

Cabinet

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
27 January 2010 at 6.00pm**

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

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COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

27 January 2010 at 6:00pm

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

AGENDA - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

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

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

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

2. Urgent Items

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

3. Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Have Your Say!

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

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

5. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2009.

6. Call-in Procedure

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

7. Strategy/Resources and Business

i. 2010/11 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast

1 - 69

See report by the Head of Corporate Management and the minute of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel meeting on 26 January

2010 (to follow).

8. Culture and Diversity

i. Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2010/2011 70 - 83

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration

ii. Single Equality Scheme 84 - 173

See report by the Head of Corporate Management and the extract from the minutes of the Policy Review and Development Panel meeting on 11 January 2010.

9. Strategy

i. Housing Investment Programme 2010/2011 174 - 180

See report by the Head of Strategic Housing and Regeneration

ii. Half Yearly Performance Report and Progress Report on the Strategic Plan Action Plan 181 - 222

See report from the Head of Corporate Management

10. Resources and Business

i. Councillor Development 223 - 278

See report by the Head of Corporate Management

11. Performance and Partnerships

i. Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures 279 - 332

See report by the Head of Life Opportunities

12. General

i. Progress of Responses to the Public 333 - 337

To note the contents of the Progress Sheet.

13. Planning, Sustainability and Environmental

i. North Colchester - Business Incubation Centre: Construction Contract 338 - 342

To note the urgent decision taken by the Deputy Leader of of the Council in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 22

14. Exclusion of the Public

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

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET

27 January 2010 at 6:00pm

AGENDA - Part B

(not open to the public or the media)

Pages

15. Planning, Sustainability and Environmental

i. North Colchester Business Incubation Centre - Construction Contract

343 - 347

The following report contains exempt information (financial/business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

To note the urgent decision taken by the Deputy Leader of the Council in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 22

16. Culture and Diversity

i. VAF related issues

348 - 357

The following report contains exempt information (financial/business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. and The following report contains exempt information (claim to legal professional privilege) as defined in paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

To note the urgent decision taken by the Leader of the Council in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 22.



Cabinet

Item
7(i)

27 January 2010

Report of	Head of Resource Management	Author	Charles Warboys Sean Plummer ☎ 282350 ☎ 282347
Title	2010/11 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast		
Wards affected	n/a		

This report requests Cabinet to recommend to Council:

- **The 2010/11 Revenue Budget**
- **Colchester's element of the Council Tax for 2010/11**
- **Changes to the Capital Programme**
- **The Medium Term Financial Forecast**
- **The Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy**

1. Decisions Required

- 1.1 To note that the outturn for the current financial year is forecast to be underspent by £699k (paragraph 3.4.).
- 1.2 To approve the cost pressures, growth items and savings / increased income options identified during the budget forecast process as set out at Appendices B, C and D.
- 1.3 To consider and recommend to Council the 2010/11 Revenue Budget requirement of £25,670k (paragraph 7.1) and the underlying detailed budgets set out in the Background Papers.
- 1.4 To agree that Revenue Balances for the financial year 2010/11 be set at a minimum of £1,500k and that £671k of balances be applied to finance items in the 2010/11 revenue budget.
- 1.5 To agree the following releases (paragraph 11.9):-
 - £1,210k from the Capital Expenditure Reserve in 2010/11 to meet costs including the community stadium. Icelandic Investment impairment and legal costs in respect of the VAF.
 - £1,184k to be financed from the Renewals and Repairs Fund for specific projects
 - £70k from the S106 monitoring reserve
 - £166k from the Regeneration Reserve
- 1.6 To agree and recommend to Council that £100k of Revenue Balances be earmarked for potential unplanned expenditure within the guidelines set out at paragraph 12.3.
- 1.7 To agree and recommend to Council that Colchester's element of the Council Tax for 2010/11 be set at £175.23 for Band D properties which is an increase of £4.23 per annum (2.47%) (paragraph 13.2).

- 1.8 To note that the formal resolution from Cabinet to Council will include the Parish, Police, Fire and County Council elements and any change arising from the formal Revenue Support Grant Settlement announcement in early February. This will be prepared in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- 1.9 To note the Medium Term Financial Forecast for the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 (paragraph 14.13).
- 1.10 To agree and recommend to Council the changes in the capital programme to agree the capital programme releases set out at paragraph 15.6.
- 1.12 To note the comments made on the robustness of budget estimates at section 16.
- 1.13. To agree and recommend to Council the Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy (paragraph 17.7).

2. Background Information and Summary

- 2.1 The 2010/11 Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme have been prepared in accordance with a process and timetable agreed at Cabinet and endorsed by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Appendix A).

Delivering a Balanced Budget for 2010/11

- 2.2. The Revenue Budget for 2010/11 has been prepared against a background of meeting the Council's Strategic Plan objectives whilst facing significant financial pressures from the difficult economic background. Every effort has been made to produce a budget that not only funds the delivery of high quality services and shifts resources for investment in priority areas but keeps the increase in Council Tax as low as possible. This has been very difficult, however, a high level of savings has been found and includes areas such as:

- Delivery of savings through the fundamental service review process
- Making efficiencies through reviewing assets and taking advantage of new technologies such as the accommodation changes and ICT strategy
- Using reserves in a managed and prudent way
- Making reasonable assumptions on the level of Government grant funding

Council Tax

- 2.3. It is proposed to increase the Council's element of the Council Tax by 2.47% in 2010/11. This is below the increase in state pensions (2.5%). The Government has stated that it expects authorities to increase Council Tax by less than 5%. Colchester's increase is therefore well within this level and is the lowest increase in 16 years in line with the expectations stated by Government.
- 2.4. A 2.47% increase in Colchester's element of the Council Tax equates to 8p per week for a Band D property. This is a modest increase when considered alongside £2.7m of cost pressures and areas of growth/investment set out in Appendices B & C respectively.
- 2.5. Further information on the budget is provided in the following paragraphs.

3. Current Year's Financial Position

- 3.1 In order to inform the 2010/11 budget process and forecast level of reserves it is useful to first review the current year's financial position. Revenue budgets are monitored on a monthly basis with regular reports to Senior Management Team and the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel (FASP). A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to determine a reasonable forecast of the year-end position.
- 3.2 The current position is showing that the forecast outturn is expected to be an underspend of £0.7m. This forecast reflects a number of variances the most significant being:-
- Shortfall in interest earnings as a result of the low level of interest rates
 - Shortfall in achieving corporate targets such as salary savings due in part to the lower turnover levels
 - Receipt of HPDG (Housing and Planning Delivery Grant) which was significantly more than budgeted
- 3.3. There remain some outstanding risks to the forecast and the position continues to be monitored and FASP on 23 February 2010 will receive a report setting out a detailed position.

