

# Policy Review and Development Panel

Grand Jury Room, Town Hall  
4 November 2013 at 6.00pm

The Policy Review Panel deals with reviewing policies and issues at the request of the Cabinet or Portfolio Holder, or pro-actively identifying issues that may require review; dealing with those issues either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, monitoring progress of these Groups and assessing their final reports.

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# Terms of Reference

## Policy Review and Development Panel

- To review strategies and policies at the request of the Cabinet either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups, and to make recommendations back to Cabinet for decision.
- To review issues at the request of a Portfolio Holder either directly or by establishing Task and Finish Groups and to make recommendations back to the Portfolio Holder for decision.
- To monitor progress of Task and Finish Groups and assess their final reports prior to their submission to either the Cabinet or the Portfolio Holder.
- To proactively identify issues that may require review and improvement and to seek Cabinet's agreement as to whether and how they should be examined.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL  
POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL  
4 November 2013 at 6:00pm**

**Members**

Chairman : Councillor Julie Young.  
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Mark Cory.  
Councillors Mark Cable, Nigel Chapman, Barrie Cook,  
John Elliott, Colin Mudie and Lesley Scott-Boutell.

**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 6 are normally brief and the last Agenda Item is a standard one 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 to silent;
- the audio-recording of meetings;
- 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 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.

## **5. 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.

## **6. Minutes**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2013

**7. Transportation Review** **8 - 22**

See report by the Head of Commercial Services

The following guests have accepted an invitation to be present at the meeting to assist Councillors in their discussions:

- David Burch, on behalf of Essex Chamber of Commerce
- Kris Radley on behalf of Sustrans
- Nick Shuttleworth on behalf of Essex Rural Community Council
- Noel James on behalf of Historic Towns Forum

**8. Introduction of 20 mph speed limits in Colchester // Update** **23 - 27**

See report by the Head of Commercial Services

**9. Equality and Diversity // Annual Update** **28 - 39**

See report by the Head of Community Services

**10. Work Programme 2013-14** **40 - 42**

See report by the Assistant Chief Executive

**11. 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).

# **POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

## **16 SEPTEMBER 2013**

*Present :-* Councillor Julie Young (Chairman)  
Councillor John Elliott (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors Mark Cable, Nigel Chapman, Barrie Cook,  
Mark Cory, Colin Mudie and Lesley Scott-Boutell

### **11. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 5 August 2013 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **12. Invited Guests**

The Chairman welcomed two guests who had been invited to the meeting in order to broaden the Panel's discussion on Demand Management and Behaviour Change:

- Elspeth Kirkman, from the Cabinet Office Behavioural Insights team
- Carol Adams, from the Department for Work and Pensions

### **13. Demand Management and Behaviour Change**

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Customer Services inviting the Panel to consider the behaviour change 'framework' and programme being developed by the Council and to make relevant recommendations to Cabinet.

Mandy Jones, Research and Engagement Manager, explained the context of huge financial challenges for Councils in the years ahead with an estimated £14.4 billion shortfall in funding by 2019/20 combined with forecast increases in demand from customers brought about by the recession and demographic changes. She then gave details of work at a national level on influencing behaviour through demand management which suggested that local authorities would need to employ behaviour change approaches if they were to meet this funding shortfall.

'Demand management' involved managing the demand customers have for Council services. This could be about reducing contact with customers (for instance, by encouraging recycling or promoting self-serve) or, by stimulating demand in the use of services that generate income (in leisure services, for example). 'Behaviour change' is part of demand management and involves using intelligent ways to change or influence customer behaviours. In addition, behaviour change can also be about encouraging and supporting customers to make better choices for themselves and their communities (for instance, by encouraging clean streets or healthy living, or enabling greater community involvement).

Mandy also provided a summary of demand management and behaviour change, outlining Colchester's involvement to date, specifically in terms of:

- Why we need to manage customer demand;
- What we mean by 'demand management' and 'behaviour change';
- Using 'customer insight';
- Behaviour change and psychology;
- Measurement;
- Developing behaviour change projects;
- Organisational issues: Barriers and shifts needed;
- What we are doing to progress demand management and behaviour change.

In response to questions, Mandy explained that a significant amount of work had been undertaken over the last five years by the Council's Customer Insight Team and it was important that this work continued to receive support in the future. In order to help to engage Councillors in the principles, Mandy had undertaken a recent Development Session for Councillors and was very willing to do more of them. The Customer Insight Team worked with other teams and utilized a project management tool to determine the types of interventions which would work best.

The Chairman invited each of the guests in turn to address the Panel on the issues from their perspective.

Elspeth Kirkman explained that the team of 14 that she worked in had been set up specifically by the Prime Minister after he had read about low cost effective interventions which tapped into what motivates human behaviour. She outlined in a visual presentation some of the theory behind 'behaviour change' together with some results from the practical application of 'behavioural insight' to projects across the public sector. Elspeth confirmed that the Cabinet Office Team annually reviewed their achievements. Currently there was more demand for work than resource to meet it and those projects with social benefits were the ones which were selected for delivery. Moving forward the Team was being formed into a Company and their support would be provided only on a chargeable basis. In response to questions, Elspeth explained that evidence relating to the longevity of behavioral 'nudges' did not yet exist but was something that was beginning to be addressed. Recent work had involved linking in changes to people's habits in order to find sustainable solutions and incentives.

Carol Adams had been working with the Cabinet Office on a behaviour change project to help people back to work and presented some of the findings. The project had been initiated in Loughton, involving around 1800 claimants and had then been rolled out across Essex. In Colchester there were around 3600 claimants and the staff had been provided with coaching to explain behaviour change concepts and the reasons behind them. Much of the work was in the context of the Universal Credit regime which would be digital by default and the work had concentrated on building relationships with claimants and getting them to make commitments to finding work. The work, although not necessarily including all the measures adopted in Essex, was due to be rolled out nationally in October.

Particular discussion from the Panel members was in relation to:



- The potential to stereotype claimants rather than for them to be treated on an individual basis;
- The concept of behavioural ‘nudges’ and whether there was a limit to the number of times people would respond to nudges;
- The need for Councillors to be supportive of the concepts to ensure that successes recorded so far would not be lost;
- The extent of the problem of Benefit fraud and the penalties currently in place to deter and prevent;
- The problems associated with using online self serve initiatives which sometimes do not provide good customer experience;
- The need for ‘appropriate contact’ to be retained with certain customers who can’t self serve and for adequate resources to be diverted to support this requirement;
- The recognition that resources may need to be provided to people in order to enable them to interact in different ways;
- The need to work with customers to find out what suits them better in order to change small pieces of behaviour;
- The similarities between demand management and what could also be termed intelligent marketing.

*RESOLVED* that –

(i) Elspeth Kirkman and Carol Adams be thanked for the insights they provided and their valuable contributions to the meeting.

*RECOMMENDED* to Cabinet that the following issues be borne in mind when considering the Behaviour Change framework and future programme of work:

(i) The benefits of expanding and building on the Behaviour Change work;

(ii) The need to provide Behaviour Change training and support to staff and councillors in order to manage demands;

(iii) The valuable assistance and support provided by the Cabinet Office Insights Team.

#### **14. Economic Development Strategy 2010 - 2015**

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Commercial Services reviewing the Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2010 to 2015 and the corresponding Delivery Plan which would help inform and shape the Council’s future delivery of the Strategy and the proposed strategic refresh.

Nigel Myers Enterprise and Tourism Manager reminded the Panel that the Council had originally adopted the Economic Development Strategy in 2010, the primary role of which was to set out a framework to steer the activities of the Council and partner organisations to achieve a sustainable and strong local economy, foster the conditions for economic resilience and growth and to capture the economic benefits for residents

and businesses in the Borough.

Whilst the lifetime of the strategy extended to 2015 it was recognised that there was now a need to align the Colchester strategy with the Essex County Council Economic Growth Strategy and with the emerging South East Strategic Economic Plan from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership. The latter in particular would be instrumental in securing funding to enable economic growth locally and regionally.

It was explained that Colchester was a diverse and growing Borough with a resilient and buoyant economy and recognised as a successful place with the drive and the tenacity to deliver an ambitious growth programme. The Colchester economy was worth in the order of £17.2 billion. The key employment sectors being manufacturing, construction, retail, IT and business services, tourism and public administration, health and education. One in six businesses in the Borough was a creative company in activities ranging from architecture, software, publishing through to artistic creation and media. In addition, Colchester had over 20,000 businesses the majority of which were micro businesses with less than 10 employees and small to medium enterprise size with less than 200 employees.

The UK CACI 2012 Retail Dimensions Survey classified Colchester as a Primary Retail Centre. It was ranked as one of the top 50 retail centres in the UK with an annual retail expenditure of £440m. Colchester was included as one of the most robust retail destinations in the UK in the 2012 Javelin Group report. Whilst recognising the inherent strengths and resilience of the local economy, the Borough continued to face some significant economic challenges in the lifetime of the current strategy. These included the level of unemployment, the effects of reduction in public sector spending given the relatively high level (31%) of public sector jobs and the relatively high level of young people aged 16 to 19 who are not in education, employment or training (5.0% of the cohort – 272 young people).

Nigel also took the opportunity to update the Panel on the progress with the Town Centre Broadband initiative which would deliver speeds in excess of 25Mb. The Council was also in contact with County Broadband in order to deliver a wireless solution across the Borough which would mean that, despite delays so far, Colchester would be ahead of most other Boroughs in Essex.

Particular discussion from the Panel members was in relation to:

- The positive contribution made by the Strategy in terms of the delivery of the Colchester Enterprise Hub;
- Concerns about the influence Colchester would be able to exert over the funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and the welcome news regarding the prospect of a Federated Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Concerns regarding the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training, especially since the winding up of the Connexions service;
- The need for apprenticeships to be subject to evaluation and the impact on people's willingness to take up this type of opportunity;
- The need to work with businesses towards the provision of a workable broadband solution;

- Speculation as to whether the predominance of small to medium enterprises and creative industries would work against the use of apprenticeships as a means of securing employment by young people;
- The potential to formulate a case study to capitalise on the marketing of Colchester as a Creative and Digital Hub.

*RECOMMENDED* to Cabinet that the following issues be borne in mind when considering the proposed refresh of the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2010 to 2015:

- (i) The potential lack of influence that Colchester will be able to exert over the funding priorities of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, given its size and scope;
- (ii) Whether there are sufficient training solutions for older people needing to access digital services in the future;
- (iii) The need for the approach to the Town Centre to be focused;
- (iv) The need to learn from partners in Suffolk in relation to the Visit Anglia Strategy;
- (v) The continuing need for ways to stimulate more investment;
- (vi) Whether the targets for a Borough wide Broadband solution are too ambitious;
- (vii) The need for improvement in the feedback about apprenticeships from education providers to local businesses;
- (viii) To acknowledge the fact that generally investors require a return on their investment within five years;
- (ix) To welcome the news that Colchester has a thriving economy of £72billion;
- (x) For support to be given to the creation of a Creative Business Centre in Colchester but to acknowledge the need for more marketing of Colchester as a Creative and Digital Hub.

