

Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2014-2015 – targets for 2014-15 as at June 2014 - App 4

Colchester Borough Council (CBC) has set out an overarching vision for the borough in The Strategic Plan 2012-2015:

Colchester, the place to live, learn, work and visit

Within this, there are a number of broad aims:

Colchester as a vibrant borough with a bright future wants to be known for:

- Leading for the future
- Creating opportunities for all its residents
- Inspiring and innovating
- Being cleaner and greener
- Listening and responding.

This Strategic Plan 2012-2015 also has a number of priority areas and outcomes to be achieved in two categories as below:

Leading our communities	Delivering high quality, accessible services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure• Improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail• Giving local people the chance to improve their skills• Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion• Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities• Supporting tourism, heritage and the arts• Bringing investment to the borough• Working in partnerships to help tackle health and crime issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering an efficient benefits service• Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste• Providing more affordable homes across the borough• Improving our streets and local environment• Tackling anti-social behaviour and using enforcement to support priorities• Enabling local communities to help themselves• Supporting more vulnerable groups• Providing sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality green spaces and play areas• Engaging with the voluntary sector.

Each of these has actions and outputs which are included in an annual Action Plan – see following pages for more information about the Action Plan for 2014-2015, and for an update on the progress being made to achieve these outcomes.

These actions are to be considered by Scrutiny Panel on 8 July and Cabinet on 30 July 2014.

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Delivering high quality, accessible services

The priorities in this section of our action plan are about actual delivery of direct services either through our own Council resources or using others to provide services.

Delivery of an efficient benefits service

Key performance measures and actions include efficient benefit processing services and effective implementation of Universal Customer Contact FSR leading to improved customer journeys and increased online take up.

- **Streamline customer journeys**
 - Facilitate self-scanning options at library and community hub and at the Greenstead local housing office
 - Introduce online enquiry forms to replace open email enquiries
- **Improve outgoing customer contact to reduce customers using our in-person and telephony channels**
 - Review and rewrite system-generated letters
 - Replace non-statutory letters from officers with email and telephony contact
- **Improve web content and increase the uptake on other online services for benefits**
 - Improving the benefit areas of the website
 - Developing benefit online accounts for customers

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Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste

Key actions here include plans for the Service to provide improvement, income, efficiencies and partnership working opportunities for the future along with implementation of recycling educational activities, progress of Section 46 enforcement and the introduction of plastic recycling collections from flats.

- **Develop a new Waste Strategy for Colchester**
- **Plastic collections and Food Waste service from flats introduced where locations can be agreed**
- **Proactive work with local residents to encourage reductions in household waste and increases in recycling**
- **Planning Service – For all new developments, planners continue to consider adequacy of bin storage areas for refuse and recycling, the distances and routes that materials will need to be carried on collection days and accessibility for dustcarts**

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Providing more affordable homes across the borough

Key actions here include the use of our own land and assets to facilitate the building of new affordable housing, in line with Housing Policy. We also aim to ensure the Housing Trajectory demonstrates a 15-year supply of housing sites, including a 5-year supply of deliverable sites and we will undertake a range of measures to bring empty homes back into use.

- **400 new affordable homes to be built over three years**
- **Qualifying sites¹ achieve the percentage of affordable housing, as stated in Housing Policy or through a viability study for each site**
- **To update the housing trajectory and ensure an adequate supply of housing land**

¹ Qualifying sites means sites of 10 units or more in Colchester, Stanway, Tiptree, Mersea and Wivenhoe or 3 units elsewhere.

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Improving our streets and local environment

Improved street cleanliness and shifting resources to increase responsiveness to environmental and cleanliness issues is a key action here along with Enabling Community Ownership to facilitate communities taking an active role in keeping their local environment clean, tidy and loved. Developing and maintaining strategic partnerships (Essex County Council [ECC], Bus and Rail operators) to help deliver improvements in air quality and sustainable transport infrastructure is an important action to improve our local environment.

