out in Section 11 of this report.

3 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To balance the 2021/22 budget and revise the Medium-Term Financial Forecast.

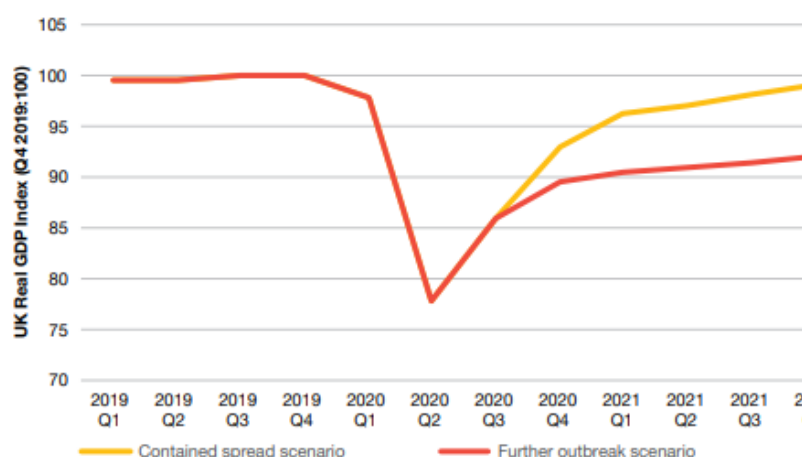
4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council is obliged to balance its budget on an annual basis. There are no alternatives.

5 Overview

- 5.1 The Council's budget and Medium-Term Financial Forecast address the impact of Covid-19. The budget and MTFF reshape Council services so that long term financial sustainability is achieved.
- 5.2 In June 2020 Cabinet approved the use of £6.692m reserves and £0.500m use of New Homes Bonus in 2020/21 to address the forecast cost of Covid-19. The Cabinet also agreed the Budget Strategy for 2021/22.
- 5.3 In July 2020 Cabinet approved progress made since June 2020 on the Budget Strategy.
- 5.4 Budget savings have now been identified and these are summarised in Section 8 of the report and more fully in the separate report on this Cabinet agenda. This is the maximum level of savings expected to be generated in 2021/22.
- 5.5 Approval of the savings is against a background of risks, and uncertainty created by the pandemic. That could continue to materially impact national and local economic activity, wealth and income as illustrated by this PwC forecast

Figure 1.4: Projections of the UK economic growth by scenario



- 5.6 The Council is therefore facing an unprecedented health and economic crisis, a deep recession and much reduced income requiring extraordinary efforts by the Council to ensure the books are balanced over the short and medium term.
- 5.7 National and local current and future restrictions and their economic and income impacts will be closely monitored and any amendment to income and savings recommendations will be reported to Council in February 2021.
- 5.8 The use of reserves totals £6.209m across 2020/22. Replenishment of reserves begins at a level of £0.250m in 2022/23, increasing to £0.500m in subsequent financial years.
- 5.9 The budget gap for 2022/23 is currently forecast at £2.574m.
- 5.10 The MTFF is now also revised to reflect more up to date assumptions. The revised MTFF and assumptions are set out in the Appendix to this report.

- 5.11 Forecast economic impact in 2021/22 is £2.900m. We now expect a second wave in Autumn and Winter 2020. This and later waves could impact on 2021/22 income prospects, despite our cautious approach and modelling. The position will need to be watched carefully up to finalising the budget at January 2021 Cabinet.

6 MTFF Consultation

- 6.1 The budget strategy and timetable have ensured that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members.
- 6.2 The Task and Finish Group reviewed the introduction of green waste collection charges and its recommendations were considered at 19 August 2020 Cabinet.
- 6.3 Budget workshops were held on 4 August 2020; 26 August 2020 and 5 October 2020 so that all members could share in the task of meeting the budget challenge.
- 6.4 The Leader of the Opposition is able at any stage of the budget process to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 6.5 The normal statutory consultation with business ratepayers and parish councils will take place.

7 Risk Management Implications

- 7.1 Extensive modelling work has been undertaken to understand the impacts and variables arising from the crisis. Staff and support costs reflect current assumptions but will be subject to the progress of our transformation work.
- 7.2 Further government support should be provided to meet 100% of councils' additional costs. Increased support will be sought by lobbying and by discussions with MHCLG. The prospects for increased funding remain uncertain.
- 7.3 Leisure and commercial income are very dependent on factors beyond the Council's control, on lock-down, the return of consumer confidence, and impacts due to the severity and duration of the macro-economic downturn and recovery.
- 7.4 Modelling has been undertaken with service managers to assess the potential range of impacts before adopting the assumptions described within the report.
- 7.5 All the above and other significant uncertainties and risks will have to be managed. Further material change is likely to the current budget assumptions and the actions needed to ensure a balanced budget.

8 Savings progress

- 8.1 The Budget Strategy has led to the successful identification of a significant level of savings for 2021/22 and later years. These are summarised in the table below allocated to the strategic themes agreed by Cabinet in June 2020. The details of the savings are set out in the separate report on this agenda.

Row Labels	Sum of 2021-22	Sum of 2022-23	Sum of 2023-24	Sum of 2024-25
Commercial	436	5	70	
Efficiency	445	25		
Service Provision	804	150	115	
Communities	64			
Grand Total	1749	180	185	

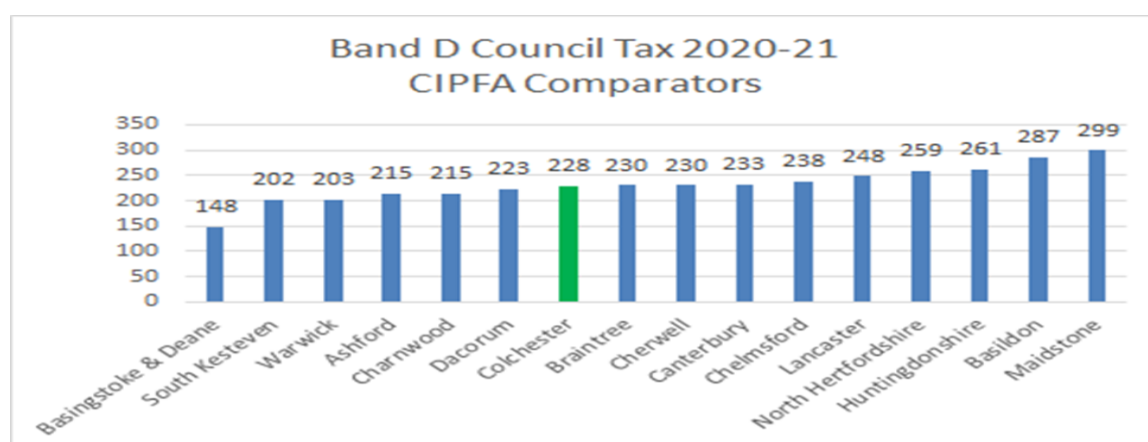
- 8.2 Considerable progress has been made in identifying savings, nonetheless the challenge for 2022/23 at £2.564m is considerable. As such, the strategic themes in the budget strategy will continue to be developed to achieve a sustainable medium term budget position.
- 8.3 Numerous additional opportunities have been identified already that require further feasibility work, business case development and due diligence before they can be realised, and benefits built into the MTFF. Further work, reflecting the Council's strategic priorities and the longer-term relationship between the Council, its partners in the public and voluntary sectors and the relationship with communities and businesses, is also underway.

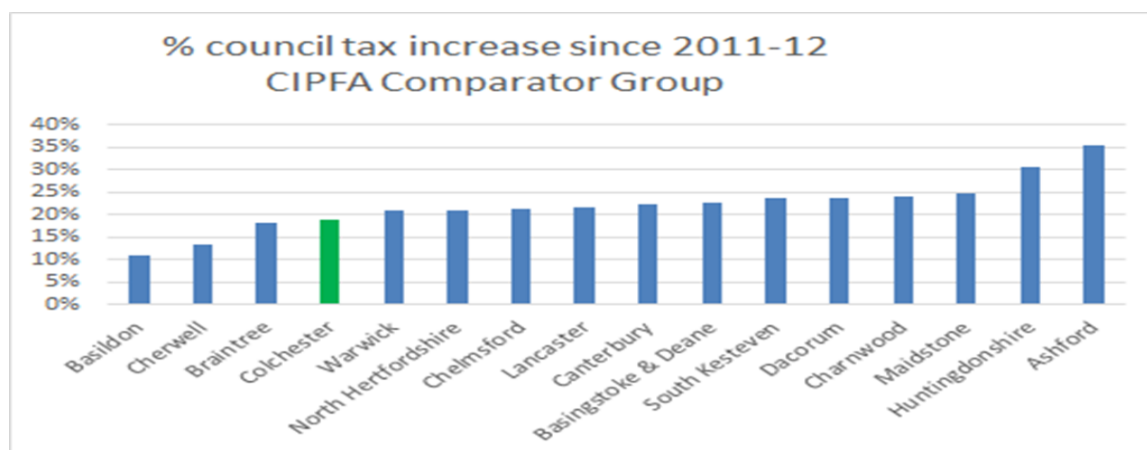
9 Budget pressures 2021/22 onwards

- 9.1 The MTFF allows £1.000m for new cost pressures in 2021/22 and £500k steps up from 2022/23 to 2024/25. It is expected one of the main calls on the 2021/22 allocation will be to cover variations in capital financing costs. This reflects capital programme variations due to Covid-19.
- 9.2 Services will therefore need to contain most pressures other than basic pay inflation and contract inflation in 2021/22. The MTFF allocation will be required for Councilwide pressures.

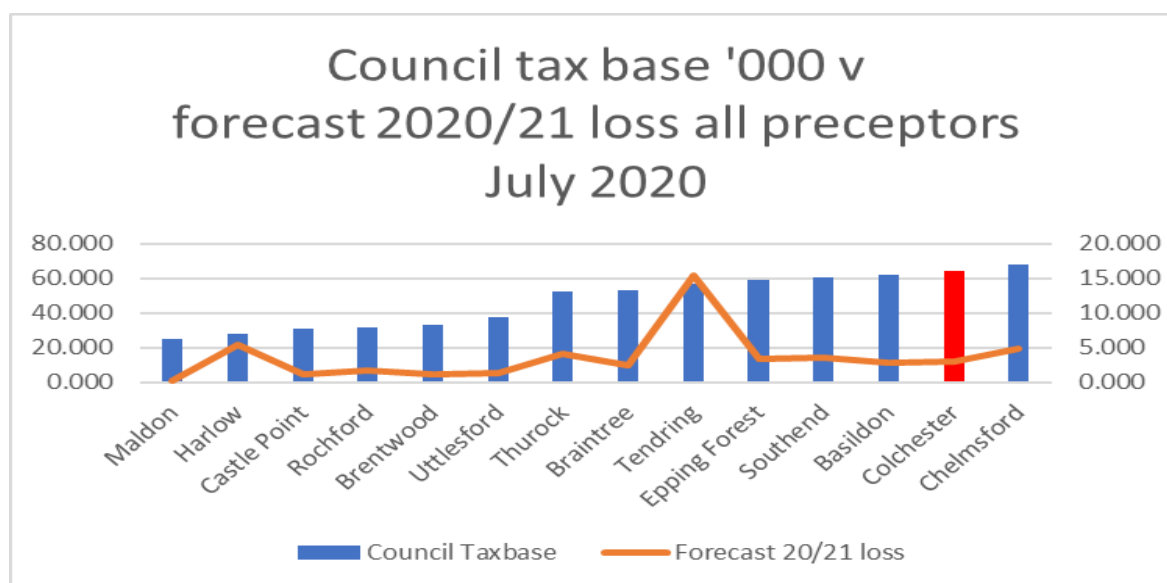
10 Council Tax

- 10.1 The 2020/21 limit for district council tax increases without a referendum was 2.5% or £5 (whichever is the larger). The MTFF assumes the same regime and that a £5 increase is made in each financial year. These remain low council tax rates compared to other district councils as set out in the charts below.