## **15. Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group // Update**

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Operational Services providing an interim update on the work of the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group prior to a full report being presented to a future meeting of this Panel.

Matthew Young, Head of Operational Services, attended the meeting explaining that the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group had been set up to aid the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste in considering matters identified in the Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal that was produced by the Strategic Waste Team in January 2009. At that time the methods identified in this appraisal to meet the vision

were agreed as follows:

- Less waste is produced by everyone
- There is an active reuse culture
- Home composting is 'the norm'
- Being able to recycle is easy for everyone
- More waste is recycled and composted than sent to landfill
- The collection service is high quality
- There is high customer satisfaction with the service

The first meeting of the Group took place in April 2009 and it agreed to aid the Portfolio Holder for Waste and Street Services, in considering the amount of residual waste going to landfill, investigating recycling options. Since 2011 the Task and Finish Group focused itself on two main issues to look at in support of the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste:

- The experience and results from the Food Waste Collection Trial that was due to commence in November 2011
- The initiatives undertaken to strongly encourage recycling

Over the trial period the Task and Finish Group received regular updates on the progress of the trial particularly the participation rate and the tonnages being collected. It reviewed the data being presented by officers and would comment on the success of the methods being used to encourage participation. It also made suggestions on improvements that could be made to the service and questioned officers on the lessons being learnt as the Trial progressed. Also during the existence of the Task and Finish Group the Council was successful in being selected to receive two grants from Government to support its waste collection services.

In response to questions Matthew acknowledged the hard work of the refuse operatives and also spent some time explaining where the food waste and other recyclable materials were sent. He referred to the current development of a anaerobic digestion plant which Essex County Council was developing and speculated about the potential opportunities available to a private business which might choose to enter this market, especially given the known high percentages of food waste generated by commercial companies.

Particular discussion from the Panel members was in relation to:

- The value provided by the Task and Finish group in being able to work cross party, outside the gaze of publicity;
- The importance of continuing the group in the future when important discussions need to be had about the delivery of the waste and recycling service in the future;
- The availability of food caddy liners from local retailers;
- The benefits of giving people information about tangible benefits of recycling such as the products that can be made from recycling materials in order to obtain buy in;
- The ability of councillors and the public to report households which regularly leave large numbers of black sacks for collection;
- The possibility of providing councillors with explanatory recycling information for

- inclusion in leaflets delivered to households in their wards;
- The need for updated information to be made readily available on what materials are currently recyclable;
  - The cost of food waste caddy liners and which local retailers had agreed to offer them for sale

*RESOLVED* that –

(i) Arrangements be made for councillors to be supplied with the necessary information for them to include in their ward leaflets, together with the list of local suppliers of caddy liners;

(ii) The next report from the Task and Finish Group to be presented to this Panel in March 2014 to be based on potential future options, including but not exclusively, the Waste Strategy, encouragement of an Anaerobic Digester for Colchester.

*RECOMMENDED* to Cabinet that the work of the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group be acknowledged and the Group be given authority to continue its work to assist the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste in important issues for the delivery of the waste and recycling service in the future.

## **16. Work Programme 2013 -14**

The Panel considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive setting out the current Work Programme for the Panel for 2013-14.

The Work Programme has been updated since the meeting of the Panel held on 5 August 2013 to reflect the decisions that were made in relation to the deferral of the 20 mph Speed Limit Task and Finish Group Update to the meeting in November 2013 and for an update from the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group to be submitted to this Panel's meeting. In addition, following the Chairman's suggestion regarding the issue of Fracking, a request has been formally submitted to Cabinet to consider the merits of a report being provided to a future meeting of the Panel giving details on the process and its implications for Colchester.

It was noted that a further report on the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group would be submitted to the meeting in March 2014.

*RESOLVED* that the current situation regarding the Panel's work programme for the year be noted.

4<sup>th</sup> November 2013

|                       |                                    |               |                       |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Report of</b>      | <b>Head of Commercial Services</b> | <b>Author</b> | <b>Paul Wilkinson</b> |
| <b>Title</b>          | <b>Transportation Review</b>       |               | <b>☎ 282787</b>       |
| <b>Wards affected</b> | All Wards                          |               |                       |

**This report concerns the panels review of the Council's transportation policy**

## 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To consider the issues presented in the report, together with any further information presented to the Panel by the various guests who have been invited to attend the meeting and to make relevant recommendations to Cabinet.

## 2. Reasons for Consideration

- 2.1 Colchester has a number of statements on transport in various plans and documents, including, the Local Plan Core Strategy 2008, the Local Investment Plan, the Integrated County Strategy, and the Essex Local Transport Plan 2011. This report will enable them to be brought together.
- 2.2 Various Colchester Panels and Committees have considered specific transport issues over the last few years e.g. public transport, park and ride, cycling strategy and town centre traffic reduction. This panel review is an opportunity to consider the subject as a whole and in more detail.
- 2.3 There are strategic issues that need to be addressed which are related to transport – e.g. impact on health, impact on economy, impact on the built and rural environment and social inclusion.
- 2.4 Funding for larger scale projects has come through the Integrated County Strategy and small scale projects through the Local Highway Panel. The South East Local Enterprise Partnership also has funding to allocate for major transport projects.
- 2.5 Funding has been sought for infrastructure and initiatives, including the new A12 junction, construction of the Northern Approaches Road phase 3, relocation of the bus station, support for new bus services, Cycle Town, investment in the railway stations, a commitment to the Colchester Travel Plan Club, traffic reduction in the town centre and promotion of car sharing to help address air quality issues and contribution and support of the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership. Further funding will be sought for all modes of transport. Colchester's forthcoming Park and Ride scheme is currently the subject of a submission to the Department of Transport (DfT).
- 2.6 The current Local Plan land use policies are urban centric locating development close to existing opportunities such as employment, education, health, leisure, and retail. This approach is supported by transport policies which cover changing travel behaviour,

walking and cycling, public transport, road infrastructure and parking. The core strategy includes a list of infrastructure to support development. Policies are set in more detail in the Development Policy and Site Allocations Documents.

- 2.7 The Local Plan Committee has commenced the review of the local plan and transportation features within the current documents that will be reviewed. The Panels deliberations and recommendations will contribute to that review.

### **3. Issues for Consideration**

- 3.1 The following main themes have emerged for consideration:

- Current transport policies
- Movement Patterns
- Future Scenarios (including land use issues)

A series of questions has been set out in section 6 of this report to aid discussion

### **4. Invited Guests**

- 4.1 The following guests have been approached and accepted an invitation to attend the meeting to assist councillors' in their discussions:

- David Burch from Essex Chamber of Commerce
- Kris Radley from Sustrans
- Nick Shuttleworth from Essex Rural Community Council
- Noel James from Historic Towns Forum

- 4.2 The Panel will receive an overview from the Transportation Policy Manager setting out the Council's policy approach, which will illustrate changes in travel movements using National, Regional and Local data.

- 4.3 Each guest has been asked to briefly outline to the Panel transportation issues from their organisation's perspective.

- 4.4 A series of potential future looking questions have been set out in section 6. There will be opportunities for questions from Councillors and discussion after the overview and again following each guest's contribution.

### **5. Transportation Movement Overview**

- 5.1 The detailed research for this report is set out in the appendix. Much of the report is based around data published in the National Travel Survey, the Census, ECC Travel Diary, ECC and DfT traffic counts. Where possible local data has been used to illustrate local issues

- 5.2 Nationally, the growth of car traffic has slowed. This slowing has been occurring for the last decade prior the recent recession. It appears that reduced company car use is the main reason for the reduction. Rail movements have increased significantly since 1995. Understanding the reasons behind the changes and forecasting of future movements is complex not least because there are places where traffic counts have shown growth.

- 5.3 European research suggests car traffic will continue to dominate movement patterns – Car travel would still dominate even if it fell by back to the level in 1990 which would represent a 20% reduction.
- 5.4 The total time spent travelling has remained constant but the length of journey has increased, with a reduction in walking trips. Driving licence holding is now creeping up slowly, and it is not known whether people who are not taking up driving licences will do so in the future especially with the increasing running cost of a car, including higher insurance. Disposable incomes could also have a factor in this lack of growth. It is known that incomes of those in the younger age groups have not increased as much as those in the older working age group.
- 5.5 In the urban areas the traffic has not grown as expected even though development and population growth has occurred in the urban area. On the inter-urban network, traffic stills appears to be growing but fluctuates widely. This suggests that both the urban and interurban networks are at capacity at certain times when people most want to travel. Working at home seems to have increased, but it appears not enough people have the flexibility or wish to change their travel patterns. The way in which people buy certain goods is changing with increased use of the internet.
- 5.6 Peak spreading has not occurred as expected, which probably reflects that working patterns and school times have changed very little over time.
- 5.7 Obesity is on the increase and it is recognised that increasing sedentary life styles and reduction in “active” travel patterns is part of the problem and could have a significant impact on the economy.
- 5.8 There is a lack of local travel data over a long time period. The Census is a 10 yearly snapshot of only travel to work patterns. The national travel survey is annual but does not have a big enough local sample. Traffic data only provides part of the picture.

## **6 The Future and Discussion**

- 6.1 Forecasting future travel behaviour at this time appears to be more complex than in the past due to a range of factors. Transport does not exist in isolation. Efficient transportation systems support the economy, minimise their impact on the environment and respect the needs of all of society. Future land use planning has an impact on transport movements.
- 6.2 Taking into consideration the information presented below is a set of questions to aid discussion:
  - 1. If the only growth in travel is going to come from population growth, and we see no change in how people travel but more people trying to do the same as now, what impact will this have?
  - 2. The economy has developed based around the car. If there is no growth in the use of the car how does the economy grow?
  - 3. The use of non-car modes is small in comparison with car use, how do you minimise the impact of car transport on the environment?
  - 4. The cost of car purchase has fallen in real terms but there is now evidence that the poorest sections of the community are in “transport poverty” and are spending 25% of their disposable income on transport. How do you ensure that they still have



access to jobs as well as other facilities such as health, education, recreation and shopping?

5. If older people are “not interested in driving” and younger people find driving too expensive what will be the people’s demand for transport in the future? How will businesses respond to a part of society that doesn’t wish to drive a car but still have valuable employment skills?
6. The transport impacts in urban areas are significant. How do you address these impacts to :
  - Maintain and support the existing locations of economic strength e.g. the town centre
  - Improve personal health
  - Minimise the impact on the environment.
7. With a decline in the use of buses for work and more people in rural areas continuing to drive, how do you ensure those who do not have access to a car have access to goods and services?
8. Traffic congestion is only part of the impact of transport on society, with health, air quality and accidents being significant costs. What policies and programmes need to be pursued to address these issues?
9. Land use planning and regeneration have key roles to play in future local travel patterns and ensuring that new developments are well connected to existing and future opportunities.
  - Urban centric land use patterns give people greater modal choice and opportunity to travel less but the urban area is also where traffic congestion regularly occurs.
  - Dispersed land use patterns have a tendency to spread travel across the network but the access to opportunity is less and the mode choice limited to, in the main, the car.
  - Reductions in disposable incomes will push up demand for more urban centric development.
10. How should development policies respond and deal with these issues in the future?

