

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
8 February 2011 at 6.00pm**

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel deals with reviewing corporate strategies within the Council's Strategic Plan, the Council's budgetary guidelines for the forthcoming year, scrutinising the Forward Plan, the performance of Portfolio Holders and scrutiny of Cabinet decisions or Cabinet Member decisions (with delegated power) 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, which is usually published 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available at www.colchester.gov.uk or from Democratic Services.

Have Your Say!

The Council values contributions from members of the public. Under the Council's Have Your Say! policy you can ask questions or express a view to meetings, with the exception of Standards Committee meetings. If you wish to speak at a meeting or wish to find out more, please pick up the leaflet called "Have Your Say" at Council offices and at www.colchester.gov.uk

Private Sessions

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss issues in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

Mobile phones, pagers, cameras, audio recorders

Please ensure that all mobile phones and pagers are turned off before the meeting begins and note that photography or audio recording is not permitted.

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 Angel Court Council offices, High Street, Colchester or telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

Facilities

Toilets with lift access, if required, are located on each floor of the Town Hall. A vending machine selling hot and cold drinks is located on the first floor and ground floor.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit. Make your way to the assembly area in the car park in St Runwald Street behind the Town Hall. Do not re-enter the building until the Town Hall staff advise you that it is safe to do so.

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e-mail: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk

www.colchester.gov.uk

Terms of Reference

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- To review corporate strategies.
- To ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council.
- To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, and make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions.
- To link the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic / Action Plans.
- To scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet, the East Essex Area Waste Management Joint Committee, the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee and Cabinet Member decisions (with delegated authority taking a corporate / strategic decision) which have been made but not implemented, and referred to the Panel through call-in.
- To monitor the Council's operational performance in relation to the Strategic Plan, Local Area Agreement targets and National Indicators.
- To scrutinise the Cabinet's performance in relation to the Forward Plan and to scrutinise the performance of Portfolio Holders.
- At the request of the Cabinet, make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet or creating difficulty for the running of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business.
- The panel will be the appropriate route for any member to refer a 'local government matter' in the context of Councillor Call for Action.

Process for Councillor Call for Action

- Councillors have the ability to call for debate and discussion a topic of neighbourhood concern, limited to issues affecting a single ward, in an attempt to bring about specific solutions for local problems. This enables members to get things done without going through the Council's executive decision making process.
- Members may bring an action on any issue they choose, with exceptions, for example, if the issue is vexatious or deals with an individual complaint. Local Government matters specifically excluded from the regime are namely matters relating to a planning decision, a licensing decision or where a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal is already provided for in law.
- Poor service performance or increased anti-social behaviour are examples of where a member will bring an action to the panel's attention.
- The scrutiny panel may reject a request as not within the guidance, or the usual channels have not been exhausted, or accept that an investigation is the appropriate action.
- The panel may conduct an investigation in the usual scrutiny manner, seeking information from the Council and/or partners and inviting them to attend meetings.
- A report with recommendations will be compiled and brought to the Council and/or partners attention, with the Council and/or partners having a duty to respond.
- The panel will consider and publish the responses to their recommendations and feed back this information to the Councillor calling for the action.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
8 February 2011 at 6:00pm**

Members

Chairman : Councillor Christopher Arnold.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Dennis Willetts.
Councillors Nigel Offen, Gerard Oxford, Julie Young,
Nigel Chapman, Mark Cory, Andrew Ellis, Bill Frame and
Theresa Higgins.

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

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Members of the public may wish to note that agenda items 1 to 5 are normally brief and agenda items 6 to 9 are standard items for which there may be no business to consider.

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. Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3. 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.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

5. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2011.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any Portfolio Holder decisions, taken under the Call in Procedure.

The panel may a) confirm the decision, which may then be implemented immediately, b) confirm the decision back to the decision taker for further consideration setting out in writing the nature of its concerns, or c) refer the matter to full Council in the event that the panel considers the decision to be contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the Budget.

9. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

To consider any Portfolio Holder decisions taken under the special urgency provisions.