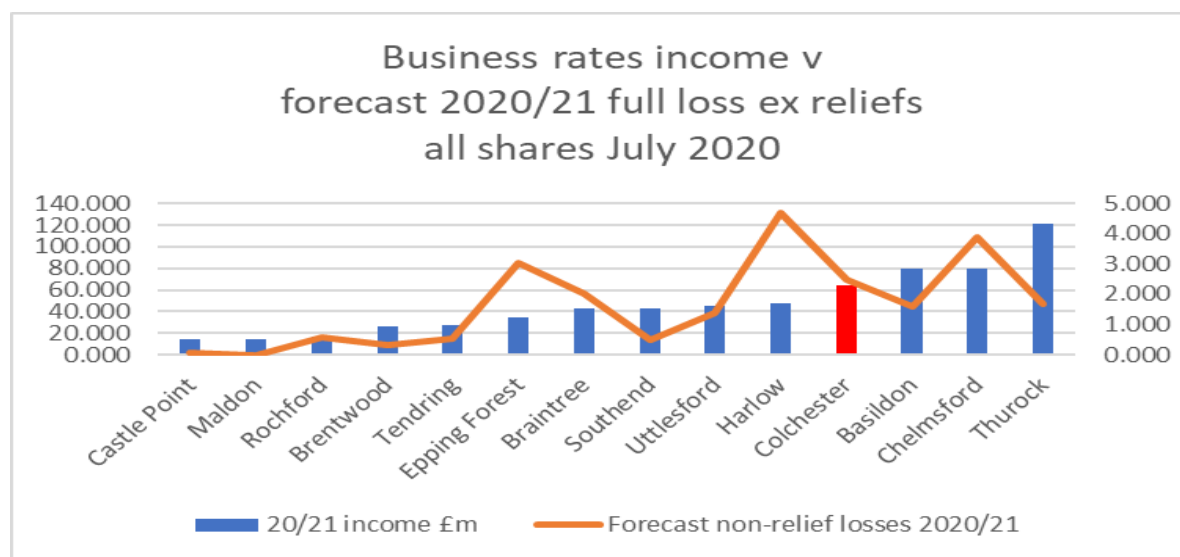
- 10.2 MTFF assumptions on collection rates and LCTS take-up from 2021/22 onwards are set out in the Appendix.
- 10.3 The impact of Covid-19 will result in a collection fund deficit in 2020/21. Council tax collection rates in 2020/21 have currently fallen by around 1% and LCTS additional costs to the collection fund are currently forecast at £400k. However, the position may deteriorate with the end of furlough arrangements. The MTFF assumption is a 95% collection rate.
- 10.4 The Council's share of 2020/21 council tax losses is estimated at £500k in the MTFF. This is spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements. Full details of the deferral rules have yet to be released.



11 Business rates

- 11.1 MHCLG requires groups of authorities that wish to pool business rates in 2021/22 to express an interest by 23 October 2020. After that date any pool applicant's withdrawal will collapse the proposed pooling arrangement for all applicants.
- 11.2 The MTFF assumes £200k gain to Colchester from pooling and to continue the current pool is the favoured option.

- 11.3 Subject to ongoing technical discussion still in progress, a less likely option is to form a pool with a subset of the existing membership, excluding the authorities with the highest prospective business rate losses.
- 11.4 The most unlikely option is that there would be no pooling arrangement for 2021/22.
- 11.5 The Government has previously suggested it would implement 75% business rates retention in 2021/22. It is uncertain now whether implementation will go ahead. If implementation goes ahead in 2021/22 it is unclear how this will impact CBC.
- 11.6 MTFF assumptions on business rate collection rates are set out in the Appendix.
- 11.7 In 2020/21 business rate collection losses are limited by the various new discounts and reliefs set nationally by MHCLG. These arrangements result in business rates income that previously had a collection risk being paid instead to the Council as government grants. The 2020/21 business rates collection fund loss is forecast at £2.5m, with the Council's 40% share being £1m. This loss is spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements. Full details of the deferral rules have yet to be released.
- 11.8 It is unclear what reliefs will be supported by MHCLG in 2021/22. It is likely the full impact of Covid-19 on the economy will manifest itself with the end of various temporary government support schemes to businesses and an economic recession. The 2021/22 business rates collection fund loss is forecast at £5m, with the Council's 40% share being £2m. This is again spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements.
- 11.9 Collection fund losses reported by Essex authorities in July Covid-19 returns are shown in the chart. These demonstrate that Colchester is making provision at a commensurate level for council tax and business rate losses.



12 Income

- 12.1 Income performance and future forecasts are comprehensively reviewed in monthly financial monitoring. The Appendix sets out current income forecasts.

- 12.2 There is now a risk of a second wave in Autumn and Winter 2020. Forecast income loss for 2020/21 in the MTFF has not been amended at this stage from the July Cabinet assumption of £9.092m.

13 Government Funding

- 13.1 Unringfenced government support for Covid-19 in 2020/21 is £2.265m. It is not assumed in the MTFF any unringfenced government support for Covid-19 will be paid in 2021/22 and later years.
- 13.2 Income loss support will be paid by MHCLG in 2020/21 only. This has been forecast as £3.928m for the full year. Any adverse variation against the forecast figure will be an additional call on reserves.
- 13.3 Furlough support will be paid by HMRC in 2020/21 only. This has been forecast at £1.000m. The furlough entitlement will be checked in monthly revenue monitoring.
- 13.4 Major changes to local government funding planned by MHCLG have been delayed due to Covid-19. These are set out in the table.

1	Devolution White Paper	The White paper may include new funding arrangements for local government? What will be the timetable for reorganisation and will this put on hold other planned funding changes set out below. There will be uncertainty as to any reorganised authority's spending need v resources position.
2	Fair Funding	Settlement Funding Assessments include assumed need to spend in the calculation. The basis is unchanged for many years. The Fair Funding review could increase or decrease Colchester's SFA. This will depend on what new basis of calculating spending needs is adopted and when it is implemented.
3	100% business rates retention	An increased business rates share will replace some government grants. A key consideration will be how changes in business rates income are to be shared between local authorities and government. How long will local authorities be able to retain growth in business rates?
4	Spending Review	How will local government's share of public spending be changed? Will the distribution between second and first tier authorities change?
5	New Homes Bonus	The Government has planned for some time to review New Homes Bonus. Colchester received £4.055m in 2020/21. The MTFF forecasts later years at £2.945m. Changes could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing or eliminating the national NHB pot • Reducing the incentive or the number of years paid • Heightening the incentive for fast growing councils

- 13.5 In view of all the uncertainties over future government funding, the MTFF provides £500k downward steps in each financial successive year.

14 Use of reserves

- 14.1 The planned use of reserves for Covid-19 is £2.870m in 2021/22. Together with £3.339m usage in 2020/21 the total Covid-19 usage is £6.209m.
- 14.2 Redundancy costs will arise in implementing savings, leading to a forecast £1.000m use of reserves.

Reserve usage reconciliation (£m)	Status	31.3.20	Use 20/1 Covid	Use 21/2 Covid	31.3.22
Future Service Reserve - Carry Forwards	Available	3.378	-1.500		1.878
Revenue Grants unapplied	Available	2.911	-0.019	-0.481	2.411
Renewals and Repairs	Available	2.455	-0.744	-0.603	1.108
Business Rates Reserve	Available	1.695	-0.540	-0.655	0.500
Revolving Investment Fund Reserve	Available	1.436	-0.536	-0.613	0.287
Future Service Reserve - Redundancy	Available	1.000			1.000
Capital Expenditure Reserve	Available	0.720			0.720
Future Service - Risk Allocation	Available	0.660			0.660
Insurance	Available	0.566		-0.121	0.445
Future Service - Excess balances	Available	0.397		-0.397	0.000
Future Service - Pooling gain	Available	0.195			0.195
S106 / Asset replacement	Available	0.050			0.050
Gosbeck Reserve	Not available	0.152			0.152
Mercury Theatre Reserve	Not available	0.100			0.100
Heritage Reserve	Not available	0.100			0.100
NEPP off street/CIMS	Not available	0.073			0.073
Heritage Mersea Mount	Not available	0.010			0.010
Pensions Deficit	Other use	3.124			3.124
		19.022	-3.339	-2.870	12.813
Total use Covid-19		-6.209			
Balance 31.3.22		12.813			
Potential use of redundancy provision		-1.000			
Revised balance 31.3.22		11.813			



- 14.3 The renewals and repairs reserve funds the replacement of plant and equipment that is essential for service delivery. The table below lists the purpose of the reserves held at 31 March 2020 where the balance exceeded £100k.

Row	Purpose	Scheme	Balance (£k)
1	Leisure World	General	326
2	Town Hall		137
3	Leisure World		131
4	Cemetery	Memorial Stability Programme	210
5	Crematorium	FBT Boiler Replacement	140
6	Crematorium	Flue replacement	120
7	Firstsite	Repair Costs	105

- 14.4 There are future risks that could also be an additional call on reserves:

- The uncertain long term economic impact of Covid-19.
- The potential impact of any second wave. The cost to the authority could be up to £1m a month, though income support grant from MHCLG might offset some of those losses.
- Reduction of MHCLG income support grant following release of the full grant details by MHCLG.
- Capital receipt losses leading to additional borrowing and capital financing costs.

15 Strategic Priorities and Recovery

- 15.1 The New Strategic Plan considered by Cabinet in September 2020 sets out three key priorities against each of five thematic areas, reflecting Covid-19 recovery priorities and financial considerations given the budget constraints outlined in this paper.
- 15.2 Post-crisis recovery, for the Council, our customers, communities and businesses, is of critical importance. This will be a key focus of activity in 2021/22 and the revised Medium-Term Financial Forecast also assumes a budget of £250k is available in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to direct to new recovery programmes. This is needed to cover gaps in government help for the Covid-19 crisis and support the Borough's recovery.

