

Cabinet

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
3 October 2012 at 6.00pm**

The Cabinet deals with the implementation of all council services, putting into effect the policies agreed by the council and making recommendations to the council on policy issues and the budget.

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COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

3 October 2012 at 6:00pm

Leader (& Chairman): Councillor Anne Turrell (Liberal Democrats)
Deputy Chairman: Councillor Martin Hunt (Liberal Democrats)
Councillor Lyn Barton (Liberal Democrats)
Councillor Tina Bourne (Labour)
Councillor Annie Feltham (Liberal Democrats)
Councillor Beverley Oxford (The Highwoods Group)
Councillor Paul Smith (Liberal Democrats)
Councillor Tim Young (Labour)

AGENDA - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

2. Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any interests they may have in the items on the agenda. Councillors should consult Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 for full guidance on the registration and declaration of interests. However Councillors may wish to note the following:-

- Where a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, other pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the authority and he/she is present at a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, the Councillor must disclose

to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest, whether or not such interest is registered on his/her register of Interests or if he/she has made a pending notification.

- If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting, he/she must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter at the meeting. The Councillor must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Where a Councillor has another pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting and where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgment of the public interest, the Councillor must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Failure to comply with the arrangements regarding disclosable pecuniary interests without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence, with a penalty of up to £5,000 and disqualification from office for up to 5 years.

4. Have Your Say!

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

5. Minutes

1 - 10

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2012.

6. Call-in Procedure

To consider any items referred by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel under the Call-In Procedure. At the time of the publication of this Agenda there were none.

7. Communities and Leisure Services

i. Supporting Customers in Welfare Reform **11 - 13**

See report by the Executive Director.

ii. Supporting Families with Complex Needs **14 - 15**

See report by the Executive Director. A presentation will also be made to Cabinet.

8. Strategy/Business and Resources

i. 2013/14 Revenue Budget **16 - 25**

See report by the Head of Resource Management

9. General

i. Calendar of Meetings 2013-2014 **26 - 33**

See report by the Head of Corporate Management

ii. Progress of Responses to the Public **34**

To note the contents of the Progress Sheet

10. Exclusion of the Public

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).

CABINET

5 SEPTEMBER 2012

Present :- Councillor Anne Turrell (the Leader of the Council)
(Chairman)
Councillors Tina Bourne, Annie Feltham, Martin Hunt
(Deputy Leader) , Beverley Oxford, Paul Smith and
Tim Young

Also in Attendance :- Councillor Nick Barlow
Councillor Mary Blandon
Councillor Nick Cope
Councillor Beverly Davies
Councillor Bill Frame
Councillor Sue Lissimore
Councillor Will Quince
Councillor Colin Sykes

18. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2012 were approved as a correct record.

19. Have Your Say!

Mrs Kalyan addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). She explained that the matter she had brought to Cabinet in October 2011 was still unresolved and that the level of damages she had incurred had now increased to £58,000. She had made a Freedom of Information request to Colchester Borough Homes for information relating to a review of issues relating to her case and detailed the correspondence she had had with Colchester Borough Homes and Colchester Borough Council on this issue. She asked for an investigation to be held into these matters which she believed was an issue of corporate governance rather than a legal matter.

Councillor Turrell, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, responded that the Council had agreed a full and final settlement of Mrs Kalyan's claim several years ago. She was unaware of a further review of her case but if Colchester Borough Homes had undertaken such a review she needed to pursue this issue with them direct. The Local Government Ombudsman had investigated complaints made by Mrs Kalyan but found there was no case to answer. However, it was open to Mrs Kalyan to raise the issue with the Ombudsman again if she was not satisfied.

Mr Hamilton addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). He expressed his dissatisfaction with a number of decisions taken by the Council over recent years. On 4 July he had brought Cabinet's attention to the condition of the walled green at the corner of Sussex Road and Lexden Road. The Council had failed to take any action or communicate with residents. The condition of

the wall had deteriorated further and he believed the Council was now responsible for the issue. He accused the Council of demonstrating arrogance and incompetence.

Councillor Turrell, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, responded that issue relating to the walled green at Sussex Road was being dealt with by the Ward Councillors, but in any case, responsibility for the issue lay with Essex County Council.

Nicola Smith and Emma Braddock addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2) about the closure of gymnastic classes at Leisure World. Both had daughters who attended these classes. Since the success of British gymnasts at the Olympics there was a greater demand for the sport and the other providers in Colchester had long waiting lists. They questioned the argument that the classes were not profitable as they were popular and well attended. Gymnastics helped develop children physically and mentally and they noted that two gymnasts from Colchester School of Gymnastics were members of the Junior England Squad. The Council should explore other potential venues or solutions such as the use of Charter Hall for gymnastic classes or help schools to provide classes. They expressed support for the proposals made by Bob Russell MP to help resolve the issue.

Councillor Frame attended and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. He noted the Business Case for the Fundamental Service Review of Sport and Leisure Services stressed the need to secure a legacy from the Olympic Games. The decision to cease gymnastic classes at Leisure World seemed at odds with this. Colchester School of Gymnastics had a waiting list of approximately 800 so there was a clear demand for such classes. He urged the Council to look at alternatives such as providing classes at the Gilbert School and stressed that he and Councillor Goss were willing to help look into the feasibility of any alternative schemes.

Councillor Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Leisure Services, responded and stressed that the Business Case for the Fundamental Service Review of Sport and Leisure Services demonstrated the Council's commitment to sport. However, decisions needed to be taken to put Leisure World on a sound financial footing. They had looked carefully to see if gymnastics classes could continue to be run but unfortunately it was not possible. The Council would support Colchester School of Gymnastics in its efforts to expand and she understood that some additional pre-school classes have already been agreed. She commented that she would be happy to work with ward councillors to look for alternative providers. A full written response would be sent to Ms Smith and Ms Braddock.

20. Gateway To Homechoice // Revision of Allocations Policy

Councillor T. Young (in respect of being a member of the Board of Colne Housing) declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5) and left the meeting during its consideration and determination.

The Head of Life Opportunities submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Bourne introduced the report and explained the main changes to the policy that would be introduced. In particular she highlighted that the Council would be able to discharge an accepted homelessness duty into the private sector where appropriate and that in these circumstances applicants would no longer be able to decline suitable private sector housing. A briefing note on the changes to the policy would be provided to all members.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, expressed his support for the proposals, especially the support given to members of the Armed Forces and bereaved spouses set out in paragraph 3.6.14 of the policy. These provisions would apply to all the authorities who were members of the Homechoice scheme.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The revised Allocations Policy at Appendix A of the Head of Life Opportunities report be approved.

(b) The principle of discharging an accepted homelessness duty into the private sector where appropriate and where resources are available to do so be approved.