10. Revenues and Benefits Fundamental Service Review - Update 1 - 18

See report from the Head of Resource Management.

11. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability 19 - 21

See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

12. Review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism 22 - 24

See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

13. Work Programme 25 - 26

See report from the Scrutiny Officer.

14. 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).

8 February 2011

Report of	Head of Resource Management	Author	Charles Warboys ☎ 282350
Title	Revenues and Benefits Fundamental Service Review – update report		
Wards affected	All		

This report concerns the implementation of the Fundamental Service Review of Revenues and Benefits services

1. Action(s) Required

- 1.1 To note and comment upon the progress being made in implementing the Fundamental Service Review of Colchester Borough Council's Revenues and Benefits service.

2. Reason(s) for Action

- 2.1 The Council's vision as set out in its Strategic Plan is of "Colchester: a place where people want to live, work and visit." This vision is supported by three objectives - to listen and respond, shift resources to deliver priorities, and be cleaner and greener - and by nine priorities for action to improve the quality of life in the borough.

The implementation of the Revenues and Benefits Fundamental Service Review (FSR) will assist the Council to deliver across the Strategic Plan's vision, objectives and priorities. This is particularly so in the case of helping local people of all ages to obtain services, support and financial help across a range of housing, social and economic needs so that they can make the most of opportunities in their community.

- 2.2 The Council's Revenues and Benefits services have contact with every household in the borough (all 74,000 homes are liable for Council tax), every business (5,200 businesses) and provide payments to ensure people are able to receive the financial support they require to remain housed (approximately 14,000 people are in receipt of benefit).
- 2.3 With such a significant contribution, both strategically and operationally, to this number of residents and businesses, the service is committed to implementing the proposals from the FSR business case, which will lead to an improved customer experience, efficiencies and effectiveness.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The FSR business case was reviewed by the Strategic and Overview Scrutiny Panel on 2 March 2010 and approved by Cabinet on 17 March 2010. This report provides an update on the progress being made in implementing the recommendations contained in that business case. As such, no alternatives are considered within this report.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Excellent progress is being made in implementing the recommendations that formed the business case approved by Cabinet. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the main achievements so far, whilst Appendix A contains an update on all of the 16 opportunities that were identified as being worth pursuing. NOTE: these opportunities were

taken from a longer list of all the ideas generated, which is why they are not numbered sequentially in the Appendix.

- 4.2 An intensive recruitment project was conducted between October and December 2010. This enabled all appointments to be made to the final (April 2012) structure, with additional posts being filled on an interim basis. Training in generic (benefits and taxation) work is underway and new methods of working are already in place, such as the Customer Relationship Co-Ordinator role. This puts experienced assessors in the CSC on the front line on a rota basis, and enables staff to solve and avoid problems for customers at the first point of contact. Appendix B shows the new staffing structure.
- 4.3 Staff are being supported through 1:1s with line management, team meetings and our HR Business Partner. Personal Development Plans, completed in December 2010, link with the overall learning needs that support the FSR cultural change.
- 4.4 In January 2011 Resource Management was re-awarded the Government accreditation "Customer Service Excellence Award", following an annual re-inspection of the service we provide. The Award was first achieved in 2010 and the inspector commented favourably on the progress made during the interval between inspections.
- 4.5 Research showed that 73% of our customers for this service are willing to access our services on-line. Our new e-claim has been available since May of last year and since that time 686 claims have been made in this way. This is without a major publicity launch of this service, as we still need to implement some software which will enable documents to be transferred automatically. This is scheduled for February 2011.
- 4.6 Where e-claims are made and the customer provides all the necessary information, we are currently processing claims within 5-6 days. The FSR target for 2012 is 5 days, so we are well on track to deliver this aim. Evaluation of the Risk Based Verification software and electronic transfer of data shows that time taken to process claims is being reduced by an average of 17%. Customer errors (potential fraud) have been detected in 46% of high risk cases which indicates the analysis is proving reliable. Eliminating these errors will further speed up processing times. 57% of cases are now classed as low risk meaning no additional evidence is required to claim. There is further progress still to be made but this is an encouraging start.
- 4.7 Work to improve the website has been completed, including a new on-line calculator which allows potential claimants to see for themselves if they are likely to be entitled to benefit. This has cut down on speculative claims, leading to a reduction in avoidable contact for the CSC and has enabled staff to concentrate on the most vulnerable claimants.
- 4.8 Enhancements to the council tax side of the operation, such as speeding up changes of address, form part of the wider corporate project iConnect. This is on track to deliver the expected benefits in the summer of 2011.
- 4.9 Partner organisations such as Colne Housing, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age concern and others, have been contacted and most are now engaged in our new ways of working. Some of these organisations are already supporting their customers in using the new e-claim facility. This demonstrates how the system is intended to work, with the aim being 100% of claims made on-line but with full support to those who cannot do this for themselves.
- 4.10 Vulnerable customers are being supported in their own homes by newly appointed visiting officers, who are focussed on welfare support and also able to offer debt advice. Debt clinics are currently being offered on a weekly basis at the CSC and other venues. Our Corporate Debt Team was the only local authority in the finals of the CCR Credit Excellence Awards.