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

- 7.1 This report and discussion will help the borough in developing future policies. The strategic plan overarching vision for the Borough is “Colchester, the place to live, learn, work and visit.” Transportation addresses the following priority areas in the Strategic Plan:
  - Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure
  - Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion
  - Improving our streets and local environment
  - Bringing investment to the borough

## **8 Standard References**

- 8.1 There are no particular references to the publicity or consultation considerations; or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

## **Background Papers**

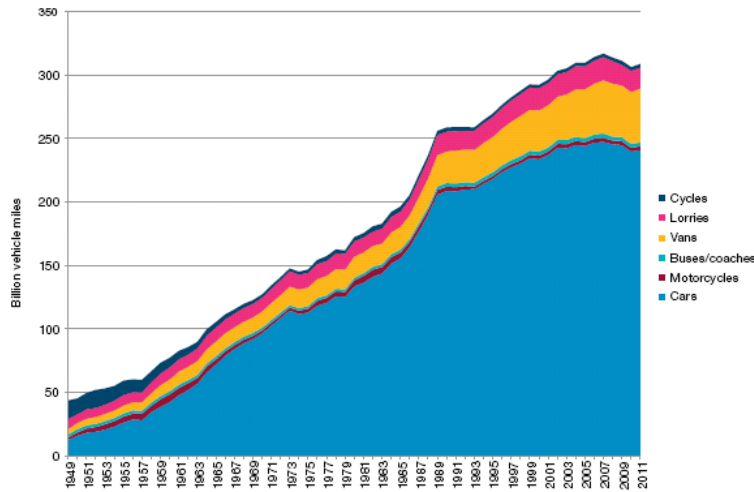
Referenced in report

**APPENDIX**  
**Transportation Review**

**Detailed Research - Transport Movements**

- Travel across the country has grown considerably in the post war era. Road traffic growth has grown massively in the post war consumer era with growth in the use of the car now dominating all other modes. This is shown in Figure 1. Rail usage had also remained fairly level until around 1995 but has grown rapidly over the last fifteen years (see Figure 2).

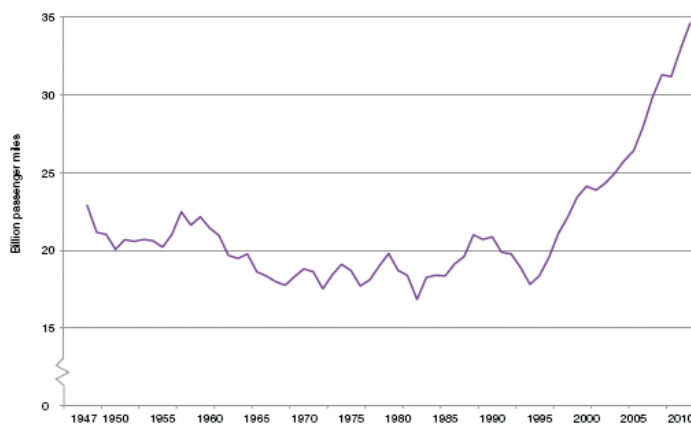
Figure 1 - Growth in Road Traffic 1949 to 2011



Source: Department for Transport (2012c)

- The growth in use of the car was steady throughout the 1950s and 60s with a slight “stall” in growth in the early 1970s in line with the oil crisis of the time. Growth in car use then rose again with a sharp increase in the late 1980’s but stalled again before picking up in the mid 1990s but at a slower rate than before. Car use appeared to plateau from just after the turn of the century. The RAC Foundation report “On the Move” suggests that this is in the main due to a reduction in use of company cars as changes in national taxation policy on the use of company cars especially the removal of free use of fuel for personal use began to bite. Travel by van and lorries has increased in the last two decades. Travel by bus/coach and motorcycle has remained fairly constant, albeit at a fairly low level. Cycling has seen significant drop over the period.

Figure 2 - Growth in Rail use 1947 to 2010



Source: Department for Transport (2012b)

- 3 There has been a 70% growth in rail passenger mileage from 1995 to 2010. This is in contrast to what has happened with car travel albeit at a lower level. More people are making more trips by train rather than making longer trips.

### Car Ownership and Licence holding

- 4 Post war consumerism has seen a significant increase in car ownership levels, with the availability of “cheap finance” and the reducing cost of motoring relative to other modes. Major post war road building programmes – construction of the Motorway network, bypasses of towns, such as Colchester on the trunk road network, supported this growth through “predict and provide” type policies.
- 5 The proportion of “no car households” is decreasing whilst those with two or more cars is on the rise. The Census data for Colchester shows the following levels of ownership by household.

Table 1 Changes in Car ownership by household:

| Colchester              | 2001  | 2011  |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| No car                  | 21.1% | 20.6% |
| One car/van             | 44.9% | 43.8% |
| Two cars/vans           | 26.7% | 27.4% |
| Three cars/vans         | 5.6%  | 6%    |
| Four or more cars/vans  | 1.7%  | 2.3%  |
| Cars/Vans per household | 1.23  | 1.26  |
| Car/Van per 1000 people | 501   | 523   |
| Ons Census              |       |       |

- 6 There has been a decline in households with no car ownership and one car with small increases those owning two or more cars. There has also been a corresponding increase of car/vans per head of population.
- 7 Not unsurprisingly in line with car ownership driver licence holding has also increased.

Table 2 - Full driving licence holders

| East of England        | 1995/97 | 2011/12 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|
| All aged 17+           | 74%     | 78%     |
| Male                   | 86%     | 85%     |
| Female                 | 62%     | 71%     |
| National Travel Survey |         |         |

- 8 In the East of England the proportion of those with a full driving licence has increased with the biggest growth in the period being female drivers. The proportions for all aged 17+ in Essex is similar to that in the East of England.
- 9 Looking at long term national trends from 1975 to 2000 there was an annual increase of around 1%. For the next 10 years growth in full licence holding has slowed to around 0.3% increase per annum.
- 10 The main reasons (National Travel Survey) for this slowing are given as:
- The cost of learning to drive (mainly those below 39 years old)
  - Reliance on lifts from friends or family when necessary (across all age groups)
  - Not interested (mainly those above 40 years old)
- 11 The cost of insurance is also identified by those in the 17 to 20 age group.

- 12 Licence holding in rural areas is 15% higher than the national average. In medium urban areas (population 25k to 250k) it is 6% less than the national average.
- 13 The following tables set out information about the number of trips, time and length over time. Table 3 gives national data back 40 years, table 3a is Essex data going back 10 years.

Table 3 - Trip Length and time

| National                  | 1972/73 | 1995/97 | 2012 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|------|
| Trips per person per year | 956     | 1086    | 954  |
| Average time (mins)       | 22.2    | 20.4    | 22.7 |
| Average length (miles)    | 4.7     | 6.4     | 7.0  |
| National Travel Survey    |         |         |      |

Table 3a - Trip Length and time - Essex

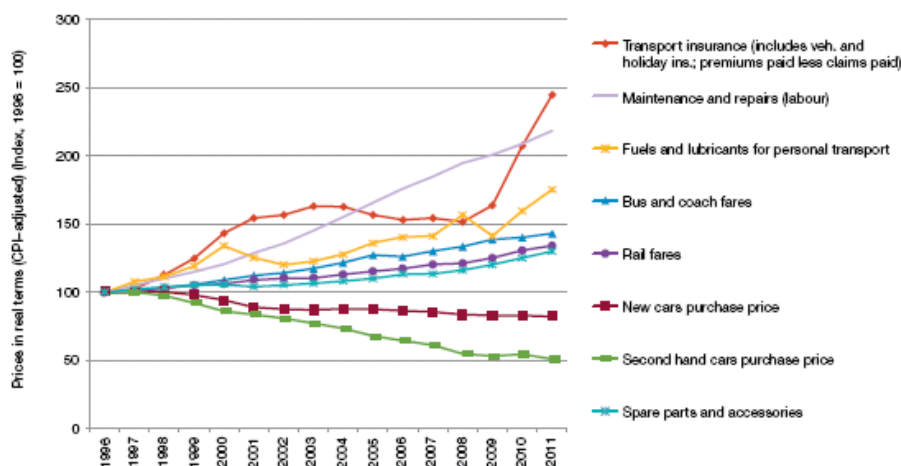
| Essex                      | 2002/04 | 2007/09 | 2010/12 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Trips per person per year  | 1035    | 971     | 930     |
| Average time (mins)        | 23      | 24      | 24      |
| Distance Travelled (miles) | 8,288   | 8,414   | 8,009   |
| Average length (miles)     | 8       | 8.7     | 8.6     |
| National Travel Survey     |         |         |         |

- 14 Within Essex there has been a 10% reduction in the number of trips (nationally it has remained static). The average time for each trip has remained fairly constant and it appears on average people will only spend an hour a day travelling.

## Relative Cost of Transport

- 15 A controlling factor on how people travel is the cost of each mode. How we pay for the different modes can affect people's perceived cost of transport, especially public transport where the purchase of a ticket is more obvious than the cost of running a car. Changing the rules on use of company cars has also made the cost of running a car more apparent to the user.

Figure 3 - Relative cost of transport 1996-2011



Source: ONS (2012)

- 16 The cost of purchasing a new or second hand car has dropped since 1996, but the costs of running a car have increased. The cost of train and bus fares has risen over time. The increased cost of car running and public transport costs have a disproportionate impact on those on lower incomes with less disposable income. There is emerging evidence that personal travel may now be closely related to levels of disposable income rather than increases in gross domestic product.

## Personal Health

- 17 The Department of Health report Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on Obesity in England (2011) sets out that obesity is on the increase in this country. This ultimately would result in an increase in future health problems especially type 2 diabetes, risk of heart attacks, stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure, and cancer of the colon.
- 18 The cost of this on society is significant. It has been estimated that the costs of overweight and obesity to society and the economy were almost £16bn in 2007 (over 1% of GDP).
- 19 The Department of Health report supports the promotion and use of active travel programmes to help address obesity, including measures to promote less use of the car such as cycle training and more walking.
- 20 From the 2013 Health Profile for Colchester 18% of year 6 school children and 24% of adults are considered obese. These are slightly better than the average values for England.
- 21 Analysis undertaken by the Government Cabinet office in 2009 published in "An Analysis of Urban Transport" suggested that the transport cost of physical inactivity cost society £9.8bn. The cost of congestion was estimated to be £10.9bn in urban areas. There are

other transport impacts in urban areas that were costed including accidents, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and noise. Congestion was calculated to be only a third of the total transport related costs. These values are dominated by London and the larger cities but demonstrate that in urban areas transport costs are more than just congestion we experience everyday.

## Local Travel Data and Forecasting

- 22 The following data uses local data either taken from the census, the Colchester travel diary and traffic counts. There are limitations with the data e.g. limited survey, only a one off survey, focus on vehicles but need to be taken as a whole.

Table 4 - Colchester Travel to Work Data by Mode 1991, 2001 v 2011 Census

| Colchester                           | 1991 | 2001  | 2011  |
|--------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|
| Work mainly at or from home          | 4%   | 9.2%  | 10.4% |
| Underground, metro, light rail, tram | 0    | 0.2%  | 0.2%  |
| Train                                | 6%   | 6.9   | 7.5   |
| Bus, minibus or coach                | 8%   | 6.1%  | 5.6%  |
| Taxi                                 |      | 0.4%  | 0.3%  |
| Motorcycle, scooter or moped         | 2%   | 1.1%  | 0.8%  |
| Driving a car or van                 | 55%  | 55.3% | 54.6% |
| Passenger in a car or van            | 8%   | 5.7%  | 5.0%  |
| Vehicle Occupancy Rate               |      | 1.1%  | 1.1%  |
| Bicycle                              | 5%   | 4.3%  | 3.9%  |
| On foot                              | 11%  | 10.2% | 11.5% |
| Other method of travel to work       | 1%   | 0.7%  | 0.4%  |
| ONS Census data                      |      |       |       |

- 23 The population of Colchester has increased over this period and there were some 96,000 employed people in Colchester at the time of the 2011 census compared with 72,000 in 2001. The mode share changes over 20 years of the census are relatively small.
- 24 Driving a car or van to work dominates the travel to work movement patterns in Colchester. The proportion of people driving to work has remained constant albeit a larger cohort. Car passenger, bus and cycling have dropped, whilst travelling by train has increased.
- 25 There are differences in the sampling for the 1991 and 2001 survey but it suggests that the biggest change is the proportion of people working at home – doubling over the period.

## Colchester Travel Diary

- 26 In July 2007 a Colchester Travel Diary was undertaken. It received 16,000 responses from people living in Colchester, generating 54,000 trips in the day. The travel diary gives a similar level of information to that in the National Travel Survey, but is only a one off survey. It is better than Census data as it covers more than just travel to work trips. A selection of the data is set out below.

Table 5 Mode share by different times of day

|                   | Morning Peak  |              | Evening Peak  |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
|                   | 06:00 – 09:00 | 11:00 -14:00 | 16:00 – 19:00 |
| Car               | 63%           | 64%          | 70%           |
| Walk              | 16%           | 19%          | 13%           |
| Train             | 6%            | 1%           | 5%            |
| Bus               | 5%            | 10%          | 5%            |
| Bike              | 4%            | 3%           | 4%            |
| Van               | 3%            | 2%           | 2%            |
| Motorcycle        | 1%            |              | 1%            |
| Taxi/minicab      |               | 1%           |               |
| Not given         | 2%            |              |               |
| Travel Diary 2007 |               |              |               |

- 27 The diary responses show a similar level of modal split to the census data especially for the morning peak hours. The car still dominates the mode share. Walking is higher as the travel diary survey also picks up combined trips e.g. the walk to the railway station. The share of bus use is higher during the middle of the day.

Table 6 Mode share by Area

| Mode              | Urban | Rural |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Car               | 62%   | 73%   |
| Walk              | 18%   | 12%   |
| Train             | 9%    | 5%    |
| Bus               | 3%    | 3%    |
| Bike              | 3%    | 3%    |
| Van               | 2%    | 2%    |
| Motorcycle        | 1%    | 1%    |
| Taxi/minicab      | 1%    |       |
| Not given         | 1%    | 1%    |
| Travel Diary 2007 |       |       |

- 28 The car again dominates the mode share, with higher levels of use in the rural areas. Walking and the use of the train is less in the rural area than the urban area. Other mode shares are similar between the urban and rural areas.

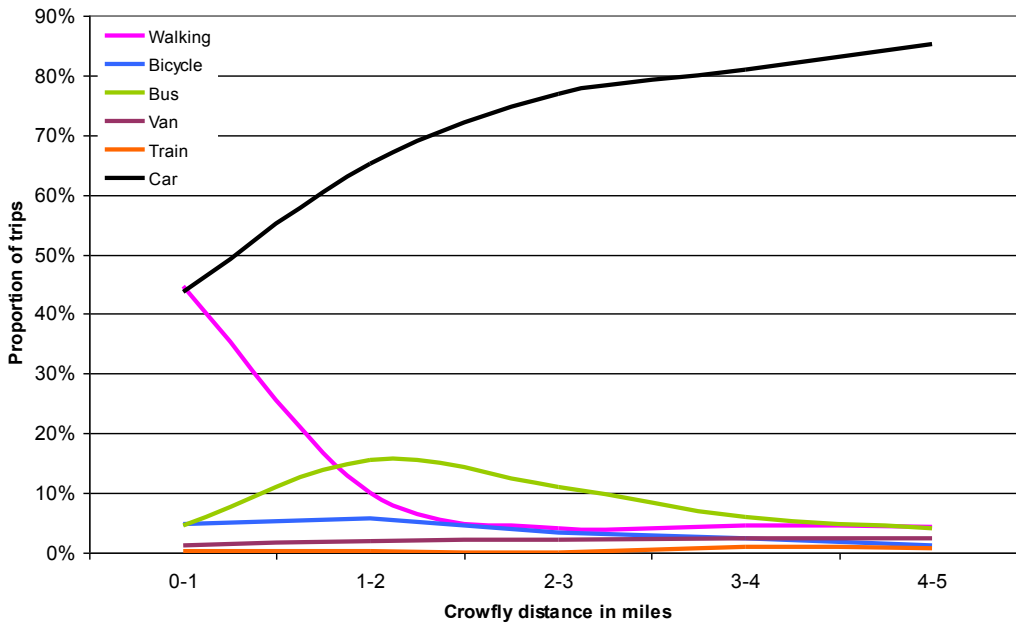
Table 7 Journey purpose throughout the day

| Journey Purpose                      | Morning Peak  |              | Evening Peak  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
|                                      | 06:00 – 09:00 | 11:00 -14:00 | 16:00 – 19:00 |
| Home                                 | 9%            | 36%          | 60%           |
| Usual place of work                  | 50%           | 10%          | 3%            |
| Visited shops/local services         | 9%            | 24%          | 9%            |
| Leisure Activities                   | 7%            | 14%          | 16%           |
| Escort someone to from school        | 9%            | 2%           | 1%            |
| Employers business                   | 5%            | 4%           | 1%            |
| Escort someone to from another place | 3%            | 3%           | 4%            |
| Collect deliver goods                | 2%            | 4%           | 2%            |
| Other                                | 2%            | 2%           | 1%            |
| Escort to/from work                  | 2%            |              | 2%            |
| Education                            | 2%            | 1%           | 1%            |
| Travel Diary 2007                    |               |              |               |



- 29 Not unsurprisingly in the morning peak half of the trips are to work. Every other purpose is less than 10%. The travel diary was aimed at those over the age of 16 and therefore did not include primary or secondary school students but does include trips where children are escorted to school. Some of the trips maybe combined. During the middle of the day there appears to be a better balance between trip purpose, with increase in shopping and leisure trips. In the evening peak the trip home dominates.
- 30 Analysis of the travel diary data revealed that in the urban area 70% of people live and work in the urban area. This generates many short trips in the urban area with about 60% of car trips being less than 3km (2miles), and 45% of car trips to work are under 1.5km (1mile).

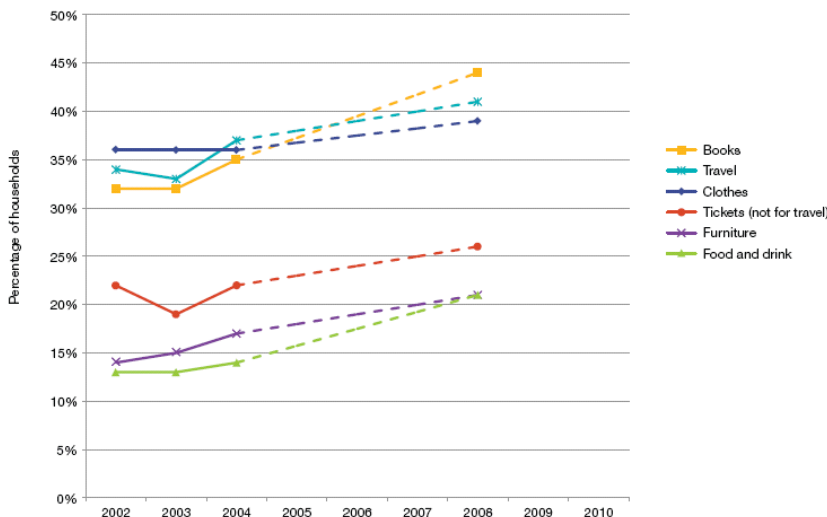
Figure 4 Distance of trips in the urban area by mode



### Phone or Internet Shopping

- 31 The national travel survey has asked “nowadays does anyone in your household (do you) ever order any of these things over the phone, by post or on the internet”. For a range of goods this activity has increased over the period.

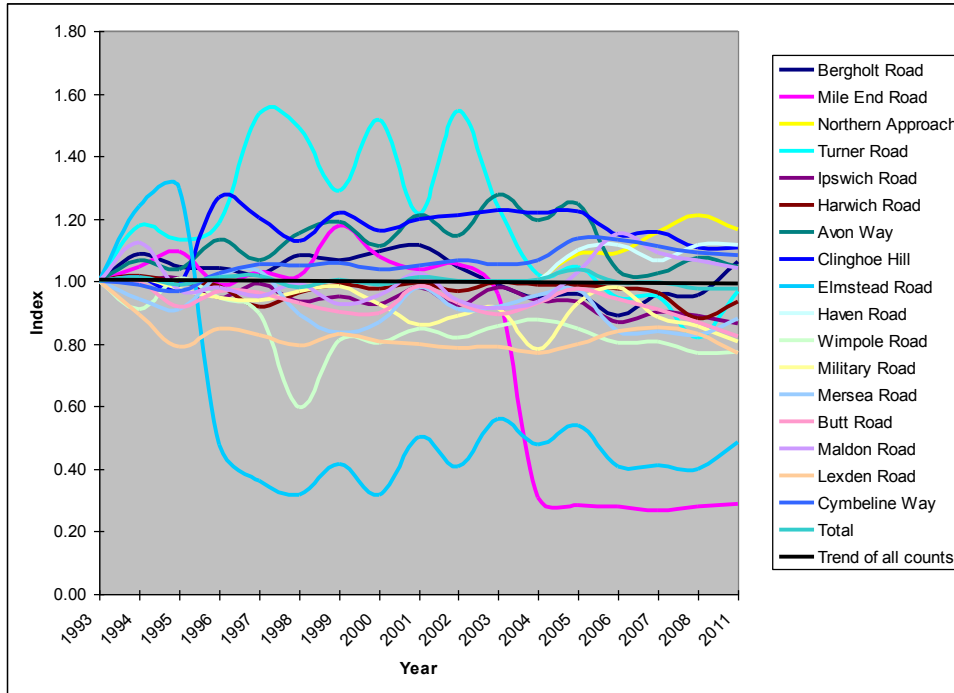
Figure 5 Changes in shopping patterns 2002 - 2008



## Traffic Patterns in Colchester

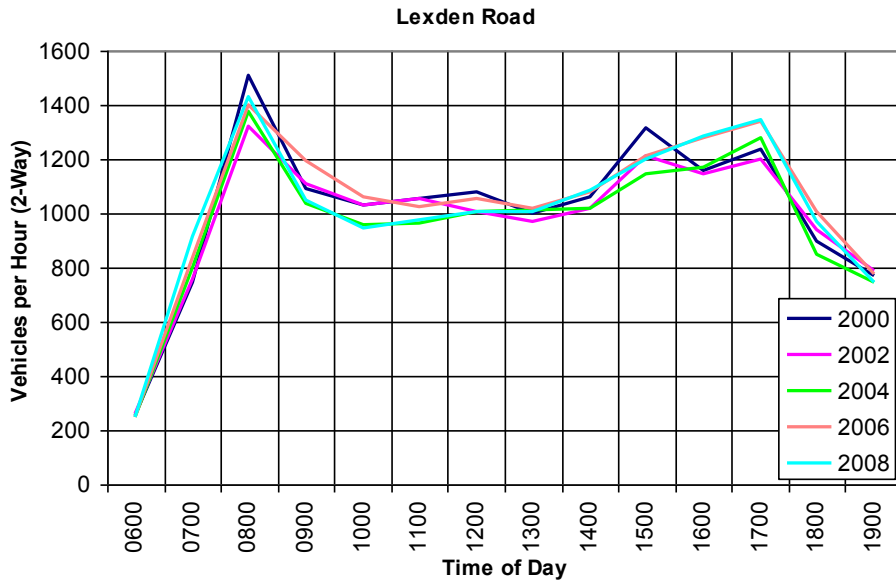
- 32 Car traffic dominates movement and using data from the Essex County Council Traffic Flow Monitoring reports and from the Department for Transport, the trends in Colchester can be compared to the national picture. Set out below is data for the local road network in the urban area and for the A12 trunk road – other trunk road data is available.
- 33 The limitations are that the regular counts are only undertaken in certain locations. There is little traffic data in the rural areas and in the south and west of the urban area.

Figure 6 Index traffic flows in Colchester urban area 1993 to 2011.



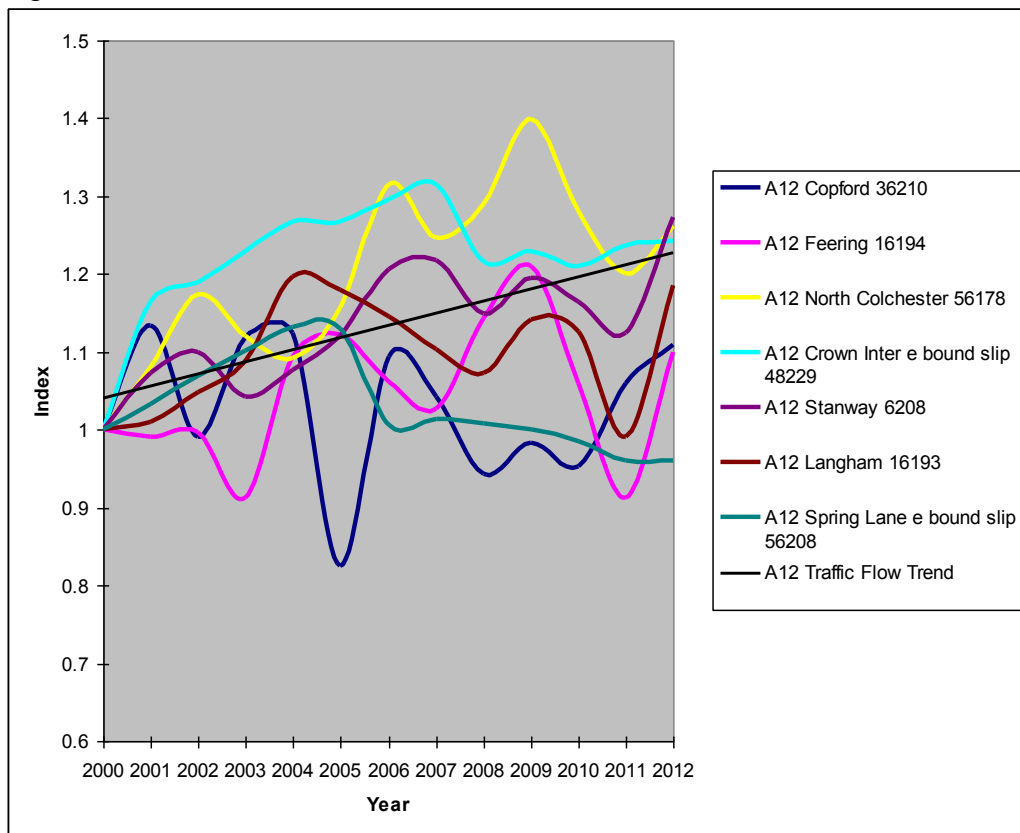
- 34 Figure 6 shows traffic flows in Colchester from 1993 through to 2011. The traffic counts have been indexed back to the 1993 value. The counts are all taken in the urban area around the town centre. The two roads which show significant drop are Elmstead Road to the University which was closed to through traffic in 1996, and Mile End Road when the Northern Approaches Road phase2 was completed. Traffic flows fluctuated on Turner Road and then dropped with the opening of the Northern Approaches Road.
- 35 The overall trend in traffic has been static in urban Colchester over the period. With the exception of the two roads referred to above the flows are within +/-20% of the flow in 1993.

Figure 7 Typical Profile of Traffic flow through Out the Day



36 The graph shows traffic flows along Lexden Road, with each coloured line representing a different year. The morning peak is around 8:00 with the evening peak at 17:00. There is also a mid afternoon peak at 15:00. General transport planning in the 1990s thought that as car ownership grew that traffic between the peaks would increase. This does not appear to have happened over time even though the population has grown.

Figure 7 Indexed Traffic Flows on the A12 2000 to 2012



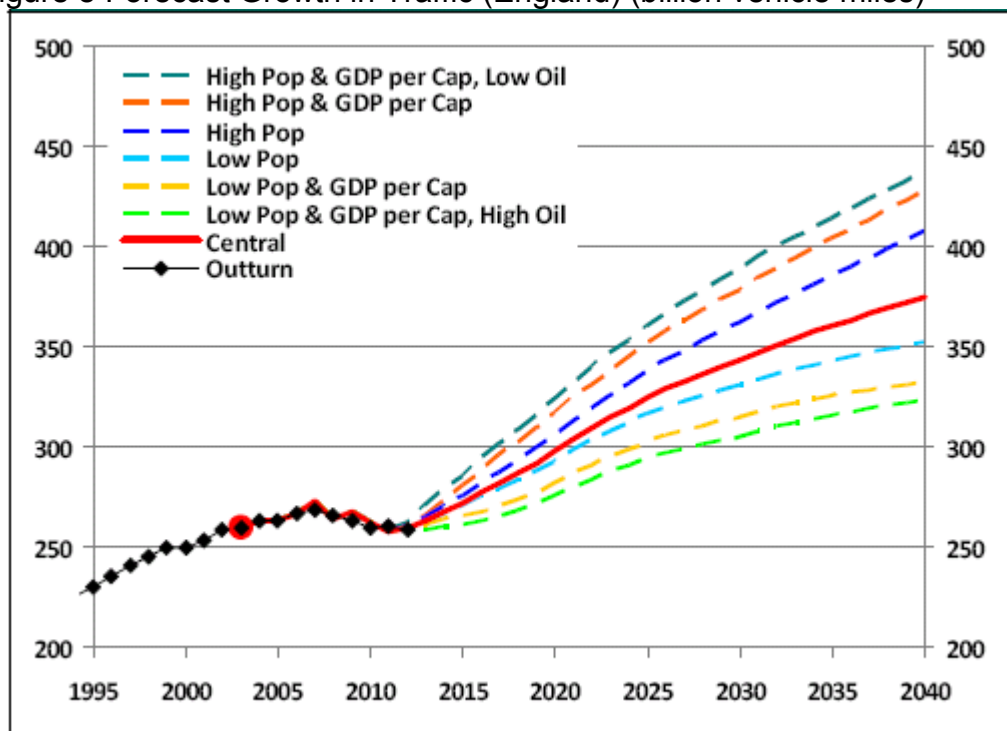
37 Figure 7 shows traffic flows on the A12 from 2000 through to 2012. The traffic counts have been indexed back to their 2000 value. The counts are taken at various locations on the A12, some are based on two way flows others on a single direction flow on a slip road.

- 38 Traffic flows on the A12 show growth over the period 2000 to 2012. Flows on the A12 on the three lane section in the Stanway area have been recorded as high as 92,500 vehicles per day. North of Colchester the flow is 59,000 vehicles per day.
- 39 The flows appear to fluctuate wildly and more analysis is required. The overall trend suggests a 20% level of growth in traffic over the period shown. This contrasts with the lack of growth in traffic in the urban areas.

**Department for Transport traffic forecasts**

- 40 The Dft has recently produced traffic growth forecasts for up to 2040. These forecasts assume that there is population growth, demographic changes, economic growth and changes in the cost of motoring. There is assumed to be no change in national government policy. The headline figure is that over the period 2010 to 2040 traffic will grow by 43% (an annual average growth of 1.4%).

Figure 8 Forecast Growth in Traffic (England) (billion vehicle miles)



- 41 In light of observations that traffic has not grown over the last 10 years these DfT forecasts have been criticised. Critics have suggested that they do not take into account what appears to have been happening with traffic over the last decade. The Dft did undertake sensitivity testing on their forecasts but believe growth will occur.
- 42 Modelling of traffic growth in the Colchester urban area (Colchester Area Saturn Model, AM and PM Forecasting Report, February 2010), including the housing and employment growth up to 2023 suggested an 18% growth in trips in the peak hours between 2007 and 2023 (an average growth of 1.1% per annum).



## Policy Review and Development Panel

Item

8

4<sup>th</sup> November 2013

|                       |   |               |                       |
|-----------------------|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Report of</b>      | <b>Head of Commercial Services</b>                                    | <b>Author</b> | <b>Paul Wilkinson</b> |
| <b>Title</b>          | <b>Update on the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Colchester</b> |               |                       |
| <b>Wards affected</b> | All Wards   |               |                       |

**This report concerns the potential introduction of 20mph speed limits in Colchester**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 Three delivery options have been considered for the implementation of 20mph speed limits in Colchester. Direction is required based on the delivery options outlined in Section 5. At this time it is recommended that a local request based approach is pursued to introduce 20mph limits in Colchester, via the Colchester Local Highway Panel.
- 1.2 A decision is also required on the future role of the Task and Finish Group.

### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 To progress the implementation of 20mph speed limits in Colchester following recent advice received from Essex County Council.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative options are set out in Section 5. In summary these are:
  - Strategic Approach covering all residential areas
  - Area-wide approach based on established zones
- 3.2 Options 1 and 2 are not currently deliverable within the scope of the policies set out by ECC, even though they may provide a more consistent approach and greater impact through consistency of speed limits.

### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Colchester Borough Council is keen to work with Essex County Council and Essex Police on the implementation of area wide 20mph speed limits in Colchester. The desire is to create a consistent approach to 20mph speed limits across the Colchester borough, especially in residential areas and areas where there are high levels of people movement.
- 4.2 The Essex County Council Colchester Local Highway Panel (LHP) discussed local communities' demand for the implementation of 20mph schemes, and who should fund such proposals. Following the August 2012 Local Highway Panel meeting, the Borough Council 20mph Task and Finish Group was reconvened. The group agreed its objective as follows:  
*"To implement 20mph speed limits in local communities which desire such limits, with benefits for road safety, social cohesion, promoting walking and cycling and community health."*

- 4.3 In June 2013 the Network Management Manager from Essex County Council attended the Task and Finish Group to outline guidance on the introduction of 20mph speed limits contained in the Essex Speed Management Strategy. It was explained that the guidance remained unchanged, and that areas wishing to introduce a 20mph speed limit should evidence a current average speed of no more than 24mph. The group was also advised that ECC would consider cases with a higher average speed of between 24mph and 29mph; if there was strong support of local residents and the County Councillor and financial backing from the Local Highway Panel. Speed surveys would be required before detailed plans could be developed. These would either be funded through the Local Highway Panel or local sources if available. Advice would be taken from ECC on the location of surveys.
- 4.4 Members were also advised that the 'Essex Local Highway Panel Terms of Reference and Members' Guide' had recently been published (July 2013) and this has a section on the assessment of 20mph schemes. The Guide is intended to aid LHP Members in prioritising and recommending schemes to the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation for approval.

## 5. Proposal

- 5.1 The following options have been considered for the delivery of 20mph speed limits in Colchester:
1. Strategic approach covering all residential areas over Colchester and the larger villages. We estimate that this would require all the Colchester Borough LHP funding for the year.
  2. Area-wide approach based on established sub areas e.g. zone teams – phased approach when funding is available (could be implemented over a few years depending on LHP funding).
  3. Local approach – driven by local requests for 20mph, with proposals securing funds from the LHP and other sources for speed surveys, and from the LHP for delivery.
- 5.2 The PR&D Panel recommended, and CBC Cabinet supported (December 2009), that a consistent approach to delivery needs to be adopted and cover as wide an area as possible, to increase effectiveness of 20mph limits. This is still CBC's preferred approach. However, the guidance from Essex County Council, including the LHP Members Guide, requires schemes to:
- Be funded through the LHP;
  - Have strong local support and the support of the local County Councillor;
  - Have mean speeds lower than 29mph following a satisfactory speed survey; and
  - Be self enforcing but without the use of physical measures.
- 5.3 The approach set out by the County Council does not lend itself to area-wide delivery. Based on the Essex County Council Policies and LHP Guide, and that Members' are keen to move forward with delivery of 20mph speed limits, it is recommended that Option 3 is pursued in order to deliver 20mph speed limits in Colchester at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.4 Schemes must have a strong level of local support. Consultation would therefore take place with local bodies (e.g. Parish Councils, Residents Associations, Neighbourhood Action Panels and Borough and County Councillors) to put forward schemes and gain strong local support for the proposed speed limit. It is also expected to be beneficial if a commitment is made locally to undertake enforcement using a "speed watch" type survey.

- 5.5 In bringing forward 20mph speed limits, the guidance set out in the Essex Traffic Management Strategy and the Essex Speed Management Strategy needs to be followed. The Essex Traffic Management Strategy defines the Functional Route Hierarchy which divides routes into County Priority 1 (PR1) and County Priority 2 (PR2) routes and Local Roads. These Strategies restrict 20mph speed limits to the local road network, although speed limits may be considered on PR2 routes following consultation with the Traffic Manager and the approval of the Cabinet Member. Our research suggests that there are a small number of PR2 routes which we believe should also be considered for 20mph to aid implementation. Further details of the Functional Route Hierarchy and the Speed Management Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.
- 5.6 The Speed Management Strategy states that ‘priority will need to be given to locations that demonstrate a collision saving and added benefits including improvements in quality of life and community benefits and encouragement of healthier and more sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling.’ This is in line with the Task and Finish Group objectives for 20mph.
- 5.7 The 20mph Task and Finish Group has been considering 20mph for a number of years and has informed the Policy Review and Development Panel, the CBC Cabinet and has been used by the Colchester LHP to help develop this report. It is felt the work of the 20mph Task and Finish Group is now complete and that it no longer needs to meet.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 Through the work of the Task and Finish Group, and the implementation of 20mph speed limits, the following objectives contained in the Strategic Plan 2012-15 will be met:
- Being Cleaner and Greener – reducing speeds will help remove a ‘perceived’ barrier to walking and cycling, and change driver behaviour to reduce vehicle emissions and noise.
  - Listening and Responding – the issue of speeding and road safety has been identified by local resident associations, neighbourhood action panels, parish councils and a range of interest groups.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Local Members would have to demonstrate they have strong support for 20mph speed limits in their area as required by Essex County Council LHP and policy guidance.

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 There is a need to manage expectations around what is deliverable and what is required from Essex County Council to deliver 20mph speed limits in Colchester.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no specific financial implications in this report on CBC.
- 9.2 Schemes will be submitted for funding through the Local Highway Panel budget. As 20mph schemes are put forward to the Local Highway Panel, decisions will be made by Local Highway Panel Members on prioritising schemes based on the Member Guidance. Speed surveys to determine whether a 20mph scheme is viable can also be funded through the Local Highway Panel, although these can be funded locally if funding is available.

## **10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 10.1 There is no specific equality impact arising from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of earlier work into 20mph. This is available on the [Commercial Services Equality Impact Assessment](#) page of Colchester Borough Council's website.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 Delivering 20mph speed limits in residential areas would improve the safety of residents from road accidents. This can be demonstrated through the research work undertaken for earlier reports on this subject.

## **12. Health and Safety Implications**

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 20mph limits proposals will have to be submitted to the Local Highway Panel for consideration. 20mph proposals will have to be prioritised against other locally identified projects. The budget for the Colchester Local Highway Panel is currently £1 million for 2013/14. The availability of funding will inevitably control the rate of delivery.



## Appendix 1: Essex Traffic Management and Speed Management Strategies

The Traffic Management Strategy, adopted by the County Council in 2005, identified and defined a Functional Route Hierarchy divided into County Routes and Local Roads. The County Routes provide the main traffic distribution function in any area and give priority to motorised users. The Traffic Management Strategy splits County Routes into Priority 1 and Priority 2.

Priority 1 (**PR1**) County Routes may be inter-urban or connecting routes, radial feeder or town centre access routes. What is important is the need to maintain free flowing traffic movement on them due to the function they perform within the network.

Priority 2 (**PR2**) County Routes are all those County routes which do not fall into the Priority 1 category.

The Traffic Management Strategy defines **Local Roads** as being non-County Routes, further subdividing into developed (generally residential) roads and rural (unclassified routes linking developed areas) roads.

Key points from the Essex Speed Management Strategy in relation to 20mph speed limits:

- Permanent 20mph speed limits will not be permitted on County PR1 Routes
- Permanent 20mph speed zones will not be permitted on County PR2 Routes but 20mph speed limits may be considered following consultation with the Traffic Manager and the approval of the Cabinet Member.
- 20mph speed limits may be considered on non-County Routes in areas where a high volume of non-motorised road users may be expected, such as in a residential area, near a school, near a local shopping area, or in special environments where the character of the carriageway and use of the area demands a reduction in speed.
- 20mph limits may be considered if the proposal has the support of the local community, Parish or Town Council, District Councillors and the Police

The County Council supports the introduction of 20mph zones and limits on the local road network and concurs fully with the comments that 'Successful 20mph zones and 20mph speed limits should be generally self-enforcing, i.e. the existing conditions of the road together with any measures such as traffic calming or signing, should lead to average traffic speeds compliant with the speed limit. To achieve compliance, there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity, unless this has been explicitly agreed.'

4 November 2013

|                |   |        |                           |
|----------------|---|--------|---------------------------|
| Report of      | Head of Community Services                    | Author | Andrew Harley<br>☎ 282880 |
| Title          | Equality and Diversity – Annual Update report |        |                           |
| Wards affected | All   |        |                           |

The Panel is asked to review this annual report on Equality and Diversity.

## 1. Decision Required

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to review progress made in meeting the Council's statutory duties and achieving its Equality and Diversity objectives, and also to endorse the approach set out at 7.1 below.

## 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The introduction of the Equality Act 2010 brought in a new Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This incorporated a general duty and specific duties, which included a legal requirement for the Council to publish a range of equality information by January 2012, and annually thereafter, and to publish its equality objectives by April 2012, and then at least every four years.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not applicable. It is important that the Panel has the opportunity to review the Council's approach towards meeting its Equality and Diversity objectives. Furthermore, the review itself supports the discharge of our statutory duties as it will contribute to evidence published on our website to show that we are meeting the general duty.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Appendix A provides examples of improvements and initiatives which have helped us to achieve our objectives in the area of Equality and Diversity.
- 4.2 Appendix B provides a case study to show in more detail the impact of a specific project or initiative.

## 5. What have we achieved in 2013?

- 5.1 The Act places a general duty on us to integrate consideration of the advancement of equality into our day-to-day business, and across all its functions. All councils, including their councillors and staff, must have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a ‘protected characteristic’ and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a ‘protected characteristic’ and those who do not.

The ‘protected characteristics’ are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but not for all aspects of the duty.

5.2 There is no tick box guide for Councils to follow that provides an easy mechanism to monitor progress. The [specific duties](#) within The Act require us to publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty and one or more objectives and we have continued to meet both of these requirements.

Key work undertaken to show compliance goes on within the Services and includes a range of activities to help and support people. Appendix A and B provide evidence of these activities.

Further, a report on the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (paragraph 6.4 below) endorsed the so-called “Brown principles” detailed in the case of R. (Brown) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions [2008], and accepted by courts in later cases. These are:

- Decision makers must be made aware of their duty to have ‘due regard’ to the identified goals.
- Secondly, the due regard duty must be fulfilled before and at the time that a particular policy is being considered by the public authority in question.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind.
- The duty imposed on public authorities ... is a non–delegable duty.
- The duty is a continuing one.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions in public authorities to keep an adequate record showing that they had actually considered their ... duties and pondered relevant questions.

Our practices reflect an active commitment to the above principles, especially through our continuing use of the Equality Impact Assessment process. Despite not being a legal requirement, we continue to view this process as an invaluable framework within which impacts upon the ‘protected characteristics’ can be consciously and systematically evaluated, and addressed, especially at a time when Public Sector resources are being cut so dramatically and our ability to assess and have regard to the impact of budgetary decisions on services is critical.

5.3 At an overall level, the evidence is published on the Council’s website and includes:

- [Equality Impact Assessments](#)
- The Council's [Strategic Plan](#) and its [Year End Performance Report](#) (including its Strategic Plan Action Plan).
- The Council’s website pages on [Equality and Diversity](#)
- The Council’s [equality information](#) section contains all required information
- Workforce statistics: [Equality monitoring information](#)
- Work undertaken by the Council’s [Research and Engagement](#) team about service users, customers and the borough’s population.
- The Council’s independent, external accreditation as an ‘[achieving](#)’ organisation under the Equality Framework for local government.

- 5.4 Please see Appendix A to see examples of specific improvements and initiatives, and Appendix B which provides a case study of a specific project or initiative.
- 5.5 Thus, in summary since last year's annual report, the Council has:
- met the specific duties for the second year; 2013 has required the publishing of equality information but has not required the setting of new equality objectives.
  - continued to address the general duty of “integrating consideration of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of public bodies, and across all its functions”.
  - made further progress towards meeting its equality objectives through its Strategic Plan Action Plan.

## 6. National Policy and Developments

- 6.1 The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act, which became law on 25 April 2013, has reformed the role of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Its role has been refocused upon its “core equality and human rights duties”, so that, for example, it no longer runs the ‘Equality Helpline’, nor does it deliver grants programmes activities. The aim of the reforms was stated to be to move “away from regulation, legislation and coercion” towards developing intelligent light touch common sense policies.”
- 6.2 New non-statutory [guidance](#) was published on the PSED by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in November 2012. It places emphasis upon the importance of embedding equality into decision-making processes, which is a continuous aim of the Council.
- 6.3 During the period since September 2012 new Census data has become available. Links to all available information are provided on the Council's website [here](#). The data provides useful evidence of changing demographics which can and does impact upon equality considerations.
- 6.4 During 2013, the Council has been waiting for the outcome of the review into the PSED. The review arose out of the government's ‘Red Tape Challenge’ and was established to examine whether the PSED was operating as intended. It was unclear whether it would remain the same and, in particular, whether there would be recommendations for changes to the general duty or specific duties. This could have affected the Council's legal obligations.

The independent Steering Group commissioned with conducting the review reported on 6 September 2013. The full report can be accessed on the ‘GOV.UK’ website [here](#). The report indicated that “a full evaluation of the PSED will be undertaken in 2016” as it is “too early to make a final judgement about its impact.”

The report recommended no changes to the Public Sector Equality Duty nor to (other areas of) the Equality Act 2010.

The report notes that “what amounts to ‘due regard’ depends on (the) particular circumstances and (that) only a court can confirm that a public body has had due regard in a particular case”. It goes on to state that “this uncertainty has on many occasions led

to public bodies adopting an overly risk averse approach to managing legal risk in order to rule out every conceivable possibility”.

The Council believes that its approach strikes an appropriate balance: it remains focused on continuing to integrate and embed equality considerations into the day-to-day running of Council business. It ensures that equality considerations are always considered, but that additional and proportionate resources will be allocated to the impact assessment process where a decision has particular relevance to equality considerations. This may involve the analysis of data and information from the Council’s extensive surveys and consultations, in concert with the Research and Engagement team.

- 6.5 On 6 September the Government announced a [consultation](#) on proposals for the further reform of the process of Judicial Review to run until 1 November. The measures proposed in the consultation include a new specialist “planning chamber” for legal challenges, involving expert judges using streamlined processes. Other areas under consideration include reform to the test for standing, which determines who is able to bring a review, and alternative ways of resolving disputes relating to the PSED.

## **7. Going Forward**

7.1 Going forward we therefore propose to:

- Encourage and support Council services in continuing to deliver practical improvements in terms of increased accessibility to our services. The Universal Customer Contact Fundamental Service Review is continuing and will further embed a customer-centric approach.
- Continue to use Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs). Although they are not legal requirements, the Council believes that the process they are part of is both flexible and robust; and that EqIAs remain the best available framework to ensure that equality considerations are consciously and systematically considered - and evidenced.
- Help to facilitate service run EqIA workshops in order to further develop officer skills, especially in the use of relevant data and information to make informed judgements.
- Continue to develop internal learning and development tools, including equality monitoring guidance for surveys and consultations, as part of the EqIA process.
- Use the Council’s Forward Plan to help allocate due priority to the key decisions listed there in order to better “integrate consideration of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of public bodies, and across all its functions”.
- Continue to further embed equality considerations into the Council’s day-to-day decision making processes.
- Maintain our commitment to Equality and Diversity despite the Council’s budgetary position. (See paragraph 14.1.)

## **8. Strategic Plan References**

- 8.1 The Council’s Strategic Plan runs from 2012-15 and therefore remains unchanged since last year’s annual report.
- 8.2 The Strategic Plan’s broad aims, with its equality objectives, continue to help ensure that all borough residents can expect a good quality of life, backed by a commitment to tackle discrimination and advance equality of opportunity.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1 The Council's equality objectives remain the same and have not therefore been subject to consultation during the past year.

## **10. Publicity Considerations**

- 10.1 The Council's approach to Equality and Diversity has the potential to affect everyone who lives, works or visits the borough. It can play a key role in the daily lives of individuals and communities by tackling prejudice, promoting understanding and advancing equality of opportunity.
- 10.2 The Equality Act asked all councils to provide a range of equality information by 31 January 2012, and then at least annually. The requirements are subject to change and development as specific guidance is issued to councils. We set up an [equality information](#) section on the Council's website to bring the required information together, along with other related content which may be of use or interest to customers, staff and councillors. This helps with openness and transparency, with everything 'in one place'.

## **11. Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The past 12 months have brought financial challenges, and decisions which have inevitably had significant 'equality impacts'. Welfare Reform changes were introduced in April 2013 following key legislation. It is important to understand that our obligation to have "due regard" to the three aims of the 'general duty' does not mean that decisions which have a disproportionate impact upon one or more 'protected characteristics' cannot necessarily be taken. The Council must nevertheless always seek to remove or reduce negative impacts, and it must be open and transparent in its decision-making. At such a time, it is more important than ever that the Council maintains its commitment to conducting detailed Equality Impact Assessments, underpinned by relevant information and data. The process provides a robust, but flexible, framework within which the Council has been able to fulfil its legal obligations.
- 11.2 The Council's approach must continue to be proportionate, with key decisions being given due priority. Equality Impact Assessments must be an integral part of the decision-making process when addressing changes to policies and practices. This is especially the case in times of reduced resources with rising expectations and customer demand.
- 11.3 Please also see paragraph 14 below as by meeting its legal obligations, the Council will also help to avoid the potential for significant financial claims.
- 11.4 The Council will take into full account comments of the recent Report on the Review of the PSED, namely, that "public bodies that treat the PSED as an "add-on" are likely to incur higher costs as a result", suggesting that an embedded approach is the most cost-effective option. The Council believes that it is also the best approach in terms of outcomes for customers and staff.

## **12. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications**

- 12.1 This report is an annual update about Equality and Diversity, and the Council's responsibilities in this area. Related information, including all Equality Impact Assessments, is published on the Council's website.

### **13. Community Safety and Health and Safety Implications**

- 13.1 The Council's approach to Equality and Diversity involves working with partners and communities to foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. Such an approach may impact positively on crime and disorder, and community safety issues such as hate crime, and the fear of crime more generally.
- 13.2 By meeting its legal obligations, the Council will help to ensure that employees do not suffer discrimination, harassment or victimisation. This will in turn create a safer working environment, and one which is consistent with the Council's Health and Safety policies.
- 13.3 Though not a 'core' agency, the Council nevertheless has responsibilities for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. In September 2012, to reflect the high priority given to the Council's second equality objective, 'protecting vulnerable groups', the Equality and Diversity Officer resource was combined with that of Safeguarding. This has allowed more effective links to be made across the organisation and between services, a process which is underpinned by the interrelationship between equality and safeguarding: Advancing equality can help to safeguard, just as preventing harm can help to advance equality of opportunity.

### **14. Risk Management Implications**

- 14.1 As an employer and provider of public services, the Council could face legal challenges from individuals or groups who have been unlawfully discriminated against, however unintended. Making sure that Equality Impact Assessments are prepared, published and considered as part of the decision-making process reduces this risk significantly.
- 14.2 Legal cases brought on grounds of discrimination do not have upper financial limits like those brought through employment tribunals. The Council must meet its responsibilities to ensure it does not discriminate, and this will also help to avoid the potential for significant financial claims.
- 14.3 There are risks to the Council's reputation and profile if the organisation does not demonstrate that it has understood and met its responsibilities under the equalities legislation currently in place.

### Key improvements and initiatives over the last year

#### Our Customers

- The Council has increased its funding to voluntary welfare organisations to over £230,000 in order to provide key services and help meet its strategic aims. This is despite the challenging economic climate, and reductions in Government grants to the Council. Funding was provided to the following organisations: Colchester CAB; Colchester Age UK; Colchester Emergency Nightshelter; Colchester Furniture Project; The Shake Trust; Grassroots; Rural Community Council of Essex; Colchester and Tendring Women’s Refuge; and Colchester Community Voluntary Service.
- Development gain monies, in the form of Community Section 106 funding has been used by the following organisations for structural and building projects: The April Centre; Colchester Community Voluntary Services; Colchester and Tendring Women’s Refuge; Colchester and Tendring Youth Enquiry Service; and Colchester YMCA. Projects have included accessibility improvements for people with disabilities. Voluntary welfare and ‘Section 106’ funding benefits ‘not for profit’ organisations that help the Council to meet its equality objectives and to discharge its legal duty under the PSED.
- The Council has supported Colchester’s ‘SOS Bus’ project through funding the purchase of medical and other equipment. The service is run by Open Road and gives practical and medical help and advice to young people who are sick, injured or vulnerable to other harm. It relies on 65 volunteers. The bus was used in the Night of Action in December 2012.
- The Life Team has continued to provide intensive support to some of the most disadvantaged families in the borough. Individuals with complex needs have been empowered through a commitment to sustained support and inter-agency expertise through the pilot project.
- By working with others to reduce crime and disorder, Colchester’s Community Safety Partnership has sought to help protect vulnerable groups and make individuals feel safer. Its many different activities have included three ‘Days of Action’ and one ‘Night of Action’ as well as Colchester’s Street Drinkers Outreach Project: The Council has funded an outreach worker to liaise with other agencies to target street drinkers who have not engaged with a 9 month pilot with information and support.
- Colchester’s Women’s Refuge helped 90 women and 128 children in 2011-12. During the last year, the Council provided specific resources to assist women fleeing domestic abuse with emergency expenses. Economic dependence has been recognised as one of the biggest barriers ending abuse, and this grant will help women to leave abusive relationships. In addition, funding has been agreed for a new Pet Fostering Scheme as it is known that improving provision for pets makes it more likely that victims of domestic abuse will move to a refuge.
- The Community Initiatives Team co-ordinated two “Crucial Crew” events in 2013: An event in April was designed specifically to help protect older people from a range of risks including those related to gas and fire safety, bogus callers, loan sharks and internet harassment. The event involved close partnership working between Essex Fire, CCVS, Trading Standards, Fall Prevention, Colchester CAB, Age UK, local schools and Essex Police.