REASONS

(a) To ensure the policy remains up-to-date, relevant, and contributes to the Council's ambitions for social housing and tackling homelessness.

(b) The review of the policy was necessary to consider the effect of legislative changes arising from the Localism Act 2011, welfare reform changes due to take place in April 2013 and Code of Guidance – Allocation of Accommodation published in 2012.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

(a) The current allocations policy could be kept unchanged. However, this would leave some issues causing difficulties to local authorities unresolved, some of which incur expenditure.

(b) The Council could consider not using the ability to discharge homeless duty into the private sector and continue to only offer social housing to those people who the Council accepts a homeless duty. However because of the severe shortage of social housing and the demand on temporary accommodation this option is not recommended.

21. Revenue Voids Contract 2012-16

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with an addendum to the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration's report introducing an additional paragraph to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) Morrison Facilities Services plc be appointed to deliver the Revenue Voids contract.

(b) The Council enter with the successful contractor into a 4 + 2 year JCT Standard Form of Measured Term Contract 2006 Edition Revision 2 (2009), further amended as set out in the Tender Document and based on the percentage adjustment to the tendered Schedule of Rates.

REASONS

(a) The existing contract period for the provision of the Revenue Voids is coming to an end. As a result the work has been exposed to competitive tender in order to establish continuous improvement and best value. The work is managed through the Deed of Variation agreed between Colchester Borough Homes and Colchester Borough Council as Schedule 12 to the Management Agreement.

(b) The procurement approach agreed by Cabinet on 1st December 2010 as part of the Asset Management Strategy is to let a JCT Measured Term Contract for this and similar types of work. As approved the Council will act as the awarding body (Employer) and Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) as the Employer's agent (Contract Administrator).

Expressions of interest were sought through a Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) process conducted on behalf of the Council by CBH, from which prospective contractors were selected. Of 35 contractors who were sent a PQQ, 24 were returned and following analysis by CBH 4 contractors were invited to tender for the works.

Tenders were received on the 10th August 2012 and were analysed and scored by CBH on 13th August 2012.

The evaluation of Quality conforms with the detail contained in the invitation to tender and also the Contract Preliminaries through an assessment based on relevant sections of the PQQ covering past performance on similar contracts, performance indicators, and references.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

(a) Not to accept the tender of the proposed contractor and continue with the present arrangements. This would not deliver best value and show continuous improvement which the Council has a duty to seek.

(b) Not to appoint the contractor selected through the procurement process. However, the Council could be open to legal challenge if it deviated from its procurement process.

22. Northern Gateway Vision

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Quince attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet to express the Conservative Group's support for the proposals. He hoped that there would be an element of flexibility to allow valuable or popular developments to proceed.

Councillor Turrell, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources and Councillor Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Leisure Services expressed their support for the proposals. The Northern Gateway would create jobs and generate an income stream for the Council. However it was important that the businesses there did not detract from the town centre.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The vision and recommendations arising from the process recently completed for the Northern Gateway site next to the Community Stadium at junction 28 of the A12 be endorsed.

(b) The Northern Gateway form an integral part of any future marketing process for the land, be an inward investment tool for the Council and be used to ensure delivery of the development at the Colchester Northern Gateway is in accordance with the vision and inspirations contained within it.

REASONS

(a) In July 2011 Cabinet requested that a Vision be developed for the Council owned land adjacent to the Community Stadium.

(b) For a site of this size and prominence it is vital that development is taken forward in a co-ordinated and measured way and the Vision will set down the standards of quality, sustainability and deliverability.

(c) Cabinet approval of the vision and phased approach recommended will trigger the creation of a project plan for delivery and the bringing forward of the first sites for development.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

(a) The Council could reject the recommendations of the Vision and re-run the process with freshly procured consultants.

(b) The Council owned land could be left undeveloped while surrounding privately owned sites are brought forward, and the final elements of road infrastructure are completed.

(c) The Council could bring forward development without a co-ordinated approach however this could lead to a mix of unrelated uses and a lack of cohesive design

development.

23. Northern Gateway // Approval of Heads of Terms

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The draft Heads of Terms which will form the basis of the Lease, including a proposed capital receipt and annual revenue contribution, be approved.
- (b) The commercial advice from the Council's valuers, NPS, that the draft Heads of Terms currently represent the best consideration to the Council, taking into account current market conditions, be accepted.
- (c) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Ian Vipond, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Renaissance and the Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, to conclude the Heads of Terms substantially in accordance with the approved draft and complete negotiations on a Lease and associated documents.

REASONS

- (a) Further to the recent development of a Vision for the Northern Gateway, the Council should now commence the phased delivery of the project.
- (b) The Lancasters are an established Colchester family company. It is for this reason that the headquarters of the operation has historically been based in the Borough. This letting will preserve existing jobs and lead to the creation of additional employment.
- (c) The land transaction will bring an important revenue stream to the Council together with an immediate capital payment.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- (a) The Council could refuse to accept that the proposed Heads of Terms offer the Council the best possible consideration for this site, or agree that they fail to realise the Council's aspirations in respect of the Vision for the Northern Gateway, which would lead to Lancaster relocating from the Borough with a loss of 43 jobs. This will end the long association between the Lancaster family and Colchester.
- (b) The Council could seek to renegotiate terms with the prospective Leaseholder, or decide that the contributions to the Council's capital and revenue are not sufficiently desirable. The Council's agent, NPS has confirmed in a report attached to the confidential part of this item, that in their professional opinion, the financial terms proposed by Lancaster plc do represent the best consideration for the Council's asset, in current economic conditions

(c) The Council could seek to sell the freehold rather than consider a leasehold deal. However, a leasehold sale will allow the Council to retain the freehold value plus it will receive an annual income from the site.

(d) The Council could seek to retain this land until the broader development proposals at Northern Gateway have been progressed; however the opportunity to retain the Lancaster jobs will be lost and this scheme is in keeping with the Vision aspirations for the area.

24. Procurement Strategy and Supporting the Local Economy

The Head of Resource Management submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Quince attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet to express his support for the proposals. He welcomed the help this would provide to local businesses, in particular making it easier for small companies to tender for Council business.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, and Councillor Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing, expressed their support for the proposals which would help the local economy and provide an opportunity for community groups to bid for Council work.

RESOLVED that the amendments to the Council's procurement processes to introduce a requirement to consider appropriate and relevant measure to address local economic, social and environmental well-being when preparing future procurement activity be agreed, in advance of the likely requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 regulations.

REASONS

To promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the local community.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The alternative option would be to wait and respond to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 regulations when they are introduced.