- 4.11 Faster processing of claims, discounts and exemptions, enables us to make prompter payment to those entitled to financial assistance. We currently make 96.4% of payments by BACS transfer direct to the claimant's bank account (or occasionally direct to the landlord), which allows customers to access their funds much quicker than when making cheque payments.
- 4.12 We continue to explore the potential for a more flexible and proactive approach by working with partners to deliver a more efficient and effective service. Visits have been made at operational and strategic level to an existing partnership of local authorities to discuss methods of working and potential savings anticipated from their experience. The Government proposals on Universal Credit are still to be fully developed, but will have a major impact upon the service. It is currently anticipated that this new benefit will be phased in from 2013 to 2017, with accompanying restructure of the administration of the benefits system.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The Panel is invited to comment on the progress being made in implementing the recommendations of the approved FSR business case.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The Council has a Strategic Plan for 2009 – 2012. As mentioned in 2.1, the redesigned Revenues and Benefits service will help towards the Strategic Plan's vision, objectives and priorities.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 This FSR has included full staff consultation throughout the development of the business case. Four workshops took place with more than 50 staff from the service to seek their input and amendments and additional posts were included in the final agreed structure as a result of staff ideas. These posts could be accommodated within the financial targets which had been set. Staff from other services whose work impacts on Revenues and Benefits such as Legal, Housing, Human Resources and ICT were also consulted. Two workshops have been held with key external partners to consider their views about the opportunities and findings of the business case stage of the review, and these too informed the final approach taken.
- 7.2 A regular schedule of meetings with Unison was maintained throughout the consultation and implementation stage.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 Revenues and Benefits Services have contact with every home and business in the borough. The review has been driven using customer insight gained from using Mosaic and Touchstone project work to make sure the review will lead to services that offer a better customer experience at every level. The overall aim is make it quicker and easier for customers to contact us across a range of access methods, and to have their query or issue dealt with as promptly and efficiently as possible.
- 8.1 A communication plan has been drawn up following the approval of the detailed business case to communicate the changes to the public as widely as possible. Press releases have kept the public informed of changes, and further releases are planned, for example when the e-claim is fully launched in February 2011.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There are significant savings to be made once the FSR recommendations are fully embedded in the organisation and the report and detailed Appendix A show the progress being made against financial targets.
- 9.2 In summary, savings of £85,000 have been delivered during the current financial year, which is ahead of schedule. This figure is net of some necessary investment in new systems, such as the Risk Based Verification Portal.
- 9.3 Further savings of £369,000 per annum have been built into the 2011/12 Budget and there is every indication that the final savings delivered from 2012/13 onwards will exceed £700,000 pa. This compares to the approved business case figure of £450,000 pa.
- 9.4 The figures quoted above do not include the one-off costs which will be incurred as part of implementing the new structure.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available on the Council's website www.colchester.gov.uk/diversity

11. Other Standard References

- 11.1 There are no specific Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The high-level risks associated with this review have been identified in section 8 of the business case and are being actively managed. It is acknowledged that the changes identified to service delivery are significant, and will need to be carefully phased and planned in terms of capacity, ICT and cultural change requirements and with appropriate timescales.
- 12.2 A full risk register and risk management plan has been developed as part of the detailed implementation plan, and in consultation with the Council's Risk and Resilience Manager.