Cleanliness and air quality actions:

- In partnership with ECC we will produce a Final Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy. The plan will set out what the Borough and County Councils intend to do to further improve air quality within Air Quality Management Areas
- Produce a Low Emission Strategy for the Borough to identify and implement measures that will reduce transport emissions of NO₂, whilst also reducing emissions of particulates, noise and CO₂.
- To undertake a consultation with members of the public, and key stakeholders for the LES and Air Quality Action Plan.
- Support Essex-wide Litter Campaign in Colchester

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Tackling anti-social behaviour and using enforcement to support priorities

Our key actions for this priority include the achievement of Purple Flag accreditation, thereby recognising excellence in the management of town centres in the evening and at night and to raise standards and improve the experience of Colchester town centre after dark. We also want to focus and continue working with partners to deal with anti-social behaviour in its widest sense, including issues relating to noise, graffiti, litter and dog fouling as well as more traditional anti-social behaviour, with the emphasis on behaviour change rather than just enforcement. We aim to work with local communities to reduce anti-social behaviour and promote pride.

- **To work in partnership with the Tactical Operations Group and continue with the Noise from Licensed Premises Project**
- **To carry out a review of enforcement activity undertaken by the Weekend Noise/Environmental Health Service to include associated policies and procedures to ensure robust and effective action is taken against non compliant premises**
- **Introduce a planned programme of enforcement action in the Town Centre to support local retail, regeneration and night time economy**
- **Licensing: Work in partnership with the Police and other responsible authorities to co-ordinate and contribute to a regular Tactical Operations meeting to share premises related intelligence and agree actions to direct and enforce the management of licensed premises**
- **Develop and implement a Night Time Improvement Plan and retain Purple Flag Accreditation**

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Enabling local communities to help themselves

Our key actions for this priority are to enable and empower communities to help themselves by supporting more development, ownership and volunteering. This includes improvement or development of more community-run facilities such as community centres, sport and recreational facilities.

- **Continued use of S106 Funding for community developments**
- **Development of a borough-wide sports strategy in conjunction with Sport England in order to plan for new sport and leisure facilities and activities in North Colchester and elsewhere in the borough and to get greater benefit from existing facilities**
- **Community Services to work collectively to develop, support and enable community-led activities and clubs, and to encourage a supportive local environment for community activities**

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Supporting more vulnerable groups

The main actions identified to help support vulnerable groups include working with partners in the voluntary sector and sub-region to provide new specialist support services to prevent households becoming homeless, and to support and develop skills within vulnerable groups in respect of confidence and assertion to support independent living and safety.

- **Deliver ‘Crucial Crew’ programme to Year 6 pupils across the borough and a further ‘Crucial Crew’ for older people**
- **Update CBC’s Safeguarding training records and complete audits in line with ESCB and ESAB**
- **Award of agreed Welfare Grant Programme funding to key Voluntary Sector Partners supporting the delivery of CBC’s priorities**

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Providing sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality green spaces and play areas

Our key actions here are to develop a sport and leisure service that embraces new technology and responds to customers' needs in order to improve access to services so that sports participation is increased. We also want to enable communities and work with partners to deliver better open spaces and leisure and work with local sports clubs, leisure providers and other partners to deliver projects that build on the energy and excitement resulting from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics.

- **Continue and increase participation in the Park Run event in Colchester as part of the national initiative**
- **Continue to work with Colchester School of Gymnastics to realise their extended facility following the upsurge of interest brought on by the London Olympics. This includes using CBC's S106 funding**
- **Chair the Active Colchester Network and ensure the agreed action plan is delivered**
- **Increase participation and income in line with FSR objectives by improving the capacity for customers to book sport and leisure activities online, capacity for customers to self-serve at Leisure World Colchester and introducing 'MyLeisureWorld' card**
- **Continue to investigate opportunities and Improvement work with our parks and open spaces, including the new outdoor gym in Castle Park and agreed use of Open Space S106 funding**

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Engaging with the voluntary sector

Our key aims are to look for opportunities to transfer the management of assets and services to the voluntary sector where this can achieve improved services and efficiencies, and to work with the voluntary sector to address strategic issues, support communities and groups and further strengthen partnerships.