16 Budget Planning Assumptions

- 16.1 The budget planning assumptions are set out in the Appendix.
- 16.2 The Council's revised Medium-Term Financial Forecast is summarised below and set out in more detail in the Appendix. In this summarised table the Covid impacts are economic and income impact plus additional costs plus new funding for recovery. Use of reserves is the use originally planned in the MTFE plus the additional use for Covid-19.

Revised MTFF (£m)	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Service costs	24,377	31,020	23,394	22,836	23,176
Covid Impacts	10,129	(8,361)	(2,050)	(700)	0
Business rates	(5,885)	(5,580)	(4,457)	(4,000)	(3,876)
Council tax	(12,448)	(11,889)	(12,248)	(12,612)	(13,145)
Other funding	(10,794)	(2,945)	(2,940)	(2,944)	(2,944)
Use of reserves	(5,378)	(2,245)	875	1,250	1,250
Savings to find	0	(0)	2,574	3,830	4,461

17 **2020/21 Outturn**

- 17.1 It is expected the 2020/21 outturn can be covered by reserves as set out in the MTFF.

18 **Financial implications**

- 18.1 As set out in the report.

19 **Environmental and Climate Change Implications**

- 19.1 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.

20 **Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 20.1 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.

21 **Other Standard References**

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

MTFF Assumptions – all annual figures	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Changes since July Cabinet for PMB discussion
Covid 19 Income loss and economic impact	9.092	2.900	1.500	0.500	0.000	Amphora dividend loss a separate line
Amphora Dividend Loss	0.300	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Additional direct Covid-19 costs	0.600	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	No change
Recovery programmes additional funding	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	Reduced from £0.333m steps 2020/21 to 2022/23
Transformation + restructuring costs	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Council tax loss 2020/21 impacting 2021-23		0.167	0.167	0.166	0.000	Was £1.200m 2021/22 – now £500k 3yr spread
Council tax base increase		+0.5%	+0.5%	+0.5%	+0.5%	No change
Council tax collection rate		+95%	+95%	+95%	+95%	No change
LCTS take-up v 2020/22 budget/ impact on District Council income		+25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	No change
Business rates losses 2020/21 impacting 2021-23		0.333	0.333	0.334	0.000	Was £1.500m 2021/23 – now £1m 3yr spread
Business rates losses 2021/22 impacting 2022-24			0.666	0.666	0.668	New - £2m 3yr spread
Contractual inflation		0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	No change
Pay inflation	3%/0.600	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	No change
Use of New Homes Bonus for Covid-19 pressures	-0.500	-1.774	-1.941	-2.341	-2.574	No change
Use of reserves for Covid-19	-3.339	-2.870	0.250	0.500	0.500	Was £6.692m 2020/21, £1.658m 2021/22. Replenishment reduced to £250k 2022/23
Government Grant Covid 19 general	-2.265	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	£317k additional
Government Grant Covid 19 income support	-3.928	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	New grant
Government Grant Covid 19 furlough	-1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Shorter duration + includes January bonus
Council Tax increase	£4.95	£5	£5	£5	£5	Was £10 in each year, now £5 in each year
Additional service income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Was £0.500m 2020/21, £1.050m 21/22 now deleted
Allowance for additional cost pressures		1.000	0.500	0.500	0.500	2021/22 allocation expected to be earmarked for capital financing
2022 Pension revaluation				0.600	0.600	No change

	2020/21		Revised				
	Budget	BQ	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Loss
Car parks	-3.970	-0.993	-0.135	-0.617	-0.733	-0.654	1.831
Budget			-0.993	-0.993	-0.993	-0.993	
% of budget			14%	62%	74%	66%	
Commercial Rents	-2.864	-0.716	-0.596	-0.596	-0.596	-0.596	0.480
Budget			-0.716	-0.716	-0.716	-0.716	
% of budget			83%	83%	83%	83%	
Sport & Leisure	-3.808	-0.952	0.000	-0.051	-0.250	-0.500	3.007
Budget			-0.952	-0.952	-0.952	-0.952	
% of budget			0%	5%	26%	53%	
Recycling Credits	-1.512	-0.378	-0.243	-0.243	-0.243	-0.243	0.540
Budget			-0.378	-0.378	-0.378	-0.378	
% of budget			64%	64%	64%	64%	
Bereavement Servs	-1.362	-0.340	-0.340	-0.341	-0.341	-0.341	0.000
Budget			-0.340	-0.340	-0.340	-0.340	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Planning	-1.227	-0.307	-0.307	-0.306	-0.307	-0.306	0.000
Budget			-0.307	-0.307	-0.307	-0.307	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Trade Waste	-0.512	-0.128	-0.063	-0.063	-0.063	-0.063	0.260
Budget			-0.128	-0.128	-0.128	-0.128	
% of budget			49%	49%	49%	49%	
Museums	-0.479	-0.120	0.000	-0.020	-0.049	-0.050	0.360
Budget			-0.120	-0.120	-0.120	-0.120	
% of budget			0%	17%	41%	42%	
Building Control	-0.455	-0.114	-0.074	-0.110	-0.110	-0.111	0.050
Budget			-0.114	-0.114	-0.114	-0.114	
% of budget			65%	97%	97%	98%	
HB Overpayments	-0.450	-0.113	-0.111	-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	0.000
Budget			-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	
% of budget			99%	100%	100%	100%	
Interest Receivable	-0.300	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.300
Budget			-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	
% of budget			0%	0%	0%	0%	
Court Fees	-0.277	-0.069	0.000	0.000	-0.208	-0.070	0.000
Budget			-0.069	-0.069	-0.069	-0.069	
% of budget			0%	0%	300%	100%	
Events	-0.300	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.300
Budget			-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	
% of budget			0%	0%	0%	0%	
Land Charges	-0.177	-0.044	-0.006	0.000	0.000	-0.014	0.157
Budget			-0.044	-0.044	-0.044	-0.044	
% of budget			14%	0%	0%	32%	
Premises Licensing	-0.158	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	0.000
Budget			-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Taxi Licensing	-0.109	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	0.000
Budget			-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Grand Total	-17.960	-4.490	-1.942	-2.527	-3.079	-3.127	7.285
Loss			-4.490	-4.490	-4.490	-4.490	
			43%	56%	69%	70%	

Revised MTFF (£m)	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Previous year's budget	20,206	34,506	22,659	21,344	22,136
Pressures	5,803	(1,200)	830	1,584	1,040
New Strategic Priorities	216	200	333	333	0
Savings	- 1,848	(2,486)	(428)	(425)	0
Covid Economy and Income	9,392	(6,392)	(1,500)	(500)	0
Covid Service Costs	600	(300)	(300)	0	0
Covid Recovery	250	0	(250)	0	0
NHB redirected Covid Impact	- 113	(1,669)	0	(200)	0
This year's budget	34,506	22,659	21,344	22,136	23,176
Business Rates	- 5,885	(5,913)	(5,456)	(5,000)	(4,544)
Council Tax	- 12,503	(12,056)	(12,415)	(12,778)	(13,145)
New Homes Bonus	- 3,602	(2,945)	(2,940)	(2,944)	(2,944)
Planned use of reserves	- 2,039	625	625	750	750
Covid 2020/21 council tax loss	55	167	167	166	0
Covid 2020/21 business rate loss	-	333	999	1,000	668
Covid MHCLG income loss	- 3,928	0	0	0	0
Covid MHCLG unringfenced	- 2,265	0	0	0	0
Covid MHCLG furlough	- 1,000	0	0	0	0
Covid use of reserves	- 3,339	(2,870)	250	500	500
Budget Gap	0	- 0	2,574	3,830	4,461

13 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement	Author	Richard Block ☎ 506825
Title	Covid-19 Recovery – Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides the Cabinet report giving details of a Budget Strategy that will deliver a balanced budget in 2021/2022 and start identifying savings required by the Medium-Term Financial Forecast in future years. Cabinet will consider this report on 14 October 2020. The report explains proposals to make budget savings through improving efficiency, reviewing models of service provision, becoming more commercial and harnessing the potential of our communities.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To note the proposals to Cabinet set out in the business cases at Appendix A and all actions necessary to prepare to implement them prior to final approval by Cabinet in January 2021, and to consider whether to make recommendations related to these.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure robust proposals are developed and can be implemented to deliver a balanced budget in 2020/2021 and in future years.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5. Background Information and Standard Paragraphs

- 5.1 The report to Cabinet, at Appendix A, and its appendices detail the background information to this item and contain details regarding the implications of the report and its content.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Cabinet Report: Covid-19 Recovery – Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement	Author	Richard Block ☎ 506825
Title	Covid-19 Recovery – Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of a Budget Strategy that will deliver a balanced budget in 2021/2022 and start identifying savings required by the Medium Term Financial Forecast in future years. The report explains proposals to make budget savings through improving efficiency, reviewing models of service provision, becoming more commercial and harnessing the potential of our communities.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the proposals set out in the business cases at Appendix A and all actions necessary to prepare to implement them prior to final approval by Cabinet in January 2021.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure robust proposals are developed and can be implemented to deliver a balanced budget in 2020/2021 and in future years.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Although this report details wide ranging options, other opportunities to generate budget savings have been considered but were rejected due to the severity of the impact on frontline services.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Covid-19 has had a seismic impact on the Council and our finances. The scale of these impacts and details of our ongoing budget gap are detailed in the report of the Head of Finance also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting.
- 5.2 Council services have also been transformed to adapt to the new normal and this transformation will need to continue so services are fit for a post Covid-19 world and can be delivered with the finances available.
- 5.3 The size of the budget gap we face combined with the unprecedented challenges presented by Covid-19 requires a rapid response and development of budget savings proposals at a scale never previously faced by this Council.
- 5.4 To respond to these challenges a crosscutting corporate budget strategy has been developed under 5 themes with each theme being led by an Assistant Director. The themes are described below:

Theme	Description	Lead
Priorities	The Covid-19 pandemic has presented the Council with unprecedented service and financial challenges changing some of the key financial planning assumptions, and priorities upon which the previous draft Strategic Plan presented in March 2020 was based. As a result, a review and reprioritisation of priorities should be undertaken	Rory Doyle – Assistant Director Environment
Efficiency	Reviewing opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks, and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation.	Leonie Rathbone – Assistant Director Customer
Service Provision	Reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new level of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to	Richard Block – Assistant Director Corporate and Improvement

	ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”	
Commercial	Understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets	Mandy Jones – Assistant Director Place and Client
Communities	Communities have so much potential, there are skills, abilities and a desire within Communities to make change happen, own and sustain it. Local Authorities and other Service Providers are beginning to understand the need to work differently with their communities going forward and focus on their strengths not imposing solutions to perceived weaknesses.	Lucie Breadman - Assistant Director Communities