Background Papers

None.



Revenues and Benefits – Resource Management

High Level Summary of Progress to 20 January 2011

- Revenue Savings - £85,000 savings in current financial year with a further £369,000 savings agreed in the 2011/12 budget working papers. For financial year 2012/13 we are on target for annual revenue savings of c.£700,000.
- Recruitment process was completed by the end of December 2010.
- Website content has been updated and designed to give clearer, simpler and more accessible information for customers, including the online claim and calculator.
- IT enablers including e-claim, risk portal and electronic transfer of data from the DWP now implemented to phase 1.
- IDOX test system enabling upgrades and Document Loader has been delivered, with full launch of E-Claim to be in February 2011.
- iConnect Phase 3 (self-serve) which includes council tax change of address, direct debits, discounts, exemptions and arrangements will be completed by March 2011.
- Working with partners to support e-claims is underway.



Fundamental Service Review – progress update January 2011

Appendix A

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - Colchester Borough Council

Monthly Management Report for 2010/2011

Month Ending

31-Dec-10

How current performance compares with the same period in past years

BENEFITS	Applications awaiting assessment	Oldest application outstanding	Actioned/Assessed this month#
31-Dec-10	1,583	20-Oct-10	4,213
31-Dec-09	1,951	14-Oct-09	4,813
31-Dec-08	2,565	27-Nov-08	1,046

COUNCIL TAX	% Collected	Oldest correspondence outstanding	Correspondence awaiting action
31-Dec-10	92.07	20-Dec-10	195
31-Dec-09	92.58	30-Nov-09	1,302
31-Dec-08	92.54	30-Dec-08	570

BUSINESS RATES	% Collected	Oldest correspondence outstanding	Correspondence awaiting action
31-Dec-10	93.26	14-Dec-10	4
31-Dec-09	93.88	16-Dec-09	9
31-Dec-08	91.89	08-Jan-09	3

Figures from this year are actioned this month, last year are actioned for that month, figures from two years ago are assessed for that month.



• CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE

Opportunity A1

Customer Insight – Louisa Giddings

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Use customer data and effective targeting to encourage customer self-help and responsibility	To broaden our understanding of our customer base	Able to direct resources better Deliver more relevant information in a more efficient manner Change customer behaviour to encourage self-help and responsibility	By December 2011	Using Govmetric data to evaluate customer behaviours and preferences 73% of customers have said they are prepared to access our services online We have received 686 e-claims since soft launch in May 2010. Hard launch is expected by end of February 2011

Opportunity A2

Clear Customer Information – Louisa Giddings

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Create clear accessible information to make the customer's journey simpler and shorter	To reduce avoidable customer contact To speed up the customer journey	CSC data to show change from 65,000 baseline Reduced time to process benefit claims (and revenue transactions such as change	By December 2011	Work to improve the website for benefits customers has been completed – includes online claim and calculator Revenue transactions form part of iConnect project which has just started



(of address)

**Opportunity A4
Channel Management – Louisa Giddings**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Adopt a proactive approach to managing communication and contact routes for customers	Customers have an improved experience which reflects their individual needs and preferences	CSC data to show change from 65,000 baseline for avoidable contact Measurement of changes to the channels used	By December 2011	Recruitment of Customer Relationship Co-ordinator (appointed 10 Nov 2010) enables specific collaboration with the CSC to start Baseline data held – next stage is to look at how this is changing

**Opportunity B1
Who Else Can Help? – Lynne Hutton**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Work with other agencies to avoid duplication of effort, information and resource	Registered Providers (such as Colne Housing), CAB, Age Concern, YMCA, Nightshelter, Women's Aid, CBH to verify information and use online forms on behalf of the customer	Complete claims received directly to the assessor (avoiding CSC contacts)	By December 2011	Agencies have been contacted and most are now engaged. Some are already using the e-claim Claim Verification Policy to be rewritten and approved by Portfolio Holder and Section 151 Officer by March 2011

