

Scrutiny Panel Meeting

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ
Monday, 26 February 2024 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 attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. 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>.

Most meetings take place in public. This only changes when certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual are considered. At this point you will be told whether there are any issues to be discussed in private, if so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

Have Your Say!

The Council welcomes contributions and representations from members of the public at most public meetings. If you would like to speak at a meeting and need to find out more, please refer to the Have Your Say! arrangements here: <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/haveyoursay>.

Audio Recording, Mobile phones and other devices

The Council records public meetings for live broadcast over the internet via its YouTube Channel and the recordings are available to watch afterwards [here \[\(4\) Colchester City Council - YouTube\]](#). When it is not possible to video stream meetings, they will be audio streamed on the Council's website: www.colchester.gov.uk

Audio recording, photography and filming of meetings by members of the public is also welcomed. Phones, tablets, laptops, cameras and other devices can be used at all meetings of the Council so long as this doesn't cause a disturbance. It is not permitted to use voice or camera flash functions and devices must be set to silent. Councillors can use devices to receive messages, to access meeting papers and information via the internet. Looking at or posting on social media by Committee members is at the discretion of the Chairman / Mayor who may choose to require all devices to be switched off at any time.

Access

There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from St Runwald Street. There is an induction loop in all the meeting rooms. If you need help with reading or understanding this document, please take it to the Library and Community Hub, Colchester Central Library, using the contact details below and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

Facilities

Toilets with lift access, if required, are on each floor of the Town Hall. A water dispenser is available on the first floor.

Evacuation Procedures

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Colchester, CO1 1JB

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Scrutiny Panel – Terms of Reference

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

- (a) To review corporate strategies;
- (b) To ensure that actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council;
- (c) To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, performance reporting and to make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions;
- (d) To review the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic and Implementation Plans;
- (e) To review the financial performance of the Council and to make recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to financial outturns, revenue and capital expenditure monitors;
- (f) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet, the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee (in relation to decisions relating to 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 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 CITY COUNCIL
Scrutiny Panel
Monday, 26 February 2024 at 18:00

The Scrutiny Panel Members are:

Councillor Darius Laws [Chairman]
Councillor Dennis Willetts [Deputy Chairman]
Councillor Tracy Arnold
Councillor Sam McCarthy
Councillor Sam McLean
Councillor Thomas Rowe
Councillor Fay Smalls

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)

1 Welcome and Announcements

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors and remind everyone to use microphones at all times when they are speaking. The Chairman will also explain action in the event of an emergency, mobile phones switched to silent, audio-recording of the meeting. Councillors who are members of the committee will introduce themselves.

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 registerable interest or non-registerable interest.

5 Minutes of Previous Meeting

No minutes to approve at this meeting.

6 Have Your Say!

The Chairman will invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition on any item included on the agenda or any other matter relating to the terms of reference of the meeting. Please indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

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.

10 Fit for the Future

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This report provides details of proposals to reimagine what we do as a Council and how we deliver services so it we are 'Fit for the Future'. The proposals are in the form of an integrated portfolio of activity covering all services that will transform their delivery, generate additional income and reduce our net operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years.

11 Exclusion of the Public (Scrutiny)

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

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



Scrutiny Panel

Item
10

Report of	Chief Operating Officer and Shared Director of Digital and Transformation	Author	Richard Block and Melissa Kemp Salt Richard.block@colchester.gov.uk and melissa.kemp-salt@colchester.gov.uk
Title	Fit for the Future		
Wards affected	All		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of proposals to reimagine what we do as a Council and how we deliver services so it we are 'Fit for the Future'. The proposals are in the form of an integrated portfolio of activity covering all services that will transform their delivery, generate additional income and reduce our net operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years.
- 1.2 Details of the overarching portfolio of activity are provided as well as information about each programme. Enabling plans to ensure governance, people and communications implications are managed effectively are also included.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel is invited to pre-scrutinise the proposals and make any recommendations they deem necessary to Cabinet for consideration when they meet on 13 March.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 To ensure there is a robust portfolio of activity to future proof the Council and ensure we are adequately prepared to deliver savings required in the medium-term financial forecast.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 The scale of the financial challenge we face as a Council is huge. The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure on our budgets and we simply cannot continue to operate as we are.
- 4.2 Our response to this financial challenge must be radical; to close the budget gap and future proof our organisation, we will need to reduce our net operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years. This will be through a combination of additional income and reduced cost of providing services.
- 4.3 To achieve this, we need a fundamental programme of work that reimagines what we do as a Council and how we deliver it. The 'Fit for the Future' programme of work will make sure that we are exactly that; fit for the future of our city, of our organisation and of our people.
- 4.4 Whilst this programme of work will help to align us with the Medium-Term Financial Forecast and ensure we are closing the budget gap identified, it will also prepare us for the longer-term financial challenge that lies ahead.
- 4.5 This programme of work will involve a significant change in our relationship with our residents, communities and partners. The changes we make will have a very significant and visible impact across the city, and we must work to realign people's expectations of the services we deliver. As our duty, and at the heart of what we do as a local authority, we will continue to do all we can to protect those residents who are the most vulnerable and do what we can to mitigate the impact changes may have on them.
- 4.6 The proposed 'Fit for the Future' portfolio of activity to achieve this is shown at appendix A. This shows each theme with individual programmes, key milestones, forecast savings/ income and implications. Priority has been given to developing detail for elements that deliver savings in 2024/2025 but information is also included for programmes that deliver savings in later years where this is available.
- 4.7 The activity proposed in this paper will also need to remain flexible and adaptable to any future pressures or changes in circumstances. It will be regularly reviewed through the governance outlined.
- 4.8 Effective internal and external communications will be essential to the success of 'Fit for the Future'. A proposed fully integrated internal and external communications plan is attached at appendix B.
- 4.9 Our staff are key to the success of these proposals and the changes to staffing and roles in the Council arising from 'Fit for the Future' are significant. As such, a workforce plan has been developed to ensure staff are supported through the changes ahead. This is attached at appendix C.
- 4.10 Effective governance will be key to ensuring appropriate oversight and decision making from senior officers and councillors. Proposed governance arrangements are attached at appendix D.

5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 5.1 As changes are made to services and staffing structures equality and diversity implications will be assessed using individual equality impact assessments.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 'Fit for the Future' will directly deliver against the Modern City Services strand of the strategic plan. When making any changes to services a key consideration of the future service provision will be contribution to all objectives of the Strategic Plan.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 The detailed communications plan at appendix B demonstrates the commitment to engage and consult with staff informally. Staff and the recognised trade union will also be consulted formally about any changes to staffing structures and roles.

- 7.2 Stakeholders and the public will also be consulted throughout using various mechanisms and existing networks including One Colchester and the Residents Panel.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 The detailed communications plan at appendix B demonstrates how changes arising from 'Fit for the Future' will be managed.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 'Fit for the Future' is essential to deliver budget savings required by the revised Medium Term Financial Forecast. By developing a 3 year planned strategic programme of change, savings can be delivered progressively avoiding the need for the development of new budget savings plans each year.

- 9.2 The forecast budget savings from each element of 'Fit for the Future' are shown in appendix A and show a roadmap to the delivery of a balanced budget over the next 3 years of the medium-term financial forecast. These are a combination of additional income and reduced operating costs.

- 9.3 Investment will also be required to facilitate many aspects of the portfolio and as reported to Cabinet in January 2024, the Council's available reserves allow for this. Investments will be made on a case-by-case basis only once a robust business case is made.

10. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 As changes are made to services and staffing structures the health, wellbeing and community safety implications will be assessed.

Health and Safety Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific implications.

11. Risk Management Implications

11.1 Each programme that makes up 'Fit for the Future' will have its own risk register which in turn will feed into an overall risk register for the portfolio of activity. This will be reviewed and managed through the governance proposed at Appendix D.

12. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

12.1 The implications of each programme will be carefully considered as changes to services are considered.

12.2 Several elements of 'fit for the future' have real potential to support the Council's strategic objectives relating to environmental sustainability such as the review of the waste strategy, review of our assets and the review of the street care and greening service.

Appendices

Appendix A – Details of the 'Fit for the Future' portfolio

Appendix B – Communications plan

Appendix C – Workforce plan

Appendix D – Proposed governance

Background Papers

None

Colchester City Council – Scrutiny

Fit for the Future Transformation Portfolio

13 February 2024

Fit for the Future Portfolio – Key Messages

- The scale of the financial challenge councils face is huge. The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure on our budgets and we simply cannot continue to operate as we are.
- Our response to this financial challenge must be radical; to close the budget gap and future proof our organisation, we will need to reduce our operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years.
- To achieve this, we need a fundamental portfolio of work to reimagine what we do as a Council and how we deliver it. The 'Fit for the Future' portfolio will make sure that we are exactly that; fit for the future of our city, of our organisation and of our people.
- Whilst this work will help to align us with the Medium-Term Financial Forecast and ensure we are closing the budget gap identified, it will also prepare us for the longer-term financial challenge that lies ahead.

Fit for the Future Portfolio – Purpose

- We are starting a portfolio of work which will span the next three years to respond to challenges we face to:
 - Run council services within budgets
 - Adapt our services to meet the changing needs of our communities
 - Seek opportunities for additional income
 - Invest in technology and the skills of our workforce to enable efficiencies and modernise services.
- The portfolio of work will involve a change in our relationship with our residents, communities and partners. The changes we make will have a visible impact across the city, and we must work to realign people's expectations of the services we deliver.
- We will continue to do all we can to protect those residents who are most vulnerable and do what we can to mitigate the impact changes may have on them.
- We will do all that can to support our people through this change, in line with our values. We will show integrity and kindness, be open and honest, demonstrate commitment to our skills, expertise and creativity, and maintain our pride in public service.

Fit for the Future Portfolio – Terms used

The following terms will be used within the project descriptions:

Several initiatives will include multiple elements from redesigned services and roles that result in a reduced cost of operation. The elements include:

- Investment
 - Commitment of funding needed to achieve benefits for delivering a new service or change to an existing service
- Cuts or reductions
 - Removal of entire services, or significant reduction in the scale of services provided
- Efficiencies
 - Savings
 - Services maintaining but delivered more efficiently/effectively
- Income
 - Additional money generated by a service

Fit for the Future - Portfolio Structure

Our Fit for the Future portfolio will look at the organisation as whole and aligns our programmes of work into 5 streams of governance:

- Environment
- Leisure and Economy
- Housing
- Assets
- Corporate

The projects, programmes and targets within the portfolio will evolve over time.

Fit for the Future

Senior Leadership Board				
Environment	Leisure & Economy	Housing	Assets	Corporate
Waste Services	Culture & Heritage	HRA Review	Asset Management	Shared Services
Rosa Tanfield	Frank Hargrave	Lindsay Barker	Mandy Jones	Richard Block
Greening & Street Care	Active and Wellbeing	Housing Provision		Future Workforce
Rosa Tanfield Mel Rundle	Rory Doyle	Philip Sullivan		Jess Douglas
	Economic Growth			Digital Customer
	Matt Sterling			Mel Kemp-Salt

Fit for the Future Savings & Revenue Financial Outcomes

Currently projected savings and revenue outcomes as of 9 January 2024

	24/25		25/26		26/27		Total
Stream	Savings	Income	Savings	Income	Savings	Income	
Environment	100K	1.055M	150K	103K	1.75M	-	£3.158 million
Leisure & Economy	146K	100K	-	-	210K	515K	£1.171 million
Asset	300K	-	-	-	-	-	£0.3 million
Housing	-	-	-	-	200K	-	£0.2 million
Corporate	143K	-	-	-	-	-	£0.143 million
Total Portfolio	689K	1.155M	150K	103K	2.16M	515K	£4.772 million

Summary of Fit for the Future Financial Outcomes

Currently projected net budget outcomes as of 9 January 2024

Stream	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Environment	1.155M	253K	1.75M	£3.158 million
Leisure & Economy	246K	-	725K	£1.171 million
Asset	300K	-	-	£0.3 million
Housing	-	-	200K	£0.2 million
Corporate	143K	-	-	£0.143 million
Total Portfolio	2.044M	253K	2.675M	£4.772 million

Delivery of Fit for the Future (particularly later year savings) will require investment. Rather than building one-off investment into the Budget, proposals have been put forward for a Fit for the Future Reserve from a Reserve rationalisation.

Waste Services Programme

	24-25	25-26	26-27
Income Target	£1.055M	£103K	N/A
Savings Target	N/A	N/A	£1M
Investment	None	None	£TBC

Owner: Rosa Tanfield

Description: Continue to be a leader in waste and recycling collections, ensuring that the Council is compliant with emerging Government waste reforms and setting out a plan to be more effective and efficient, whilst looking at new income opportunities, building on existing services that the Council provides.