25. 2011/12 Year End Review of Risk Management

The Head of Resource Management submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with minute 11 of the meeting of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel meeting on 24 July 2012.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The risk management work undertaken during 2011/12 be noted.
- (b) The current strategic risk register be noted.
- (c) The proposed risk management strategy for 2012/13 be approved.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the risk management strategy for 2012-13 be included in the Council's Policy Framework.

REASONS

(a) Cabinet has overall ownership of the risk management process and is responsible for endorsing its strategic direction. Therefore the risk management strategy states that Cabinet should receive an annual report on progress and should formally agree any amendments to the strategy itself.

(b) During the year quarterly progress reports are presented to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel detailing work undertaken and current issues. This report was presented to FASP on 24 July 2012 where they approved it's referral to this meeting

(c) The Risk Management Strategy is one of the key Corporate Governance documents that supports the Constitution of the Council and forms part of the Policy Framework. Accordingly any amendments have to be approved by full Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Not to approve the risk management strategy for 2012/13 nor refer it to Council for inclusion in the Council's Policy Framework.

26. Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review 2011-2012

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

Councillor Turrell, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, noted that no findings had been made against the Council and that the time taken to respond to Ombudsman enquires had reduced. Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, stressed that in contrast to claims made by some Have Your Say! speakers, the review demonstrated that the Council's processes and procedures were sound.

RESOLVED that: the contents of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for 2011-12 be noted.

REASONS

To inform the Cabinet of the number and type of decisions made by the Local Government Ombudsman in relation to Colchester during 2011-12.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

27. Progress of Responses to the Public

The Head of Corporate Management submitted a progress sheet a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Progress Sheet be noted.

REASONS

The progress sheet was a mechanism by which the Cabinet could ensure that public statements and questions were responded to appropriately and promptly.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet/Panel resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

28. Revenue Voids Contract 2012-16

The Head of Resource Management submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that: the contents of Appendix A to the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration's report containing commercially sensitive information in support of the report in part A of the Agenda, be noted.

REASONS

As set out in minute 21.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

As set out in minute 21.

The Cabinet/Panel resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

29. Northern Gateway // Approval of Draft Heads of Terms

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The draft Heads of Terms agreed in the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration's report in Part A of the agenda for this meeting (see minute 23), which will form the basis of the Lease, including the proposed capital receipt and annual revenue contribution as set out in the report, be noted.
- (b) The commercial advice from the Council's valuers, NPS, that the draft Heads of Terms currently represent the best consideration to the Council, taking into account current market conditions, be accepted.

REASONS

- (a) Reasons for approval are as set out in minute 23.
- (b) The report by NPS attached to the report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration confirmed that the draft Heads of Terms with Lancaster represent, in their professional opinion, the best consideration for the Council's landholding in the current economic conditions
- (c) A valuable capital receipt will be payable together with an annual revenue stream.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- (a) The Council could refuse to accept that the proposed Heads of Terms offer the Council the best possible consideration for this site, or agree that they fail to realise the Council's aspirations in respect of the Vision.
- (b) The Council could seek to renegotiate terms with the prospective Leaseholder, or decide that the contributions to the Council's capital and revenue are not sufficiently desirable. However in order to retain Lancaster in Colchester it is important that any deal is brought to a swift conclusion as their current lease comes to an end in the near future.

3 October 2012

Report of	Executive Director	Author	Ann Hedges
Title	Supporting Customers in Welfare Reform		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report concerns the proactive work to mitigate the impact of welfare reforms on the Council and our customers

1. Decision(s) Required

1.1 To note the actions being taken to support customers through Welfare Reform.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

2.1 An innovative intervention is being undertaken to help support customers through the very significant changes that will take effect from April 2013 in Welfare to help to mitigate the impact for the Council and our customers.

3. Supporting Information

3.1 There are a number of very significant changes to the Welfare system that will come into effect in April 2013 that will change the level of benefit and entitlements around housing for number of our residents.

3.2 Key changes include:

- A Benefits Cap that will limit Housing Benefit payments to £500 a week for families and £350 for single people.
- Under occupation in social housing meaning that Housing Benefit payments will be reduced by 14% if it is considered that a family has one spare bedroom over their allocation and by 25% for two or more spare bedrooms
- A new scheme for allocation of Council Tax Benefit that will see the overall grant reduced by 10%

3.3 We know that this will mean that a number of households will receive smaller benefit payments from 2013.

3.4 At this point the number of household affected in Colchester are estimated at:

- 150 households will be affected by the Benefits Cap
- 500 households are likely to be affected by the under occupation arrangements
- Up to 7,250 people may receive less Council Tax support through the new scheme

3.5 This presents a number of risks to our residents. Some households will find it hard to manage their finances and there may be an increase in rent arrears in the most highly impacted households. This could lead to an increase in the evictions and potentially homelessness cases.

- 3.6 There are also a number of risks for the Council and a number of our partners. These include a risk that it will become harder to collect Council Tax, rent and other payments.
- 3.7 In light of these potential impacts the Council looked at how it could be proactive in helping to support households that are likely to be affected. The outcome has been the creation of a new team, based in the Customer Service Centre to support customers with housing needs, in the first instance.
- 3.8 We have been working with Job Centre Plus in partnership in this project because of their role in helping people back into work. The support team provides bespoke advice to customers who are potentially affected by the benefits cap or are worried about the impact of the cap. The scope of the work is to help customers living in the Borough, who are affected, potentially affected or concerned about the cap and to try and prevent homelessness.
- 3.9 The team is made up of experts from our Customer Service Centre, Housing, Communities, Welfare Rights and very importantly Job Centre Plus as a key partner in the work.
- 3.10 To date all customers that may be affected by the cap have been contacted by letter, with follow up phone calls to invite them to meetings to look at options for their specific circumstances. A number of customers have now met with an advisor and the feedback is positive in terms of understanding the issues and their options.
- 3.11 The work has been recognised nationally as good practice and we anticipate that we will expand the scope of the team as the impact of other welfare changes become more apparent.

4. Strategic Plan References

- 4.1 The work supports a number of priorities in the Strategic Plan:
- Supporting more vulnerable groups
 - Delivering an efficient benefits service
 - Enabling local communities to help themselves

5. Consultation

- 5.1 There have been a range of consultations around policy changes that we have responded to.
- 5.2 A consultation is currently in the public domain around the new Council Tax Scheme.

6. Publicity Considerations

- 6.1 We have released a number of items to the press around the changes to raise the profile of changes and encourage people to seek early advice. There has also been a significant amount of national coverage about the changes.
- 6.2 Our work to engage customers to help them look for solutions was highlighted in the House of Commons as an example of good practice.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The team has been supported by transitional funding to support the changes from the Department of Work and Pensions. This funding was provided on the basis that it would be used to provide targeted support to help meet the housing needs of customers affected by Welfare Reform.

8. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 8.1 The work to support customers will help to address equality and diversity issues. It is likely that the majority of people impacted by Welfare reform will be amongst the most deprived in our Borough. Helping them to address issues early will avoid longer term problems.

9. Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 N/A

10. Health and Safety Implications

- 10.1 N/A

11. Risk Management Implications

- 11.1 There are a number of risks for the Council around reduced income levels as a result of the Welfare Reforms. Taking action in the way described helps to mitigate these risks.

3 October 2012

Report of	Executive Director	Author	Ann Hedges
Title	Supporting Families with Complex Needs		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report concerns the work the Council is undertaking in partnership to improve the lives of families with complex needs. A presentation at Cabinet will provide more detail on the principles of the work and progress to date

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To note the work being undertaken to improve the lives of families with complex needs

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 A previous decision committed the Council and a range of partners to work with Participle on a new model for families with complex needs. A presentation at Cabinet will provide more detail on the programme and our progress to date.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 It is estimated that there are 120,000 families with complex needs in the UK and that support to each family costs the public sector anything from £75k to £250k a year. Taking the lowest estimate this equates to £9 billion a year. Families with complex needs have a range of problems including parents not working, mental health problems, children not in school, the family causing crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.2 A range of interventions have been tried over the years. Most recently the Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) have started to produce some positive results. We now need to learn from such interventions and move to the next stage of change.
- 3.3 Essex is one of 17 national pilots taking part in a programme to look for innovative solutions for families with complex needs. Colchester agreed to be one of five localities in Essex alongside Tendring, Basildon, Castle Point / Rochford, and Harlow. It is intended that we look for new ways of addressing the needs of families for better outcomes and that this would also help to deliver change in our organisations, reducing duplication and making savings.
- 3.4 It is estimated that there are around 280 families in Colchester that have complex needs and national estimates suggest that each family costs the public sector up to £250k a year to support. This means that in Colchester alone the cost could be up to £70m a year. It is also accepted that the outcomes for such families are poor; we do not on the whole solve their problems or help them change their lives. Research has demonstrated that most of the time spent by public sector is on administration and reacting to circumstances and just 6% of their time investing in strengthening the families. The Essex Family project sets out to change this.

3.5 A steering group has been formed in Colchester to lead this project, made up of a number of key partners; Police, Health, University, Essex County Council, Colchester Borough Homes, Police, PCT, Colchester Community Voluntary Service, Colchester Borough Council.

4. Proposals

4.1 A previous report to Cabinet agreed that Colchester would work with Participle, a Community Interest Company to run a programme called Life designed in partnership with Swindon Council.

4.2 A presentation at Cabinet will give some more detail on the principles of the Life Programme and the progress we are making in Colchester.

5. Strategic Plan References

5.1 This project helps to deliver against a range of the new Strategic Plan priorities:

- Working in partnership to tackle health and crime issues
- Giving local people the chance to improve their skills
- Supporting the more vulnerable groups
- Engaging with the voluntary sector
- Enabling local communities to help themselves
- Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities

6. Consultation

6.1 The work will include engagement with a range of stakeholders and the families themselves will be at the centre of designing solutions.

7. Publicity Considerations

7.1 There has been considerable national publicity around families with complex needs and the narrower focus of troubled families.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The financial implications were previously agreed by Cabinet; the funding has been made available by Essex County Council.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

9.1 This is an important project to support equality of opportunity for some of the most deprived groups in our communities.

10. Health and Safety Implications

10.1 There are no particular health and safety implications.

11. Risk Management Implications

11.1 There are no particular risk management implications.



Cabinet

3 October 2012

Item
8(i)

Report of	Head of Resource Management	Author	Sean Plummer ☎ 282347
Title	2013/14 Revenue Budget		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the 2013/14 Revenue Budget forecast

1. Decisions Required

1.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the following items:

- i) Note the updated 2013/14 budget forecast as set out at paragraph 6.1 shows a current gap of £374k
- ii) Note that officers are working towards delivering a balanced budget and that progress has been made to identify savings to assist with the delivery of the budget strategy. (See section 9).
- iii) Determine whether the cost pressures set out at paragraph 7.1 should be included in the 2013/14 budget forecast.
- iv) Determine whether the growth items set out at paragraph 8.1 should be included in the 2013/14 budget forecast.
- v) Determine whether the provisional savings set out at section 9 should be included in the 2013/14 budget forecast.
- vi) Note the potential 2013/14 budget forecast variables and risks set out in Section 11.

2. Reasons for Decisions

- 2.1 The Council is required to approve a budget strategy and timetable in respect of the year 2013/14.
- 2.2 This report relates to the budget update and a review of the capital programme.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 There are different options that could be considered and as the budget progresses changes and further proposals will be made and considered by Cabinet and in turn Full Council.

4. Background

- 4.1 A timetable for the 2013/14 budget process (see Appendix A) was agreed at Cabinet on 4 July 2012.
- 4.2 At this stage in the budget process it is important to identify the main areas of cost pressure and any planned growth areas together with the approach to balance the budget. Detailed budgets are currently being produced with the aim to complete this task by December. Work is currently progressing well and is in line with the budget timetable.
- 4.3 The Council's gross General Fund revenue budget is c£119million which translates in to a net revenue budget of £21million. This is the starting point and context in which to view the remainder of this report.

5. Budget 2012/13 - Review

- 5.1. The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel (FASP) reviewed the budget position for the current year including outturn projections on 21 August 2012. The total position reported at what was an early stage showed a potential net underspend of £74k. This excludes the risk factor allowance of £285k.
- 5.2. FASP will receive a report on the half year position in November and this will in turn be reported to the next Cabinet meeting when any impact on balances will be assessed.

6. Summary of 2013/14 Budget Forecast

- 6.1. Should Cabinet approve the items detailed in this report the current 2013/14 budget forecast shows a current gap of £374k. This reflects certain changes mainly in respect of anticipated savings.

	2013/14 £'000	Comment
Base Budget	21,567	
One off adjustments	(280)	
Cost Pressures	900	See section 7
Growth items	1,000	See section 8
Savings	(1,670)	See section 9
Forecast Base Budget	21,517	
Government Grant	(7,951)	No specific provisional figures yet available, therefore based on assumed reduction. Includes the removal of the one-off Council Tax Freeze grant.
New Homes Bonus	(1,775)	Assumes an increase in grant of £250k
Council Tax	(11,085)	Based on 2.5% increase and 0.5% increase in taxbase.
Use of Reserves	(332)	Ongoing use to fund community stadium, S106 and pensions increase
Total Funding	(21,143)	
Budget gap	374	

- 6.2. As indicated later in this report, further work is ongoing to fully assess options to balance the budget including completion of remaining budget reviews and developing delivery plans for all savings, completion of detailed budgets and the ongoing assessment of risk areas.