**Opportunity B2
Prevention / Place Shaping – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Support customers through difficult circumstances and help them to maximise their income – looking at underlying needs	Simpler benefit process Higher benefit take-up	CSC data to show change from 65,000 baseline for avoidable contact	By December 2011	E-claim hard launch following successful implementation of IDOX Document Loader (February 2011) reliant on ICT negotiations with IDOX
		Reduced time to process benefit claims	By March 2012 from 15 days to 5 days	Reductions in time to process being achieved by e-claim, risk portal and electronic transfer of data from the DWP (ETD)
	Vulnerable customers supported through the process	Visiting officers focused on welfare support on claiming benefits and debt advice	By March 2011	Visiting officers recruited 11 Nov 2010, new roles in place following training March 2011
		Further development of the Debt Advice Clinic	By June 2011	Currently weekly, more frequent clinics to be introduced at the CSC and other venues following successful recruitment and training of Corporate Enforcement Officers (end of November 2010)

**Opportunity C1
Online Automated Claims and Assessment – Karen Stoddart**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Enable customers to access their own information and claim online	All claims are made using the e-claim	No paper claims	By April 2011	E-claim hard launch following successful implementation of IDOX Document Loader (February 2011) reliant on ICT negotiations with IDOX
Reduced avoidable customer contacts	Reduced avoidable customer contacts	CSC data to show change from 65,000 baseline for avoidable contact	By December 2011	Work to improve the website for benefits customers has been completed – includes online claim and calculator
Faster processing and quicker payment of benefit claims, discounts and exemptions	Faster processing and quicker payment of benefit claims, discounts and exemptions	Reduced time to process benefit claims	By March 2012 from 15 days to 5 days	Recruitment of Customer Relationship Co-ordinator now enables specific collaboration with the CSC to start
Reduced time to process discounts and exemptions (revenues)	Reduced time to process discounts and exemptions (revenues)	Reduced time to process discounts and exemptions (revenues)	By March 2012	Reductions in time to process being achieved by e-claim, risk portal and electronic transfer of data from the DWP (ETD)
				As above plus iConnect Project will assist with this

- EFFICIENCY

FSR Objective – Revenue Savings

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
To achieve the savings identified in the FSR Business Case	£450,000 net revenue saving 2012/13 per annum (Business Case)	£85,000 net year-on-year revenue saving in 2010/11 £369,000 net year-on-year revenue saving in 2011/12 c.£700,000 net year-on-year revenue saving by 2012/13	By 31 March 2011 By 31 March 2012 By 31 March 2013	Achieved Agreed in Budget Working Papers for 2011/12 On target

Target	2011/12	2012/13
	£	£
Budget saving 10/11	23,000	23,000
Further FSR Saving 10/11	25,000	25,000
Saving re one-off cost pressure	70,000	70,000
Forecast 11/12	185,000	185,000
Forecast 12/13		150,000
Total Saving (per Bus Case)	303,000	453,000
IT costs to deliver		
Risk portal	16,000	16,000
Capita Contract	5,000	5,000
Total Recurring costs	21,000	21,000
Scanning saving to be found	45,000	45,000
Total Target after costs	369,000	519,000

The figures shown are net of all recurring costs but exclude one-off redundancy and pension strain costs

**Opportunity H3
Service Structure – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
To change the service structure to give a more efficient service	To have the final structure in place	To match the final structure with a people resource which is flexible and responsive to customer needs To achieve the final saving of c.£700,000 per annum	By April 2012	Recruitment to final structure completed Dec 2010 Interim structure in place by 1 Jan 2011 delivering savings for 2011/12 of £369,000

**Opportunity I1
Centre of Excellence – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Create a Centre of Excellence where we will provide a service to other local authorities	To bring in a sustainable income stream for the council Enhance the council's reputation Boost the local economy	Sell Corporate Debt Team capacity and expertise to other authorities to cover long term absence, maternity cover Media coverage and recognition of achievements targeted at the public sector – to help us win business Contribution to health of local economy	By April 2012 By April 2011 By April 2012	This could also lead to a shared debt recovery service Corporate Debt Team only local authority in the finals of the CCR Credit Excellence Awards