- **Award of agreed Welfare Grant Programme funding to key Voluntary Sector Partners supporting the delivery of CBC's priorities**
- **Transfer the management of assets and services to the voluntary sector where this can achieve improved services and efficiencies**

Leading our communities

This section of the action plan is about influencing others in a range of functions where the Council does not have direct responsibility for delivery, but knows that these things are vital to the future of the borough and its residents.

Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure

This is arguably one of the most challenging but important priorities for the Council in the current climate. The main actions here are to support the delivery of the key regeneration sites, and bring back existing buildings into use including stalled sites to deliver new homes and jobs. We also aim to bring forward the regeneration of key areas in the borough to provide enhanced community facilities and infrastructure, including public spaces, by working in partnership with the public and private sectors.

- Sheepen Road feasibility
- New funding bids through SELEP, TSB and EU
- Continue to support the delivery of Greyfriars Hotel and East Hill House conversion
- Development of the first Phase of the Severalls site
- Progress the delivery of a Masterplan for the Northern Gateway to deliver new leisure facilities and jobs including development of a hotel, health and fitness centre and associated retail.
- Consider approval of a planning application for North Growth Area Urban Extension
- Progress negotiations with developers for Phase 2 to include progressing planning consent, sign development agreement.

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Improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail

Key actions for this priority include the implementation of key projects within the Better Town Centre Programme Plan, including delivery of the new Creative Business Centre providing flexible work space and network and business support facilities for a priority growth sector. Also to deliver the Colchester Digital Strategy and develop local networks and business support to enable Colchester businesses to start up and to grow.

- **Completion of refreshed Colchester Economic Growth Strategy**
- **Progress development agreement and planning consent for Vineyard Gate Shopping centre**
- **Relocate the Charter Market from its current split location to the High Street**
- **Facilitate collaborative working between COLBEA (Colchester Business Enterprise Agency) and the Colchester Enterprise Hub to help increase the number and survival rates of new business start ups in the borough**
- **Promote and encourage SMEs to use the energy switching service linked to the Big Community Switch**
- **Progress plans for development of a Creative Incubator providing circa 22 workspace units for start-up businesses**
- **Continue to work with the independent retail sector to deliver partner-based local initiatives**
- **Progress delivery of superfast broadband and 4G mobile connectivity by the end of 2014**
- **Increase the number of partnership links relating to business, employment and skills initiatives**
- **Work with 'Colchester Works' to increase the promotion and take up of employment and skills initiatives to local residents and businesses**

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Giving local people the chance to improve their skills

Our key actions here are to work with the Adult Community College and Job Centre Plus to increase the number of residents with skills for work by providing extra courses in community venues. We also want to help reduce the number of young people aged 18 to 24 in the borough who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) and increase the take-up of Apprenticeships in the borough.

- **Work with Colchester NEET Group (including ECC) to deliver work/training initiatives that will benefit the Colchester NEET group and help to reduce the cohort numbers**
- **Work with Job Centre Plus and other partners to maintain work clubs and continue our customer support team initiative**
- **Work with the Adult Community College to increase the number of residents with skills for work by providing extra courses at community venues**
- **Deliver Job and Volunteers' Fairs**

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Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion

Our key actions for this priority are to support the reduction of unnecessary traffic in the town centre. We also aim to use the public realm strategy to develop a package of measures to enhance the vitality and economic prosperity of the area. We want to develop, with ECC, the sustainable transport infrastructure for the North Colchester Connectivity corridor and deliver Travel Change Behaviour programmes with transport providers to help address congestion and air quality issues. We also aim to review the Nottingham Declaration strategy and develop a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

We have continued to lobby partners such as ECC and Abellio Greater Anglia for investment into Colchester. We expect a number of announcements in response to funding submissions made in 2013/14 and if successful this will influence the programme and activity in 2014/15. The current submissions relate to promoting sustainable transport and supporting sustainable development and we have continually prioritised the North Colchester Connectivity Corridor in these submissions to help address the growth and traffic congestion in this area. Funding has been allocated from the New Homes Bonus for a number of transportation projects to be started in 2014/15.

- **Develop a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Colchester**
- **Prepare an overarching Transportation Summary Document as evidence base to inform the review of the Local Plan (amended)**
- **To improve access to the town centre for sustainable transport and in the town centre to improve the environment for people by reducing traffic, seek funding to improve streetscape and access for sustainable transport.**
- **Support the delivery of a Park and Ride service from North Colchester to the Town Centre by releasing the land for construction and work with Essex County Council, local businesses and organisations to maximise the use of Park and Ride**
- **Work with the public transport operators, bus and rail to improve services in Colchester.**
- **Continue to work with and provide leadership to public and private sector organisations to develop Travel Change Behaviour programmes to help address congestion, air quality and personal health issues.**
- **Develop strategies to increase the level of investment in sustainable transport and infrastructure to help deliver sustainable development, including transportation in economic, environmental, land use strategies.**
- **Prepare an overarching Transportation Summary Document as evidence base to inform the review of the Local Plan**

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Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities

Our key actions for this priority is to work with partners to successfully introduce a new integrated offender management programme to reduce repeat crime. We also want to develop and agree a service level agreement with the Probation Service to enable positive use of the Community Payback scheme. We have an overarching aim to promote tolerance and work with partners and communities to meet the diverse needs across the borough, and consider equality and diversity implications in our policies on those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, pregnancy, maternity, marriage, civil partnership, sexual orientation, gender reassignment).

- **Work with Probation Service to enable Community Payback scheme to continue**
- **Continue (with partners) the offender management programme**
- **Consider Equality and Diversity and promote tolerance and the diverse needs of our residents, reporting annually to the Governance Committee on progress**
- **Continue to operate Zone working principles with a focus on local needs**

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Supporting tourism, heritage and the arts

Our key actions are to work with partners and local industry businesses to increase the economic impact of tourism in the borough. We also want to work in partnership with Colchester Arts Centre, Firstsite, the Mercury Theatre and the Museum Service to provide leadership and support to deliver the Creative Colchester strategy and increase skills, jobs, community development and forge new links between cultural, creative, tourism and hospitality sectors. We have our exciting Castle re-development project and the associated interpretation of the wider heritage in the borough and our aim to deliver increased visitor numbers, and encouraging day visitors to overnight/weekend stay visitors.

- **To increase trips to the borough and spending while here**
- **Creative Colchester strategy / Deliver identified priorities within the Action Plan**
- **Develop and maintain delivery mechanisms for improvement and maintenance of our heritage assets across the borough -.**

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Bringing investment to the borough

Our key actions are to work with Invest Essex to promote the Colchester offer and attract inward investment into the borough. Work with the Integrated County Strategy and Haven Gateway Partnerships to secure the infrastructure investment identified in Colchester's Local Investment Plan and target 20 companies in key growth sectors to secure additional investment in the borough in excess of £1m. We aim to secure funding from Growing Places Fund, Integrated County Strategy investment fund, Europe, private sector partners and other sources for key projects.

- **Secure new inward investment into the borough in excess of £2m from joint work with Invest Essex**
- **Secure funding from Growing Places Fund, Integrated County Strategy investment fund, EU funding programmes, private sector partners and other sources for key projects**

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Working in partnerships to help tackle health and crime issues

Our key actions include working with our partners on the Safer Colchester Partnership to agree a plan to reduce crime and support the Neighbourhood Action Panels we also aim to develop our partnership with Essex Probation Service. We want to work with Public Health at ECC to coordinate and integrate our public health work with the wider agenda and the Public Health Outcomes framework, and to develop partnerships with other local health organisations, including North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

- **To promote the Weekend Noise/Environmental Health Service as a resource to internal and external agencies including the Police, Trading Standards and Fire Brigade. To establish joint working protocols and cross referral mechanisms to support a more effective multi-agency response to criminal activity and matters likely to give rise to negative health outcomes**
- **CBC will continue to review its approach to supporting the Health Agenda given the new Local Authority responsibilities. We will develop agreed partnership priorities and targets, where applicable, and seek funding opportunities to support a more preventative health agenda**
- **Encourage representation on the Safer Colchester Partnership from the new Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **Support the work of the Neighbourhood Action Panels**
- **Seek ongoing support for the SOS Bus from both the Safer Colchester Partnership and the North East Essex CCG to ensure the service is maintained and clinical cover provides access to treatment**