- 5.5 Officers from across the organisation have been involved in developing workstreams for each theme to ensure a budget strategy that is joined up and not siloed.
- 5.6 The detailed templates at appendix A show proposals to make budget savings of more than £1.7 Million in 2021/2022 and a cumulative total of £2.1 million by 2024. They also show the associated implications to services, residents and staff. Proposals that have the least impact on frontline service have been identified wherever possible. To protect frontline services, this does mean some increases to charges for discretionary services are proposed.
- 5.7 The proposals would result in the overall level of full time equivalent staff (FTE) employed by the Council reducing by 28 FTE. 8 of these roles are currently vacant so if these proposals were approved, 20 FTE staff would be at risk of redundancy.
- 5.8 All changes to staffing would be made in line with the Organisational Change Policy and if approved by Cabinet, formal consultation will be commenced with officers whose job is at risk of redundancy. Staff will be redeployed into other roles where possible to avoid redundancies. Provision has also been made in the Medium Term Financial Forecast for costs associated with redundancies.
- 5.9 Any staff who are eventually made redundant will be provided with a package of support including coaching, training, and support to apply for other jobs.
- 5.10 An overall summary of the savings generated by each theme is shown below along with the associated reduction in staff FTE required:

Theme	Total Savings from 2021-2024 (£000)	Number of staff reduced (FTE)
Priorities	0	0
Efficiency	469.5	13.8
Service Provision	1,069	13.6
Commercial	511	0
Communities	64	1
Total	2,113.5	28.4

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out for each of the budget strategy themes. These are at appendix B.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Priorities theme has involved reprioritising the Council's new Strategic Priorities to ensure they can be delivered with the resources and staff capacity available. This resulted in the revised Strategic Plan that was considered by Cabinet in September and recommended to Full Council for approval in October.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Informal consultation regarding the budget strategy proposals has been undertaken with Unison and staff throughout September and the results will continue to be used to further develop proposals to bridge our budget gap.
- 8.2 If Cabinet give approval to these initial proposals a 30 day period of formal staff consultation will be undertaken in November.
- 8.3 Wider public consultation will be undertaken with residents and other stakeholders during November using Webinars and an online survey.
- 8.4 The results of formal staff and public consultation will be provided to Cabinet when the final Budget Strategy proposals are considered in January 2021.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 A significant internal and external communications campaign has been initiated to publicise the scale of our budget challenge and the reasons for these proposals. The plan will now move to a consultation phase as detailed above.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The full financial impact of these proposals is shown on each business case. As stated above, these proposals could generate savings/additional income of £2.1 million by 2024. There will be associated transformation costs including those associated with redundancy. Provision has been made for these as detailed in the report from the Head of Finance also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The full implications of each proposal are shown in the impacts section of each business case. Most of these proposals have no direct external health, wellbeing, or community

safety implications as they relate to efficiencies and changes to the way we provide support services.

- 11.2 The proposals to reduce ward member budgets in the Communities Theme could have impacts as some would previously have been used to support health, wellbeing, or community safety.
- 11.3 In the Commercial theme increases in fees and charges for activities that have a positive health/wellbeing impact e.g. allotments may have a negative impact if it discourages people from undertaking these activities.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no direct public health and safety implications.
- 12.2 In terms of the Health and Safety of Council employees, these proposals will result in concern and stress particularly for the members of staff who would be at risk of redundancy. All staff will be fully supported through a range of mechanisms including direct support from their manager/HR, our employee assistance programme and from the network of trained mental health first aiders within the organisation.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The individual risks associated with each proposal is detailed in the relevant business case.
- 13.2 If these proposals are not approved the most significant risk is that the Council is unable to deliver a balanced budget for 2021/2022 and alternative savings proposals are not identified.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 Many of the proposals in the Efficiency Theme are associated with a greater use of technology and less use of printing and paper making them more environmentally sustainable.
- 14.2 Increases in car parking fees proposed through the Commercial Theme could influence the public to consider other forms of transport which would have a positive impact on air quality and congestion in Colchester.

Appendices

Appendix A – Business Cases for Each Budget Strategy Theme

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessments

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Commercial		
Introduction to Theme	This theme is about understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets and working with the Council's Amphora trading companies.		
Workstream	Fees and charges (including new charging opportunities)		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Cremation fee increase	60	0	0
Environment fees and charge increases	47	0	0
Car parking charges increase and environmental levy	208	0	0
Pavement licence income increase	5	0	0
Income from Electrical Safety Penalties	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Cremation fee increase Increase in fees and charges predominantly in Adult Cremations by £38 to a cost of £827. When benchmarked against other LA Crematorium Adult fees this is as follows (for current year may also increase next year) – Braintree (3 Counties) £999 / Chelmsford £793 / Havering (South Essex) £955 / Ipswich £713 Nacton (Seven Hills) £775 / Southend £825 Weeley £775</p> <p>Environment fees and charges increase Environment – Fees and charges inc (Beach hut / allotment / sports pitches / bulky / special collections / HW Country park + fishing. Higher % increase to be offset with proposal to hold fees for a fixed term.</p> <p>Car parking charges increase and environmental levy Putting up the St Mary's, St John's & Priory Street Mon-Fri/Sun Tariff to the Sat Tariff (between 10p-20p per hr) would mean an increase in net income of about 7%-8% That means approximately: £58k in St Mary's £75k in St Johns (where most pay the special offer day rate) £22k in Priory Street</p>		

	<p>Carparks will require continuing investment in repairs and maintenance. Needs to tie in with wider work to promote Colchester as a destination. Need to closely monitor for customer attrition. Short – medium (21 days minimum advertising once placed, and legal notices required).</p> <p>Adding 10-30p to Vineyard Street tariffs across the board (to take over next full coin) would yield about £21k</p> <p>If the same yield were true of Britannia (need to investigate further) then net = £32k</p> <p>Upping the higher tariffs would impact fewer people, but you'd have to more than double the tariff for any effect.</p> <p>Pavement license fee increased take up</p> <p>Extension to Borough Wide and new uptake following Covid changes and Cafe Culture. More demand for outside dining following this year's trial and new requests for permits and increasing scheme across the Borough. However, trial may not work, and more businesses may cease trading after Covid-19 impacts.</p> <p>Electrical safety penalties (Private sector housing)</p> <p>Increase from new penalties around electrical safety - robust and proactive approach and campaign, new policy change and process. Fits with robust approach to enforcement and safe housing for all priority. Can't start until inspections re-commence realistically – difficult to predict and needs resources for a proactive approach.</p>		
Workstream Two Description	Using our assets - Markets, Car Parks and Castle Park. Extending market and using car parks and Castle park more commercially.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Market expansion	86	0	0
Car park markets and events	0	5	10
Castle park café	0	0	20
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	<p>Market expansion</p> <p>Increase in the number of pitches across the borough to 12 new sites (in addition to existing sites). This is currently under investigation and detailed Business Case being prepared. Outline proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sites within the Town Centre to create a Market trail. • Generate opportunities for new businesses and businesses looking to start afresh post-lockdown – aiding economic recovery (to be outlined in Recovery Plan). • New sites generate opportunities for new businesses and businesses looking to start afresh post-lockdown, particularly for those who are having difficulty with cost of premises. <p>Also looking outside town centre and within the borough</p> <p>Risks</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second spike • Economic downturn, will impact different traders at different times (essential items may be more prosperous) • Weather and Covid-19 could have an impact on footfall <p>Discussions held about ideas for using the park more commercially to benefit income and TC and eco recovery (more trading through pitches, possibilities for cafe lease, market).</p> <p>Car park markets and events</p> <p>Other uses of car parks to be investigated, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a small number of pitches in parking bays (regular) could produce additional income to parking (Demi Quinn and Richard Walker to investigate) • One off market in car parks (particularly those out of town in the winter where parking can be on street - West Mersea for example) • Bigger events and markets on car parks (cinema for example). • More 'permanent' use of car parks for other purposes https://secretldn.com/franks-cafe-rooftop-peckham/ <p>Bringing Amphora Events into these conversations - create further joint working opportunities to enhance income.</p> <p>Castle Park café</p> <p>Options for café involve CBC running the café or changing lease arrangements (needs Business case – Commercial resource). Initial work includes liaison with Amphora around lease arrangement and initial view on investment needed / commercial possibilities.</p>		
Workstream Three Description	Opportunities to expand Trade Waste service		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Increased income from Trade waste	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Could increase income (grow the business) or sell the operation (quick win) Options appraisal / business case to be undertaken - needs some resource to grow the business. Another one for Commercial project resource (Recovery funding).</p> <p>Depends on decision taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt for sale of business and reduced associated costs; or • Increased uptake from businesses who are supported to recycle and associated increased income. <p>Needs further work to analyse potential business case. Income target already increased and under-recovered against it. Would require investment and marketing. Willingness of business to enter into new</p>		

	contracts post Covid unknown. Income in future at risk if further lockdown measures introduced.		
Workstream Six Description	Smaller and longer-term income opportunities: 1. Arts Council funding increase 2. Tree planting		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Arts Council funding	0	0	40
Tree planting	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Arts Council funding increase Additional £200k per year funding to enhance service and income generating opportunities NPO Band 2 application is to Arts Council from Apr 23. Next round of NPO funding from April 2023 - apply for next band up so income moves from £200k per year to £400k per year. Allows for more exhibitions and improvements that can generate additional income. Will only be achievable IF we are successful in a Band 2 Application to ACE. Going to Band 2 requires ambition but comes with £400k annual additional income which will generate more income to CBC.		
	Tree planting Contribution towards planting a tree£3 @ 10K trees		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM COMMERCIAL THEME	436	5	70
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	Dependent on workstream but most portfolios are impacted.		
Implementation Costs –			
Not fully known at this stage – will depend on Business Case development for each workstream and project. Have identified projects and costs where known and comments			
Item / Project area	Cost	Comment	
Environment fees and charges	Potential revenue cost		
Trade waste	Needs BC		
Market expansion	Not outlined (TBC)		

Car parks, markets, events	Needs BC, potential revenue and capital		
Castle park café	Possible capital and revenue costs		
Identification of name and number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	0	0	0
Identification of name and number of new posts in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	0	0	0
Conclusion	<p>As shown above there are a number of opportunities for increasing income across the organisation.</p> <p>Some may be unpopular but easily achievable in an operational sense and will give returns in 20/21, whilst others are more difficult and longer term, will need resource and project management to undertake detailed business cases but could provide longer term opportunities.</p>		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Communities		
Introduction to Theme	<p>Communities have so much potential, there are skills, abilities and a desire within Communities to make change happen, own and sustain it. Local Authorities and other Service Providers are beginning to understand the need to work differently with their communities going forward and focus on their strengths not imposing solutions to perceived weaknesses. Inequalities are also increasing. Finding ways to redress that balance is crucial to overall health and wellbeing.</p> <p>There are a myriad of services who all need to work as a system, reduce duplication and join the effort of putting communities at the heart of what they do, focusing on what's strong, unique and possible. Encouraging people to harness and make use of their existing assets and resources. This is starting to happen in Colchester with partnerships such as The Health Alliance, One Colchester and Local Development Partnership beginning to work very differently.</p> <p>Efficiencies from this approach are unlikely in these early days and therefore savings are modest. But there is more potential going forward, not to cut resources but to use it in different ways, with new models of working and more faith and reliance on the Voluntary Sector and Communities themselves to find better outcomes and solutions.</p>		
Workstream	Reduction of Locality Budget		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Reduce Locality Budget Spend by 50% to help budget position	50	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Locality Budgets are £2k per Ward Cllr to use on local initiatives. The value of these budgets has been questioned for some years, and in many cases spend is toward the end of the year after numerous reminders. With more focus on inequalities there is a need to re-think Locality Budgets, where they go and what difference they make given the financial constraints on the Council. Reducing by half will soften any impact and help with the immediate financial pressures and going forward we need to work with Ward Cllrs to consider how this remaining funding can best address the ABCD approach and support those who need it the most.</p> <p>Risk – may not be seen in the spirit of Community Enabling / ABCD as it is actually reducing funding going directly into local communities so is likely to be met by Ward Cllrs with some criticism and realistically is a 'cut'. There is an opportunity to re-think the whole scheme for the future and make it more linked to those deprived communities to help deal with issues around inequalities.</p>		