**Opportunity I2
Outsource – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Consider outsourcing all or part of the service	To decide whether or not to outsource all or part of the service	Cabinet decision made on way forward	By March 2012	Visits made at operational and strategic level to another authority to discuss potential savings anticipated from their experience

**Opportunity I3
Pooling of Resources (Shared Service) – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Explore the potential for a more flexible and proactive approach by working with partners to deliver a more efficient and effective service	To decide whether or not to enter a full or part shared service with others	Cabinet decision made on way forward	By March 2012	<p>Visits made at operational and strategic level to an existing partnership to discuss potential savings anticipated from their experience</p> <p>Shared services and different approaches to administer revenues and benefits are being promoted centrally by the Government as an effective way to reduce the cost base. The proposals around Universal Credit are still to be fully developed.</p>

• EFFECTIVENESS

Opportunity C2
Risk Assessment – Louisa Giddings

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
To introduce risk assessment software and procedures which are proportionate for the level of risk posed by each claim	Quicker processing and payments for the customer	Reduced time to process benefit claims	By March 2012 from 15 days to 5 days	Reductions in time to process being achieved by e-claim, risk portal and electronic transfer of data from the DWP (ETD)
	Better targeting of fraud resources	More effective use of the fraud officer resource	From July 2010	Customer errors (potential fraud) detected in 46% of high risk cases
	Reduced cost to serve	Reduction in paperwork, avoidable contact, scanning and indexing, time taken	From July 2010	57% of cases now classed as low risk meaning no evidence required to claim Working with software suppliers to move the risk assessment process to the start of the claim to reduce customer contact to the minimum

**Opportunity C3
Mobile Assessment – Rick Godfrey**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Enable officers to visit the customer in the home to complete and assess the claim	To give a quick and efficient service to vulnerable customers	Vulnerable customers receive an assisted service which helps to maximise their income and offers them choice	By March 2011	Visiting officers recruited 11 Nov 2010, new roles in place following training March 2011

**Opportunity E1
Corporate Debt – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Create a corporate team to deal with debt recovery and enforcement	A consistent approach to the way we deal with our debtors	Customers receive a consistent and co-ordinated approach from the council as a whole when negotiating their debts with us	By March 2011	Corporate Debt Team recruited in Nov 2010 More frequent debt clinics to be introduced at the CSC and other venues Pilot work from CBH of Former Tenant Arrears cases started Oct 2010 Engagement with CBH and other services underway
	Have a fair debt policy in place	Our approach is clear, accessible and communicated consistently	In place but to be revised by July 2011	



Fundamental Service Review – progress update January 2011

Appendix A

**Opportunity F1
IT Opportunities – Rick Godfrey**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Implement the IT opportunities identified in the Business Case	One single Customer Record Customers can fully self-serve	Effective implementation of iConnect and associated IT systems Reduction in avoidable contact	By March 2011	Corporate project phase 3 (self-serve) agreed at Customer Excellence on 8 Nov 2010, initial specifications for Firmstep implementation completed by FSR project team on 12 Nov 2010
	IDOX used to its full potential	Reduced cost to serve		IDOX test system in place mid-Nov 2010, IDOX visit 16 Nov 2010 to install updates including Document Loader for testing
	Interactive FAQ's to assist "first time resolution"	Reduction in avoidable contact		Awaiting project start date

**Opportunity G1
People and Culture – Paul McMorris**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Build capacity and capability, with effective change management	A service which delivers the three drivers of customer excellence, effectiveness and efficiency – and is sustainable, flexible dynamic	Selection of individuals who can bring in changes, attitudes and practices, which will support the new structure and service delivery	By March 2012	<p>Recruitment to final structure to be completed 1 Dec 2010</p> <p>Phased approach to reducing interim staff numbers as the IT opportunities are implemented</p> <p>Personal Development Plans to be completed Dec 2010 to link with the overall learning needs that support the FSR cultural change</p> <p>Staff being supported through 1:1s with line management, team meetings and our HR Business Partner</p>