7. Cost Pressures

- 7.1. The following cost pressures expected in 2013/14 have been previously identified through the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) process either as specific pressures or as risks areas. The table sets out estimated pressures for next year some of which are indicative provisions which will be revised as more detail becomes known.

	Current allowance £'000	Comment
Inflationary pressure	240	Net inflation impact. This allowance will be reviewed as assumptions for key areas such as energy and pay are assessed.
Incremental pension contributions	102	Additional cost arising from actuarial review which is being funded from reserve setup in 2011/12.
Elections	(92)	One-off reduction due to no borough elections in May 2013.
Castle Museum - Income	50	The planned temporary closure of the museum will result in a reduction in income. Steps to manage these continue to be put in place, however, it is considered prudent at this stage to allow for a reduction in income.
Land Charges	200	Current assumed reduction in income from land charges due to more information now being available for free under the Environmental Information Regulations.
Risk Factor	400	As reported to Cabinet in July a recurring budget risk factor of £400k is included in respect of various potential risks arising from Government reforms and other budget issues such as inflation assumptions.
Total	900	

- 7.2. Cabinet need to determine whether the cost pressures detailed above should be included within the current 2013/14 budget forecast.

8. Growth Items

- 8.1. The budget forecast includes £1m for growth items. This includes an allowance in respect of a Borough wide Food Waste service and an assumption that provision will be made to invest part of the anticipated increased New Homes Bonus for 2013/14. These allowances are working figures at the moment and specifically more work is required to consider costings in respect of the waste service.

9. Savings/Increased Income

- 9.1. The budget strategy for 13/14 was agreed by Cabinet on 4 July. This included five tracks in our budget strategy:-

1. Income generation
2. Efficiencies (including Fundamental Service Reviews)
3. Total Place projects / themes
4. Shared services and different models for service delivery
5. Cuts and reductions

9.2. Progress has been made in identifying budget savings. The following table provides a summary of proposed savings and adjustments totalling £1.67m including items previously reported to Cabinet.

	£'000	Comment
Total Service Items	(646)	Current savings across services including ongoing impact of items agreed in the 12/13 budget such as further ICT contract savings of £0.3m and some new proposed savings.
Fundamental Service Reviews	(739)	Savings from Sport and Leisure Review and further planned savings in respect of Street Services.
Savings Risk Factor	(285)	It is proposed that at this stage the savings risk factor be removed from the budget forecast. Consideration will be given to whether to include any allowance in the 13/14 budget as part of the risk assessment of balances and the emerging savings proposals.
Total	(1,670)	

9.3. Further budget saving options have been identified and these are currently being assessed in more detail. This includes consideration of savings arising from the Universal Customer Contact FSR.

10. Government Grants / Funding

10.1. Current Government proposals arising from the review of Local Government funding will result in a change to how local councils are financed from 2013/14. A detailed, mostly technical, consultation on the Business Rate Retention scheme concludes in September. There still remains a significant level of uncertainty as to how the scheme will work. Some of the key emerging issues set out in the consultation include:-

- There will be a 50% local share of NNDR (in other words 50% of all NNDR collected will go to Government)
- This will in turn be distributed via Revenue Support Grant (RSG) or other specified grants. As such we will still receive a level of RSG.
- A number of existing grants are being 'rolled in' to the NNDR scheme. These include Council Tax Freeze grant and the new Council Tax Support (CTS) Grant.
- The Government is proposing to remove funding required for New Homes Bonus with different options as to how this will be achieved.

10.2. It appears clear that the transition to the new funding system is expected to be within current Government spending controls. The Comprehensive Spending Review points to a further reduction in government funding in 2013/14, however, what this will mean for Colchester is unclear. At this stage the assumption continues to be made of a reduction in core funding (potentially business rates and government grant) of 5% with a further cash reduction of £300k. The Local Government Finance Report for 2013/14 is expected in early December. This will provide detailed information on funding levels and arrangements. This is expected to also include confirmation of the New Homes Bonus for 2013/14 for which the working assumption remains for an increase of £250k.

- 10.3. The Council receives other Government grants and announcement on the level of these will be made at a similar time as formula grant. Confirmation of the level of grant funding will be an important part of completing the Council's budget. The level of benefit administration grant is one where it is likely that a reduction in funding may be seen. At this stage the budget forecast assumes a standstill position and therefore this will remain a risk area.
- 10.4. As stated above one important issue will be the introduction of the business rates retention scheme. Later budget reports will set out more detail showing how the scheme will work an assessment of the impact on the 2013/14 budget and also future years. One issue to report at this stage is that the option of pooling will not be pursued for 2013/14.
- 10.5. The option of pooling is open to all authorities. Put simply it relates to a group of authorities agreeing that they will 'pool' all business rate receipts and then agreeing collectively how these will be distributed between pool members. Essex County Council and all Essex districts submitted an 'expression of interest' in pooling.
- 10.6 Colchester confirmed a desire to establish pooling arrangements for 2013/14 on the basis of the potential to retain a greater share of business rate growth within Essex and also to try to develop agreement on providing greater protection for the Council from fluctuations in business rate levels.
- 10.7. Unfortunately due to the lack of financial information provided by the Government and the prescribed timetable, it was considered within Essex that it was unworkable for authorities to develop proposals and make recommendations through the required governance routes within the timeframe. Therefore, despite Colchester's agreement to move forward and develop pooling proposals there will not be an "Essex pool" in 2013/14. Essex authorities do remain interested in exploring the opportunity for pooling in 2014/15 and are committed to developing future proposals.

11. Risks and Variables

- 11.1. On 4 July 2012 Cabinet considered the budget strategy and MTFF. The MTFF set out the key areas that may impact on 2013/14 budget forecast and potentially later years. These have been reviewed and continue to represent the key variables including areas that may have positive or negative affect on the budget forecast. The list is provided at Appendix B and several of these items are considered within this report and we will continue to review all issues as the budget progresses.
- 11.2. Some of the key risk and variables at this stage in the budget process are:-
- Completion of detailed budgets (including any impact of changes in costs between the General Fund and HRA)
 - Announcement of Government grants and impact of Business Rates Retention Scheme
 - Completion of ongoing FSRs and budget reviews.
 - Proposals in respect of Council Tax and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme
- 11.3. It should be noted that the Council's general fund balances remain £0.3m above our current assessed recommended level of £1.5m. This takes account of a number of specific allocations held within revenue balances, including an allowance in respect of changes arising from the Local Government Resource Review. Based on the review of the 12/13 budget reported to FASP it is expected that there will not be a call on balances this year.

- 11.4 As already planned a full review of the risk assessment of the recommended level of balances will be made and reported to the next Cabinet meeting. This will propose any changes to the recommended level of balances and also consideration of all reserves held by the Council. This review will consider a number of new risk areas arising from the various local government finance reforms such as the potential volatility on business rates income and the financial impact of the welfare reform agenda, specifically the risks attached to the Local Council Tax Support arrangements.