	Future receipt could be linked to Ward Cllrs having participated in ABCD training and actively linked to promoting this approach.		
Workstream Two Description	Working differently with partners across the System to streamline and reduce duplication.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
CBC Community Team Resource reduction	14	0	0
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	Dealing with Covid response and improved understanding and closer working with partners, along with securing access to external funding streams has already led to new working models and more use of shared resources. While this approach is still in its early days it has already provided some additional capacity and the opportunity for a small efficiency saving.		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM COMMUNITIES THEME	64	0	0
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	PFH for Communities, Cllr Mike Lilley		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
n/a	n/a		
Identification of number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	1 FTE		
Conclusion	£64,000 saving to budget in total but emphasis on this Theme is about working differently in the future and longer term opportunities across a much wider system for new approaches, improved Health and Wellbeing, Community Ownership and solutions and ultimately a need for less public resources.		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Efficiency		
Introduction to Theme	This theme describes the opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation. We will seek simplicity in every process, capture efficient new ways of working that have emerged since Covid-19 and look to automate processes where possible.		
Workstream One Description	Payments and Purchasing Due to internal role moves and the success of an interim structure we can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs. Proposals to utilise system improvements to enable purchase orders to be completed within teams, supporting the development of a more proactive purchasing team which will add value to procurement savings.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Staff resource reduction	70	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The interim arrangement have successfully tested different ways of organising the team and the allocations of tasks. Also, recent system upgrades have released opportunities to process work in a more efficient way. Ability of key system supplier to continue to deliver system changes poses some risk. There is a risk of significant redundancy costs.		
Workstream Two Description	Contact and Support - Call Handling Efficiencies (CBH) A new housing system is being implemented (Northgate) ready for 20/21. This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. This added to recent improvements in call management will allow for savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	56	0	0
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	Currently there is vacancy within the team that can contribute toward the identified savings. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings and attainment of service KPI, however the team are currently exceeding service targets and work is ongoing to further promote the use of e-communications to CBH tenants in receipt of benefits which will again reduce telephony contact, this stream is separate to the Northgate implementation.		

Workstream Three Description	Contact and Support – Call Handling and Processing Efficiencies - Community & Environmental Digital development of processes within this team has recently accelerated with more development scheduled. Manual processing for fishing permits, allotments and credit claim has been reduced with automated and digital solutions. This reduction in processing has also led to a reduction in telephone enquiries. A new system for regulatory services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	42	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Digitalisation of processes is well established and has gathered considerable momentum due to positive service liaison. Key dependencies being Neighbourhood Services where considerable cross service development is underway which will reduce customer contact. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings. Spikes/unplanned service demand could create greater demand in short term until digitalisation programme fully rolled out.		
Workstream Four Description	Contact and Support – Planning, Building Control, Licensing - Processing Efficiencies The impact of Covid-19 rapidly changed the way we communicated with customers and processed tasks. Agents, developers and interested parties are now routinely submitting plans and work requests digitally. Additionally, innovative solutions are being introduced to process taxi application virtually removing the need for resource heavy in-person appointments. A new system for Built Environment/Licensing Services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team officer Resource reduction	31	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Some services improvements are linked to the sourcing and adoption of suitable ICT equipment for officers. Further behaviour change of some customers is needed but this is in the minority. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings.		
Workstream Five Description	More Efficient Processing of Benefit Claims Recent development to our core systems combined with a reduction in onerous verification, through policy changes, has led to simplified and more cost effective processes. This has given a foundation for further		

	automation which can be underpinned by an effective compliance regime. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Benefits Processing Team resource reduction	35	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The team are currently processing new claims and changes very quickly and well within target - whilst maintaining quality standards. Automation of Universal Credit notifications and wider expansion of e-notifications are underway and will lead to a reduction in contact/processing. Covid-19 still present risks to this area as the fiscal landscape is directly reflected into caseload numbers however this has been factored into our thinking and assumptions on caseloads have been made. A radical shift in excess of our assumptions would create pressure in the short term.		
Workstream Six Description	Complaints/FOI Processing Efficiencies Development of SharePoint solutions (escalator / informer) has released efficiencies in the ways complaints and FOI's are allocated and processed. The next step of development is to deliver a front end to the informer site and to enhance information provided on our website which will avoid unnecessary contact. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Customer Information staff resource reduction	30	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Complaints and FOIs could rise the unlikely event of dramatic reduction in wider service delivery, but this risk is deemed low to minimal. Delivery of a customer self-serve front end to the informer process will reduce the need for manual intervention, however delay to this development could lead to short term pressure. Developments delivered in this area have resulted in a stable and effective processing which now allows for a final stage of enhancement.		
Workstream Seven Description	Electoral Services It is anticipated the annual registration process will undergo further reform allowing for more effective processing. Also, wider efficiencies in payroll processing, contract management and system development could deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Electoral Services Team resource reduction	0	25	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Savings are dependent on further relaxation of legislative framework and efficiencies being delivered in process/contracts/system development. Savings are net of additional temporary resourced need at election period. Compliance and accuracy are paramount in holding successful elections and any error could lead to additional costs, disenfranchising of electors and loss of reputational currency. These risks will need to be judged against progress of process and task development/efficiency.		
Workstream eight Description	Finance Team Review By reviewing and revising how capital budgets are monitored we can perform this function more efficiently.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Reduction in posts to monitor Capital Budgets	45	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This proposal would result in a risk of redundancy costs. It would also reduce the overall capacity of the Finance Team and will necessitate a review of the responsibilities of all team members to mitigate this impact and ensure capital budgets are appropriately managed.		
Workstream Nine Description	People and Performance Team Efficiencies Several vacant posts have not been filled in People and Performance but the team have demonstrated through the efficient way they operate and a move to greater self-serve and through effective use of technology that they can deliver support services with less resource than previously.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Research Team Efficiency	20	0	0
Human Resources Efficiency	33	0	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	These posts are all vacant so there is no direct impact on existing staff. The teams have also shown through efficiency improvements they can deliver effective support services with these posts removed.		
Workstream Ten Description	ICT Team Efficiencies By restructuring several roles in the ICT service, this can be delivered with a reduced amount of resource.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Master Data Management Efficiencies	40	0	0
Combining existing management roles.	43	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The LLPG and Street Naming and Numbering are statutory duties and reducing would give us enough resource to complete these statutory duties and complete essential tasks on the other elements. There could be pinch points around one off project work led by services (such as elections or planning) but we would need to look at solutions for this as needed. Back up and contingency could be provided by working more closely with other organisations. The proposed ICT management changes would mean less available resource to Project Manage service based work or deal with operational issues for service owned systems (like Call Centre technology) but should be sufficient to allow the overall management of the team and the programme of work.		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM EFFICIENCY THEME	445	25	0

Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	Resources Customer		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
Redundancy	Not fully known	Specific details / postholders are unknown at this stage.	
Number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	13.8 FTE	1 FTE	
Number of new posts in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	1FTE		
Conclusion	<p>Northgate system implementation will allow for significant redesign /digitalisation of processes across a number of teams. Also, Covid -19 has led to innovative and new ways of working which have relied on digital and virtual solutions not only making us more efficient but allowing us to meet increased demand in some areas and to question former established ways of working . These factors will build on the digital development we have already successfully implemented and add to the momentum in driving efficiencies across the organisation.</p> <p>The efficiencies detailed will result in reductions to the staff establishment and this carries some risk of some short impact on service provision and redundancy cost.</p>		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Service Provision		
Introduction to Theme	This theme involves reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new levels of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”. In addition to examining in house services, services provided through external contracts will be reviewed. New more cost effective models of service delivery will also be investigated including shared services and in-sourcing.		
Workstream One Description	Procurement Savings Over the next 12 months several external contracts are due to be retendered. By using our buying power, joint procurement and reducing specifications we will make savings against the budgeted spend for these contracts. The process can be repeated for future years based on experience gained this year.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Savings against current budgeted cost for external contracts.	150	50	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This workstream enables budget savings whilst safeguarding jobs. There are risks that procurement savings will not be generated and contract specifications and associated service standards may need to be reduced to achieve the savings.		
Workstream Two Description	Reviewing Outsourced Services We can review and consider insourcing services currently provided via external contracts and SLA's. The Grounds Maintenance Contract expires in 2023. This has an annual value of £1.7million but if we start planning now the specification and model of delivery could be reviewed. For example, we could explore options to change the service specification to reduce the environmental impact whilst also reducing cost. Other models of service delivery such as in-sourcing and a staff mutual will also be considered with the support of the Policy Panel.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Saving against current budget for the Grounds Maintenance Contract	0	0	100
Review the current SLA with CBH for	29	0	0

managing Antisocial Behaviour			
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Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	<p>This theme will ensure the previous recommendation to Cabinet by the Alternative Methods of Service Delivery Task and Finish Group is implemented in that co-operatives/mutual's and insourcing will be explored. Such models have benefits in terms of staff engagement/ownership of the service which can result in higher levels of service. The impact of TUPE legislation will need to be considered in any alternative model. If the Ground Maintenance Service continues to be provided by an external contractor, the specification could be revised to make it more Environmentally Sustainable and lower cost e.g. less weed removal/reduced grass cutting. There is a risk that the current service reduces in quality if the current contractor believes there is no opportunity for them to retender for the contract.</p>
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Workstream Three Description	Shared Services We are already sharing some elements of our Corporate Services. There are further opportunities to share including, insurance management, learning and development, and recruitment. We could also trade our support services including ICT.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Savings against salary budget costs by sharing the cost of staff in HR, Finance, Governance, and ICT with partner organisations.	100	100	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Sharing services can reduce the overall cost to partners whilst pooling expertise and creating greater resilience. It does require a relationship based on mutual trust and this has already developed with other Councils in HR and ICT. If the overall level of saving cannot be generated then the current resource levels for providing these services will need to be reviewed. As such, when vacant posts arise in these support services they will not be filled until proposals that will generate required savings are developed.</p>
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Workstream Four Description	Review of Operating Models This will involve a review of our operating models and organisational structures including management structures. It will also involve more immediate opportunities to reduce staffing levels as we adapt to the new normal.
	Identified Savings

Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
With revised operation of our key buildings we can review and reduce the resource to manage them.	100	0	0
Review of Communications and Marketing Team management structure	40	0	0
Demand into the Building Control Team has reduced requiring less staff resource.	35	0	0
Demand into the Licensing Team has reduced which means less staff resource is required.	15	0	0
Change museums business rate banding.	12	0	0
Change Heckworth House to incorporate a display to change business rates categorisation.	0	0	15
During our response to Covid -19 we have demonstrated that “in person” services previously provided in the Library/Community Hub can be provided as effectively digitally.	56	0	0
Rather than maintaining a permanent Customer Improvement Team the staff resource required for each service improvement project should be part of a business case made at the start of the project.	110	0	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The revision to how we manage buildings will require different ways of working which will result in users of Key Buildings, including the Town Hall experiencing a different service. It is also predicated on reception arrangements at Rowan House being revised. The review of Communications and Marketing Team Management Structure will require the team to be located under a different GMT. This will result in some reduction in the team's overall capacity. When reviewing in person services provided at the library provision will need to be made to support vulnerable residents (such support has been provided during lockdown)		
Workstream Five Description	Vacant Posts Deletion and Better Establishment Control There are some vacant posts across the organisation which could be deleted and as posts become vacant they could be deleted unless there is a strong business case to fill them. This can then be supported through more effective establishment control so with a more robust approval process before new posts are agreed.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Housing Team	7	0	0
Better establishment control	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This is likely to place additional pressure on remaining team members. As such the capacity of the remaining team will need to be considered and outputs/performance levels revised appropriately. In many cases this is likely to lead to lower levels of service provision than has previously been delivered.		
Workstream Description	Reduction of posts/service in targeted areas		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Revise and reduce overall officer resource in the Planning Service utilising technology to further increase efficiency.	120	0	0
We could cease the night-time noise service which currently operates from 11PM to 1AM and is provided through staff overtime.	20	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The impact on performance of the planning service – enforcement and applications etc. would need to be carefully monitored and if there was a significant upturn in applications/complaints additional resources would		

	need to be reintroduced albeit the cost would be offset through additional fee income.		
	Other responsibilities can be managed by redistributing responsibilities across the team.		
	The cessation of the night-time noise service would need to be clearly communicated as there is currently a public expectation for us to provide the service. In future issues would be dealt with on the next working day.		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM SERVICE PROVISION THEME	804	150	115
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	All Cabinet Portfolio's are impacted		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
Redundancy	Not fully known	As specific posts not identified as this stage it is impossible to know what redundancy costs would be but we should assume there will be some.	
Posts reduced in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	13.6		
Identification of number of new posts in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	0	0	0
Conclusion	Changes to the way services are provided and procured could deliver substantial savings whilst maintaining current service levels. There are also several opportunities to make reductions to the staff establishment accepting there will be some impact on service provision. Savings will have major impacts on some service areas if agreed that have not been fully investigated.		

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:

Budget Strategy Theme – Commercial

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

This is a theme of the budget strategy developed in 2020/2021 to identify budget savings to deliver a balanced budget in the following years.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

This theme is about understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets and working with the Council's Amphora trading companies.

Ensuring we maximise our fees and charges fairly and consistently

2. Working with staff to find creative ways to maximise income across the Council through new opportunities

3. Finding ways to use our assets more commercially and effectively

4. Working with the Council's Amphora trading companies

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

The theme propose a variety of changes led by a number of workstreams including increases to fees and charges across services, using our own assets more commercially and effectively and increasing our income from new commercial opportunities across service areas.

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

Service users/customers would be affected.

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

The theme aims to use our assets more commercially to increase income for the Council and create innovative solutions to the budget gap.

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

This is a corporate budget strategy theme so it impacts a range of services. Some proposals may also involve Amphora Trading in delivery.

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.*

A full internal and external consultation will be undertaken covering all proposals made as part of the overall budget strategy and this will be use to help understand the impact of these proposals on customers and staff.

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

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

(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.

This theme does not specifically help to meet the general duty as it details various budget savings proposals.

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

-

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

-

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

-

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:

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.

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

This theme does not specifically help to improve health inequalities as it details various budget savings proposals.

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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	N/A	No	N/A
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Disability	Physical	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Sensory	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Learning	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mental health issues	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Ethnicity ⁶	White	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Black	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Chinese	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Gypsies/ Travellers	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Language	English not first language	No	N/A	No	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	No	N/A	No	N/A

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
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sex	Men	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Women	No	N/A	No	N/A
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	No	N/A	No	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	N/A	No	N/A

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

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

No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

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.

⁸ 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'.

⁹ 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.

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:

Mandy Jones

15. Date of completion:

25/9/20

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

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).

¹⁰ This is normally three years, but not always: You may know that the policy itself will be reviewed earlier in which case the EqIA 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.

Section 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment

Where there is a negative impact which has not been minimised or removed

17. If you have identified negative impact(s) on the 'protected characteristics' that have not been minimised or removed, is this considered to be 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'¹¹? If yes, state how:

If a negative impact cannot be minimised or removed and cannot be objectively justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim', the policy should not be implemented as it could unlawfully discriminate.

Where there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement

If you identified that there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether there are any negative impacts on the 'protected characteristics', please complete the first column of the Action Plan below.

Engagement and Consultation Action Plan

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
Age	Older people (60+)			
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)			
Disability	Physical			
	Sensory			
	Learning			

¹¹ This phrase is taken from sections 15 and 19 of the Equality Act 2010. 'Positive action', benefitting one or more 'protected characteristic'(s), may result in a disproportionate negative impact upon another, but this may be justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. The need to balance a budget can constitute a "legitimate aim". Contact the Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator for more information or look at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) webpage under "objective justification".

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
	Mental health issues			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Ethnicity	White			
	Black			
	Chinese			
	Mixed Ethnic Origin			
	Gypsies/ Travellers			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Language	English not first language			
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks			
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)			
Sex	Men			
	Women			
Gender Reassignment	Transgender/ Transsexual			
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership			

If your answer to question 16 (above) is ‘no’, this policy could be unlawfully discriminatory against a ‘protected characteristic’. You should not implement this policy. Otherwise, you may implement the policy, taking care to review its impact based on planned engagement. The Review should be carried out within 6 months from the date of this Full Impact Assessment, at which point a further Review may or may not be required depending on whether you have collected sufficient evidence.

Summary and findings of Full Equality Impact Assessment

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

Findings	Action required
Likely negative impacts have been identified but are considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Further planned engagement with equality target groups will take place in order to gain sufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and review within 6 months.
Planned engagement has taken place: No likely negative impacts have been identified. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Planned engagement has taken place: Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
The policy could be unlawfully discriminatory and will not be implemented. <input type="checkbox"/>	Finish without signing off.

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

20. Date of completion:

21. Date for update or review of this screening:

If you have now signed off this full assessment, please (a) send a copy to the relevant Head of Service 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.

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Communities Theme in the Council Budget Strategy

- 1. What is the main purpose of the changes?** The Council Budget Strategy is to ensure that we can live within our financial means. With the impact of Covid19 on our finances the Council has had to quickly review its financial position and consider expenditure and income. The approach taken has been to look at 'themed' areas of work and the Communities Theme specifically looks at how we work with our communities and if there are opportunities to reduce our spending or increase income opportunities by working in a different way in the future.
- 2. What main areas or activities does it cover?** The Specific changes relate to two key areas, one is linked to the Locality Budgets that Ward Cllrs receive each year and the other is linked to the resources within the Community Development team at the Council.
- 3. Are there changes considered in this assessment?** The main changes are that the Locality Budget is to be halved from £2,000 per Councillor to £1,000 per Councillor and we will not replace the Community Development Team Apprentice paid for from the Councils Staffing Budget from April 2021. These changes will save the Council £64,000 annually which will help towards balancing the budget following the impact of loss of income and increased expenditure from the Covid19 pandemic.
- 4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?** For the Locality Budget changes the main audience are local communities who would generally be invited to apply for this funding for a range of Community Activities from Community events through to small improvements to community facilities. The Apprentice change is unlikely to directly impact on one main audience or set of customers.
- 5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?** The key outcome is the efficiency of £64,000 to help the Council balance its finances but the change will also result in more consideration to how the remaining Locality Budget money is spent, considering with Ward Cllrs the inequalities that exist and if funding can be used in a different way in the future. In some cases, some Ward Cllrs have struggled to find ways to spend their locality budgets so the impact will be felt more by some than others.

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

Locality Budgets have generally been spend across the whole Borough and on a range of different things over the years including new benches, events, activities, blub planting, supporting community groups and to help improve community facilities.

The money is generally very small amounts, usually between £300 to £500 per grant, decided and paid by Ward Cllrs. The change will have a small impact on Communities access to funding but it is not spend on the same thing each year and Ward Cllrs still have access to £1000 so have the ability to minimise any impact on those with protected characteristics by being more selective on how they spend their grants in the future. Officers will work with Ward Cllrs to mitigate any possible impacts by considering future spend very carefully to maximise the positive outcomes for those who need the help the most.

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

- As above in relation to Locality Budgets – so better analysis of need and inequalities for each Ward Cllr to consider more focussed spending of the remaining grant within their Ward areas.
- Other funding is available for Communities to assist with some of the areas that have traditionally been funded by locality budgets and officers will work with Local Ward Cllrs and Communities to seek alternative sources of funding.
- Use of Asset Based Approaches within communities, so looking at what strengths and assets they have to help themselves and positively influence the improvements communities want to see happen.
- Working with the voluntary sector and other partners to enable and support communities into action and to find other, more sustainable sources of funding and help,.
- With regard to the Apprenticeship role, one off funding has been secured to employ an Apprentice in a different role within the team so the only negative impact, losing the opportunity to help improve the skills and employability of an individual has been mitigated by this new opportunity. The Apprentice role that will not be replaced will have ended naturally and they have also secured alternative employment.

12. Could the policy discriminate¹ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly²? (No)

¹ 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'.

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 – yes	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: Lucie Breadman, Assistant Director for Communities

15. Date of completion: 08th September 2020

² 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.

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:

- Budget Strategy – Efficiency Theme
- [Link](#)

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown has had a significant impact on council finances. We also have an ongoing need to reduce The costs of council services and to be more efficient and modern in line with other government and local government services which are increasingly moving to online.

To address the budget gap a new budget strategy has been formulated under 5 key themes - Priorities, Commercial, Efficiency, Service Provision and Community.

The Budget Strategy – Efficiency Theme, with supporting business case, describes how the council will drive efficiency through:

- Innovation and modern thinking
- Accelerating the shift to digital
- Seeking simplicity in every process
- Reducing time and effort required by customers to report, apply and pay for services
- Reducing time and effort required by officers to process, update and complete tasks

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The following are the key activities and is not exhaustive
For customers

- Accessing CBC services online
- Using the online channel to find information and to contact us

For officers

- Receiving requests
- Inputting and verifying data
- Allocating tasks
- Plan, process and update
- Deciding criteria
- Liaison, visits and checking
- Notification to customers
- Document management

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

- Minor changes to policies may be required as we refine and change service processes.