**Opportunity H2
Multi-Skilled Officers – Karen Stoddart**

Action	Outcome	Output	Timescales	Update
Enable our staff to be more flexible and to support the customer more comprehensively	Staff who have the capacity and capability to deliver the three drivers of customer excellence, effectiveness and efficiency for the service	Staff who have the ability and freedom to support the new structure and service delivery Multi-skilled revenues and benefits teams recruited	By March 2012 By December 2010	Training Co-ordinator recruited 4 Nov 2010 Project to deliver training and support to staff to begin Dec 2010 Recruitment completed Staff being supported through the shift to multi-skilling – which links to G1 People and Culture



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel Scoping Document

Item
11

8 February 2011

Committee	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	
Topic	A review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability	Ref: SCR-8
Objective	The Panel is asked to consider the effectiveness of the work undertaken by the Portfolio Holder during the current municipal year.	
Reasons for undertaking review	One of the functions within the panel's Terms of Reference is to scrutinise the performance of Portfolio Holders.	
Approach	<p>The basis for scrutiny will be dialogue between the panel members and Portfolio Holder to determine the effectiveness of the portfolio holder in respect of;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegated responsibilities – these are attached to the scoping report and members have the opportunity to determine the contribution made by the portfolio holder in the effectiveness of this work. 2. The 6-monthly Performance Report, as reported to the Panel on 14 December 2010 giving progress on performance indicators and the Strategic Plan Action Plan is available on-line and in the Members Room. This is an opportunity for Members to understand the contribution made by the portfolio holder to this work. <p>This review is not about the work of those officers working in the service areas within the portfolio holder's Scheme of Delegation.</p>	
Membership	Full Panel	
Governance Officer	Robert Judd, Scrutiny Officer	
Lead Officer(s)	Pam Donnelly, Executive Director	

Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members

<h2>Delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability</h2>
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PLANNING

To procure the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:

1. Functions as Local Planning Authority.
2. Building Regulations and allied legislation relating to dangerous buildings and safety at sports grounds.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

To procure the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. The preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents and the issue of draft Supplementary Planning Documents for consultation.
2. To agree the Statement of Community Involvement and the Annual Monitoring Report.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. To develop policies in relation to sustainability and to oversee and promote the implementation of the Nottingham Declaration objectives.
2. The delivery of the Council's renewal agenda including sustainable housing, infrastructure, employment and leisure facilities.

ENVIRONMENT

To procure the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. Sea defence and coast protection matters.

Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members

Delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability (continued)

Portfolio Responsibilities

1. To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Council's policies and services relating to all planning activities including conservation and building control.
2. To monitor the implementation of the Local Plan.
3. To promote and procure the implementation of the Borough Council's Transport Strategy in partnership with Essex County Council, the responsible Transport Authority and other partners to improve infrastructure.
4. To promote partnership working with Essex County Council, the responsible Transport Authority.
5. To oversee major regeneration projects which impact upon the Council's landholdings.
6. To support local and regional partnerships which can lever in new investment into the Borough's four regeneration areas.
7. To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Borough Council's services and policies relating to environmental initiatives.

Major Project(s) in Portfolio:

Town Centre, Cultural Quarter, Vineyard Gate; North Colchester and East Colchester.



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel Scoping Document

Item
12

8 February 2011

Committee	Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel	
Topic	A review of the work of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism	Ref: SCR-9
Objective	The Panel is asked to consider the effectiveness of the work undertaken by the Portfolio Holder during the current municipal year.	
Reasons for undertaking review	One of the functions within the panel's Terms of Reference is to scrutinise the performance of Portfolio Holders.	
Approach	<p>The basis for scrutiny will be dialogue between the panel members and Portfolio Holder to determine the effectiveness of the portfolio holder in respect of;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegated responsibilities – these are attached to the scoping report and members have the opportunity to determine the contribution made by the portfolio holder in the effectiveness of this work. 2. The 6-monthly Performance Report, as reported to the Panel on 14 December 2010 giving progress on performance indicators and the Strategic Plan Action Plan is available on-line and in the Members Room. This is an opportunity for Members to understand the contribution made by the portfolio holder to this work. <p>This review is not about the work of those officers working in the service areas within the portfolio holder's Scheme of Delegation.</p>	
Membership	Full Panel	
Governance Officer	Robert Judd, Scrutiny Officer	
Lead Officer(s)	Pam Donnelly, Executive Director	

Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members

<p style="text-align: center;">Delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism</p>
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SKILLS

To encourage the procurement of the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. Promotion, influence and improvement of the skills base of the Borough.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To procure and or encourage the procurement of the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. Economic development issues affecting Colchester.
2. The preparation and publication of an annual economic prosperity strategy delivery plan.
3. Partnerships that improve and encourage business opportunities within the Borough.
4. Appropriate exhibitions, seminars etc for local businesses and economic development at local, national and international events.

TOURISM

To procure the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. The Visitor Information Centre and the promotion of the Borough for tourism purposes.
2. Liaison with other tourism agencies for the development of tourism in the Borough.

Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members

<p style="text-align: center;">Delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism (continued)</p>
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CULTURE AND THE ARTS

To procure the specified service in the provision, implementation, maintenance and management of:-

1. The Council's involvement in the Mercury Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre, Firstsite and similar organisations.
2. The Council's art collection and artefacts.
3. Events of cultural and artistic merit.
4. To exercise the functions delegated to the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee on behalf of the Cabinet.
5. Archaeological sites and monuments.
6. Approval of expenditure under the Heritage Fund.

<p style="text-align: center;">Portfolio Responsibilities</p>
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1. To encourage a buoyant and diverse local economy, which encourages full employment and works towards the creation of more high-value local jobs.
2. To champion the Borough of Colchester as a centre of business excellence, and to help local companies grow and flourish.
3. To help sustain a thriving town centre which satisfies the needs of all sectors of the community.
4. To encourage lifelong learning and skills development for the whole community to maximise job opportunities.
5. To promote Colchester as a key destination for visitors.
6. To oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Council's policies and services relating to heritage and culture

Major Project(s) in Portfolio: "Cycle Colchester"



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item
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8 February 2011

Report of	Scrutiny Officer	Author	Robert Judd Tel. 282274
Title	Work Programme 2010-11		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report sets out the 2010/11 Work Programme for the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

1. Action Required

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and note the 2010-11 work programme.

2. Reason for Action

- 2.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference in the Constitution.

3. Addition and/or outstanding items

- 3.1 There are none.

4. Current Work Programme

The work programme for the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel includes the work of the Crime and Disorder Committee.

4.1 8 June 2010

1. 2009-10 Year End Performance Report (Head of Corporate Management)

24 June 2010 (extra meeting)

1. HRA Reform – Consultation paper (Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration)

20 July 2010

1. Budget Strategy, Timetable and MTF (Head of Resource Management)

24 August 2010

1. Safer Colchester Partnership (**Crime and Disorder Committee**)

21 September 2010

1. Review of the Leader, Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Performance

12 October 2010 (extra meeting)

1. HX Care – Serious Case Review

16 November 2010

1. Street Services FSR (Head of Street Services)
2. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

14 December 2010

1. Review of the Budget – Strategic update (Head of Resource Management)
2. Performance report (6-monthly 2010-11) (Head of Corporate Management)
3. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Diversity

11 January 2011

1. Review of NEE Local Children's Trust Board (LCTB) (Head of Life Opportunities) - invitation accepted by the Chair of LCTB.
2. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Communities

18 January 2011 (extra meeting)

1. Town Centre demonstrations (**Crime and Disorder Committee**)

8 February 2011

1. Revenues and Benefits FSR / stage2 - follow-up to Full Business Case Review
2. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability
3. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

15 February 2011 (extra meeting)

1. Review of the London 2012 Partnership Plan

22 March 2011

1. Housing Services FSR / stage2 – follow-up to Full Business Case Review
2. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Customers
3. Review of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety

