

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

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

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

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

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

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

RESOLVED that the Strategic Plan 2023-26 be agreed.

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

REASONS

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

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

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

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

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