- As in previous years, Crucial Crew for children was aimed at communicating key messages on safety in an entertaining format of several short, high-impact, presentations. This year it was held at the Western Homes Community Stadium and was attended by 1568 pupils from 24 different primary schools.
- A new Customer Support team based in Angel Court has been established to provide a wide range of support and advice to residents in receipt of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS). The team has individually contacted residents of the borough who are affected by these reforms, and has run community engagement and outreach events targeted at vulnerable groups. One such example was a community event targeted at young people aged 16-22 living in YMCA accommodation. Also in response to the challenge of welfare reform, the Discretionary Housing Benefit Scheme has been used to protect vulnerable adults, working in concert with a range of internal and external groups.
- The Keep Safe Scheme was extended to Colchester on 6 June 2013 to help ensure that people with a learning disability feel safe and confident outside their home. It also aims to counter harassment and bullying. Shops, businesses and other venues display a yellow “Keep Safe” sticker to show that someone carrying a “Keep Safe” can get assistance should they need it. The scheme employs a whole community approach involving Essex County Council, Essex Police and voluntary services. In October 2013 there were 22 host venues, and over 100 card-carrying members of the scheme.
- The Council chairs and hosts the Equality and Diversity sub-group for the Greater Haven Gateway. It helps to ensure that the work of the sub region complies with the Equality Act 2010 and it contributes towards its action plan. During 2012-13 it has used 2011 census population data to look at whether the ‘protected characteristic’ groups are over or under represented on the housing register and in lets to properties through the register.
- The Council continues to chair and host groups which help support vulnerable groups within the community. This includes the Essex Migrant Agencies Forum and the Colchester Older People’s Forum.
- A new Student Accreditation Accommodation Scheme was agreed in October 2012 following consultation with the National Landlords Associations. The scheme takes into account recent changes in law, and seeks to improve the quality and value of accommodation for this group. The scheme has 305 properties fully accredited - with at least 20 more coming on board.
- Colchester is a partner in the Essex Countrywide Traveller Unit (ECTU), the development of which heralds a step change in how the public sector works with the Gypsy and Traveller communities to enhance outcomes and promote equality. It aims to improve: fire safety on sites; education outcomes; access to GPs and dentists; and access to unmet care needs. The scheme was shortlisted for the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards in 2013. Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies are protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010 as they fall into the definition of the ‘protected characteristic’ of Race.
- Colchester residents are being encouraged to access cheaper home energy through a free collective switching scheme called the “Big Community Switch”. It is recognised that the people most vulnerable to fuel poverty, such as older people, are often the least likely to switch providers, and this scheme is aimed to help all residents but particularly the more vulnerable. Signpost resource centres and the Learning Shop are offering help improve IT skills to help people register.

- The Council has continued to commit additional funding to Disabled Facilities Grants. Despite an adverse financial climate, the Cabinet agreed an additional £200,000 in January 2013. This is in addition to the Government Grant which many councils do not supplement. The funding is often used for stair-lifts or extensions, and will allow many people with disabilities to continue to live independently in their home.
- A Joint Working Protocol has been agreed between the Council and Essex Social Care to help prevent homelessness for 16 and 17 year olds who are seen together by a Housing Officer and social worker to help assess, and meet, needs in partnership.
- The Natural History Museum ‘community garden project’ offers adults with learning disabilities and young people the opportunity to socialise and grow in confidence in addition to creating a green space in their community.

### Our Internal Policies and Communications

- All policies have an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), which is published on the website and all public reports make appropriate reference to equality, diversity and human rights implications.
- In June 2013, ‘Commercial Services’ facilitated its own EqIA workshop to pool resources and expertise on three key assessments. This drew on relevant information and data to reach informed judgements on equality impacts. This ‘service’ initiative reflects well an integrated, embedded, approach to Equality and Diversity. This will be followed by a further EqIA workshop in December to be run by ‘Professional Services’.
- A range of accessibility options are available on Council web pages and forms. These include the Google Translate feature, which provides a real benefit to people who do not have English as a first language; also included is the “BrowseAloud” enabled feature, which can be of particular benefit to people with a visual impairment or who are dyslexic, whose main feature is allowing text to be read aloud for free from a Smartphone, Tablet, PC or Mac.
- The Council holds quarterly ‘Diversity Steering Group’ meetings to give continued prominence to the equality agenda at a senior level, as well as to help embed best practice and monitor the equality impact assessment process.
- Staff have continued to support and attend a number of local and regional groups linked to supporting customers and services that fall within the protected characteristic groups.
- A new summary of key information on Equality and Diversity including our legal duties been provided specifically for the Enterprise Programme Management Office (EPMO).
- A new summary of key information and data (including estimates where relevant) on the ‘protected characteristics’ in Colchester borough has been made available to staff on the Hub. This will mean that borough wide data is readily available for officers carrying out Equality Impact Assessments.

### Our Workforce

- Face-to-face induction training for all new staff has continued, and now incorporates key safeguarding messages to reflect the interrelationship between equality and safeguarding. Training always places due emphasis upon organisational responsibilities towards staff, and inter-staff obligations in terms of anti-discrimination and anti-harassment.
- Published equality data on our staff has become more comprehensive during the past 12 months. For example, available data on sexual orientation has increased for current permanent staff from 76% (2010-11) to 97.5% (2011-12) coverage. Such data helps the Council to ensure that its practices are non-discriminatory, which helps protect staff and assists the organisation in meeting its 'specific duties'.
- There has been a continuous review of our Human Resources policies, including our flexible approach to working, approach to health and wellbeing, and treating each other with dignity and respect.
- The Council is part of the 'Positive about Disabled People' Scheme – This means that if an applicant for a job meets the essential criteria for the role as set out in the Person Specification document, he or she will be automatically shortlisted.
- A staff union representative sits on the Diversity Steering Group to both bring forward equality issues and concerns at a high level, as well as to feedback key messages, where appropriate, through union channels.

## **Customer Support Team – Local Council Tax Support**

### **Background**

As part of the national welfare reforms, Council Tax Benefit was replaced by Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) from 1 April 2013. LCTS is a new discount scheme for residents that are on a low income. Under this new scheme the maximum amount of financial support residents of working age can receive has reduced from 100% to 80%. For Colchester Borough Council this means an additional 7,500 residents have to pay some or more Council Tax than they did before.

A new Customer Support team based in Angel Court is focusing on providing a wide range of support and advice to residents in receipt of LCTS. The team is being supported by Cheryl Pashley, Behaviour Change Coordinator and Jason Granger, Customer Co-ordinator, and consists of Customer Support Officers Sharon Peacock, Denise Pearson and Jackie Pace, as well as a Customer Support Money Management Officer Mark Lucas.



Since June, the team have been proactively contacting residents affected by the change to LCTS, and have also run community engagement and outreach events targeted at vulnerable groups or those with protected characteristics.

### Supporting young adults through welfare reform

An example of the support provided to our community through the Customer Support team can be highlighted by the partnership working the team initiated with Colchester YMCA. Tenants of the YMCA are young adults who have been homeless or have experienced a risk of homelessness. They are generally on a limited income and may come from challenging social backgrounds. They are managing such issues whilst also managing the transition to adult independence.

#### Key benefits

Led by Denise Pearson, Customer Support Officer, the Customer Support Team conducted YMCA staff training which facilitated:

- Increased YMCA support staff awareness of welfare reforms and the requirements for tenants to pay a proportion of their council tax liability.
- The building of resilience in the community - Tenant enquiries can now be dealt with by the YMCA staff themselves without referral to CBC.

The Customer Support Team then conducted tenant 'drop-in' sessions at the YMCA which allowed:

- Individual tenants to understand why they are required to pay a proportion of their Council Tax and how the scheme works.
- Individual tenants to understand the importance of maintaining such payments and what would happen if they defaulted.
- The Customer Support Team to understand individual issues and react in a bespoke way to the customer by, for example, setting up flexible arrangements, applications to discretionary funds and signposting to relevant agencies.
- The avoidance of formal enforcement action.

#### Key outcomes

The following outcomes can be reported:

- High take up for YMCA tenants in respect of discretionary assistance.
- All accounts are monitored monthly to allow for additional early intervention if needed.
- Good levels of payments are being achieved
- Clear line of referral between the YMCA and the customer support team in place to deal with and resolve any ongoing issues.

#### Conclusion

A key task of the Customer Support Team is to support the more vulnerable groups in our community. Council Tax reform does affect those of working age and as such the team identified a protected characteristic being age. Within this protected characteristic are more vulnerable groups such as young adults in supported housing. By early identification of this group of customers, with such protected characteristics, allowed for support to be put in place which has led to wide reaching benefits for this customer group and Colchester Borough Council.

4 November 2013

|                       |                                  |               |                       |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Report of</b>      | <b>Assistant Chief Executive</b> | <b>Author</b> | <b>Amanda Chidgey</b> |
| <b>Title</b>          | <b>Work Programme 2013/14</b>    |               | <b>☎ 282227</b>       |
| <b>Wards affected</b> | Not applicable                   |               |                       |

This report sets out the current Work Programme 2013/2014 for the Policy Review and Development Panel.

## 1. Decisions Required

- 1.1 The Policy Review and Development Panel is asked to note the current situation regarding the Panel's work programme for 2013/14.

## 2. Alternative options

- 2.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference and, as such, no alternative options are presented.

## 3. Introduction

- 3.1 The terms of reference for the Panel involve reviewing and making recommendations on strategies and policies at the request of the Cabinet or a portfolio holder and making recommendations back to Cabinet for decision. In addition the panel can proactively identify issues requiring review and, accordingly, seek Cabinet's agreement as to whether and how they should be examined.
- 3.2 The Panel's work programme will evolve as the Municipal Year progresses and items of business are commenced and concluded. At each meeting of the Panel, the opportunity is taken for the work programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Work Programme has been updated since the meeting of the Panel held on 16 September 2013 to reflect the decisions that were made at the meeting in relation to a further report on the Waste and Recycling Task and Finish Group which would be submitted to the meeting in March 2014.

## 5. Strategic Plan References

- 5.1 The Council recognises that effective local government relies on establishing and maintaining the public's confidence, and that setting high standards of self governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead. Effective governance, of which the review and development of policy are parts, underpins the implementation and application of all aspects of the Council's work.

## **6. Standard References**

- 6.1 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations; or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

**Policy Review and Development Panel  
WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14**

|                                     |                              |                             |  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
|                                     | <b><u>17 June 2013</u></b>   | <b><u>5 August 2013</u></b> | <b><u>16 September 2013</u></b>                                  |
| <b>Policy Initiatives</b>           |                              | European Funding            | Behaviour Change<br>Economic Growth (including youth employment) |
| <b>Review of Corporate Policies</b> | Environmental Sustainability |                             |  |
| <b>Task and Finish Groups</b>       |                              |                             | Waste and Recycling // Update                                    |

|                                     |   |                                 |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
|                                     | <b><u>4 November 2013</u></b>           | <b><u>13 January 2014</u></b>   | <b><u>10 March 2014</u></b>             |
| <b>Policy Initiatives</b>           | Transportation Strategy                 | Market Strategy<br>Zone Working | Housing / Homelessness / Welfare Reform |
| <b>Review of Corporate Policies</b> | Equality and Diversity // Annual Report |                                 |   |
| <b>Task and Finish Groups</b>       | 20 mph speed limit // Update            |                                 | Waste and Recycling // Update           |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Task and Finish Groups</b>                    | <b>Membership 2013-14</b>   |
| Waste Prevention and Recycling Options Appraisal | Councillors Cope, Cory, Lissimore, B. Oxford, Willetts and J Young                |
| 20 mph   | Councillors Harrington, Lilley, G Oxford, L Sykes and Parish Councillor Gili-Ross |