12. Future Years

- 12.1 As part of consideration of budget issues facing the Council, SMT and Leadership Team have been considering future year budgets. The Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) reported to Cabinet in July showed a potential budget gap rising to c£2m by 2015/16. Work in progress to identify savings and the potential for increased income through the FSR work will examine the financial impact over a similar timescale. With the announcement of Government funding for 13/14 and finalisation of the major local government finance reforms the MTFF will be updated as part of the final budget report.

13. Proposals

- 13.1 It is proposed that the budget position should be noted including proposals relating to cost pressures, growth items, savings and risk and variables.

14. Strategic Plan References

- 14.1. The Council has agreed an over arching vision for the Borough: Colchester, the place to live, learn, work and visit. Alongside this are number of broad aims.
- 14.2. The 2013/14 budget and the Medium Term Financial Forecast will be underpinned by the Strategic Plan priorities and will seek to preserve and shift resources where needed to these priorities.

15. Consultation

- 15.1. The Council is required to consult on its budget proposals. A consultation exercise took place as part of the production of the Strategic Plan agreed by Council in February 2012.
- 15.2. The budget strategy and timetable aims to ensure that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members on proposals in the process. The aim is that detailed information will be available prior to the final budget report being submitted to Cabinet and approval by Council in February.
- 15.3. As has been the case in previous years the opportunity remains open for the leader of the opposition to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 15.4. Furthermore, we will continue with the statutory consultation with business ratepayers and will meet with parish councils in respect of grant funding.

16. Financial implications

- 16.1 As set out in the report

17. Equality and Diversity Implications

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

18. Risk Management Implications

- 18.1 The strategic risks of the authority will be considered in developing the 2013/14 budget and all forecast savings/new income options will be risk assessed as part of the budget process. This report sets out some of the key risks / variables at this stage in the budget process and as stated earlier this will be refined during the year.

19. Other Standard References

- 19.1 There are no specific Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications at this stage.

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet 4 July 2012

Revenue and Capital budget position reported to FASP on 21 August 2012.

2013/14 Budget Timetable

Budget Strategy March 12 – July 2012

March – June (SMT and Budget Group)	Budget Group Meetings Agreed Update MTFF /Budget Strategy Review potential cost pressures, growth and risks Consider approach to budget Initial budget reviews started
Cabinet – 4 July 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on updated budget strategy / MTFF • Timetable approved
SOSP – 17 July 12	Review Cabinet report
Budget Group / Leadership Team - June / July	Consider review of capital programme Consider approach to consultation

Detailed Budget preparation and Budget Setting Consultation

Budget Group / Leadership Team regular sessions on progress / budget options now - December	Review budget tasks Consider outcomes of Fundamental Service Reviews
Cabinet –3 October 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Update • Review of capital resources / programme (if available)
Cabinet – 28 November 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget update • Reserves and balances • Government Finance settlement (if available)
FASP – 22 January 13	Review consultation / Budget position (Detailed proposals)
Cabinet – 23 January 13	Revenue and Capital budgets recommended to Council
Council – 20 February 13	Budget agreed / capital programme agreed / Council Tax set

Leadership Team to review budget progress during year.

Ref	Risk / Area of uncertainty	
1	<i>Government Grant and the Comprehensive Spending Review 10 (CSR10)</i>	<p>The CSR10 sets out the background to public sector finances over the next 4 years.</p> <p>A cash reduction of 5% in each year of the MTFF has been included with a further reduction of a recurring £300k shown.</p> <p>The Government has produced various consultation papers setting out proposals relating to NNDR (business rates) and also the localisation of Council Tax benefits. These are likely to be significant issues for district councils such as Colchester and will continue to be considered as part of an update of the MTFF when more detail becomes known.</p>
2	<i>Government grants and partnership funding</i>	<p>The Council's budget has changed over recent years with a greater emphasis on funding from both partner organisations and Government bodies. These funding streams can rarely be guaranteed and can therefore add to our cost pressures.</p> <p>Provision has been made in the 2013/14 budget for the New Homes Bonus based on the grant received in 2012/13. Future budget reports will consider this source of funding and the implications for the MTFF.</p> <p>No provision has been made for changes in other Government grants, such as housing benefit administration, and these will be considered as details are announced.</p>
3	<i>Pensions</i>	<p>An allowance has been built in for increases in pensions costs based on the results of the last actuarial review and which therefore are fixed until 2013/14. Thereafter an allowance has been assumed of £250k</p>
4	<i>Fees and charges and other income</i>	<p>As has been seen in the past few years we have experienced a number of pressures arising from changes in income levels. The 12/13 budget forecast assumes a decrease in revenue from car parking and future updates of the MTFF will consider any other changes to income.</p>
5	<i>Inflation</i>	<p>An allowance for general inflation has been built into the 12/13 forecast and MTFF, and specific increases allowed for items such as energy.</p> <p>The current (August 2012) CPI is 2.5% and RPI is 2.91% Not all the Council's costs are directly linked to RPI and therefore we will continue to monitor the impact of inflation on all Council costs.</p>
6	<i>Use of reserves</i>	<p>The budget position for 2012/13 includes proposals to use certain reserves. The MTFF assumes the ongoing use of the capital expenditure reserve and S106 reserve.</p>
7	<i>Legislation</i>	<p>There is likely to be several items of new legislation over the life of the MTFF for which any available funding may not cover costs or which may impact significantly on the Council e.g. universal credit.</p>
8	<i>Impact of regeneration programme e.g. car</i>	<p>As the regeneration programme progresses there will be an ongoing impact on income from car parks due to temporary and permanent closure of certain car parks and also the</p>

Ref	Risk / Area of uncertainty	
	<i>park closure and staff resources</i>	introduction of park and ride.
9	<i>Property review</i>	A review of our assets was carried out and a 5-year Building Repairs and Maintenance Plan produced. There will continue to be financial implications arising from this for both the revenue budget and capital programme and these will continue to be considered in detail and included in the on-going updates of the MTFF. The 2012/13 budget includes an additional allocation of £150k in respect of planned repairs and this will be reviewed to consider if it is sufficient to meet ongoing requirements.
10	<i>Impact of growth in the Borough and demand for services</i>	<p>A number of Local Authority services are directly impacted by the increase of population in the Borough, such as waste services, planning, benefits etc.</p> <p>As part of the budget it will be necessary to consider whether there is a need for additional resources in these or other areas in order to maintain levels of service.</p> <p>At this stage no allowance for these areas has been provided within the MTFF. Fundamental Service Reviews (FSR) have been carried out or are being implemented on some of the key areas affected by growth and such as benefits, housing and street services. The financial assumption made is that these reviews will assist in identifying efficiencies to cope with changes in demand, however, this will be regularly reviewed.</p>
11	<i>Delivery of budget savings</i>	The 2012/13 budget includes c£1.7m of savings or increased income. The latest report to FASP points to an outturn that will be within budget. Consideration to any risk of delivering further savings will be made as part of later budget reports.
12	<i>Net earnings and investments</i> <i>Interest and</i>	The budget is influenced by a number of factors including interest rates and cashflow movements. The treasury management strategy for 2012/13 highlighted the outlook for interest rates in the medium-term which pointed to continuation of unprecedented low levels into 2012/13.



Cabinet

3 October 2012

Item
9(i)

Report of	Head of Corporate Management	Author	Richard Clifford
Title	Calendar of Meetings 2013-2014		 507832
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report proposes a Calendar of Meetings for the 2013-2014 Municipal Year

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the draft Calendar of Meetings for the next municipal year from May 2013 to April 2014.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to cancel meetings to the Chairman of the relevant Committee/Panel in conjunction with the Head of Corporate Management.
- 1.3 To note the possibility that the 2013-14 Municipal Year may be extended in view of the European elections to be held in June 2014 and to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy to agree revisions to the Calendar of Meetings in these circumstances.

2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The Calendar of Meetings needs to be determined so that decisions for the year can be timetabled into the respective work programmes and the Forward Plan.
- 2.2 Advance notice of the Calendar of Meetings needs to be made available to external organisations, parish councils and other bodies with which the Council works in partnership and to those members of the public who may wish to attend meetings of the council and make representations.
- 2.3 The meeting rooms also need to be reserved as soon as possible so that room bookings can be made for private functions by private individuals, external organisations and internal Council groups.
- 2.4 A formal arrangement needs to be in place for the cancellation of meetings that no longer need to be held.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 This proposal has been largely devised based on the current meeting structure and frequency. It would be possible to devise alternative proposals using different criteria.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 The attached draft Calendar of Meetings for 2013-14 is largely based on the current meeting structure and frequency of meetings. The following matters have also been taken into consideration:-

- The Municipal Year to begin with the Annual Meeting on 22 May 2013.
- No Cabinet meetings in the six weeks before the local elections in May 2014;
- To facilitate the hearing of call ins, a Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting to follow after a Cabinet meeting and to alternate with meetings of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel;
- Nine member training days between June 2013 and March 2014;
- Political group meetings on Mondays prior to Council and Cabinet.

4.2 The Calendar of Meetings 2013-14 comprises:-

- Council – the Annual Meeting plus four Council meetings. It is no longer proposed to schedule a Council meeting in March. Council meetings are scheduled for Wednesdays, with the exception of the December meeting, which is scheduled for a Thursday to avoid the difficulties caused by the clash with late night shopping that would ensue if the meeting were held on Wednesday. The dates are timed to facilitate approval of the budget, setting the parish precept and the council tax in February 2014.
- Cabinet – seven meetings on Wednesdays. The dates are timed to facilitate budget planning leading to a recommendation to Council to approve the budget and the level of council tax to be set.
- Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel – nine meetings on Tuesdays.
- Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel – nine meetings on Tuesdays.
- Accounts and Regulatory Committee – four meetings on Tuesdays held immediately after Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel meetings. The dates are timed to facilitate the approval of the draft Annual Statement of Accounts, auditors report and annual audit letter.
- Policy Review and Development Panel – six meetings on Mondays.
- Planning Committee – 22 meetings on Thursdays. During the summer months, there is a fall in the number of planning applications referred to the Planning Committee for determination. It is therefore proposed that the Committee move to a three week cycle during July, August and September with a two weekly cycle throughout the rest of the year.
- Local Plan Committee – six meetings on Mondays.
- Licensing Committee – eight meetings on Wednesdays.
- Standards Committee – four meetings on Wednesdays.
- Licensing Sub-Committee Hearings – Meetings for sub-committee hearings of the Licensing Committee have been scheduled for a number of Fridays, to be held during the day. A number of weeks have been left free to enable commercial bookings to be taken. It is not anticipated that a sub-committee meeting will be held on each of the

dates scheduled but it is necessary to have the flexibility for meetings to be called at short notice.

- Occasionally it proves necessary to schedule additional meetings of Committee and Panels at short notice. Six “reserve” dates have been included in the Calendar where meeting rooms will be booked. This will facilitate the scheduling of additional/urgent meetings. These meeting dates will not be used unless needed.
- The following Civic events have also been included for completeness:

Opening of the Oyster Fishery 6 September 2013

Oyster Feast 25 October 2013

Remembrance Sunday 10 November 2013

- 4.3 In May 2014, the Borough elections have been scheduled for 1 May 2014 with an Annual Meeting date of 21 May 2014. European elections are also due in June 2014, and in these circumstances previously the Government has moved the Borough elections to coincide with the European elections. There is therefore a possibility that the Municipal Year for 2013-14 will be extended to thirteen months. However there is unlikely to be any certainty on this issue until autumn 2013. Therefore the calendar also shows a potential alternative Annual Meeting date for June 2014. It is proposed to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy to agree revisions to the Calendar of Meetings should the Municipal Year be extended.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 In general terms the costs are those associated with the meetings process such as the number of panels/committee, hallkeeping charges, agenda printing costs and members travelling allowances. The costs are covered by existing budgets.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Executive Management Team and Heads of Service. The Chairman and group spokespersons on the Planning Committee have been consulted in respect of the proposed change in the Planning Committee cycle.

7. Publicity Implications

- 7.1 The dates of council meetings are published on the Council’s website. They are also distributed to parish council and advertised at Council offices and libraries throughout the borough.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment covering the Council’s decision making and meetings processes has been completed and can be found by on the Council’s website www.colchester.gov.uk following the route: Home/Council and Democracy/Polices, Strategies and Performance/Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessments/Decision Making and Meetings or by clicking on the link below:-

[Decision Making and Meetings EQIA](#)

9. Standard References

9.1 It is considered that there are no direct Strategic Plan references, human rights, community safety, health and safety and risk management implications raised by this report.

2013

		May		June		July		August
Mon					1			
Tue					2			
Wed	1				3	Licensing Committee		
Thu	2	Elections (ECC)			4		1	Planning Committee
Fri	3				5	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	2	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	4		1		6		3	
Sun	5		2		7		4	
Mon	6	<i>Bank Holiday</i>	3	Local Plan Committee	8	Groups	5	Policy Review and Development Panel
Tue	7		4		9		6	
Wed	8		5	Licensing Committee	10	Cabinet	7	Licensing Committee
Thu	9		6	Planning Committee	11	Planning Committee	8	
Fri	10		7		12		9	
Sat	11		8		13		10	
Sun	12		9		14		11	
Mon	13		10		15	Groups	12	
Tue	14		11	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	16		13	
Wed	15		12	Reserve Meeting Date	17	Council	14	Training
Thu	16		13		18		15	
Fri	17		14	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	19	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	16	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	18		15		20		17	
Sun	19		16		21		18	
Mon	20	Groups	17	Policy Review and Development Panel	22		19	
Tue	21		18	Training	23	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	20	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Wed	22	Annual Meeting	19		24	Training	21	
Thu	23	Planning Committee	20	Planning Committee	25		22	Planning Committee
Fri	24	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	21	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	26		23	
Sat	25		22		27		24	
Sun	26		23		28		25	
Mon	27	<i>Bank Holiday</i>	24		29	Local Plan Committee	26	<i>Bank Holiday</i>
Tue	28	Groups	25	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel/A & R Committee	30	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel	27	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel
Wed	29	Cabinet	26	Standards Committee	31	Reserve Meeting Date	28	
Thu	30		27				29	
Fri	31	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	28				30	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat			29				31	
Sun			30					
Mon								
Tue								

¹ Daytime meeting Light shading = Essex school holidays

2013

		September		October		November		December
Mon								
Tue			1	Training				
Wed			2					
Thu			3	Planning Committee				
Fri			4	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	1	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing		
Sat			5		2			
Sun	1		6		3		1	
Mon	2	Groups	7	Groups	4	Policy Review and Development Panel	2	Groups
Tue	3		8		5		3	
Wed	4	Cabinet	9	Cabinet	6	Reserve Meeting Date	4	<i>Late night shopping – avoid meetings</i>
Thu	5		10		7		5	Council
Fri	6	Opening of Oyster Fishery	11		8		6	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	7		12		9		7	
Sun	8		13		10	Remembrance Sunday	8	
Mon	9		14	Groups	11		9	
Tue	10		15	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel/A & R Committee	12	Training	10	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Wed	11	Licensing Committee	16	Council	13		11	<i>Late night shopping – avoid meetings</i>
Thu	12	Planning Committee	17	Planning Committee	14	Planning Committee	12	Planning Committee
Fri	13	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	18	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	15	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	13	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	14		19		16		14	
Sun	15		20		17		15	
Mon	16	Policy Review and Development Panel	21		18		16	Local Plan Committee
Tue	17	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	22		19	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel	17	Training
Wed	18	Standards Committee	23		20	Standards Committee	18	Licensing Committee
Thu	19		24		21		19	
Fri	20	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	25	Oyster Feast	22		20	
Sat	21		26		23		21	
Sun	22		27		24		22	
Mon	23		28		25	Groups	23	
Tue	24	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel/A & R Committee	29	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	26		24	
Wed	25	Reserve Meeting Date	30	Licensing Committee	27	Cabinet	25	<i>Christmas Day</i>
Thu	26		31	Planning Committee	28	Planning Committee	26	<i>Boxing Day</i>
Fri	27				29	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	27	
Sat	28				30		28	
Sun	29						29	
Mon	30	Local Plan Committee					30	
Tue							31	

¹Daytime meeting Light shading = Essex school holiday;

2014

		January		February		March		April
Mon								
Tue							1	
Wed	1	<i>New Year's Day</i>					2	
Thu	2	Planning Committee					3	
Fri	3	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing					4	
Sat	4		1		1		5	
Sun	5		2		2		6	
Mon	6		3	Local Plan Committee	3	Groups	7	
Tue	7		4		4		8	
Wed	8		5	Reserve Meeting Date	5	Cabinet	9	
Thu	9		6		6		10	Planning Committee
Fri	10	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	7	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	7		11	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	11		8		8		12	
Sun	12		9		9		13	
Mon	13	Policy Review and Development Panel	10		10	Policy Review and Development Panel	14	
Tue	14	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	11	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	11	Training	15	
Wed	15		12		12	Standards Committee	16	
Thu	16	Planning Committee	13	Planning Committee	13	Planning Committee	17	
Fri	17		14	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	14	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	18	<i>Good Friday</i>
Sat	18		15		15		19	
Sun	19		16		16		20	
Mon	20		17	Groups	17	Local Plan Committee	21	<i>Easter Monday</i>
Tue	21	Training	18		18	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	22	
Wed	22	Licensing Committee	19	Council	19	Licensing Committee	23	
Thu	23		20		20		24	Planning Committee
Fri	24	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	21		21		25	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing
Sat	25		22		22		26	
Sun	26		23		23		27	
Mon	27	Groups	24		24		28	
Tue	28	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel	25	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel/A & R Committee	25	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel	29	
Wed	29	Cabinet	26	Training	26	Reserve Meeting Date	30	
Thu	30	Planning Committee	27	Planning Committee	27	Planning Committee		
Fri	31		28	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing	28	¹ Licensing Sub-Ctte Hearing		
Sat					29			
Sun					30			
Mon					31			
Tue								

¹ Daytime meeting; Light shading = Essex school holidays

2014

		May		June
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu	1	Borough Elections		
Fri	2			
Sat	3			
Sun	4		1	
Mon	5	<i>Bank Holiday</i>	2	
Tue	6		3	
Wed	7		4	
Thu	8		5	European Elections
Fri	9		6	
Sat	10		7	
Sun	11		8	
Mon	12		9	
Tue	13		10	
Wed	14		11	
Thu	15		12	
Fri	16		13	
Sat	17		14	
Sun	18		15	
Mon	19		16	
Tue	20		17	
Wed	21	Annual Meeting	18	
Thu	22		19	
Fri	23		20	
Sat	24		21	
Sun	25		22	
Mon	26	<i>Bank Holiday</i>	23	
Tue	27		24	
Wed	28		25	Annual Meeting (if Borough Elections moved)
Thu	29		26	
Fri	30		27	
Sat	31		28	
Sun			29	
Mon			30	
Tue			31	

¹ Daytime meeting

Light shading = Essex school holidays

PETITIONS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS

(i) Have Your Say speakers

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet, 5 September 2012	Angel Kalyan	The handling of a Freedom of Information request	Verbal response from the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy at the meeting.	5 September 2012
Cabinet, 5 September 2012	Andy Hamilton	Concern in respect of a number Council decisions and the condition of the walled green at the junction of Lexden Road and Sussex Road.	Verbal response from the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy at the meeting	5 September 2012
Cabinet, 5 September 2012	Nicola Smith, Emma Braddock	The closure of gymnastic classes at Leisure World	Verbal response from the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Leisure Services at the meeting, written response from the Chief Executive and the Portfolio for Communities and Leisure Services on 10/11 September 2012.	11 September 2012

(ii) Petitions

None received