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

- Customers
- Officers of the council
- Members

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

- The efficiency theme describes the opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation.

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

- This is cross council theme and will affect all service areas

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.

These proposals will be subject to a comprehensive consultation and governance regime – key stages below:

Commence informal staff/Unison consultation/communication on business cases and alternative staff/union suggestions on budget savings.	September 20
Update to Cabinet	2 September 20
Budget Group Consideration of business cases.	29 September 20
Initial Consideration by Scrutiny of business cases	13 October 20
Initial approval by Cabinet of Business Cases	14 October 20
Formal consultation with Staff	21 October - 27 November
Full Council – update	3 December 20
Consideration by SMT of feedback from formal consultation and any changes to business case	7 December 20
Feedback to Leadership results of formal consultation	10 December 20
Feedback to staff results of formal consultation	11-14 December 20
Update to Scrutiny Panel on results of formal consultation and any resulting changes	15 December 20
Final approval by Cabinet	27 January 21

In addition, Colchester Borough Council launched to a survey during September 2020 to gather feedback on the provision of in-person going forward. The survey aims to be a mechanism for consulting with the public on their preferences for where in-person services need to be in the future, who we should operate with, and how we should provide this service. It can be completed in-person at Colchester Library or online by visiting www.colchester.gov.uk/customersurvey

8. The ‘general duty’ states that we must have “due regard” to the need to:

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.

- (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):

- The proposal within the efficiency theme have been devised to support residents in Colchester whilst balancing the available funding and assumed fiscal pressures in future years. Consideration has been given to ensure that the proposals do not unlawfully discriminate. The proposals are fundamentally reliant on using digital solutions to improve the way we process and manage task and accounts. This will allow us to modernise and become more in line with other government and local government ways of processing customer requests which are increasingly moving to online. These developments will allow us to provide a more convenient and easier service to many residents whilst allowing us to efficiently administer task, accounts and enquiries.

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

- Standardisation and automation of process is based on set criteria, workflow and conditionality all of which will ensure that all customers are considered in a fair and consistent way.

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

- Modernisation of processes will allow for greater access to services which is not limited to traditional working patterns, will remove reliance on visits to public offices, travel costs and offer greater confidentiality in contact.

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

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.

- The proposals intended to be tested, refined and adapted through a comprehensive consultation and governance regime. Furthermore, the council has fostered a high degree of community resilience and has helped to develop a wider network of advice and support for residents.

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:

- Proposals will remove the need for unnecessary visits to public offices, reduce travel costs and create an equality of access to services.

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'.

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

'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+)	Y	<p>Convenience of accessing information and services 24/7 and at a time that suits the customer, in addition to the popular and well used telephony channels</p> <p>Reduced in person appointments, burdensome verification and necessity to travel to a public office</p> <p>Removal of reliance on paper applications</p> <p>The council offers alternative way of contact and additional support for those that need it.</p>	Y	Transformational change can sometimes cause the need for temporary additional support
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	Y	As above	N	
Disability	Physical	Y	As above	N	
	Sensory	Y	As above	N	
	Learning		As above	Y	Additional support maybe needed accessing certain services
	Mental health issues	Y	As above	N	
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White	Y	As above	N	
	Black	Y	As above	N	
	Chinese	Y	As above	N	
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	Y	As above	N	
	Gypsies/ Travellers	Y	As above	N	
	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	Y	As above	Y	Where English is not the first language a translation service may be required
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	Y	As above	N	
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	Y	As above	N	
Sex	Men	Y	As above	N	
	Women	Y	As above	N	
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	Y	As above	N	
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	Y	As above	N	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	Y	As above	N	

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

- Transformational change can sometimes cause the need for temporary additional support – telephony and Digital Access Support Team offer a free digital support service that helps residents gain skills and confidence using today's technology. Furthermore, the council works with a wide range of community partners which can also help and support our residents within their own communities.
- Instant telephone translation services may be accessed for customers via language line. Customers who wish to use on online services can use free online translation tools, such as google translate.

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.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹?

No – It is held that identified negative impacts have been mitigated as detailed above.

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
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed ✓	Sign off screening and finish.

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

- Leonie Rathbone – Assistant Director Customer

15. Date of completion:

- 21 September 2020

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

- 7 December 2020

⁸ 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'.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ This is normally three years, but not always: You may know that the policy itself will be reviewed earlier in which case the EqIA 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.

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:

Budget Strategy Theme – Service Provision

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

This is a theme of the budget strategy developed in 2020/2021 to identify budget savings to deliver a balanced budget in the following years.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

This theme involves reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new levels of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”.

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

The theme involves various workstreams which propose a variety of changes including procurement savings, reviewing outsourced sharing support services, reviewing operating models and organisational structures, deleting vacant posts and reviewing and reducing service levels in line with the resources available.

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

CBC staff would be impacted and service users/customers would also be affected.

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

The theme aims to reduce the overall cost of service provision whilst maintaining frontline service levels as much as possible.

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

This is a corporate budget strategy theme so it impacts a range of services. Some proposals also impact on partner agencies i.e. reviewing outsourced services and ceasing the night-time noise service.

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.*

A full internal and external consultation will be undertaken covering all proposals made as part of the overall budget strategy and this will be use to help understand the impact of these proposals on customers and staff.

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.

This theme does not specifically help to meet the general duty as it details various budget savings proposals.

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

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.

-

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

-

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

-

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 theme does not specifically help to improve health inequalities as it details various budget savings proposals.

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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+)	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	No	N/A	Yes	The proposals to reduce apprentice roles is likely to have a greater impact on younger people.
Disability	Physical	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Sensory	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Learning	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mental health issues	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Ethnicity ⁶	White	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Black	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Chinese	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Gypsies/ Travellers	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Language	English not first language	No	N/A	No	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	No	N/A	No	N/A

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
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sex	Men	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Women	No	N/A	Yes	The job roles that would be removed by these proposals currently have a greater proportion (57%) of female employees in post than male. The overall gender balance for Council Employees is 50/50 male/female.
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	No	N/A	No	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	N/A	No	N/A

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

The impact on younger people is a potential impact rather than actually impacting on individuals as the 2 apprentice posts that are proposed to be reduced are currently vacant.

The impact on Women highlighted above is difficult to mitigate as a greater number of our back-office support roles are undertaken by female members of staff. The most significant proportion of male staff work in frontline services such as Neighbourhood Services and these have been protected through these proposals.

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.

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 <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:

Richard Block

15. Date of completion:

18/9/2020

⁸ 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'.

⁹ 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.

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

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).

¹⁰ This is normally three years, but not always: You may know that the policy itself will be reviewed earlier in which case the EqIA 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.

Section 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment

Where there is a negative impact which has not been minimised or removed

17. If you have identified negative impact(s) on the 'protected characteristics' that have not been minimised or removed, is this considered to be 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'¹¹? If yes, state how:

If a negative impact cannot be minimised or removed and cannot be objectively justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim', the policy should not be implemented as it could unlawfully discriminate.

Where there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement

If you identified that there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether there are any negative impacts on the 'protected characteristics', please complete the first column of the Action Plan below.

Engagement and Consultation Action Plan

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
Age	Older people (60+)			
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)			
Disability	Physical			
	Sensory			
	Learning			

¹¹ This phrase is taken from sections 15 and 19 of the Equality Act 2010. 'Positive action', benefitting one or more 'protected characteristic'(s), may result in a disproportionate negative impact upon another, but this may be justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. The need to balance a budget can constitute a "legitimate aim". Contact the Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator for more information or look at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) webpage under "objective justification".

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
	Mental health issues			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Ethnicity	White			
	Black			
	Chinese			
	Mixed Ethnic Origin			
	Gypsies/ Travellers			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Language	English not first language			
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks			
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)			
Sex	Men			
	Women			
Gender Reassignment	Transgender/ Transsexual			
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership			

If your answer to question 16 (above) is ‘no’, this policy could be unlawfully discriminatory against a ‘protected characteristic’. You should not implement this policy. Otherwise, you may implement the policy, taking care to review its impact based on planned engagement. The Review should be carried out within 6 months from the date of this Full Impact Assessment, at which point a further Review may or may not be required depending on whether you have collected sufficient evidence.

Summary and findings of Full Equality Impact Assessment

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

Findings	Action required
Likely negative impacts have been identified but are considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Further planned engagement with equality target groups will take place in order to gain sufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and review within 6 months.
Planned engagement has taken place: No likely negative impacts have been identified. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Planned engagement has taken place: Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
The policy could be unlawfully discriminatory and will not be implemented. <input type="checkbox"/>	Finish without signing off.

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

20. Date of completion:

21. Date for update or review of this screening:

If you have now signed off this full assessment, please (a) send a copy to the relevant Head of Service 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.

13 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director - Customer	Author	Jason Granger ☎ 508824
Title	Local Council Tax Support scheme 2021 - 2022		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Colchester Borough Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme provides a reduction in Council Tax Liability for eligible residents.
- 1.2 Each year the scheme is reviewed, and proposals are formulated to potentially update the scheme or to maintain the scheme in its existing form.
- 1.3 This report provides details of the proposal for the scheme effective from 1 April 2021.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The panel is invited to review and comment on the proposed Local Council Tax Support scheme commencing 1 April 2021.
- 2.2 Such review and comment will be considered ahead of the Cabinet meeting of 23 November 2020 and the Full Council meeting of 3 December 2020 where approval of the scheme will be requested.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 It is recommended that current working age entitlement is maintained for the fiscal year effective 1 April 2021 to maximise ongoing support for residents in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.2 The only changes from the current scheme are the prescribed regulation changes and mandated national legislative updating.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 Colchester Borough Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme provides a reduction in Council Tax Liability for eligible residents. Each year the scheme is reviewed ready for 1 April. Local Council Tax Support currently helps 9,300 residents reduce their Council Tax bill – 3,500 of state pension age and 5,800 working age residents. The value of Local Council Tax Support being granted in 2020/21 is currently £8.6 million. National regulations still require local schemes to 'protect' those residents of state pension credit age from any reduction to their level of support as a result of the localisation of the scheme.
- 4.2 Local Council Tax Support entitlement in Essex, for those of working age, still overwhelmingly follows means-tested principles, based broadly on Housing Benefit legislation. Of the 14 Essex Authorities only one has a minimum contribution lower than 20%.
- 4.3 Stability to the scheme is being recommended. This will provide residents with support and consistency within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant financial instability.

5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 5.1 No changes are being proposed to the current scheme other than prescribed and mandated national legislative amendments. Therefore, the Equality Impact Assessment has not been revised.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The Council's Strategic Plan sets out four themes, one of which being:

 'Wellbeing - Making Colchester an even better place to live and supporting those who need most help'. One of the five priorities under the Wellbeing theme is to: 'Target support to the most disadvantaged residents and communities'.
- 6.2 Precepting authorities contributed additional funding to assist with the collection of Council Tax, recognising the additional number of residents we had to collect from and the potential difficulties we would experience collecting from residents who have either not previously paid Council Tax or who are paying an increased amount. This additional money has helped fund a proactive intervention programme which provides a range of services including flexible payment plans, debt and back to work advice as well as administration of an Exceptional Hardship fund.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 It is recommended that the current scheme is maintained therefore a consultation is not required.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 Local Council Tax Support is publicised via our website and we continue to provide information within our annual Council Tax bills and other mailings.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There is no specific funding for the Local Council Tax Support scheme. The costs depend upon the number of eligible applicants. The cost of the scheme is shared between the preceptors.
- 9.2 The medium-term financial forecast assumes an increase in Council Tax in 2021/22 and a significant rise in applications, because of the pandemic induced economic crisis. These factors have been budgeted accordingly, as below:

Scheme Cost

	Total Local Council Tax Support costs (£'000)	Colchester Borough Council share (£'000)
2020/21 – current	8,600	1,075
2021/22 – 25% rise	10,400	1,300

10. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 The proposals contain provision for dealing with welfare concerns of residents, particularly vulnerable people and the support is intended to limit hardship.

11. Health and Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no health and safety implications.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 Fundamental changes to the current criteria could potentially affect the collection fund position, especially in consideration of the current Covid-19 pandemic.
- 12.2 The absence of an adopted Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22 could lead to introduction of a prescribed default scheme which broadly represents the former Council Tax Benefit scheme with an additional funding requirement.

13. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 13.1 There are no environmental and sustainability implications.

Background Papers

- Draft Local Council Tax Support policy document 2021 – 2022.

13 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement Services	Author	Owen Howell ☎ 282518
Title	Work Programme 2020-21		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the current Work Programme 2020-2021 for the Scrutiny Panel. This provides details of the reports that are scheduled for each meeting during the municipal year.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to consider and approve the contents of the Work Programme for 2020-2021.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The Panel's work programme evolves as the Municipal Year progresses and items of business are commenced and concluded. At each meeting the opportunity is taken for the work programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances. The current work programme for 2020-21 is appended to this report.
- 3.2 The Forward Plan of Key Decisions is included as part of the work programme for the Scrutiny Panel, and this is included an **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 It is envisaged that meetings of the Scrutiny Panel will be conducted remotely online until further notice is given. Councillors, officers and members will be informed of any developments regarding meeting arrangements/future venues, and these will be publicised for members of the public who may wish to participate or attend.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the Work Programme has been redrawn to reflect the use of online meetings and the need to focus greater scrutiny work on consideration of a smaller number of agenda items per meeting.

4. Standard References

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

5. Strategic Plan References

- 5.1 Good governance is integral to the delivery of the Strategic Plan's priorities and direction for the Borough as set out under the four themes of growth, responsibility, opportunity and wellbeing. Unfortunately
- 5.2 The Council recognises that effective local government relies on establishing and maintaining the Public's confidence, and that setting high standards of self-governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead. Effective governance underpins the implementation and application of all aspects of the Council's work.

Appendices

Appendix A – Forward Plan of Key Decisions – 1 September 2020 to 31 December 2020.

Work Programme for 2020/21

Scrutiny Panel meeting - 1 June 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 23 May 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance and Council Response Reports relating to Covid-19 2. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting – 7 June 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing - TBC
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-Scrutiny of Proposed changes to Garden Waste Collection 2. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting - 21 July 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 16 July 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Year End 2019/20 Performance Report and Strategic Plan Action Plan 2018-21 2. N.E. Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance 3. Annual Scrutiny Report 4. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting (Call-in) - 27 July 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – N/A
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call in of Response to Bradwell B Stage One Consultation
Scrutiny Panel meeting – 17 August 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 13 August 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. North Essex Garden Communities Project and NEGC Ltd Update and Financial Information
Scrutiny Panel meeting - 18 August 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 13 August 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recovery work by CBC, CBH and CCHL relating to the Covid-19 situation 2. Colchester Business Improvement District 3. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel (Crime and Disorder Committee) - 15 September 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 10 September 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee) 2. Work Programme 2020-21

Scrutiny Panel – 13 October 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's Briefing – 8 October 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Council Tax Support – Year 2021/22 (Provisional) 2. Budget Strategy for 2021-22 3. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting - 10 November 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 5 November 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reports from Arts Organisations (Mercury, The Arts Centre, FirstSite) 2. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting - 15 December 2020
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 10 December 2020
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Half Year 2020-21 Performance Report & Strategic Plan Action Plan progress 2. Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd [TBC] 3. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting - 26 January 2021
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 21 January 2021
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2021-22 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast and Treasury Management Investment Strategy 2. Housing Revenue Accounts Estimate and Housing Investment Programme 3. Corporate Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2021-22 4. Colchester Borough Homes: Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2021-22 5. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel (Crime and Disorder Committee) - 16 February 2021
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 11 February 2021
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee) 2. Work Programme 2020-21
Scrutiny Panel meeting– 16 March 2021
Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 11 March 2021
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work Programme 2020-21

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS 1 November 2020 – 28 February 2021

During the period from 1 November 2020 – 28 February 2021* Colchester Borough Council intends to take 'Key Decisions' on the issues set out in the following pages. Key Decisions relate to those executive decisions which are likely to either:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*The Forward Plan also shows decisions which fall before the period covered by the Plan but which have not been taken at the time of the publication of the Plan.

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)	DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD DECISION TO BE TAKEN	DECISION MAKER (title and name, including Cabinet, portfolio holders and officers)	DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED OR TO BE SUBMITTED TO DECISION TAKER TO CONSIDER (and from where they are available)	CONTACT DETAILS FROM WHICH DOCUMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED (name of the authors of the reports)
The award of a contract for the Council's new affordable homes to be constructed at Military Road	Yes	October 2020	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Andrew Tyrrell Client Services Manager 01206 282390 Andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk
Approval of Award of Contract for Replacement Windows and Doors	Yes	October/November 2020	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Clare Lawrance Client Asset Manager 01206 282506 Clare.lawrance@colchester.gov.uk

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Award of Contract for the Supply of an Integrated Parking System	No	October/November 2020	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report, framework links	Richard Walker Parking Partnership Group Manager 01206 282708 richard.walker@colchester.gov.uk
Award of Contract for Caged Vehicles Fleet	Yes	14 October 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Tracy Allen Specialist and Contracts Manager 01206 282256 Tracy.allen@colchester.gov.uk

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Covid 19 Recovery Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme	No	14 October 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Richard Block Assistant Director, Corporate and Improvement Services 01206 506825 Richard.block@colchester.gov.uk
Procurement of Liquid Fuel	Yes	14 October 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Tracy Allen Specialist and Contracts Manager 01206 282256 Tracy.allen@colchester.gov.uk

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Submission of Colchester's "Town Deal" to Government	No	14 October 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Matthew Brown Economic Development Manager 01206 507348 matthew.brown@colchester.gov.uk
Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Forecast	No	14 October 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Paul Cook Head of Finance 01206 505861 Paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk

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Award of Contract for Light Vehicles	Yes	November 2020	Dan Gascoyne, Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with Councillor Martin Goss, Portfolio Holder for Waste, Environment and Transportation, under delegated authority from Cabinet Please contact via	Officer report	Robert Doran Fleet and Depot Contract Manager 01206 282612 Robert.Doran@colchester.gov.uk
Matters Relating to Third Party Rights at Queen St	Yes	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report and plans	Ian Vipond Strategic Director, Policy and Place 01206 282717 ian.vipond@colchester.gov.uk

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New Climate Change Response Works in the Housing investment Programme	No	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Andrew Tyrrell Client Services Manager 01206 282390 Andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk
Extension of the Management Agreement with Colchester Borough Homes by 5 years	No	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 Geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk

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Officer Pay Policy 2021/22	No	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report, draft Officer Pay Policy	Chris Reed People and Performance Specialist 01206 282240 chris.reed@colchester.gov.uk
Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2021-22	No	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Jason Granger Customer Solutions Manager 01206 508824 Jason.granger@colchester.gov.uk

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Budget 2021-2022 Update and Approval of Fees and Charges	No	23 November 2020	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report, schedule of fees and charges	Paul Cook Head of Finance 01206 505861 Paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk
Colchester Northern Gateway Heat Network Update	Yes	23 November 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report and tender analysis	Andrew Tyrrell Client Services Manager 01206 282390 Andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk

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Award of contract for external decorations (12 week package)	Yes	November/December 2020	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report, including summary of procurement exercise	Clare Lawrance Client Asset Manager 01206 282506 Clare.lawrance@colchester.gov.uk
Award of Contract for the Replacement of 100 Kitchens 2020	Yes	November/December 2020	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report, including summary of procurement exercise	Clare Lawrance Client Asset Manager 01206 282506 Clare.lawrance@colchester.gov.uk

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Approval to award a contract over the value of £500,000 for the delivery and procurement of parking bay sensors for installation in various locations in both Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea.	Yes	December 2020	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, Councillor Michel Lilley (under delegated powers from Cabinet) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services	Portfolio Holder report will detailing the proposed contract to be awarded, including the supplier and works to be carried out by Ringway Jacobs/Essex Highways.	Jason Butcher Parking Project Manager 01206 282901 Jason.butcher@colchester.gov.uk
Award of Contract for Housing Renewals	Yes	December 2020	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Clare Lawrance Client Asset Manager 01206 282506 Clare.lawrance@colchester.gov.uk

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Update on Proposed New Grow-on Business Centre in Queen Street	Yes	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Matthew Brown Economic Development Manager 01206 507348 matthew.brown@colchester.gov.uk
Covid 19 Recovery Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme	No	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Richard Block Assistant Director, Corporate and Improvement Services 01206 506825 Richard.block@colchester.gov.uk

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2021/22 General Fund Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Forecast – Cabinet will consider the 2021/22 General Fund Revenue Budget and make a recommendation to Council.	No	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Paul Cook Head of Finance 01206 505861 Paul.cookx@colcehster.gov.uk
Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2021/22 To approve the HRA Estimates 2021/22	No	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Darren Brown Finance Manager 01206 282291 Darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk

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Housing Investment Programme 2021/22 To approve the Housing Investment Programme 2021/22	No	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Darren Brown Finance Manager 01206 282291 Darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk
Award of Contract for the Colchester Northern Gateway Heat Network	Yes	27 January 2021	Cabinet (Cllrs Cory, J Young, Fox, Goss, Higgins, King and Lilley) Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report and tender analysis	Andrew Tyrrell Client Services Manager 01206 282390 Andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk

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Award of Contract for External Decorations Contract 2021	Yes	February 2021	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Adam Fox Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report, including summary of procurement exercise	Clare Lawrance Client Asset Manager 01206 282506 Clare.lawrance@colchester.gov.uk

CONTACT ADDRESSES FOR COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Tel: (01206) 507887
email: leonie.rathbone@colchester.gov.uk