	Project Manager	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Garden Waste Chargeable Service	John Kellett	Implementation Jan-24			
Creation of Waste Strategy	Rosa Tanfield	Draft strategy to E&S Panel Mar-24	Full council sign-off by Oct-24		
Delivery of Waste Strategy	Rosa Tanfield			Implementation ongoing	
Business Waste Service Expansion	Rosa Tanfield		Implementation		

- Garden Waste Scheme: New revenue from subscription fees 2024/25 - £955K; 2025/2026 - £103K
- Business Waste Service: New revenue from increased business 2024/25 - £100K
- Creation and Delivery of Waste Strategy: 2026/27 - £1M

Environment Stream: Waste Programme

SRO: Rosa Tanfield

Project	Garden Waste Chargeable Service		John Kellett
Description	A new opt-in chargeable garden waste service was launched in January 2024 as part of our Fit for the Future programme to bring in additional year on year income to the help close the budget gap. The new service has brought efficiencies within the service by rolling out a full wheeled bin collection for all residents, instead of the previous mix of sacks and bins. Not only do the wheeled bins bring collection efficiencies, but also aims to reduce staff sickness due to muscular/skeletal injuries and therefore a reduction in agency costs. In addition, financial support was provided to those that need it most, through a discount scheme for residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support.		
Planned Activity	Continue to develop and delivery further self-serve options, such as 'Home Move' and 'My bin is lost/broken'		
Key Milestones	Launch of Garden Waste scheme 15-Jan-24 Price review 2025/26, autumn/winter 2024 Renewals for existing residents, March/April 2025		
Staff Impact	The previous garden waste service used 5.25 trucks and crews. With the new paid for service, three crews will be used, later expanding to four if needed. Some of the remaining trucks and crews will be used to help with flat collections, where there's a lot of work. The rest of the crews, initially two and later one, will be moved to fill empty jobs in the team, replacing temporary workers if necessary. The Council has job openings for Senior Operatives and Team Leaders, and the plan is to put these crews into those positions, reducing the need for redundancies.		
Investment Requirement	Capital budget has already been approved for purchase of vehicles and wheeled bins.		
Risks and Mitigation	Risks: -Reputational risk: "garden tax" -Operational delivery challenges	Mitigation:	-Clear and comprehensive communication plan -Data-led and best practice informed decision making -Whole-Council approach to project delivery, with risks and issues logs to manage and mitigate through robust project planning, management and delivery
Financial Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £955K net revenue increase 2024/25 £103K net revenue increase 2025/26 	What does this mean?	2024/25 - This is made up by additional (gross) income of £1.246m from the new scheme. This additional customer and client receipt income is calculated on the basis of £1.896M, less £650K (of which £50K is attributed to a reduction in credit claim income under Grants and Reimbursements) 2025/26 - This is based on additional income on the base budget for further potential new customers, if existing customers renew)

Project	Creation and Delivery of Waste Strategy		Rosa Tanfield
Waste Strategy for Colchester			
Description	The development and delivery of a new Waste Strategy for Colchester, in response to central government guidance, the Environment Protection Act, the Environment Act 2021, the 25-year Environment Plan and other relevant legislation, strategies and policies. The aim is to deliver value for money, provide a safe, compliant, and resilient service, have a community asset based approach and minimise the impact on the environment. Running alongside this, waste reforms emerging from the Environment Act 2021 will see all residents and businesses being required to be consistent in the way they present recycling and waste materials for collection, and the way that Councils are funded to deliver waste collection services will change.		
Planned Activity	Review what we currently do and how we do it; draft a new Waste Strategy in winter/spring 2024; prepare for waste reform changes coming from the Environment Act 2021 imminent/April 2026 (flat food waste collections).		
Key Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2024: Draft Waste Strategy for Colchester at Environment & Sustainability Panel • Summer 2024: Public consultation on Waste Strategy • Autumn/Winter 2024: Ratification of Waste Strategy for Colchester • Winter 2024 onwards: Implementation of Waste Strategy for Colchester <p>There will be also be major changes to food waste, plastic films and flexible plastics collections through the Waste reforms, Environment Act 2021.</p>		
Staff Impact	Additional internal capacity (project management) to deliver the strategy and changes will be needed. There is likely to be further staffing required at the launch of changes to support operational delivery. Some of this may be funded from DEFRA. Staffing levels and roles will be reviewed to deliver the strategy and waste reform aims and objectives.		
Investment Requirement	The strategy and option modelling will clearly set out the investment requirements of any proposals. This is still to be determined and will be dependent on the option agreed. Additional one-off funding will be needed to provide capacity to launch the changes. DEFRA have indicated new capital burden funding for the Waste reforms, Environment Act 2021 but the Council is requesting a review of the allocation to better reflect the operational need/requirement. Funding will be capital for new equipment, transitional to help with the launch and ongoing.		
Risks and Mitigation	<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputational risk from the public on the changes being made to their waste collections • Inability to launch the changes to the timeframe • Significant capital investment required 	<p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication strategies will be vital, as can already be seen through the results of the communication strategy with the garden waste changes. Additional mitigation will be determined as the strategy is drawn up. • Additional one-off funding will be needed to provide capacity to launch the changes • Seek advice from experts to minimise spend and risk • Data-led and best practice informed decision making • Whole-Council approach to project delivery, with risks and issues logs to manage and mitigate through robust project planning, management and delivery 	
Financial Outcomes	Aim for £1M net revenue decrease in budget 2026/27	What does this mean?	This could result in the way that residents put out recycling and waste material and the frequency that they do this being different. Fleet and service roles may also change.

Environment Stream: Waste Programme

SRO: Rosa Tanfield

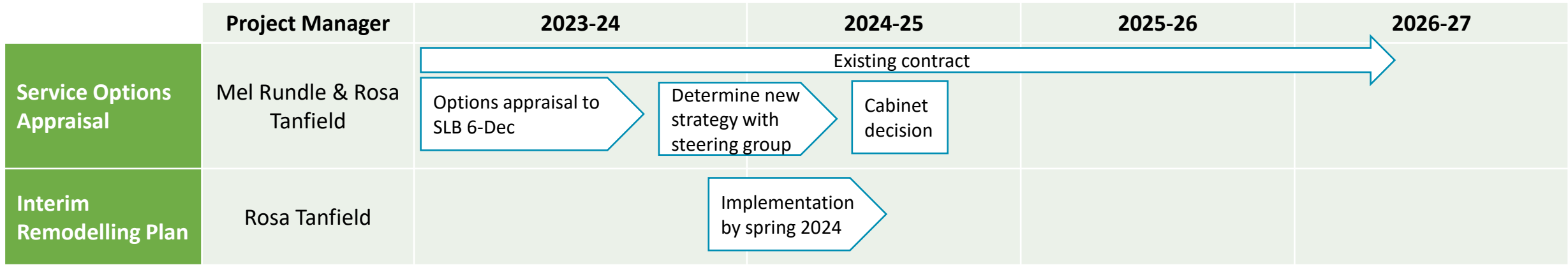
Project	Business Waste Service Expansion		Rosa Tanfield
Description	Waste reforms emerging from the Environment Act 2021 will see all businesses being required to be consistent in the way they present recycling and waste materials for collection. These changes and with the opportunity to build on the existing Business Waste Service, it is proposed that a business plan is created to expand the current service to enhance local businesses' waste management options, support compliance and to provide enhanced income and commercial opportunities.		
Planned Activity	Development and ratification of business plan spring / summer 2024		
Key Milestones	Spring/Summer 24: Ratification of Business Waste service proposal Autumn/Winter 24: Launch of extended Business Waste service		
Staff Impact	An additional crew will be required to service the new routes which will be funded from the new service offer by the additional income generated. The sales and process changes will require capacity from existing staff that will need to reprioritise other work unless additional capacity can be found. Commitment will need to be provided from our Marketing and Comms team to push the promotion of the service.		
Risks and Mitigation	Risks: -Public Perception -New vehicles is not available for operational launch -Inability to launch to timeline -Operational challenges	Mitigation: -Clear and comprehensive communication plan -Data-led and best practice informed decision making -Whole-Council approach to project delivery, with risks and issues logs to manage and mitigate through robust project planning, management and delivery	
Investment Requirement	Capital funding has already been agreed for new vehicle		
Financial Outcomes	Aim for £100K net revenue increase 2025/26	What does this mean?	We expect to see the current Business Waste Service expand and increase income generation and commercial opportunities

Greening & Street Care Programme

	24-25	25-26	26-27
Income Target	N/A	N/A	N/A
Savings Target	£100K	£150K	£750K
Investment	TBC	TBC	TBC

Owner: Mel Rundle & Rosa Tanfield

Description: Reviewing what we do and how, in relation to functions and activities to do with grounds maintenance and street care and safety across the whole Council, and to consider and agree new ways of working, at the end of the current grounds maintenance contract, that achieve the objectives as set out below.



Programme Objectives

- Ensure functions, initiatives and activities (particularly those that are statutory), are affordable and delivered within the allocated financial budget
- Deliver fit for the future services that match the changing needs of Colchester
- Work with partners and communities in a different way going forward

Environment Stream: Greening & Street Care Programme

SRO: Mel Rundle & Rosa Tanfield

Project	Interim Remodelling Plan		Mel Rundle/Rosa Tanfield
Description	<p>Create and deliver a service plan for the next 2-3 years that runs concurrently to the review of our approach to maintaining our streets and green spaces (set out on the next page), to realign the service for any possible agreed changes, whilst also ensuring that during that period the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers within the financial envelope – ensure all street care and safety initiatives and services are executed within the allocated financial resources. This could mean reducing operating costs by reducing service standard, removing Council assets that need to be maintained, changes to contracted work, and staffing reductions, as well as improving commercial income. • Proactiveness – Proactively address street care issues before they escalate, promoting a cleaner and safer environment. This means identifying efficiencies and could mean prioritising cyclical and urgent work over non-urgent tasks. • Partnerships – collaborate with various stakeholders to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of street care services. This could extend to private sector partnerships, such as that already in place with Waste Investigations Support and Enforcement (WISE). • Communities – foster a sense of community pride and engagement through clean and safe public spaces. This could mean greater focus on increasing volunteer activities, e.g. our existing Litter Warrior scheme. • Environmental impact – minimise the environmental footprint of street care operations and contribute to sustainability goals. This could mean looking a route optimisation, electrification of fleet and equipment, and reducing landfill for example. 		
Planned Activity	Staff consultation currently underway with Sweeper drivers on 1 full time equivalent staffing reduction, and agreement already given to reducing 1.4 full time equivalent Operative roles.		
Key Milestones	Review what we currently do, who and how we do it, and benchmarking against others in winter/spring 2024; talk to our stakeholders in spring 2024; launch spring/summer 2024; Subject to any changes to job descriptions and staffing numbers or consultation required, this will launch spring/summer 2024		
Staff Impact	Circa 60 staff are employed by CCC; Planned activity currently is underway to reduce the overall team by 2.4 full time equivalents. Further exploration and plans for service delivery could consider contracting works and/or reducing service standards, requiring less directly employed staff over the 2-3 year period, as well as seasonal only contracted staff. Staff impact cannot be fully determined until finalisation of the plan.		
Investment Requirement	Investment requirement cannot be determined until the final service plan has been agreed.		
Risks and Mitigation	<p>All risks will be measured through the exploration of the service plan and will be presented in detail as part of the final proposal, but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to how parts of our city will look over the year • Reputational risk from the public regarding public spaces and how they are managed and maintained • Potential redundancy costs 	<p>Mitigation could include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contingency plan will be developed to address unforeseen challenges, including a phased implementation approach to minimize disruptions. • Communication and behaviour change activity will be key to success. • Training and redeployment options will be explored • Seek advice from experts to minimise spend and risk 	
Financial Outcomes	<p>Aim for £100K net revenue decrease 2024/25 Aim for £150K net revenue decrease 2025/26</p>	What does this mean?	We expect to see some redesign of staff structure and roles including a possible reduction, an increase in some income generation, and changes to our contracted spend.

Environment Stream: Greening & Street Care Programme

SRO: Mel Rundle & Rosa Tanfield

Project	Service Options Appraisal		Mel Rundle/Rosa Tanfield
Description	Reviewing what we do and how, to determine the skills required to take a new approach to maintaining our streets and green spaces. Instead of having resource in CCC, contractors, and CBH the intent is to have multi-skilled operatives and align service delivery across the whole city in the most efficient way. This could be a variety of models, which could include a community-enabling approach in some areas and will ensure a more sustainable service that is fit for the future. This may impact how parts of our city will look over the seasons, with longer periods between grass cuts for example but we will continue to work hard to ensure the city looks welcoming for residents and visitors.		
Planned Activity	Review what we currently do and who does it in spring 2024; different service delivery options exploration in spring/summer 2024; talking to our stakeholders in summer/autumn 2024		
Key Milestones	Options appraisal: Committee review and recommendations to Cabinet – Sep/Oct 2024 Detailed proposal: Cabinet and council sign-off – by December 2024 Implementation plan: Implementation plan with phased timelines – delivered by October 2026		
Staff Impact	Circa 40 staff employed by the contractor (TUPE implications), circa 60 staff at CCC but ultimately the staff impact cannot be determined until the final service option decision has been reached.		
Investment Requirement	Investment requirement cannot be determined until the final service option decision has been reached however some capital investment for tools and machinery will be required for any in-house service as well as investment in some CCC owned sites to ensure they are fit for purpose.		
Risks and Mitigation	All risks will be measured through the exploration of the service options and will be presented in detail as part of the final proposal, but could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to how parts of our city will look over the seasons • Reputational risk from the public regarding public open spaces and how they are managed and maintained • TUPE implications as well as potential redundancy costs • Potential significant capital investment, subject to the final service option decision 	Mitigation could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contingency plan will be developed to address unforeseen challenges, including a phased implementation approach to minimize disruptions. • Communication and behaviour change activity will be key to success. • Training and redeployment options will be explored • Seek advice from experts to minimise spend and risk 	
Financial Outcomes	Aim for £750K net budget decrease 2026/27	What does this mean?	We expect to see a reduction in contract spend, a redesign of staff structure and roles including a possible reduction and income generation opportunities

Culture & Heritage Programme

	24-25	25-26	26-27
Income Target	£100K	TBC	TBC
Savings Target	£120K	TBC	TBC
Investment	TBC	TBC	TBC

Owner: Frank Hargrave

Description: Provide a more efficient and entrepreneurial museum service

	Project Manager	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Delivery Model Review	Frank Hargrave	Options analysis/ consultation to reach agreement by Oct-24 or accept cultural exemption			
Hollytrees	Frank Hargrave		Options analysis		
Natural History Museum	Frank Hargrave	Options analysis and consultation	NLHF application – May '24	Development phase to RIBA 4 (if NLHF successful)	NLHF Round 2 app and delivery

- Delivery model options are being considered to achieve the savings target; however, these may have other implications and costs.
- Other options such as Cultural Exemption on admissions at the castle may achieve similar savings more swiftly and without investment/significant risk
- Charging for admission at Hollytrees - estimated £100k income based on 20k visitors initially at £5 per head, (estimating an initial 50% drop) will be special offers as part of Castle entry and for returning customers.
- NLHF funding application being made in May 2024 with the aim of delivering a c.£5m redevelopment of the Natural History Museum.

Leisure & Economy Stream: Culture & Heritage Programme

SRO: Frank Hargrave

Project	Museums Delivery Model Review	Frank Hargrave
Description	Review exploring a new independent organisation, Charitable Trust/CIC or similar. Savings need to be balanced with new and additional governance and accounting requirements of a Trust. The new Trust would require time and investment to setup however it would provide further opportunities for fundraising and greater flexibility.	
Planned Activity	Production of a delivery model options appraisal including cultural exemption. Consultation with key stakeholders including Ipswich Council for finalisation of delivery model proposal.	
Key Milestones	Complete options appraisal Decision on delivery model Consultation with Ipswich Museums Staff consultation Cabinet Oct-2024	
Staff Impact	There are 65 FTE across Colchester and Ipswich museums. No change in staffing levels for museum service is expected but possible TUPE to new Trust as well as a review of skills and training needed.	
Investment Requirement	Investment requirement cannot be determined until the final service option decision has been reached	
Risks and Mitigation	Risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputational damage, miscalculation of finances, break up of partnership with IBC and loss of ACE funding 	Mitigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due planning and engagement of appropriate specialists. Consultation with partners/funders
Financial Outcomes	£120K savings in 2025/26, if cultural exemption not taken up in 24/25	What does this mean? It is not anticipated that the model of museum delivery will impact the service

Additional activity under this programme includes PwC being commissioned for:

- Assessment of the viability of cultural exemption on Castle admissions. This would bring savings of ~£120K but would lower the VAT exempt threshold of the Council from c.£1.4m p.a. to c.£800,000 p.a. so has wider implications that need to be considered.
- Challenge HMRC on Non-Business Supplies, as was done for Leisure World. May take several years to complete but PwC estimate a potential rebate of more than £500K and future VAT savings.

Leisure & Economy Stream: Culture & Heritage Programme

SRO: Frank Hargrave

Project	Hollytrees Admission Charging		Frank Hargrave
Description	Charging for admission to the Hollytrees Museum.		
Planned Activity	Pricing structure developed following benchmarking. Admission will start at £5 for an adult with family offers and joint ticketing options with the castle		
Key Milestones	Delivery by Apr-24		
Staff Impact	None		
Investment Requirement	Under review – c.£10k		
Risks and Mitigation	<p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of visitors to the museum following introduction of charges. - Reputational damage 	<p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An estimation of income of between £80,000 to £100,000 p.a. (in part dependent on VAT exemption) is based upon the halving of visitor numbers from 40,000 p.a. to 20,000. Learning from the wider sector implies the impact to visitor numbers is the same irrespective of the charge so low entry charges would be inadvisable. In mitigation the team is improving signage and adding trails, dress-up activities etc to help improve the visitor offer. 	
Financial Outcomes	£100K revenue 2024/25	What does this mean?	Hollytrees Museum will no longer be a free resource for our communities.

Active and Wellbeing Programme

	24-25	25-26	26-27
Income Target	TBC	TBC	£515k
Savings Target	£26K	TBC	£210k
Investment	-	£500k capital	-

Owner: Rory Doyle

Description: To transform the public sector sport and leisure model so that is financially sustainable and contributes to reduction in health inequalities and supports integrated working with system partners in relation to estate and service delivery.

	Project Manager	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Service Model Redesign	Rory Doyle		Discovery to Sep-24	1-year Planning phase	Delivery phase
Interim Transition	Rory Doyle			Medium term transition	
Gladstone	Adam Britton		£20K savings 24-25		
Digi Ticket	Adam Britton		£6K savings 24-25		

- £26k of savings relate to contract negotiations for systems in use within the service with no service impact.
- A staffing restructure currently underway will provide the foundations for community health and wellbeing being at the heart of sports and leisure service delivery.
- The delivery of our new service model is a long-term multi-year programme. We will collaborate with communities to change how our services and teams serve our people, be less dependent on formal offers, and tackle health inequalities to ensure that active wellbeing becomes an integral and valued contributor to the wider health and care system.

Leisure & Economy Stream: Active & Wellbeing Programme

SRO: Rory Doyle

Project	Sport and Leisure Service Review		Adam Britton
Description	As part of our ongoing development of sports and leisure services, we are implementing changes to our team structure to ensure the service is fit for future users and provide opportunity for additional income streams. These changes set the foundations for delivering a new service model to put community health and wellbeing at the heart of the vision and delivery of our sport and leisure service. This new approach increases our presence in the community, participation levels for all user groups in Colchester, greater partnership working with national governing bodies, community groups and schools. In addition, contract negotiations for systems currently in use within the service will deliver £26k savings with no service impact.		
Planned Activity	Staff consultation currently underway.		
Key Milestones	Implementation of new service structure, and recruitment to new roles – from April 2024 Procurement of new equipment – by April 2025 Installation of new equipment - 2025		
Staff Impact	The structure being implemented by April 2024 will largely provide the new roles anticipated for the next three years, however the new ways of working are likely to result in greater effectiveness and efficiencies. Services also may need to be reviewed and refined in response to customer need.		
Investment Requirement	There is a required capital investment in 25/26 of £500k, in addition to other grant monies already being pursued.		
Risks and Mitigation	<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful recruitment to team structure - Fluctuating energy and supplier costs - Not achieving income levels needed on memberships 	<p>Mitigation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upskilling where appropriate, use of agency workers - Use different suppliers where we can, aim for lower energy use - A specialist consultant has completed an income analysis with reasonable assumptions has been taken and confidence levels are high. 	
Financial Outcomes	£725k target net budget reduction for 26/27 (£515k income growth, £100k Premises savings from energy efficiencies, £60k employees, £50k between supplies/grants)	What does this mean?	We expect to see a reduction in system spend, a staff restructure which brings efficiencies and increase in income generation. This new health and wellbeing approach will help to tackle health inequalities in our city and mean we are a valued contributor to the wider health and care system.

Housing Stream: HRA Review Programme

SRO: Lindsay Barker

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
✓			

Project	Housing Revenue Account Assessment	Lindsay Barker
Description	Review of our Housing offer and delivery model (to be planned in stages over 3 years)	
Planned Activity	Development of a long-term plan to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and the future sustainability of our housing offer, beginning with an assessment and reset of the future use of our Housing Revenue Account.	
Key Milestones	Strategic assessment of the HRA to be planned and commissioned by April 2024 to underpin future plan (timescales for completion TBD)	
Staff Impact (FTE)	No direct impact from the review, although there may be impacts arising from the review	
Investment Requirement	TBC	
Risks and Mitigation	Risk: That the HRA business plan is unsustainable	Mitigation: The review will identify mitigating actions
Financial Outcomes	The aim of the review is to result in a financially viable business plan for the management of our housing stock.	

Housing Stream: Housing Provision Programme

SRO: Philip Sullivan

Project	Homelessness Prevention		Philip Sullivan
Description	Development of a long-term plan to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and the future sustainability of our housing offer, beginning with an assessment and reset of the future use of our Housing Revenue Account.		
Planned Activity	This is an emerging programme of transformation work with activity at various stages of development. The new Housing Board already established and chaired by Rory Doyle connects the Health and Well Being Alliance and will provide better governance and partnership working opportunities. The Housing Delivery Plan will generate additional projects that will be assessed by the new Board arrangements.		
Key Milestones	New approach to strategic oversight of housing functions determined from late Dec-23		
Staff Impact (FTE)	Staff impact currently being scoped as this involves staff across CBH and CCC		
Investment Requirement	TBC		
Risks and Mitigation	Risk: Further increased in homelessness	Mitigation: The review will identify solutions to further increases in homelessness	
Financial Outcomes	£200K savings 2026/27		

Assets Programme

	24-25	25-26	26-27
Income Target	N/A	TBC	TBC
Savings Target	£300K	TBC	TBC
Investment	N/A	TBC	TBC

Owner: Patricia Barry

Description: Develop an Assets strategy aligned to strategic plan and business goals, ensuring property is maintained effectively and that regeneration, climate change and place-making objectives are realised, and commercial and income generation opportunities are promoted. Develop an asset strategy, policy and delivery model that ensure we make the most of our assets.

	Project Manager	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Asset Management Plan	Patricia Barry		Cabinet decision	Delivery	
Corporate Landlord Model	Stephen Nash		TUPE	Service redesign	

- The focus of this programme is less on the assets themselves and more on identifying a clear plan that enables Colchester to understand and leverage the whole estate, making sound financial and risk-based decisions, in partnership with other organisations
- Heritage asset management – Colchester has a large portfolio for the size of the authority and is a huge liability.
- There is significant potential for capital receipts to enable broader organisational change and this will require investment.

Assets Programme

Savings or income breakdown and detail

- 2024/25 - £300k saving from the design of our Corporate Landlord service.
- Work with services (as part of other transformation areas) to identify savings or income generation relating to assets under those programmes according to the gap identified and in line with strategic approach.
- Plan for future years impact – work to begin immediately to understand discovery data and the following opportunities;
 - **Cut spend** – unlikely that this will be in relation to works due to annual under-investment, however:
 - Potential reduction in costs of borrowing if disposals of surplus/cost inefficient properties identified and capital receipt used for reinvestment rather than using capital borrowings
 - Efficiency programme for building usage to reduce/control running costs
 - Review vacant properties and strategic hold assets – there will be costs associated with security etc
 - Strategic investment in properties identified for long term retention to enable use of capital rather than use of revenue in ‘ad-hoc’ approach to spend
 - **Stop income loss:** investment in stock, particularly those that are generating income is essential. Also review marketing of vacant commercial portfolio
 - **Increase income (immediate and future opportunities):** review the use of access to capital in relation to the investment strategy e.g. opportunities for secure income stream from provision of facilities that support health provision – primary care, intermediate housing, community located health provision
 - **Use of capital:** does capital expenditure always support economic growth or lead to reduction in revenue?

Assets Programme

People - current and projected

- Complete picture of property related staffing numbers is unknown, but a forensic cost analysis of the ledger will identify all resources, including staff numbers, that are involved in estate matters
- The Corporate Landlord structure is in development

Estimating Confidence levels

- High

Key Risks

- The organisation does not consider the current and future risk and cost of the estate through the lens of the financial sustainability of the council (once the relevant data has been gathered and analysed)
- Competing political and operational drivers for capital investment or property related decisions
- Investment is not forthcoming to develop business cases for projects that are specifically linked to revenue reduction or income generation projects e.g. New Crematorium, Energy production - Heat Networks/Solar Farm, Town Hall
- Continuing volatility of the property market will affect assumptions around time, cost, and open market valuations for business cases therefore contingency will need to be included in all cases
- Speed of deterioration of the estate continues to impact on income, unexpected cost and reputational damage

Assets Programme

Next Steps	Status
Implement Corporate Landlord – already approved at Cabinet	In progress
New governance structure to be established to ensure member engagement, transparency of decision making, strategic understanding and planning of the Estate	Implementation mid Feb
Service and organisational engagement regarding culture change that the Corporate Landlord will deliver	Ongoing
Forensic cost analysis of the ledger to provide accurate visibility of costs of the estate	Completion end Feb
Commercial estate analysis – risk and identification of opportunities	Completion end Feb
Detailed stock condition survey to include 15–20-year life cycle costings to support financial planning beyond the current MTFF	Complete end March
3-year action plan for the estate (developed under delegated authority due to timing of receipt of stock condition data)	Complete early March
Any new capital project that negatively impacts the financial liability of CCC, until approval of the Strategic Estate Plan must be exceptional, new gateway process following capital review must be strictly adhered to and wider strategic impact considered as part of the business plan	Ongoing
As per CIPFA recommendations, Estate Plan (Strategy/Policy) drafted, with submission to Scrutiny in February and Cabinet in March	In progress
Develop business cases where there are revenue reduction implications or income generation opportunities only	In progress
Further discussion with Health Care Alliance regarding use of council capital to support projects for secure revenue returns	Ongoing
Integrated working with Amphora events team in relation to the Estate Plan	In progress
Strategic review of all Heritage Assets to be undertaken following receipt of condition surveys	March start

Corporate Stream: Shared Services

SRO: Richard Block

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
✓			✓

Building the resilience of our organisation through shared services. A joint Shared Services Executive Board has been established and a programme director is in place leading the work to fully maximise the benefits we know shared service working can bring. The programme has a clear vision to share 'back office' services across the three councils, including:

- HR
- Revs and Bens
- Finance
- ICT
- PMO (Project Management Office)



**shared
services**
Braintree . Colchester . Epping



Organisational resilience – We all carry numerous vacant posts and find it difficult to recruit the right staff for the future. Working in partnership we can be more resilient by sharing services, sharing key posts, attracting the right people.



Improving capacity and agility – Specialists posts can be shared rather than a reliance upon agency staff and Suppliers. Peaks and troughs in workload can be dealt with through improved capacity and sharing of common processes and policies.



Staff retention and development – There is the opportunity to develop some bigger/challenging roles across the partnership that will underpin our ability to retain key staff. Investing in staff development will be a key part of service design.



Aligning and developing best practice – The co-design of services will enable us to build upon strengths, significantly improve common pain points and lead to a one-off change in delivery through the alignment towards shared service best practice.



Service efficiency – We will co-design more efficient services by designing out pain points whilst at the same time dealing with frustrations of staff with existing service delivery models.



Shaping our own future in Essex – Three strategically aligned partners can move quickly enough to co-design shared services now. This way we are in control of service delivery models.



Improve the customer journey – This programme presents us with a step-change (one-off) opportunity to co-design services around Customer needs.

Corporate Stream: Shared Services

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
	✓		✓

Additional to the main programme

SRO: Richard Block

Project	Building Control		Andrew Tyrrell
Description	Proposal for a shared management structure with one or more local authorities. Key enabler is to have a high-quality Team Leader beneath a shared Service Manager, freeing the manager to align service operations and best practices, customer relationships, income, budgets, workforce planning, training and development. The right Team Leader could reduce the degree of geographical dependency for this role as they would be engaged daily, locally. Shared management would benefit from shared policies, pricing, systems, and practices and be a key role to take best practices from each local authority and encourage a unified team.		
Planned Activity	Team Leader role currently being advertised for Colchester		
Key Milestones	Recruitment of local Team Leader post		
Staff Impact (FTE)	0.5 FTE Service Manager post		
Risks and Challenges	<p>Risks:</p> <p>Success of shared service management is dependent on ability to recruit a sufficiently experienced Team Leader.</p> <p>Progression timeline dependent on Team Leader recruitment.</p> <p>The arrangement would make people highly desirable to other recruiters</p>	<p>Challenges:</p> <p>Market conditions are uncertain at present, affected by 1-Apr-24 Building Safety Regulator “Registration” requirements</p> <p>IT systems in place at participating authorities, whether cost, lifespan, functionality</p>	
Financial Outcome	£43K savings 2024/25		

Corporate Stream: Future Workforce Programme

SRO: Jess Douglas

Our workforce will be critical to the delivery of the Fit for Future transformation portfolio. Our workforce will need/to be:

- Ready for significant change
- Lean but sustainable
- Inclusive leadership
- Diverse and inclusive
- Agile and resilient
- Highly skilled
- Model our core values and demonstrate personal leadership
- Embrace system working and shared services
- Digitally and data enabled



Future Workforce Programme

SRO: Jess Douglas

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
✓			✓

What this means:

Approach:

Sustainable	<p>Establishment is affordable within the council’s budget; work is achievable, fulfilling, and long hours are not the norm.</p> <p>Core workforce, with ability to bring in additional interim capacity and expertise.</p> <p>Staff are fulfilled, quality of work life is positive, and needs are being met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFF Change Management Policy Review • Change Management Leadership Programme • Service workforce/organisational development plans
Agile and Resilient	<p>Workforce will be supported to adapt and thrive in a constantly changing environment, by focusing on people’s wellbeing, physical and mental health</p> <p>Utilising skills and sharing knowledge across the council, systems and partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing strategy • Enabling more movement across the council to re-deploy staff where needed and support career aspiration • Formal mentoring and buddying system
Inclusive	<p>Increased diversity and good representation across the council against each protected characteristic.</p> <p>Workforce reflective of our communities</p> <p>EDI embedded in every workforce activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New EDI Strategy linked to LGA equalities framework • Reverse mentoring • EDI KPIs and monitoring
Future Skills	<p>What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means and impact to services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills taskforce to identify future skills • Skills audit and gap analysis • L&D plans linked to priorities • Career pathways • Digital skills

Future Workforce Programme

SRO: Jess Douglas

What this means:

Leadership

Lead transformation positively and collaboratively understanding and managing the impact of change on people
Continually model the council's core values
Be committed to leading a diverse workforce and promoting inclusion

System working /shared service opportunities

Build on existing and forge new partnerships, work collaboratively to realise the opportunities that shared services can bring; resilience, improving capacity, building relationships, retaining staff, service efficiencies and improved customer journey.

Approach:

- Leadership development programme aligned to strategic priorities, core values and transformation
 - Future leaders' talent management programme
 - New leaders' induction programme
-
- Introduce a framework to support the delivery of future shared services:
 - Business case development, models of delivery, culture development, change process, staff involvement and engagement plan.

Corporate Stream: Digital Customer Programme

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
✓			✓

SRO: Mel Kemp-Salt

Project	Website Replacement Project		
Description	Replace existing extranet, intranet, and microsite platforms at Colchester City and Epping Forest District Council and deliver a platform that is readily usable and adoptable by further partners. Transform website content to provide clear, concise information and simple, consistent self-service options.		
Planned Activity	Project brief is with key stakeholders for contribution		
Key Milestones	Project timeline assessment is expected to deliver the project over 24 months. The expected path to a phased service by service implementation is: 03/2024 - Go out to procurement framework (budget/resources agreed) 05/2024 - Sign-off procurement and secure delivery partner 06/2024 - Develop project requirements and Statement of Works 07/2024 - Commence project deliverables		
Staff Impact (FTE)	No expected staff reduction however there may be efficiencies realised in related services.		
Investment Requirement	To be determined through project planning and procurement frameworks		
Risks and Mitigation	Risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not able to provide a platform that underpins modern customer expectations If services are unable to engage with the new site redesign and content review then there will be delays in the project completion 	Mitigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market research indicates this is low risk Early engagement, agreed web standards in line with, workshopping content, re-use of best practice content 	
Financial Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital investment will be required to fund the project 	What does this mean?	Increased web accessibility, better navigation

Corporate Stream: Digital Customer Programme

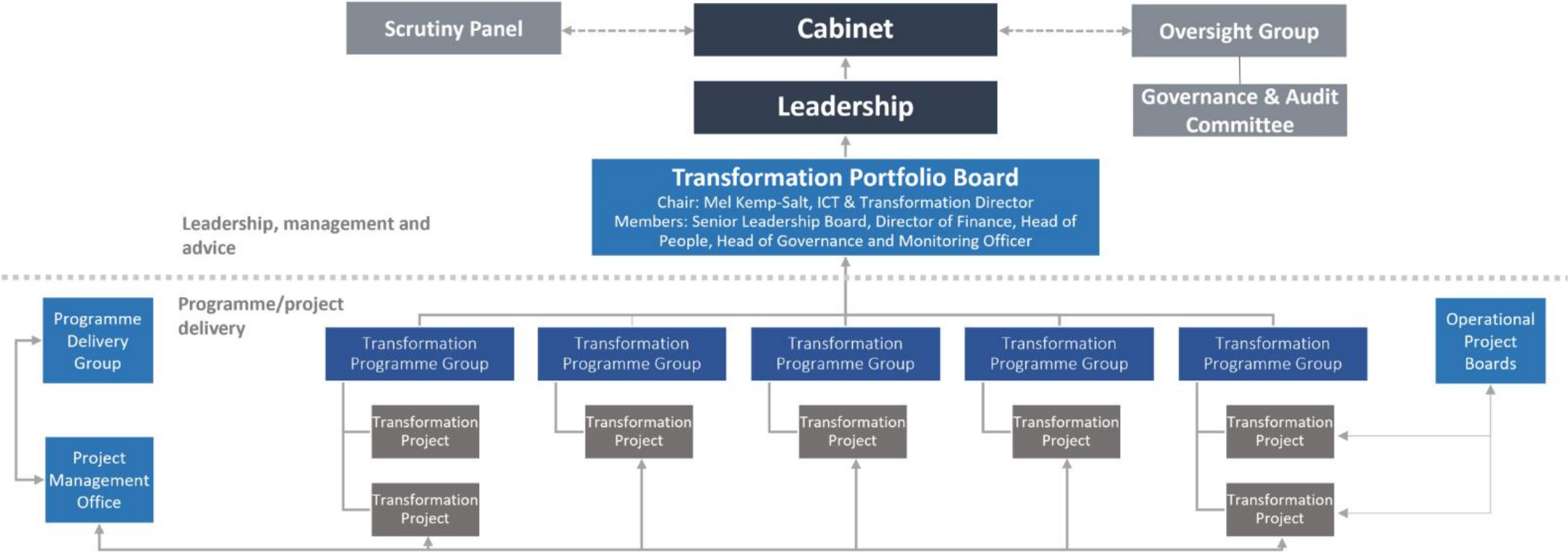
SRO: Mel Kemp-Salt

Efficiency	Cuts	Income	Investment
✓			✓

Project	Channel Experience with Contact Centre		Sam Preston
Description	Reviewing what we do and how we do it to adapt our service to make sure we're fit for the future and meet our customers' needs. This includes reviewing customer journeys to maximise channel shift, which would result in requiring less staff resource and create budget savings in 24/25. This may impact how customers perceive our contact service, with longer response times on the phone however we will work hard to provide better experiences across other digital channels. Future years' service improvement will be dependent on delivery of digital systems.		
Planned Activity	Iterative changes to rebalance the level of service provision across all channels in a test and learn approach, reducing telephony hours to allow better email and self-serve response times and service experience; exploring use of other more efficient digital contact channels; refocus performance indicators and targets away from time taken to first contact resolution; improved use of telephone messaging to direct customers to self-serve options; establish a relationship with Epping customer services to explore options/solutions together.		
Key Milestones	Iterative service adaptations – from January '24 Customer self-serve platforms in place - TBC Web improvements (delivered by the Website Replacement Project) - TBC Redesign the customer service delivery model and optimise alternative contact channels - TBC		
Staff Impact (FTE)	32.58 FTE currently, we expect a reduction of 3-4 FTE that will be achieved through natural attrition and end of fixed term contracts		
Investment Requirement	No specific investment expected, however there will be some dependency on wider projects within digital customer which will require investment		
Risks and Mitigation	Risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced customer satisfaction Longer telephony wait times Urgent contacts unable to get through Inability to flex to unexpected demands 	Mitigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt the changes being made based on customer feedback Reviewing call routing to prioritise more urgent contacts Service design will protect urgent service lines Re-prioritisation of call queues, customer comms as needed 	
Financial Outcomes	£100K net budget reductions 2024/25 achieved through salary savings	What does this mean?	Focusing resources where needed, and improving the experience of our residents interacting with our digital services

Fit for the Future Governance Framework

The proposed governance structure is intended to ensure good governance, with decisions at the lowest level possible and with oversight from Members and Officers at the highest level. In addition to local governance, some programmes will report to other groups, e.g. North Essex Councils.



Transformation Governance Bodies

Governance Body	Chair/Attendees	Purpose	Frequency
Leadership	Leader & Deputy Leader Portfolio Holders Senior Leadership Board	To oversee the delivery of the transformation portfolio and the achievement of its deliverables. Approve the initial portfolio and any additions (or deletions) from it.	TBC
Oversight Group	Group Leaders PfH Economy, Transformation and Performance, PfH Neighbourhoods and Waste, Chair Governance & Audit Committee, Senior Leadership Team	To build cross-party discourse, understanding and consensus on the portfolio of transformation programmes including management of risk. To be supported by the Director of ICT & Transformation.	TBC
Transformation Portfolio Board	Chair: Mel Kemp-Salt Vice Chair: Andrew Small, Jess Douglas Senior Leadership Board Andrew Weavers Programme SROs	To review progress on the portfolio and ensure issues and risks are addressed, to hold individual projects to account, provide support and guidance to programme project SROs, to recommend the addition and removal of initiatives from the transformation portfolio, and to ensure that the Council's transformation objectives are met. Also, to provide upward reporting to Members Committees and Groups. Streams/programmes/projects can be reviewed by exception however the Transformation Board may wish to review specific areas of concern or interest as needed.	Monthly
Transformation Programme Groups	Programme SRO Project Manager(s) Relevant Officers	Programme-level groups to identify and define potential transformation projects for further consideration and development.	As needed
Transformation Projects	Project Manager Project leads HR & Finance Business Partners	Set up following the identification of transformation opportunities to develop proposals and deliver projects. To be comprised of nominated project manager and leads for the project, along with HR and Finance Business Partners and support from the Project Management Office. To assess the viability of potential transformation projects with a view to establishing business cases and Project Initiation Documents for consideration by the Programme Delivery Board.	Weekly

Transformation Governance Q1 2024

Informal Officer Governance

Senior Leadership Board

Monthly oversight of portfolio

Informal Member Governance

Leadership

Oversight Group

Leader of the Council, Leader of the Labour Group, Leader of the Conservative Group, PFH for Resources, Chair of Scrutiny Panel, Chair of Governance and Audit Committee

Formal Member Governance

Budget **Scrutiny** 23/01/24

Budget **Cabinet** 24/01/24

FFF **Scrutiny Panel** 13/02/24

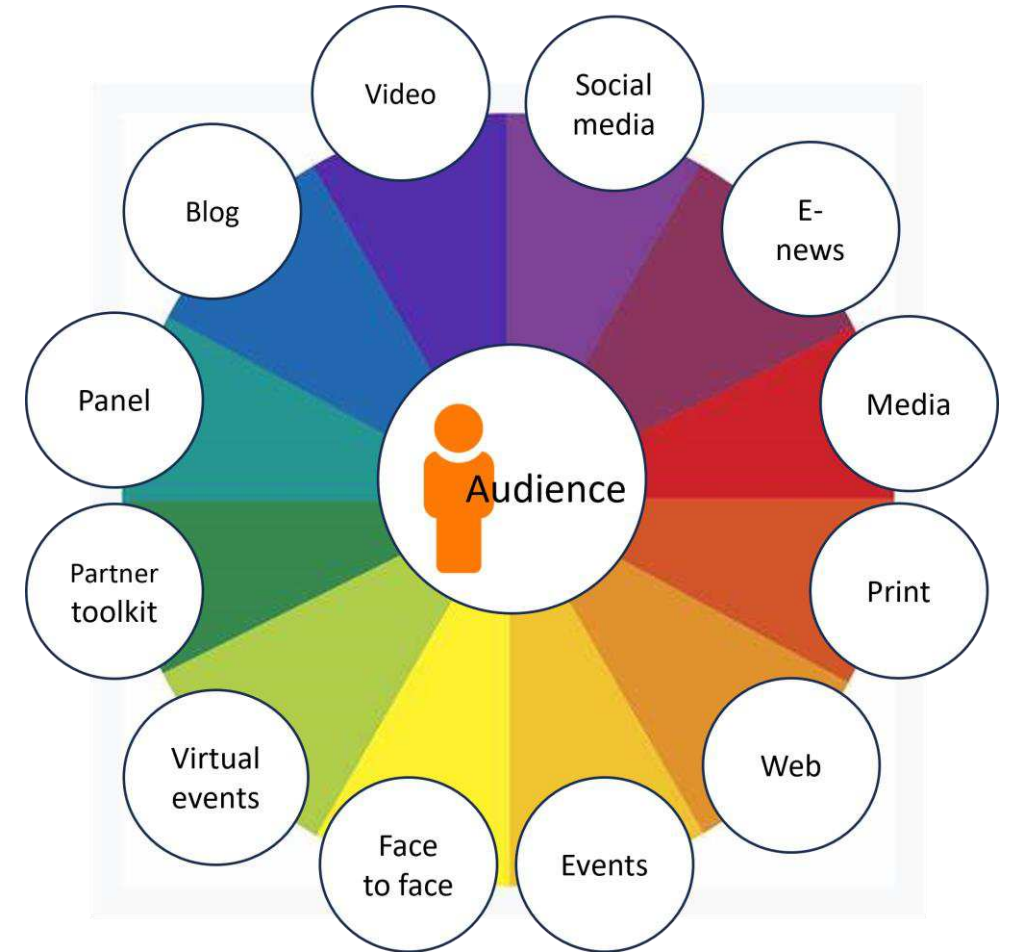
Budget - **Full Council** 21/02/24

FFF **Cabinet** 13/03/24

Fit for the Future: Integrated Communications Strategy

Integrated communications will ensure we deliver consistent message across channels and to residents, staff, members and stakeholders to support the programme objectives, take people on the Fit for the Future journey with us and build trust and loyalty.

It includes who we are talking to, why we are talking to them, how and when we will talk to them, what form of communication the content should take and what channels we should use to share it.



Fit for the Future: Integrated Communications Strategy

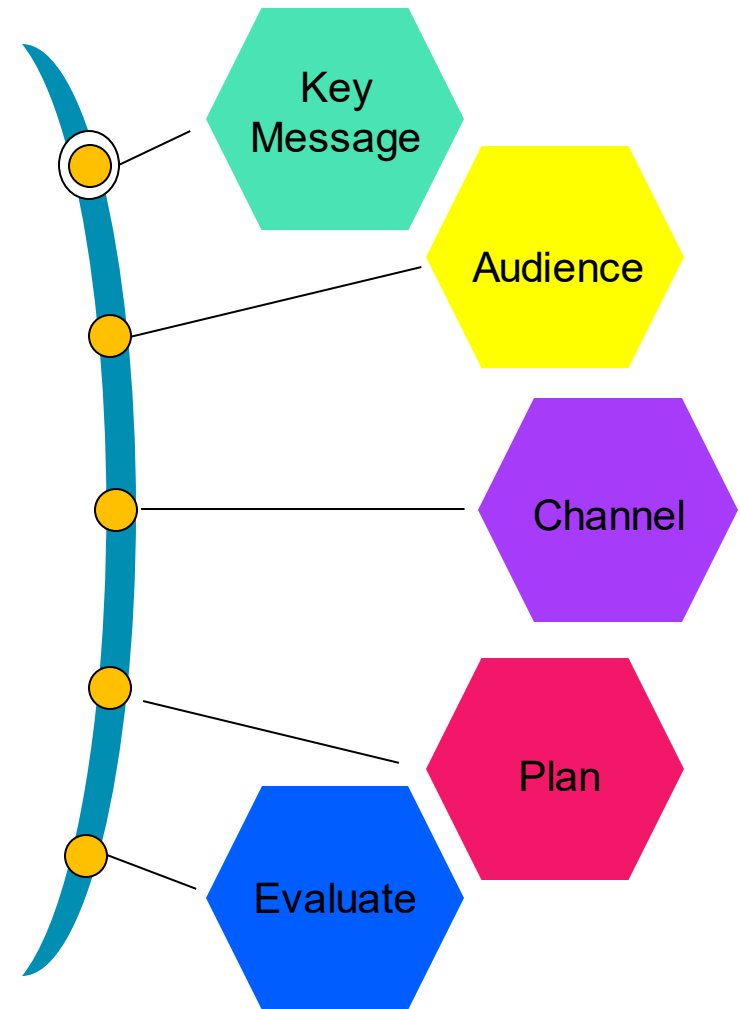
	Key Messages	Approach
External	The budget situation of the organisation, how we are acting through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means and make sure our services are fit for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full communications plan. • Mix of channels appropriate to message, including media, social media, e-news, website and residents’ panel.
Internal	What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means, impact to services and staff, ensuring up to date / timely messages with the ability to ask questions and feed into the process and support for staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full communications plan with monthly focus on work streams. • Mix of channels appropriate to audience e.g. desk based/frontline. • Clear feedback routes.
Members	What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means, impact to services and residents, ensuring up to date and timely messages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of channels appropriate to audience, including networking events, new member induction, regular updates from CEO and Leader and toolkits.
Stakeholders	What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means and impact to services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person stakeholder briefings for key partners to the council by SLB/SLT/Cabinet • Regular meetings already attended by SLB/SLT/Cabinet.



Fit for the Future Integrated Communications Approach

Purpose

Integrated communications will ensure we deliver consistent message across channels and to residents, staff, members and stakeholders to support the programme objectives, take people on the Fit for the Future journey with us and build trust and loyalty.



Key Messages

- The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure (of around £6.262 million over the next three years) on the council's budget.
- Our response to this financial challenge must be radical; to close the budget gap and future proof our organisation, we will need to reduce our operating costs by 25 percent over the next three years.
- Colchester City Council has a strong track record of financial management, having saved nearly £16million since 2018, from its net budget of £26million.
- Colchester is not alone in dealing with these pressures. Most councils are facing the same problems. We are in a better position than some, but (like most other councils) we have a substantial structural deficit in our revenue budget.
- Continuing as we are, is not an option. We are working to reset and transform the council to become a leaner, more efficient organisation, doing everything we can to find ways to improve the way we work and deliver services to ensure a stable and secure financial future. This work is called 'Fit for the Future'.

Full list of important messages

- The scale of the financial challenge we face is huge (around £6.262 million over the next three years). The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure on our budgets and we simply cannot continue to operate as we are.
- Colchester City Council has a strong track record of financial management, having saved nearly £16million since 2018, from its net budget of £26million.
- Colchester is not alone in dealing with these pressures. Most councils are facing the same problems.
- Colchester is in a better position than some, but (like most other councils) we have a substantial structural deficit in our revenue budget. This is why the transformation programme is so important. It will see us reduce our spend, size and scope, making sure we are not overspending.
- Our response to this financial challenge must be radical; to close the budget gap and future proof our organisation, we will need to reduce our operating costs by 25 percent over the next three years.
- To achieve this, we are working to reset and transform the Council to become a leaner, more efficient organisation, doing everything we can to find ways to improve the way we work and deliver services to ensure a stable and secure financial future. The 'Fit for the Future' programme will make sure that we are exactly that; fit for the future of our city, of our organisation and of our communities.
- Whilst this work will help to align us with the Medium-Term Financial Forecast and ensure we are closing the budget gap identified, it will also prepare us for the longer-term financial challenges that lie ahead.
- The programme of work will involve a significant change to many of our residents, communities and partners. The changes we make will have a very visible impact across the city, and we will work to support our residents and businesses through the changes.
- As is our duty, and at the heart of what we do as a local authority, we will continue to do all we can to protect those residents who are the most vulnerable and do what we can to mitigate the impact changes may have on them.
- We will do all that can to support our people through this change, ensuring we live and breathe our core values.

Narrative

Colchester City Council budget pressures explained

We are working to transform our services to ensure we can continue to deliver high-quality services for the people of Colchester.

Like every resident and business in the UK, the cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, rising energy costs, and the current economic climate, is placing an unprecedented pressure on local authority budgets, and Colchester is no exception.

We are experiencing pressures on our budgets, more than normal

Colchester is not alone in dealing with these pressures. Most councils are facing the same problems. We have a strong track record of financial management, having saved nearly £16million since 2018, from its net budget of £26million.

We have had to identify £5.26million in savings this financial year, with a further estimated £6.262million in savings to over the next three years to ensure our budgets are met. This is something we are legally required to do.

What are the numbers?

The cost-of-living crisis, alongside the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and rising energy costs have placed significant pressure (of around £6.262million) on the council's budget.

These pressures are on top of limited government support and the rise in inflation (peaking at around 11% in 2023) and recent increases to the National Living Wage.

We have had to identify £5.26 million in savings this financial year (2023-24), with a further estimated £6.262million in savings to over the next three years.

Finance officers will continue to review the updated position, and this is a figure that could grow. Cont...

What is the consequence?

Colchester is in a better position than some local authorities, but (like most other councils) we have a substantial structural deficit in our revenue budget.

The scale of the pressures we are facing cannot be met by reducing costs, making efficiencies or raising council tax, like we have in the past. Continuing as we are, is not an option. We need to make some big changes to ensure we can balance the budget. We must transform the way we work.

If we don't transform our organisation, to make sure we are spending within our means, we may, in future, be in a similar position to Thurrock and Birmingham councils and may have to issue a S114 Notice, to let the Government know we will be unable to balance our budget. The issuing of a S114 notice bans all new spending with the exception of protecting vulnerable people and statutory services and pre-existing commitments.

We hope not to get anywhere near that point.

Transformation is our long-term plan

We have already begun to reduce non-essential spending and are working hard to reduce the councils overspend and begin to put the council on the right track for the future.

We have some money in our reserves (like a savings account) that will help us in the short term, but the most important thing is that we are proactively working to ensure we live within our means moving forward.

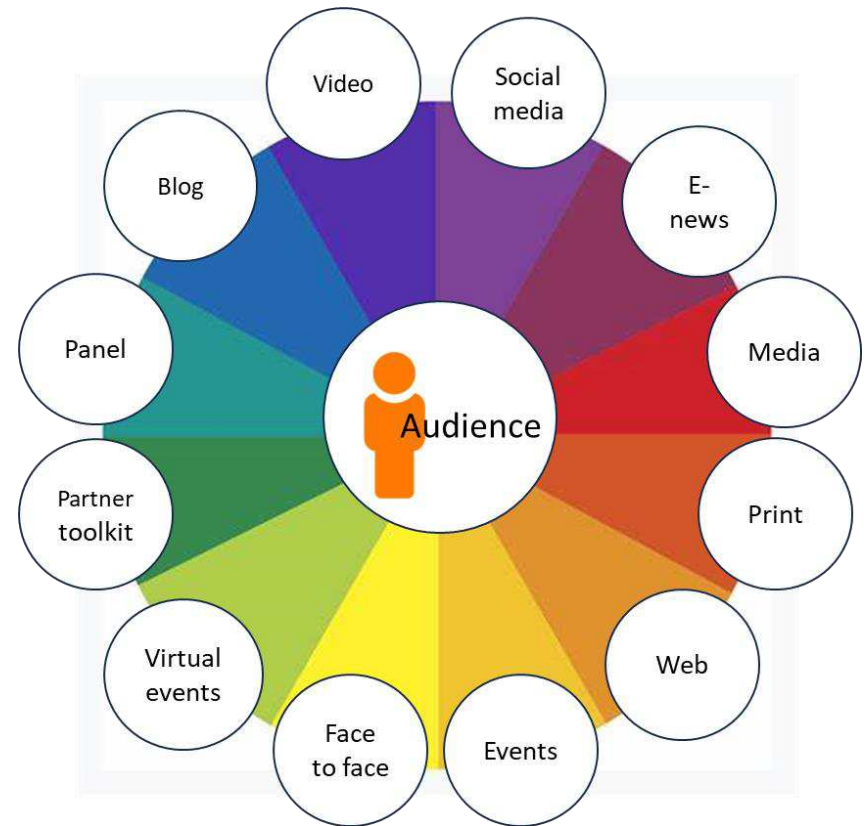
To achieve this, we are working to reset and transform the Council to become a leaner, more efficient organisation, doing everything we can to find ways to improve the way we work and deliver services to ensure a stable and secure financial future. The 'Fit for the Future' programme will make sure that we are exactly that; fit for the future of our city, of our organisation and of our communities.

The plans for how we are going to do this is set out in the Fit for the Future proposals report that is due to be discussed at Cabinet in February 2024.

Approach

This integrated comms approach for Fit for the Future shows you:

- who we are talking to
- why we are talking to them
- how and when we will talk to them
- what form of communication the content should take
- what channels we should use to share it



Audience

Key Messages

Approach

External

The budget situation of the organisation, how we are acting through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means and make sure our services are fit for the future.

- Full communications plan.
- Mix of channels appropriate to message, including media, social media, e-news, website and residents' panel.

Internal

What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means, impact to services and staff, ensuring up to date / timely messages with the ability to ask questions and feed into the process and support for staff.

- Full communications plan with monthly focus on work streams.
- Mix of channels appropriate to audience e.g. desk based/frontline.
- Clear feedback routes.

Members

What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means, impact to services and residents, ensuring up to date and timely messages.

- Mix of channels appropriate to audience, including networking events, new member induction, regular updates from CEO and Leader and toolkits.

Stakeholders

What changes are happening through the Fit for the Future programme to make sure we are living within our means and impact to services.

- In person stakeholder briefings for key partners to the council by SLB/SLT/Cabinet
- Regular meetings already attended by SLB/SLT/Cabinet.

Communication Goal	Communication Method	Audience	Frequency	Owner
Narrative and positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website PR / Open Letters Gazette Cabinet interview Homepage banner Infographics Residents Panel Members toolkit key messages Annual Report, with Council Tax main billing Local radio and TV, ensuring they are aware we are keen to talk about budget situation Webinars 	<p>Residents Stakeholders Members Staff</p> <p>Residents Members Staff</p> <p>Local radio journalists / Residents</p> <p>Members</p>	<p>One off update, with review every 3 months. Gazette Cabinet meeting – quarterly.</p> <p>Annual report is annual.</p> <p>As needed</p>	<p>Comms, supported by SLT, Leader and Finance.</p> <p>Comms, supported by organisation.</p> <p>Comms</p> <p>SLB, Transformation leads</p>
<p>Regular and timely focused budget updates</p> <p>Raising awareness of budget gap and seps to close it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Press release E-news Social media (where appropriate) Local Government publications Residents Panel 	<p>Residents Members Staff</p>	<p>As arise. Then planned approach to PR once information is available.</p>	<p>Comms, supported by Finance and transformation theme leads.</p>

Communication Goal	Communication Method	Audience	Frequency	Owner
<p>Repetition of key messages</p> <p>Transformation streams as timelines get confirmed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release (non-budget focused) where appropriate. • Leaders Column in Gazette • Community events / face to face. Tagging into events already happening. Providing toolkit to staff or CEO / Leader to join. • Actual Radio/BBC Essex ask if there is an appetite for a regular budget chat • Cllr King updates to Members 	<p>Residents Members Staff</p> <p>Readers of the Gazette and its website</p> <p>Residents</p> <p>Residents</p> <p>Members</p>	<p>As arise</p> <p>TBC (fortnightly)</p> <p>As arise</p> <p>As needed</p>	<p>Comms</p> <p>Leader</p> <p>Organisation, CEO, Leader</p> <p>Comms</p> <p>Leader</p>
<p>Promote sign up to City News</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homepage banner • Other e-newsletters • Process forms • Social media • Mentions in press releases • Residents Panel • Members / T&P Council 	<p>Residents Businesses</p>	<p>Regularly</p>	<p>Comms</p>

Communication Goal	Communication Method	Audience	Frequency	Owner
Promotion of Residents Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homepage banners • City News • Mention in press releases • Members / T&P Councils • Video 	Residents	Regularly	Comms & Research Team
<p>Monthly FFF focus topic</p> <p>(determined by FFF timeline)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLIN content • Webinars • Guest blog once a month • Listen, Learn, Lead topic lead • Regular short videos from SLB and topic leads • SUN meetings • Frontline service roadshows • Manager engagement toolkit • Publish a quarterly financial update against key milestones • Support Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with People team to promote benefits of working for the council • Continue to embed and embrace company values • Full visual calendar of planned comms 	<p>Staff</p> <p>Some content can be used for Members too</p>	Regularly	Comms team, SLB, Heads of Service and HR

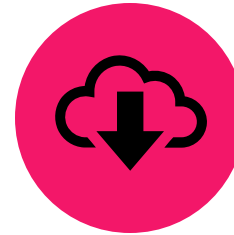
Communication Goal	Communication Method	Audience	Frequency	Owner
Fit for the Future drop-in session/innovation festivals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In person at Rowan House, invite to all staff and Members 	Staff Members	Twice a year Further event can be planned at critical points in the timeline as needed	Heads of Service with support from Comms
Essex wide approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	Essex residents	TBC	ECC, supported by CCC comms
Reinforcement of how we are we doing well e.g. city centre doing well, new business in Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release Social media Partnership working BID and others 	Residents Members Staff	As arise, will be listed on the forward plan	Comms, supported by organisation
Myth busting, Guerrilla marketing Idea needs forming depending on FFF content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media 	Residents		Comms, supported by organisation

Insight and Evaluation

Evaluation enables us to measure the impact of our work and provides the evidence and insight to show what works and what doesn't, so enabling us to improve and shape the strategy and delivery of future activity under the Fit for the Future programme.

The Future of Colchester survey report and other key research and insight will be used to shape message and approach.

Insight from a recent Internal Comms Survey has been used to shape the communications approach for staff. Continuing to gain insight and adapting our approach is key to ensuring staff engagement.



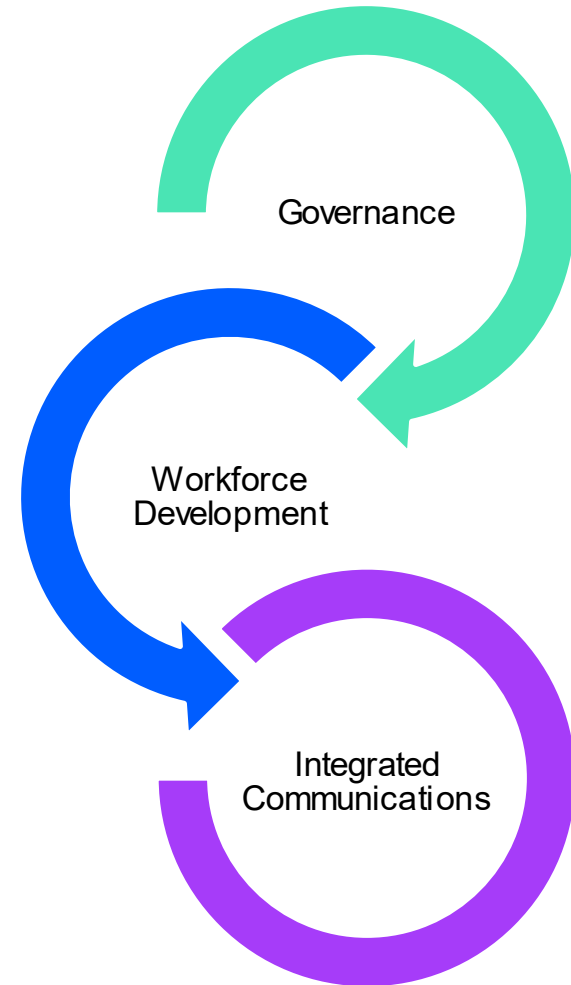
Evaluation and insight tools and techniques

	External	Internal	Members	Stakeholders
Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media listening • Residents' Panel discussion and feedback • Customer Services feedback • Public meetings 'have your say' • Feedback from staff and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak Up Now group insight • Live pulse check ins through webinars • Listen, Learn, Lead insight (Leadership and Managers) • SLB to attend team meetings • Anonymous feedback and question form on COLIN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion at internal meetings • Discussion at public meetings • Discussion between members and the Leader and CEO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion at meetings • Feedback to SLB and HoS.
Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media coverage • Social media engagement/reach • Website page views • Subscribers and open rate for City News e-newsletter • Number of Resident Panel members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar attendance • Event attendance • COLIN page views • Listen, learn, lead take up • Video views 		

Delivery

The Communications Plan will work in harmony with the Workforce Development Strategy and Governance programme.

Internal and External Communication Plans have been created and will continue to be live documents that will continue to grow and be shaped as the Fit for the Future programme progresses.



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Colchester City Council

Future Workforce Plan

Enabling Transformation through our People



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1 Introduction

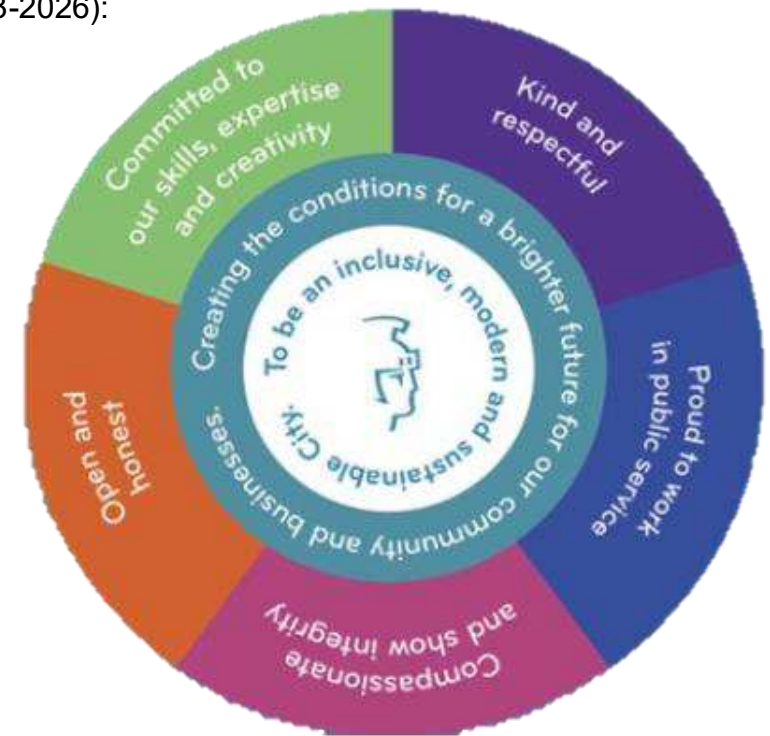
To be a modern council and to ensure we are fit for the future needs of our residents, our aim is to have a workforce that reflects the lived experience of the people it serves. We want to be an employer of choice for Colchester residents, with a high-performing, agile and diverse workforce, capable of delivering innovative services which enable our city to grow and ensure every community and place matters.

The Council's Strategic Plan 'A City Fit for the Future' sets out a clear vision for the outcomes the council wants to deliver for the city of Colchester over the next three years, alongside the actions we will take to get there. The Workforce Strategy describes the way we plan to develop our current and future workforce to ensure they have the right skills, environment and values to enable the council to deliver its Strategic Plan.

Our Strategic Plan sets out the six priorities for the council over the next three years (2023-2026):

- Respond to the climate emergency.
- Deliver modern services for a modern city.
- Improve health, wellbeing and happiness.
- Deliver homes for those in need.
- Grow our economy so everyone benefits.
- Celebrate our city, heritage and culture.

To reflect the six strategic priorities, the council has created a new vision, purpose and core values which define and shape our workplace culture. They reflect who we are and what matters to us as council employees.



2 Drivers for change

As we work to turn the vision and priorities into reality, we must also continue to live within our means.

We have a diverse and committed workforce focused on delivering services to our residents.

However, cuts to our core funding, on-going financial pressures coupled with ambitious plans for our city means that we will need to operate very differently to deliver on our vision and purpose and be a sustainable council that can live within its means.

Our response to this financial challenge must be radical; to close the budget gap and future proof our organisation, we will need to reduce our operating costs by 25% over the next 3 years.

To achieve this, we have developed a transformation programme encompassing a portfolio of work to reimagine what we do as a Council and how we deliver it. The 'Fit for the Future' portfolio will make sure that we are exactly that; fit for the future of our city, of our organisation and of our people.

Our workforce will be critical to the delivery of the Fit for Future transformation portfolio. To enable the level of change we will need an engaged workforce, investment in technology and skills, inclusive leadership and people policies and processes that will enable and sustainable, agile and resilient workforce that is fit for the future. At an organisational level, we will need a great understanding of our workforce in terms of their values, career aspirations and why they choose to work for the council so we can retain their skills.

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Senior Leadership Board				
Environment	Leisure & Economy	Housing	Assets	Corporate
Waste Services	Culture & Heritage	HRA Review	Asset Management	Shared Services
Rosa Tanfield	Frank Hargrave	Lindsay Barker	Mandy Jones	Richard Block
Greening & Street Care	Active and Wellbeing	Housing Provision		Future Workforce
Rosa Tanfield Mel Rundle	Rory Doyle	Philip Sullivan		Jess Douglas
	Economic Growth			Digital Customer
	Matt Sterling			Mel Kemp-Salt

[Fit for the Future transformation programme overview]

3 Where are we now

Our Strategic Plan, alongside our Vision, Purpose and Core Values forms the basis of organisational transformation.

We will establish a clear link between our strategic priorities and our talent needs. A leaner and agile organisation will require a core workforce with the ability to add interim capacity and expertise as and when required.

We will support our people through this change, ensuring we live and breathe our core values. Showing integrity and kindness, being open and honest, demonstrating commitment to our skills, expertise and creativity, and ultimately being proud to work in public service has never been more important.

Our workforce is our most valuable asset. Providing critical services to residents, it needs to be skilled, engaged, motivated and responsive to the changing environment. Our vision as an employer is to invest in our people to build a skilled, agile and sustainable workforce that can fully utilise its potential.

The Covid-19 pandemic and world events have impacted our economy, government response and therefore our city and communities. The ability to lead in a volatile, complex and uncertain environment has become the norm and our leaders will need to acknowledge that reality and develop the skills to respond positively, with clarity and clear direction. Many of our leaders are having to manage a disparate and hybrid workforce and how they manage may require a re-set as the council transforms and staff engagement becomes ever more important.

We have embraced system working alongside Anchor organisations on shared strategic priorities and sharing a senior post with the Integrated Care Board with potentially more shared role opportunities to come. We are also progressing with sharing our back-office services with Braintree and Epping Forest District Councils. There will be a great deal of change for our staff which will require clear communication and engagement on the vision and direction of travel and enabling staff to work across boundaries.

The Future Workforce plan sets out what we will do in the next 1-2 years to achieve our vision to build a sustainable workforce that can deliver on the council's ambitious agenda.

4 Our current workforce profile

Since the economic crisis in 2010, the council has undertaken a series of fundamental service reviews which has transformed the way we work and delivered significant efficiencies and financial savings.

There is a policy framework in place that supports our workforce development and change processes:

- Change Management and Redundancy Policy
- Wellbeing Strategy
- Flexible and Agile Working Policies
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Equality Impact Assessment guidance
- Officer Pay Policy
- Organisational Development Action Plan – add link
- Staff recognition policy

We employ – 879 staff FTE is: 761.5 staff Casual staff – 239 workers Agency workers -£ 1.1 million 2022/23	Gender split Female – 45% Male -54% Re-assigned -1%	Gender pay gap 1.9% in favour of	Disability (declared) - 5.12%
		Ethnic minority staff (declared) - 6.74%women	Staff turnover 14.3%
Full time staff - 647/74% Part time staff - 232/26%	Across our family: CBH – 241 headcount – 222.5 FTE CCH Ltd and Amphora – 49 HC – 41 FTE	Total employees CCC + CBH CCH Ltd and Amphora: 1169 Headcount 1025 - FTE	

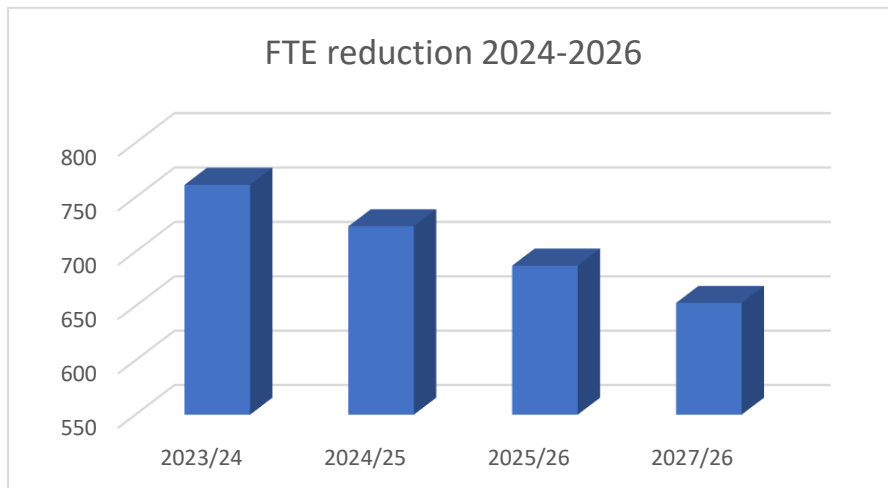
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5 Where do we need to be

This future workforce plan seeks to future proof the organisation, by ensuring the council has the resources, skills and capacity to deliver services in a changing economic and local government landscape. Understanding the current and predicting the future workforce landscape is vital to ensuring the council can attract and retain staff and provide different work experiences that reflect the needs of our diverse workforce. The following external challenges may impact on our workforce ambitions, but through effective workforce planning and understanding and engaging with staff, we aim to minimise the impact of these external factors:

- Demand for skilled staff is outpacing the labour market and the council must constantly review its employment offer to recruit and retain staff.
- Competitive pay and reward are an issue for some staff and therefore the council must look at the wider benefits it can offer, particularly professional development and career choice.
- The expectations of our workforce at different points of their working lives are different and the council needs to understand these differences and be flexible in its employment offer.

To deliver the budget, we will need to reduce our operating costs by 25%. We aim to achieve this through a combination of income generation opportunities, efficiencies generated through shared services, different models of delivery and some natural attrition. With an annual turnover rate of around 15%. With an annual turnover rate of around 15%, we assume an annual reduction of staff (full time equivalents) of 5%.



6 How we will achieve it

To deliver the council's strategic priorities, alongside the Transformation Portfolio and address our financial challenges our future workforce we have developed eight 'Levers for Change'.

<p>Sustainable</p>	<p>Establishment is affordable within the council's budget, but work is achievable, fulfilling, and long hours are not the norm. Core workforce, with ability to bring in additional interim capacity and expertise to drive through council priorities. Staff are fulfilled, quality of work life is positive, and needs are being met. Strengthened culture and internal processes to develop and upskill staff internally rather than externally recruit or use temporary staff to cover posts. Emphasis on wellbeing at work so everyone can thrive at work; Healthy body, healthy mind, healthy workplace.</p>
<p>Agile</p>	<p>The need for an adaptable workforce, with an increase in demand for our services, technological advancements and different models of delivery will need a responsive workforce that is enabled to respond, adapt, learn new skills and gain knowledge. We will utilise our existing skills and share knowledge across the council, systems and partnership. In return the council will invest in its people to learn new skills, embrace new opportunities to do different work and be open to change.</p>
<p>Resilient</p>	<p>Together we will need to be clear on the direction of the council and resilient to meet the challenges. Our people will be supported to adapt and thrive in a constantly changing environment, by focusing on people's wellbeing, physical and mental health. We will build a resilient, high performing workforce by supporting staff holistically by adopting a biopsychosocial approach.</p>
<p>Inclusive</p>	<p>Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to EDI and are involved in activities to promote inclusion. Colleagues are respectful of each other and working proactively to create an inclusive environment free of discrimination and harassment where difference is celebrated. Increased diversity and good representation across the council against each protected characteristic More diversity within senior leadership team. Workforce reflective of our communities EDI embedded in every workforce activity</p>
<p>Ready to develop skills for the future</p>	<p>Investment in skills development linked to council priorities and transformation Opportunities for our workforce to learn, grow and develop new skills Generous to share learning and knowledge, to develop and empower others</p>

Engaged	Working together to achieve the council's vision and purpose underpinned by our core values; Showing integrity and kindness, being open and honest, demonstrating commitment to our skills, expertise and creativity, and being proud to work in public service. Working diligently together with residents to deliver results.
Embracing system working and shared service opportunities	Building on existing and forging new partnerships, work collaboratively to realise the opportunities that shared services can bring; resilience, improving capacity, building relationships, retaining staff, service efficiencies and improved customer journey.
Digital and data enabled	Investment in skills, to enable technological innovations and to support transformation, building digital services to enable customers and deliver services efficiently. Using data to support evidence-based workforce planning and to measure impact.

The council is going through unprecedented transformation; inspirational leadership is vital to shaping the direction, supporting staff to perform their best and ensuring everyone is able to achieve great results.

To build the workforce of the future our leaders will need to be people focused:

1. Continually model the council's core values
2. Be committed to leading a diverse workforce and promoting inclusion
3. Take time to listen without judgement, communicate purpose openly and regularly, offering feedback opportunities
4. Be able to lead transformation positively and collaboratively understanding and managing the impact of change on people
5. Have an open mindset, a desire to listen, understand alternative viewpoints and tolerance of ambiguity and build resilience.
6. Be curious and open to learning and development of new skills
7. Collaborative, empowering individuals and harnessing input from diverse groups
8. Enable staff to do their best work, be engaged, motivated and proud to work for the council
9. Focused and supporting the wellbeing of colleagues
10. Be ambitious for the council and lead by our leadership pledge:
 - Share a common purpose, vision, and endeavour;
 - To commit to the values of public life;
 - Be accountable for our behaviour and the impacts we have on those we lead;
 - Model exemplary behaviour and uphold the highest standards in our leadership roles;
 - Empower and enable colleagues and to collaborate to deliver the best outcomes for our communities;
 - Be open and supportive of change when it is in the best overall interest of the Council family and its residents
 - Lead with integrity, honesty, and kindness

Our workforce strategy has many independencies:

- To be sustainable and deliver excellent services will require agility, skills, new technology and staff engagement.
- Embedding our vision, purpose and core values will require inspirational leaders, communication, modelling and recognising behaviours that reflect our core values.
- Our change management policies and processes need to enable change, be fair and transparent and trusted by staff.
- New technology will enable different ways of working and will need to be supported by investment in new skills.
- To become an inclusive council, we must have a clear EDI strategy in place for our people and communities.
- To be resilient we will need to work with system partners to deliver strategic priorities and adopt a shared service approach where opportunities arise.
- We will respond to the competitive external recruitment challenges, by drawing on public sector recruitment campaigns and collaborating with partners to address capacity and skills challenges.



How will we know achieved our workforce priorities

- The council is sustainable and lives within its means – staffing budget is balanced
- Strategic plan action plan is delivered, KPIs are achieved
- Reduction in the use and cost of agency and interim temporary workers for core roles
- Staff tell us that their wellbeing is prioritised by the council
- Sickness absence due to mental health and physical work factors is reduced – annual sickness absence target is achieved
- Investment in skills provides a return on investment, i.e. improved performance, career progression, staff retention
- The rate of staff re-deployed through the change process is higher than the turnover rate.
- Examples of internal movement and progression increase
- Staff satisfaction and engagement improves over the next 3 years
- Workforce reflects Colchester City's population as per the census.
- Senior Leadership Team is diverse and more inclusive
- Council achieves excellence standard against the LGA equalities framework
- Apprenticeship levy is spent in full, either through new apprenticeship recruitment or professional development of existing staff
- Clear examples of partnership working delivers strategic priorities and builds capacity and resilience.
- Staff increasingly working across systems and collaborating successfully across services and partners.

7 Our workforce priorities and action plan

Sustainable - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
<p>Sustainable Leaner council – 25% reduction in operating costs will impact size of workforce Coherent strategic approach to workforce planning, to define, attract and grow our workforce and future leaders Identification of pinch points and priorities over the next few years to address shortages /surpluses informed by knowledge of our skill levels across our workforce. Significant change and new models of delivery Leaders who can communicate and engage staff HR Change Management Policy and process Opportunities for staff to shape the programme, provide feedback and ideas Effective internal communications Acknowledging that the size of our workforce needs to reduce, manage this partially through natural turnover, internal recruitment first, re-skilling to minimise redundancies. Use data to support evidence-based workforce planning and to measure impact.</p>	<p>Review Change Management Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus of the policy to change to re-deployment first not necessarily exit to retain skills and minimise costs • Review job matching threshold of 80% to allow more flexibility to amend roles • Career support: personal skills development plans, re-deployment opportunities discussions using existing coaches trained to be internal career coaches. • Everyone in the redeployment pool assigned a career coach 	<p>Most vacant posts are filled through internal re-deployment.</p> <p>Highly effective career coaches in place and staff retention remains stable.</p>	<p>February 2024</p>
	<p>Change Management skills programme to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding our Transformation and Future Workforce Programme • Developing options for change • Facilitation and coaching skills • Change management Process – how to implement • The importance of involving, communicating and consulting teams through change • Managing redundancy conversations positively • Career and talent management 	<p>Managers effectively managing change process through their teams.</p> <p>Staff tell us through surveys that they understand, feel engaged and supported through the change process.</p> <p>Employee relations issues are managed well.</p>	<p>March/April 2024</p>
	<p>Operational / Service Workforce and Organisational Development Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create workforce and OD plans bespoke to each service aligned to service plan, long term and short-term workforce needs, embedding core values, change, transformation portfolio, skills development • Train Heads of Service in workforce planning to understand how to plan staff resources and use workforce planning tools to reflect future service needs. Work force plans to include skills development, succession planning, use of apprenticeships, attraction and retention, recruitment, management development 	<p>Workforce/OD Plans in place for each service and teams have the capacity and skills to deliver the strategic and service priorities.</p>	<p>HoS Training Feb 2024</p> <p>Plans – April 2024</p>

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Skills for Future - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
<p>Understanding our workforce skills through council wide <u>Skills Audit</u> Identifying the skills needed through the future? Skill gap analysis- based on skills audit, self-assessment and appraisal outcomes Costed Future Skills Plan in place Increased investment in skills development – capacity, focus and budget</p>	<p>Work with partners to establish a skills taskforce to identify the skills needed by the council for the future. Use the outputs of service plans and workforce plans, horizon scanning and research on the future of work.</p>	<p>Skills development programme investment – increase in internal appointments to vacant posts</p>	<p>April 2024</p>
	<p>Conduct a whole council skills audit exercise and gap analysis and develop a learning and development strategy and plan.</p>	<p>L&D plan in place aligned to strategic priorities and future workforce needs.</p>	<p>June/July 2024</p>
	<p>Develop career pathways and development plans for each service to support progression and retention and support our future workforce and leaders.</p>	<p>Staff retention and internal movement increases</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>
	<p>Transforming our Digital Offer Understand the skills needed to support digital innovation and build efficiencies. Investment in skills, to enable technological and digital innovation to support transformation, building digital services to enable customers and deliver services efficiently. Leaders to be digitally upskilled to inspire others.</p>	<p>All staff are digitally enabled and can effectively use the work systems they need.</p>	<p>TBC</p>
	<p>Promote and build on our apprenticeship programme and aim to take an apprenticeship first approach for internal professional development and recruitment of entry level roles.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship levy is fully spent. Where appropriate apprenticeships offered for professional development.</p>	<p>Relaunch Apprenticeship Week March 2024</p>
	<p>Train workforce on data use to support better evidence-based decision making and performance monitoring.</p>	<p>Use of data increases, decision making enhanced.</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>

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Leadership - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
<p>Leadership framework Coaching/mentoring of future leaders Leadership development programme to support transformation.</p>	<p>Deliver a programme of development for senior leadership team to effectively lead transformation. Team Coaching, performance coaching, Colchester Leadership programme.</p>	<p>Senior Leadership Team effectively leading the organisation and transformation</p>	<p>Started and on-going</p>
	<p>Launch a CCC leaders' skills and competency framework</p>	<p>All managers have a personal development plan linked to framework. Leaders are highly competent.</p>	<p>April 2024</p>
	<p>Deliver a focused leadership programme based on the new leadership skills and competency framework and support leaders to lead in a complex environment; manage hybrid and remote teams and across organisations i.e. shared services.</p>	<p>Leaders competent to lead teams through transformation.</p>	<p>From June 2024</p>
	<p>Re launch Future Leaders talent management programme Offer ILM level 5 & 7 qualifications through the apprenticeship levy Coaching and mentoring support, Secondment opportunities Shadowing, Political awareness and governance course</p>	<p>Pipeline of future leaders in place ready to move into leadership roles.</p>	<p>From Sept 2024</p>
	<p>Launch coaching and mentoring strategy to embed inclusive leadership and coaching culture.</p>	<p>Coaching and inclusive leadership embedded.</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>
	<p>Create and launch new leaders Induction Programme.</p>	<p>New leaders are ready to fulfil roles.</p>	<p>June 2024</p>
	<p>Integrate core values and leadership pledge in all leadership roles</p>	<p>All leaders model the core values.</p>	<p>March 2024</p>
	<p>Support agile leadership by enabling job shadowing and swaps.</p>	<p>Agile leaders able to fill critical roles.</p>	<p>On-going</p>

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Agile and Resilient - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
<p>Effective wellbeing strategy and plans with clear outcomes New occupational health service provider focused on biopsychosocial approach. Empowered staff who understand and share the council's vision, purpose and core values.</p>	Train managers in wellbeing awareness, their responsibilities, where to signpost and how to support staff in crisis.	Mental health sickness absence is reduced.	June 2024
	Wellbeing champions to review and re-focus wellbeing strategy and plans to enhance staff resilience through transformation.	New wellbeing strategy and plans aligned to Fit for Future programme.	Sept 2024
	Work with health partners to identify and provide health interventions to improve wellbeing and attendance.	Sickness absence target achieved.	Jan 2025
	Develop a network of mentors and implement a formal buddying system to support new staff through their probation period.	New staff can deliver their roles quickly. Staff retained after probation period.	Sept 2024
	Introduce more flexible Job Accountability Statements and roles and start to embed the principle in our recruitment that we work in a fluid and agile environment and roles may change as the organisation transforms.	Staff movement encouraged across CCC. Staff understand the need for flexibility.	Sept 2024
	Launch a new occupational health provider with an innovative biopsychosocial approach. Focus will shift from addressing the physical and mental health issue by taking a more holistic approach, with specialist support offered.	New OH provider supports staff to return to work after absence.	May 2024

Inclusive - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
<p>EDI objectives embedded into workforce planning and Targets and plans to address under representation EDI group and champions collaborating and steering EDI plan and activity Work towards Excellence against the LGA Equalities framework Enabling an open and happy workforce</p>	<p>Roll out an EDI learning and development plan. EDI workshop for SLT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating bespoke accessible content and EDI learning opportunities for front line and operational staff • Annual Programme of EDI lunch and learn sessions -open to all • Development and roll out of EDI workshops for staff to supplement e-learning • Refreshed EDI induction model • 	Managers and staff to understand their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.	From Feb 2024
	Introduce a Reverse Mentoring programme	Staff empowered.	January 2025

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		Diversity promoted and stereotypes broken down. Staff develop business skills	
	Development of an EDI Strategy that demonstrates our inclusion ambition and commitment to diversity and inclusion aligned to the LGA Equalities framework.	Achieve the excellence standard within 3 years.	June 2025
	Raise awareness of different EDI issues through a calendar of events and activities	CCC is an inclusive organisation.	On-going
	Conduct accessibility audits in corporate buildings to support our aim to be an inclusive workplace.	Buildings are accessible to all.	In line with Asset Strategy plan
	Measure and monitor the impact of our EDI work through objectives and KPIs	KPIs in place and delivered.	Sept 2024
	Providing tailored and targeted EDI initiatives based on the needs of each service.	EDI employee relations issues reduce.	On-going
	Introduce a young person network to support younger staff in the workforce and provide a social hub, to help them to connect in the hybrid environment.	Younger workforce thrive and stay.	May 2024

Engaged - Key elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
New Fit for Future communication and engagement plan Measurement and monitoring engagement through staff surveys. Use of diverse forums to gather workforce insight and feedback. Autonomous staff enabled to innovate and implement new ideas	Communicate, Engage, Consult Refresh our internal and staff engagement plan, aligned to the transformation programme. Be open and honest with staff, using existing communications tools and forums to increase trust and confidence in the change process.	Staff feel informed, understand the rationale for change and have opportunities to shape the future.	In line with FFF internal comms plan
	Review and enhancement of COLIN (intranet) to develop a more interactive and inclusive communications portal.		
	Deliver an annual all-staff conference to support staff engagement and inclusion.		
	Enable front line staff, to receive communications through investment in ICT equipment and training in remote locations to improve engagement and sense of belonging.	Front line staff are fully informed and engaged.	March 2025

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	Launch a digital ideas portal so staff to support innovation and implementation of new ideas to improve services.	New innovations and service improvements encouraged.	Sept 2024
	Celebrating success - Review staff recognition scheme to make it more agile and inclusive, e.g. employee of week, team of the month etc.	Staff are recognised for their contribution towards the transformation programme.	Sept 2024
	Measure and monitor staff engagement through staff survey, pulse surveys and develop follow up action plans to address issues and enhance engagement.	Staff survey analysed and action in place to address issues.	All staff survey June 2024

System working/shared services Key Elements	We will	How will we know if we succeed	Target date
Shared services across council family and North Essex LAs Shared roles with system partners Collaboration with alliance, anchor partners, public sector, to provide capacity, resilience and shared learning and delivery.	Work with Epping Forest and Braintree District Council to deliver the vision for back office shared services across the 3 local authorities.	Shared back office shared service in place and drivers delivered.	September 2025
	Develop a framework to support the delivery of future shared services: Share our knowledge with other partners and North Essex Councils.	Business case delivers shared service - staff are engaged and work in shared service positively.	Sept 2024
	Ensure staff earmarked to be in the shared service are given opportunities to engage and shape the shared service to ensure buy in.		On-going

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To deliver this plan we will need:

Extra capacity to deliver/co-ordinate the workforce strategy

Skills development plan plus budget to deliver

Leadership development programme focused on transformation

Buy-in and engagement of members, SLT, all staff, partners

Fit for the Future Governance (Proposed)

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Transformation Governance – Structure and Groups

The scale of the financial challenge we face is such that our response must be radical. To achieve the change needed to close the budget gap over the next three years and future proof our organisation, a fundamental portfolio of transformation activity is needed to reimagine what we do as a council and ensure we are 'Fit for the Future'.

Effective governance of the portfolio is key to ensuring appropriate oversight and decision making from senior officers and councillors.

The proposed governance structure is intended to ensure good governance, with decisions at the lowest level possible and with oversight from Members and Officers at the highest level. In addition to local governance, some programmes will report to other groups, e.g. North Essex Councils.

Informal Member Governance

The bodies that will support decision makers, but that have no decision-making powers of their own, include:

Leadership

The Leadership group consists of Cabinet members and the Senior Leadership Board. The role of Leadership is to hold the Transformation Portfolio Board accountable for delivery.

Oversight Group

Purpose: To build cross-party discourse, understanding and consensus on the portfolio of transformation programmes.

Members: Group Leaders, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Transformation and Performance, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Waste, Chair of Governance & Audit Committee, Senior Leadership Board

Scrutiny Panel

Purpose: Portfolio and programme level scrutiny of decisions

Governance & Audit Committee

Purpose: High level oversight of the portfolio governance and risk issues

Informal Officer Governance

Transformation Portfolio Board

Recognising that there is change and transformation work happening across the council, the Transformation Portfolio Board will be responsible for providing central oversight of the delivery of programmes and projects within Fit for the Future against milestones and plans, managing risks and issues, and progress against key performance indicators and savings and revenue targets.

The Board gives top level officer consideration of transformation and will provide upward reporting to Members to allow active management and advice of the portfolio to take place.

1. Frequency

Monthly

2. Purpose

To review progress on the transformation portfolio at Colchester City Council, as informed and advised by Senior Responsible Officers (SROs), and to ensure that issues and risks are addressed. Group responsibilities are to:

- Hold individual projects to account, providing support and guidance to SROs as needed.
- Add or remove initiatives from the transformation portfolio over time as required, to ensure that the Council's transformation objectives are met.
- Manage the overarching resourcing, cost and risk positions of the transformation programmes within the context of the Fit for the Future portfolio
- Provide upward reporting and information to Member Committees and Groups.

3. Membership

The Transformation Portfolio Board will comprise:

- Chair: Mel Kemp-Salt, Director of ICT & Transformation
- Vice Chair: Andrew Small, Director of Finance, Jess Douglas, Head of People
- Senior Leadership Board
- Andrew Weavers, Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer
- SROs for each Programme (as required)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Coordinating the delivery of a blueprint for the future of the organisation
- Approving overall strategic direction of the portfolio and programmes within it
- Confirming and communicating information about the portfolio to staff, members, and stakeholder groups
- Appointing a Programme's Senior Responsible Officer
- Ensure resources are available to deliver a transformation programme
- Ensure Portfolio benefits are delivered

5. Administration

The Project Management Office (PMO) will provide agenda and papers in advance of the meeting.

Transformation Programme Groups

Programmes within the Portfolio will be led by a Senior Responsible Officer of the council who is accountable for successful delivery of transformation activity and achieving outcomes and benefits.

1. Purpose

To identify and define potential transformation projects for further consideration and development.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Accountability for delivery of programme outcomes and associated benefits
- Maintains alignment of the programme with the Fit for the Future portfolio
- Manages the relationship with stakeholders, ensuring ongoing support for the programme
- Owns the programme vision and provides strategic direction
- Appoints and authorises project managers to manage projects within the programme
- Reviews progress of projects within the programme and where possible resolves risks and issues

Transformation Project Groups

Programmes are comprised of project groups that are set up following the identification of transformation opportunities and are tasked with developing proposals further. To be comprised of nominated project manager and leads for the project, along with HR and Finance Business Partners and support from the Project Management Office where appropriate.

1. Purpose

To assess the viability of transformation projects with a view to establishing business cases and Project Initiation Documents for consideration by Programme Delivery Board.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Assist the project manager to deliver project objectives
- Carry out relevant elements of the project that they are tasked with (within their technical expertise)
- Advise the project manager of any risks that are likely to affect delivery of the project and be a part of the risk management process
- Provide information for project documentation
- Submission of project progress reports
- Produce project products as defined in project business case/Project Initiation Documents (PID)

See the Figure 1 for the structure of the proposed governance framework.

Figure 1