3.4 **Cabinet is asked to note that the forecast outturn position for the current year is anticipated to be an underspend of £0.7m and that the position will continue to be monitored.**

4. 2010/11 Revenue Cost Pressures

- 4.1 Appendix B sets out revenue cost pressures, over the 2009/10 base, of £2,677k which have been identified during the budget process. This includes an inflation allowance, impact of the economic downturn on investment income and the one off costs in respect of the VAF legal costs and Icelandic investment impairment.
- 4.2 The cost pressures have mostly been previously considered by Cabinet, however, provision has now been included to reflect changes to assumptions including a reduction in income in respect of licensing and cemetery and crematorium and the impact of the lower than expected level of housing benefit admin grant.

4.3 **Cabinet is asked to approve inclusion within the 2010/11 Revenue Budget of the cost pressures set out at Appendix B.**

5. 2010/11 Revenue Growth

- 5.1. Appendix C sets out growth items totalling £125k which have been identified during the budget process. These items will assist in enabling the Council to deliver its Strategic Plan objectives and include costs funded through Government grants and the use of Council reserves.

5.2. **Cabinet is asked to approve inclusion within the 2010/11 Revenue Budget of the growth items as set out at Appendix C.**

6. 2010/11 Revenue Saving/Increased Income

- 6.1 Appendix D sets out savings / increased income totalling £1,234k. The appendix provides an analysis of the risks to delivering the savings and steps taken or planned to mitigate these risks.

6.2. There are some changes to the report since Cabinet met on 2 December 2009. These include an assumption regarding potential savings through the Fundamental Service Review Process, additional planning income, revised assumption for HPDG for 10/11 and various savings across all service areas.

6.3. There will be some one-off costs required to deliver all the budget savings. A sum of £150k has therefore been included within the budget.

6.4. **Cabinet is asked to approve inclusion of the savings / increased income items set out at Appendix D within the 2010/11 Revenue Budget.**

7. Summary Total Expenditure Requirement

7.1 Should Cabinet approve the items detailed above, the total expenditure requirement for 2010/11 is as follows:

	£'000
2009/10 Budget	24,432
Less: 2009/10 one-off items	(330)
Cost Pressures (as per Appendix B)	2,677
Revenue Growth (as per Appendix C)	125
Savings/Increased Income (net of one off costs) (as per Appendix D)	(1,234)
Forecast Budget 10/11	25,670

Note:

Detailed service group expenditure is available in the Background Papers. A summary of service group expenditure is attached at Appendix E.

7.2. **Cabinet is asked to agree and recommend to Council the net revenue expenditure requirement for 2010/11 and the underlying detailed budgets set out in the Background Papers.**

8. Revenue Support Grant

8.1 The provisional Revenue Support Grant Settlement was announced in Parliament in November 2009. Our provisional grant settlement is £12,911k, which is in line with the announcement of the 3 year figures provided as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR 07).

8.2 The settlement represents an increase of £230k (1.8%) in cash terms on 2009/10

8.3. The Settlement is provisional and subject to consultation. Traditionally, there has been very little change between the provisional and actual Settlement. Any marginal change to the Council's grant entitlement will be reflected in the final budget recommendation to Council.

8.4. Looking ahead the outcome of the next comprehensive spending review is unlikely to be known until Autumn 2010. What is evident is that the pressures facing public finances will mean that resources to support Local Government will be reduced and as such this will place increased pressures on the Council's finances. This is considered as part of the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

9. Council Tax

- 9.1 As part of the formal budget setting process, the Council is required to determine each year, as at 15 January, the estimated surplus or deficit arising from the Council Tax Collection Fund as at 31 March.
- 9.2 The collection rate continues to be close to our target and a higher surplus was made in the prior year than was originally estimated. As a result a surplus is anticipated at the 2009/10 year end of £49k. The MTFF had previously assumed that Colchester's share of the any surplus would be nil and therefore this has improved the overall budget position.

10. Revenue Balances

- 10.1 The Local Government Act 2003 places a specific duty on the Chief Financial Officer to report on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves of an Authority when the budget is being considered. This section and section 11 address this requirement.
- 10.2. Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 December 2009, considered a report setting out the outcome of a risk analysis in respect of the Council's Revenue Balances. Cabinet agreed with the analysis conclusion that Revenue Balances should be maintained at a minimum of £1.5m and that the situation would be reviewed based on the implications and details of items such as the grant settlement, budget savings and other variables. Based on the assumptions built into the budget it is considered prudent to maintain the recommended minimum level at £1.5m.
- 10.3. The cost pressures and growth items set out in the following table and included within the appendices to this report include a number of one-off costs which are recommended to be funded from general balances in additional to general support of the budget.

	<i>Cost in 10/11 £'000</i>	<i>Note</i>
Potential one-off costs to deliver budget options	150	See para 6.3
Child Poverty Initiative	15	See Growth items (Appendix C)
One-off costs for census	15	See Growth items (Appendix C)
One of costs for 20mph	15	See Growth items (Appendix C)
Place surveys	15	See Cost pressures (appendix B)
Benefits staff – Reduction in grant	70	See Cost pressures (appendix B)
General support of the budget	391	
Total	671	

- 10.4 In considering the level at which Revenue Balances should be set for 2010/11, Cabinet should note the financial position the Council is likely to face in the medium term both through the levels of future Government funding and the incremental pension burden highlighted in the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF).
- 10.5 The forecast position in respect of Revenue Balances as at 31 March 2010 is set out at Appendix F and shows balances at £1,500k the recommended minimum balance as set out in the agreed Risk Analysis. Taking account of the medium term position detailed above, Cabinet is recommended to approve that balances are retained at a minimum level of £1,500k and release £671k to assist in funding the 2010/11 Revenue Budget.
- 10.6 **Cabinet is recommended to approve Revenue Balances for the financial year 2010/11 at a minimum of £1,500k and that £671k of balances is applied to finance items in the 2010/11 Revenue Budget.**

11. Reserves and Provisions

- 11.1. Cabinet at its meeting on 2 December 2009 considered the Council's earmarked reserves. As part of the budget process a review was undertaken into the level and appropriateness of earmarked reserves and provisions for 2010/11. The review concluded that the reserves and provisions detailed were broadly appropriate and at an adequate level, however, it was stated that a further review would be done as part of this final report. The proposed budget includes a number of releases from reserves, including some changes to those already proposed.

*Capital Expenditure Reserve (CER) – release of £1,210k:-
Community Stadium - £300k*

- 11.2. The Council agreed that an approach to minimise the revenue pressure is to fund the annual MRP cost by identifying new capital receipts in the period of the borrowing. This then allows a release of revenue funds within the capital expenditure reserve. For 2010/11 the use of the reserve remains at £300k.

Icelandic Investment Impairment- £615k

- 11.3. As reported to Cabinet in December we are required to recognise the assessed financial impairment in respect of the Council's investment in Landsbanki. This has been calculated to be £615k based on guidance received of a recovery of 88%, phased repayments and status as a preferred creditor.

VAF Legal Costs - £250k

- 11.4. The proposal to budget for these costs was agreed by Cabinet. Using the CER is considered appropriate given this is a one-off cost and is linked to the capital programme.

Corporate Scanning - £45k

- 11.5. As part of the accommodation strategy a corporate scanning team has been set up. This has been financed through savings in service areas through scanning. However, in the first year it is estimated that there will be a cost of £45k. Funding through the CER will enable an assessment of the running costs of the scanning team to be made and to consider how, if necessary, this will be funded in the future.

Renewals and Repairs Fund – release of £1,184k

- 11.6. Cabinet noted on 2 December that the estimated balance at 31 March 2010 on the Renewals and Repairs Fund stood at £2,600k and that the 2010/11 expenditure programme would be considered at this meeting. Appendix G sets out the recommended programme totalling £1,154k. The releases include £760k in respect of the 5-year building maintenance programme. The programme has been based on in-depth condition surveys of all Council building assets. The programme will continue to be developed over the coming year and will again be considered as part of the budget strategy for 2011/12.

Regeneration Reserve – release of £166k

- 11.7. As with previous years it is proposed to use £166k from the Regeneration Reserve in respect of resources to maintain the role of this team. This will fully use this reserve and will mean that for 2011/12 the cost of the team will need to be met as part of the general budget or alternative resources will need to be met the costs. The MTFF takes account of this potential pressure.

S106 Monitoring Reserve – release of £70k

- 11.8. This reserve was set up to provide funds to support the future monitoring of Section 106 agreements. Within the last budget report to Cabinet it was proposed to use £60k to

support the 2009/10 budget. However, given that the costs involved in monitoring are higher than this a contribution of £70k is now proposed. This reserve will still last for at least the next 3 years if used in a similar way.

- 11.9 **Cabinet is recommended to agree release of**
- £1,210k from the Capital Expenditure Reserve in 2010/11
 - £1,154k from the Renewals and Repairs Fund as set out at Appendix G
 - £166k from the Regeneration Reserve.
 - £70k is released from S106 monitoring reserve towards the costs of carrying out this function

12. Contingency Provision

12.1 The Council's Constitution requires that any spending from Revenue Balances not specifically approved at the time the annual budget is set, must be considered and approved by full Council. This procedure could prove restrictive particularly if additional spending is urgent.

12.2 It is recommended that £100k of Revenue Balances be specifically earmarked for potential items of unplanned expenditure. It should be noted that if this sum was used during the year it would take revenue balances below the recommended level of £1,500k and the Council would need to consider steps to reinstate balances at a later date.

- 12.3 **Cabinet is asked to agree and recommend to Council that £100k of Revenue Balances be specifically earmarked for potential items of unplanned expenditure which are:**
- The result of new statutory requirements or
 - An opportunity purchase which meets an objective of the Strategic Plan or
 - Is considered urgent, cannot await the next budget cycle and cannot be funded from existing budgets
 - Authorisation being delegated to the Leader of the Council.

13. Summary of Position

13.1 Summary of the Revenue Budget position is as follows:

	£'000
Revenue expenditure requirement for 2010/11 (para 7.1).	25,670
Release from Capital Expenditure Reserve (para 11.2 to 11.5)	(1,210)
Release of General Reserve (para 10.3)	(671)
Release of Regeneration Reserve (para 11.7)	(166)
Release of S106 monitoring reserve (para 11.8)	(70)
Budget Requirement	23,553
Funded by:	
Revenue Support Grant (para 8.1)	12,911
Collection Fund Surplus (para 9.2)	49
Council Tax Payers requirement (before Parish element) see below*	10,593
Total Funding	23,553

Council Tax*	
Council Tax Payers requirement (before Parish element)	10,593
Council Tax Base – Band D Properties	60,451.7
Council Tax at Band D	£175.23

- 13.2 **Cabinet is asked to agree and recommend to Council Colchester's element of the Council Tax for 2010/11 at £175.23 per Band D property, which is an annual increase of £4.23 (2.47%), noting that the formal resolution to Council will include Parish, Police, Fire and County Council precepts and any minor change arising from the formal Revenue Support Grant announcement.**

14. Medium Term Financial Forecast – 2010/11 to 2013/14

- 14.1. This Council, in common with most other local authorities, faces an ongoing difficult position in the medium term due to a range of pressures including increased statutory pension payments and potential revenue implications of strategic priorities. However, the most significant factor that will impact on budget will be the level of grant support.
- 14.2. The Government three-year grant settlement has provided some certainty over future grant levels and aids longer term planning. However, 2010/11 is the last year of the previously announced Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07) and therefore making assumptions for 2011/12 and beyond is difficult and can only be indicative at this stage. What is clear is that the widely reported deficit within public finances needs to be addressed and funding to local authorities will come under pressure. The CSR10 is expected to be announced during the latter half of 2010 and irrespective of the outcome of the General Election reductions in grant support for public services are anticipated.
- 14.3. The Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) is attached at Appendix H showing that the Council will face the need to bridge a budget gap of circa £3m over the three years from April 2011 with the 2011/12 gap likely to be in the region of £1.9m. To formulate the MTFF it is necessary to make a number of assumptions. Generally, these do not represent decisions but are designed to show the impact of a set of options for planning purposes. The key assumptions and savings required are set out at the Appendix and summarised below:-

Government Grants – RSG, HPDG and LABGI

- 14.4. An assumption is made of a 5% reduction in core Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant - RSG) equivalent to £650k pa. This assumption, whilst realistic, is by no means a worst case forecast with some other authorities predicting reductions up to 20%.
- 14.5. In considering the reduction in Government funding it is also necessary to assess the impact of discontinuing the LABGI and HPDG schemes, as has been indicated, which based on the assumptions made in the 10/11 equates to a further reduction of £748k.
- 14.6. When added to our forecast reduction in RSG this equates to a cash reduction of £1.4m in 2011/12 (10.3% reduction of these current budgeted grants).

Pay, Inflation and costs

- 14.7. The 2010/11 includes a 1% pay award which has been agreed as part of a 2 year settlement for 09/10 and 10/11. For the following 3 years a planning assumption of a nil pay award has been shown. For other price inflation a range of 1% to 1.5% has been used although it will be necessary to review forecasts for specific areas in due course.
- 14.8. An allowance of £250k pa has been included for the outcome of the next actuarial review of the pension fund. It is unlikely that we will know the actual figure until the Autumn, however, it should set out the pressure for the coming three years.

Economic Downturn

14.9. It is difficult to fully assess the impact on Council budgets, however it is evident that there has been a reduction in some income budgets such as planning and net interest earnings as well as increased demands for services such as benefits. The MTFF assumes a broadly neutral position over the next three years which is likely to represent a prudent forecast.

Council Tax

14.10. In line with the approach taken in recent years, a planning assumption has been used of an increase in Council Tax of the same as the coming year's budget proposal, in this case, 2.47%. This is shown to set out the MTFF position and does not represent a proposal.

Summary

14.11. In the 2010/11 budget savings of £1.2m have been found which is similar to previous years. Whilst we will continue to look for other areas of savings and efficiencies it will be increasingly hard to balance budgets without considering variations to current services.

14.12. This year's budget process includes assumptions in respect of savings anticipated through the fundamental service review process and these reviews will continue during 2010/11. The Budget Group has also noted a number of areas where savings in 2011/12 may be possible. This group is continuing to meet and has started considering steps necessary to deliver balanced budgets for future years.

14.13. **Cabinet is asked to note the medium term financial position forecast for the Council.**

15. Capital Programme

15.1. The capital programme has been reviewed and as a result changes are proposed to remove certain schemes and include a number of new items. This review also includes the necessary changes to enable the release of the capital expenditure reserve.

15.2. Appendix I sets out proposed schemes to remove from the capital programme totalling £1.8m which includes £1m set aside for ICT purposes which is no longer required given the approach taken to using new technologies. Other items include projects that were previously put "on hold" by Cabinet.

15.3. The capital programme proposals include the following new bids:-

Scheme	Amount £'000	Description
Private Sector Renewals	585.0	Including £200k additional resources for 2009/10 and £350k additional for 2010/11.
Town Hall DDA Sensory Access	75.0	Principal benefit will be to have a hearing loop system available in all meeting rooms at all times. Quality sound and visual display accessible to everyone attending council meetings. Members and the public feel included and are able to fully participate in Council meetings.
Disabled Facilities Grants	200.0	Additional resources required.
Public Realm Works	175.0	Funding anticipated from the capital receipt for 15 Queen Street

Scheme	Amount £'000	Description
Customer Service Centre Redesign	100.0	Work required following the completion of the flexible working project and sale of Angel Court
Repairs to walls of closed churchyards following survey	75.0	There are concerns regarding the condition of the walls surrounding closed churchyards as there has not been an ongoing maintenance programme to deal with these in the past. This has resulted in a backlog of work being required that is beyond the means of the current revenue budget. The amount of £75k relates to all the works with health & safety concerns.
	1,210.0	

15.4. The full proposed new capital programme reflecting all changes is set out at Appendix J. In total there is a forecast surplus of resources of £1m, however, this reflects some capital receipts expected later in 2010/11 meaning that not all capital projects can be started immediately. The forecast surplus also assumes that the net underspend of £202k against capital schemes that was reported to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel on 17 November 2009 has been made available for allocation to other schemes.

15.5. It is proposed that funding for the projects set out at paragraph 15.3 are released subject to the agreement of including these items in the programme by Council.

15.6. **Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council that the changes to the capital programme set out Appendix I and paragraph 15.1 be agreed and that subject to this funding be released for projects set out at paragraph 15.3.**

16. Robustness of Estimates

16.1 The Local Government Act 2003 placed a specific duty on the Chief Financial Officer to report on the robustness of estimates in the budget proposals of an Authority when the budget is being considered. This section addresses this requirement.

16.2 As set out in this paper a rigorous process and timetable has been followed throughout the budget setting activity this year involving the Cabinet, Leadership Team, Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel, Senior Management Team, the Budget Group and budget holders. All key assumptions used have been reviewed and scrutinised as part of this process. The result of this process has been a budget which is, in my view, challenging but deliverable.

16.3. The continuing impact of the economic climate on the Council is significant. This includes pressures on income from areas such as planning and car parks, although there has been some recovery in some of these areas during the last 12 months. Falling interest rates have had a major effect on investment returns and it has been necessary to significantly adjust budget assumptions in this area.

16.4. Steps have been taken to revise corporate targets such as salary savings, procurement and income in light of the current climate.

16.5. By taking appropriate action within the proposed 2010/11 budget, exposure to further downgrading of assumptions has been reduced and to that extent some of the risk has been mitigated. However, the need to draw heavily on reserves to support the budget, albeit largely in respect of one-off items, is a concern and considerable financial discipline will be required to achieve balanced budgets over the medium term.

- 16.6. Whilst I consider that reasonable assumptions have been made to account for the pressures being faced there remains a degree of risk with the key areas being:-
- Uncertainty over how long the impact of the economic downturn will be felt.
 - The combined impact of falling interest rates and negative cashflow factors such as reduced levels or delays to securing capital receipts on the net interest budget.
 - The ability to deliver all savings included within the budget, including the assumptions in respect of fundamental service reviews.
 - Actual levels of grants received from Government, specifically Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) and the LABGI (Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme)
 - Meeting income levels in particular in respect of planning, leisure and car parking.
- 16.7. These risks will be managed during 2010/11 by regular targeted monitoring and review at Senior Management Team and Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel. The Revenue Balance Risk Analysis considered these areas in establishing a minimum level of required balance of £1.5m.
- 16.8. Delivery of the budget will continue to require financial discipline led by SMT in terms of the corporate budget initiatives and by budget holders, ensuring expenditure is not incurred without adequate available budget. Budget managers will continue to be supported through training and advice to enable them to do this.
- 16.9. Regular updates on forecast expenditure will also be important to ensure the budget is managed within the expenditure constraints set out.
- 16.10. **Cabinet is asked to note the comments on the robustness of budget estimates.**

17. Prudential Code Indicators

- 17.1. The aims of the Prudential Code are to assist local authorities to ensure that:
- Capital expenditure plans are affordable
 - All external borrowing is at a prudent and sustainable level
 - Treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good practice
 - The authority is accountable in taking decisions by providing a clear and transparent framework.
 - The framework is consistent with and supports local strategic and asset management planning and proper option appraisal.
- 17.2. The prudential indicators are designed to support and record decision making in relation to capital expenditure plans, external debt and treasury management. Estimating capital expenditure for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years is the starting point of the calculation of prudential indicators. The Council has made reasonable estimates of both HRA and non-HRA total capital expenditure.
- 17.3. In agreeing the Council's revenue budget and capital programme there is a requirement to approve the prudential indicators for the coming year.
- 17.4. The recommended Prudential Indicators for 2010/11 are set out in the background paper with relevant commentary.
- 17.5. One of the key requirements of the Code is that the Council agrees a number of prudential indicators which set out the limits to which the Council may borrow and the

implications of borrowing. The main assumptions used in setting these indicators are that:

- Capital expenditure to be financed through prudential borrowing has been agreed as part of the 09/10 budget by Council in respect of the Firstsite:newsite project (£2m), the replacement of a cremator (£0.5m), the Business Incubation Centre (£0.9m), and the upgrading of the communal aerial system in the Council's housing stock (£0.4m). These projects have been previously agreed by Cabinet / Council.
 - The revenue and capital budget proposals set out in this report will be agreed.
 - That treasury management decisions will be carried out in line with the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 17.6. Council is required to annually approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy that underpins the setting of some of the prudential indicators, the Council's capital programme and the revenue budget for net interest earnings. The 2010/11 strategy reflects the revised CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice as well as other guidance issued following the credit crunch and Icelandic banking collapse, particularly in relation to the criteria used for investing with banks and building societies, and the reporting of treasury management activities to members. The strategy also states that the Council will continue to 'borrow internally' for the foreseeable future to reduce exposure to interest rate and credit risk, as well as providing forecasts on interest rates and setting the policy for calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision.

- 17.7 **Cabinet is asked to agree and recommend to Council:**
- **The revised CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice, including the four amended clauses**
 - **The revised Treasury Management Policy Statement**
 - **The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy**
 - **The Prudential Indicators for 2010/11**
 - **The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement**
- All of the above are set out in Appendix K**

18. Strategic Plan References

- 18.1. The budget forecasting process has been underpinned by the Strategic Plan. The objectives of the Strategic Plan have informed all stages of the budget setting process. The proposed budget will enable the Council to deliver the services and priorities set out in the Strategic Plan which is subject to a separate report on this agenda.
- 18.2. Looking specifically at the revenue budget and capital programme proposals these include changes with direct links to the Strategic Plan such as:-
- The introduction of graffiti clean up team
 - Maintaining staff resources to help process benefits claims despite reduction in Government grant.
 - Providing resources to support a child poverty initiative
 - Considering in detail proposals for 20mph speed limits
 - Providing additional capital funding for disabled facilities grants and private sector renewal schemes.
- 18.3. To achieve the budget growth proposals resources have been shifted through efficiencies such as savings in accommodation running costs and use of new IT reducing

the need for large scale IT replacement. The system of carrying out fundamental service reviews is helping to improve service delivery whilst also reducing costs.

- 18.4. In addition to these items the budget includes examples where funds have been shifted within service areas to ensure that priorities are met at no net additional costs. An example includes funding for air quality monitoring stations and for the detailed assessment.

19. Financial Implications

- 19.1 As set out in the report.

20. Publicity Considerations

- 20.1 Arrangements will be made to publish the approved tax levels in the local press and to produce the Council Tax Information Leaflet for distribution with the Council Tax bills. These will be in accordance with the legal requirements.

21. Human Rights Implications

- 21.1 None

22. Equality and Diversity

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

23. Community Safety Implications

- 23.1 None

24. Health and Safety Implications

- 24.1 None

25. Risk Management Implications

- 25.1 Risk management has been used throughout the budget process and specific consideration has been given to the Council's current risk profile when allocating resources. This will be reflected in the corporate risk register.

26. Consultation

- 26.1. The budget will be scrutinised by Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel on 26 January 2010. The statutory consultation with NNDR ratepayers takes place on 20 January 2010 and notes of the meeting will be provided at Cabinet.

- 26.2. The budget proposals have been underpinned by the Strategic Plan which was subject to consultation.

Background Papers

Detailed Service Group Expenditure Papers
Budget reports to Cabinet – 2 December 2009

2010/11 Budget Timetable	
Budget Strategy March 09 – July 2009	
March – June (SMT)	Budget Group established Update MTFF /Budget Strategy Review cost pressures, growth and risks Consider approach to budget Externally facilitated Budget Workshop held
Cabinet – 13 July 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on updated budget strategy / MTFF • Timetable approved
SOSP – 14 July 09	Review Cabinet report
Budget Group / Leadership Team - July	Consider review of capital programme Consider approach to consultation
Detailed Budget preparation and Budget Setting Consultation	
Budget Group / Leadership Team regular sessions on progress / budget options July - September	Review budget tasks Consider Fundamental Service Reviews
Cabinet – 9 September 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Update • Proposals for consultation • Review of capital resources / programme
Cabinet – 21 October 09	Budget Update (if required)
Cabinet – 2 December 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget update • Reserves and balances • Grant settlement • Consultation results (provisional date)
FASP – 26 January 10	Review consultation / Budget position
Cabinet – 27 January 10	Revenue and Capital budgets recommended to Council
Council – 17 February 10	Budget agreed / capital programme agreed / Council Tax set

2010/11 Revenue Cost pressures

Heads of Service / Portfolio Holders have been asked to contain cost pressures within existing budget allocations wherever possible. The following are specific areas where budget allocations have been increased. Changes since the report to Cabinet on 2 December 2009 are highlighted.

	Previous estimate	Updated estimate	
	£'000	£'000	Comment
Inflationary pressure	(67)	(67)	Net inflation impact, including the allowance for the agreed pay award and assumed increase in prices and an increase in fees and charges. This allowance has been reviewed with the main change being the inclusion of savings in energy prices which have taken effect from October.
Incremental pension contributions	154	154	The triennial review of the pension fund has shown a significant deficit due to market conditions and increased life expectancy. This financial pressure is one being felt by all local authorities and other organisations. The impact of next triennial review will need to be considered as part of the 2011/12 budget.
Minimum Revenue Provision (Commutation adjustment)	13	13	Increase in calculated figure based on statutory criteria.
Place Survey – Statutory requirement (one off for 10/11)	15	15	The cost of the statutory place survey is needed every 2 years.
Local Development Framework (LDF) Examinations. (One off)	150	150	Following the submission of two LDF documents to the Secretary of State the process of examination then starts in 2010, including 2 in public. The estimated cost includes the fee for the inspector, legal and consultant fees and a temporary programme officer.
Net Interest earnings	900	900	The net interest budget for this year is currently forecast to have a shortfall due to the low level of interest rates available. The outlook for interest rates remains uncertain, however, it is evident that there will continue to be a considerable cost pressure next year. The allowance of £900k reflects this.
Impact of foregone Layer Road receipt	60	60	At the July Cabinet it was agreed in principal to dispose of land at Layer Road at nil value for an extra-care housing scheme. As reported this will result in a revenue budget impact due to the ongoing costs of borrowing in respect of the community stadium.

	Previous estimate	Updated estimate	
	£'000	£'000	Comment
Corporate Safeguarding Co-ordinator	10	10	We have statutory responsibilities under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 regarding safeguarding the welfare of children – our task this financial year is to complete a self-assessment against these responsibilities, and we then need to use the results of this self-assessment to develop an action plan in the next financial year to ensure we are fully compliant, and this staff resource will drive this process and support Services with tasks they need to complete. We then need to report our progress back to the Essex Safeguarding Children Board late in 2010.
2 Planning Officers (Strategic Policy and Regeneration)	75	75	These are permanent posts in the establishment but have to date been funded through an annual approval process of using HPDG (Housing Planning and Delivery Grant). It is proposed that the cost of these posts be included in the base budget with an assumed increase in the level of HPDG as agreed by Cabinet.
Revised Corporate targets	260	260	The report sets out that it is necessary to review the level of salary targets due to the economic climate and the resulting impact on staff turnover. In addition, the income target has also been reviewed.
Housing Benefits – reduction in admin grant	0	70	The recently announced benefit admin grant has reduced from the level received in 2009/10. In order to maintain current staffing levels to deal with the continued high level of claims it is recommended that this pressure be funded as a one-off with the assumption that the FSR will identify savings through more efficient processes from 2011/12.
Reduction in cemetery and crematorium income	0	64	We are facing a large income pressure in year for 09/10 for a number of reasons: A reduction in the number of burials and cremations carried out (anecdotal evidence from surrounding crematoriums seems to suggest a current decline in death-rate); a reduction in the number and value of memorials purchased and the opening of a new crematorium in Braintree
Reduction in Licensing income	0	15	The introduction of the EU Services Directive (in force from 28 December 09) requires that we do not charge any more for licences than it costs us to administer the licence. This impacts on licences such as Sex Shop Licences which are very low resource input but high income.
Audit Fees		23	Forecast increase in external audit costs due to methodology for calculating base fee imposed unilaterally by the Audit Commission.

	Previous estimate	Updated estimate	
	£'000	£'000	Comment
Technical Items / General Fund / HRA adjustments		25	Estimated impact of budget change on allocation of costs between General Fund and HRA and other technical items.
Scanning		45	Additional costs associated with running central scanning team. In 2010/11 this will be funded through the ICT Strategy capital budget via the Capital Expenditure Reserve.
VAF Legal Fees	250	250	Additional provision for external legal costs as reported to Cabinet on 2 December 2009
Icelandic Investment impairment	614	615	Estimated impact of 'impairment' costs associated with investment in Landsbanki. Cost includes cashflow impact based on specified repayment profile and preferred creditor status.
Total	2,434	2,677	

2010/11 Revenue Growth items

The following growth items have been included within the current budget allocations which are all additions since the report to Cabinet on 2 December 2009.

Area	New Items / Changes £'000	Comment
Graffiti Clean Up	55	Introduction of a specialist Graffiti cleaning team in order to improve clearance response times, extend areas of removal and meet the Councils Strategic aims.
Child Poverty Initiative	15	The project involves training 2 staff members in every Colchester Children's Centre on the most common Welfare Rights and Benefits matters. Then staff will proactively identify families who would gain the most from extra benefit checks as publicising this new service in the Centres and responding to those families seek support.
Census preparation (one- off)	15	<p>The £15k proposal is to fund a Census Community Developer post. This person would be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with external partners, • Bringing our community/voluntary groups together, • Organising and taking part in low level community events • Coordinating the data for our Census Area Profile (CAP) • Communications support. <p>The Census will take place on 27 March 2011. Increased emphasis is being given to local authority involvement in its success. Our focus should be on low level engagement with our customers and reaching all sectors of the community to encourage people to complete their Census form.</p>
20mph consultation (one off)	15	Following the findings of the 20mph Task and Finish Group and approval of the recommendations by Cabinet that funding is required to develop and undertake structured, meaningful and relevant consultation with residents and organisations on the implementation of 20 mph policy across Colchester.
Green Infrastructure Study (one off) funded through HPDG).	25	Green infrastructure is a connected system of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. By providing for multi-functional uses, e.g. wildlife, recreation, and cultural experience, green infrastructure contributes to quality of life whilst also delivering landscape, historic and ecological benefits. A local study will provide more detail and help inform master plans that are being prepared for North Colchester and Stanway as well as the regeneration of East Colchester.
	125	

Summary of Savings / Increased Income

	Total	Reallocations	Total by Service
	£	£	£
Service specific savings			
Executive Management Team	14,000		14,000
Corporate Management	216,000	(16,000)	200,000
Customer Service Centre	60,000		60,000
Environmental & Protective Services	199,000	8,300	207,300
Life Opportunities	70,000	77,900	147,900
Resource Management	40,000	60,900	100,900
Strategic Policy and Regeneration	59,000	600	59,600
Street Services	117,000	3,500	120,500
Total Service Savings	775,000	135,200	910,200
Housing and Planning Delivery Grant	398,000		398,000
LABGI	50,000		50,000
Fundamental Service Reviews (FSR)	100,000	(100,000)	0
Invest to Save	34,000	(8,000)	26,000
NNDR Costs Across service areas	27,200	(27,200)	0
Less: Provision for one-off costs	(150,000)		(150,000)
Total Service Savings	1,234,200	0	1,234,200

Notes:

The budget also includes the continuation of corporate savings targets in respect of salaries of £315k.

The table shows reallocations for savings across more than one service such as legal costs and NNDR savings as well as FSR savings.

Housing FSR savings are shown all within Life Opportunities, however, some saving will be within SP&R

The following pages set out detailed delivery plans for all specific proposals.

Work Area: EMT					
Who: Ann Wain					
Saving (£): £14,300					
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>	
External printing (£1.8k)	Majority used for Xmas cards. Have gone to electronic cards so no longer need budget.	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Conferences (£2k)	Reduction in costs for SMT awaydays.				
Marketing (£10.5k)	Budget reduced.	Reduced speed and impact of work and in particular training and development; removes flexibility to respond to opportunities as they emerge.	Take as a one off saving and review impact in future years.		

Work Area: Corporate Management

Who: Lucie Breadman

Saving (£): £216k (includes £16k savings across other service areas)

<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Rowan House Service Charge (£30k)	Reduced Service Charge already agreed	Should not be any risk	n/a	Ongoing monitoring of service charge
Town Hall – Lettings income (£13k)	New business plan active from 1.4.10	Ongoing works to Town Hall, economic climate	Limit Disturbance and marketing plan	Ongoing monitoring of BP against income
Angel Court – Savings in respect of disposal of Angel Court (£140k)	Should be effective from 1.4.10	No foreseeable risk	n/a	Ongoing monitoring against predicted cost
Legal Services – staffing reduction and reduced legal costs across CBC through use of Essex Legal Services Partnership. (£29k)	Finalisation of staff redundancy and payment details and agreement by Strategic Housing to take on a small element of additional work.	1) Non-use of Essex Legal Services by Services who still procure external legal advice from current sources – no saving achieved. 2) Use of Essex legal services does not provide the quality of service required.	1) Savings to be taken out of service budgets up front to ensure use of the partnership. 2) Close monitoring and communications with Legal Services from those using the partnership to feedback & monitor on service levels.	Regular monitoring and liaison.
Mayoral reception The annual reception hosted by the Mayor for the Mayor's and Mayoress' of the various neighbouring local authorities (£1.7k)	Has been agreed with current Mayor not to hold this event in 09/10. NB NOT agreed with new Mayor for 10/11 as yet, awaiting a decision.	None	Not relevant	Not relevant.
Small savings across group (£2k)				

Work Area: CSC				
Who: Leonie Rathbone / Pam Donnelly				
Saving (£): £60,000				
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Income from partners in support of infopoint@colchester (£60k)	Commitment now agreed from partners	Contributions change or are not ongoing.	Ongoing communication with partners and consideration of securing ongoing commitment.	Regular review of arrangements with partners.

Work Area: Environmental and Protective Services				
Who: Beverly Jones				
Saving (£): £199k				
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Environmental and Protective Services Review – Forecast increase in income (£15k)	Review income projections for 2010/11. Agree budget for year.	Based on current levels this increased income is achievable.		Monthly monitoring of income and caseloads
Museums. Saving on administration / IT (£15k). Target for savings from review of service (£30k)	Savings on Administration/IT are secured by renegotiation of IT charge and by decision to cut staff post. Review due to start March/April 2010 and due to report August/September.	No risk to delivery Review fails to identify efficiencies or changes to service levels that are acceptable. One-off costs are prohibitive.	The FSR process has been shown to be effective at identifying opportunities for making changes and delivering efficiencies. Ensure consultation and scrutiny throughout process.	Final report to be submitted in New Year and monitoring of action plan.
Planning Income. Additional forecast income reflecting improved number of applications. The	Planning Officers continue to work with Developers and Agents to ensure that process does not discourage	Recession impacts on quantity or scale of development and therefore impacts on numbers of applications.	Planning Officers continue to offer pre-application advice and maintain open discussions with	Regular financial monitoring

Work Area: Environmental and Protective Services					
Who: Beverly Jones					
Saving (£): £199k					
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>	
increased income needs to be offset by the cost of staff returning from temporary secondments to deal with the current workload (net saving of £138k)	applications.		developers and agents to ensure that development opportunities continue to be considered.		
Small savings across group (£1.2k)	Budget Group 14 Dec	No risk to delivery	N/A	Regular monitoring	financial

Work Area: Life Opportunities			
Who: Gareth Mitchell			
Saving (£): £145k (including £75k in respect of Housing FSR)			
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>
		<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>	
Sport and Leisure – Additional net income in respect of:- Bar and catering (£10k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage vending contracts in-house rather than through contractors • Review prices of stock against other comparable local outlets 	The recession results in decreased sales	Regular financial monitoring
Retails sales of swimming equipment (£6k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter agreement with Zoggs to supply swimming equipment • Build retail outlet off the reception area at Leisure World 	<p>The recession results in decreased sales</p> <p>A delay in building retail outlet leads to lower sales</p>	Regular financial monitoring and liaison with supplier
Tiptree Sports Centre income (£5k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional grass pitch at Tiptree Sports Centre in conjunction with Thurstable school 	<p>The recession results in decreased pitch use</p> <p>Additional pitch provision in Tiptree could affect potential income</p>	Regular financial monitoring
Charter Hall Events (£6k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider financial risk on an event by 	The recession results in decreased ticket sales	Regular financial monitoring

Work Area: Life Opportunities			
Who: Gareth Mitchell			
Saving (£): £145k (including £75k in respect of Housing FSR)			
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>
			<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Aqua Springs (£3k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> event basis Pursue private hire bookings 	<p>Cost of hiring Charter Hall leads to hirers using other venues</p> <p>The recession results in decreased sales</p> <p>Competitive market</p>	<p>and value for money</p> <p>Pricing and promotional campaigns, identify customer demands</p> <p>Regular financial monitoring</p>
Lifestyles memberships (£15k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff aware of importance of up-selling centre passes where appropriate 	<p>The recession results in decreased sales in a competitive market</p>	<p>Regular financial monitoring and capturing customer feedback</p>
Invest to Save project. Savings accruing from Invest to Save projects carried out in 2009. (£15k)	<p>Projects agreed and implemented.</p>	<p>Savings being delivered now therefore minimal risk.</p>	<p>Regular budget monitoring.</p>
Car parking charges at High Woods Country Park (£10k)	<p>Produce business case for introduction of car parking charges</p> <p>Implement car parking charges</p>	<p>Business case does not demonstrate opportunity for sufficient additional income.</p> <p>Project will not deliver full year income opportunity due to timescales</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder will consider business case.</p> <p>Regular financial monitoring</p>

Work Area: Life Opportunities				
Who: Gareth Mitchell				
Saving (£): £145k (including £75k in respect of Housing FSR)				
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Housing Fundamental Service Review (£75k) Estimated General Fund saving through changes proposed as part of the review of housing. The saving comprises savings across this service area and Strategic Policy and Regeneration.	Housing Review detailed business case agreed by Cabinet on 2 Dec 2009. Implementation commenced in Jan 2010.	Savings are apportioned across HRA/General Fund and may not achieve full budgeted GF saving. Implementation is delayed so full year saving is not achieved Any potential one off costs could reduce the savings potential in year one	Performance Management Framework to be developed for implementation phase of review. Realise all opportunities to redeploy staff to minimise any one off costs.	Portfolio Holders and Cabinet informed of progress throughout review through Implementation Plan updates. Implementation Team in place to manage and monitor implementation.

Work Area: Resource Management				
Who: Charles Warboys				
Saving (£): £73k (includes £25k in respect of FSR to be allocated)				
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Indicative target for Fundamental Service Review of revenues and benefits. (£48K) <i>Includes saving of £23k in respect of benefits assessment officer post not replaced.</i>	Review started and due to report early in new year.	Review fails to identify further efficiencies. One-off costs are prohibitive. Economic situation increases workload resulting in limited scope to deliver net savings.	The FSR process has been shown to be effective at identifying opportunities for making changes and delivering efficiencies. Ensure consultation and scrutiny throughout process.	Final report to be submitted in New Year and monitoring of action plan.
Invest to Save – Remote printing proposal (£8k)	Meetings scheduled with Serco and supplier. Project due to start for revenues and benefits in mid-March with a completion date by end of July.	Saving dependant on level of postage / use of electronic communication methods.	Monitoring usage / volumes.	Monitoring of project plan.
Non-renewal of DCAL software licence (£6.5k)	Decision to not renew system agreed and supplier notified Alternative system arrangements put in place.	New procedures result in greater administration costs	Process considered and will be reviewed to ensure it is cost effective.	Review arrangements during year.
Miscellaneous rental changes, principally Culver Square (£6.6k)	Budget amended	Economic climate is such that rental income is not delivered as expected.	Continue to monitor and review rental income. Work with partners to	Monthly monitoring of rental income forecasts

Work Area: Resource Management			
Who: Charles Warboys			
Saving (£): £73k (includes £25k in respect of FSR to be allocated)			
			promote CBC
Treasury Management brokerage fees (£4k)	Savings included in current forecast 09/10. Reduced fees likely to be incurred in 10/11 due to policy of internal borrowing so less new borrowing	At risk if required to borrow to finance capital programme / incur temporary borrowing.	Regular review of cashflow forecasts.
			Review of cashflow and treasury management strategy

Work Area: Strategic Policy and Regeneration

Who: Lindsay Barker

Saving (£): £59k (+ savings included under Life Opportunities in respect of Housing Review)

<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>
Reduction in Cultural Services Management budget (£30k)	Budget removed	Main risk will be reduced capacity for project support.	Continue to work with partner organisations.	Cultural Services Manager
Spatial Policy – Reduction in staffing by 0.5fte following review (£19k)	Opportunity to amalgamate two posts following the end of a joint arrangement with Tending (TDC decision)	Already in place from Jan 2010	Clear workload management in place for the team to manage the reduction in staffing	Spatial policy manager
Initiative Funding Subscriptions (£10k)	Grantfinder / Grant net is a tool for identifying grant funding opportunities within the UK. Annual subscription expires in March 2010.	Potential to miss funding opportunities	ECC have the tool so will seek to work more closely where necessary	Enterprise team

Work Area: Street Services					
Who: Matthew Young					
Saving (£): £117,000					
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>	
Trade Waste expenditure (£7k)	ECC have reduced landfill charges from 1 April resulting in £7k saving	No risk to delivery. The only circumstance where saving is not met would result in additional income for customers	n/a	Monthly monitoring by Street Care and Recycling Manager	budget by Street Recycling
Trade Waste service (£25k)	Consideration of additional recycling opportunities for businesses. Additional marketing and promotion of commercial waste service	Risk that marketing and promotion does not result in additional market share and income	Promotional campaigns, identify customer demands Improve service delivery and develop SLA for customers Start process as soon as possible	Monthly monitoring by Street Care and Recycling Manager	budget by Street Recycling
Street Fundamental Review (£25k)	The savings will be delivered as part of the project work approach of a FSR	That no 'in year' savings are identified through the process. That the corporate support to the project is delayed	From the experience of other FSR it is probable that savings will be identified some of which could be realised immediately	Regular reviews into FSR process	built
Markets (£60k)	Investigate and develop action plan to introduce new and/or improved	Risk that additional markets are unable to attract sufficient traders	Promotional campaigns, identify customer and trader demands	Monthly monitoring by Street Care and Recycling	budget by Street Recycling

Work Area: Street Services			
Who: Matthew Young			
Saving (£): £117,000			
	markets. Consideration of additional Thursday street market or themed Thursday or Sunday markets Investigate outsourcing of market management Consider redesign of market layout	Aim to commence 1 April although timescales may be difficult to meet	Improve service delivery and develop SLA for traders and customers Start process as soon as possible
			Manager

Work Area: Technical Items / Non-Service Specific areas					
Who: Charles Warboys and Senior Management Team					
Saving (£): £501k					
<i>Outline of work</i>	<i>Specific Tasks and Timetable</i>	<i>Risks to delivery</i>	<i>Mitigating action</i>	<i>Monitoring arrangements</i>	
Changes to Government Grants:- LABGI (extra £50k, i.e. total of £100k) HPDG (extra £398k, i.e. total of £648k)	Await announcement of grants	Grants are lower than budgeted.	LABGI estimate based on indications provided within consultation paper and amount received in 09/10. HPDG grant in 09/10 was over £1.4m. The consultation paper set out that the overall funding pot in the third year (10/11) will be larger. Based on current forecasts the budget figure should be achievable	Grants will be notified during 2010/11 and will be reported as part of normal budget monitoring reports to FASP.	
NNDR savings across services (£27k)	Following the revaluation of properties and extension of empty property relief there is a net saving across CBC properties	N/a	n/a	Budget monitoring	
Invest to Save (residual balance £26k)	Proposed to release this sum to support the budget	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Budget Analysis – Appendix E

	Adjusted Base Budget	One-Off Items	Cost Pressures	Growth	Total Savings	Detailed 10/11 Budgets
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate & Democratic Core	330		26			356
Executive Management Team	759		7		(14)	752
Corporate Management	6,714	59	68		(200)	6,641
Customer Services	1,157	(9)	11		(60)	1,099
Env. & Protective Services	2,555	(20)	55		(207)	2,383
Life Opportunities	5,965		(72)	15	(73)	5,835
Resource Management	2,095		138		(68)	2,165
Strategic Policy & Regen.	2,658	(120)	492	55	(60)	3,025
Street Services	2,823	(40)	(44)	55	(120)	2,674
Total Services	25,056	(130)	681	125	(802)	24,930
Technical Items						
Pay Savings	(515)		200			(315)
Procurement	0		0			0
Income target	(60)		60			0
LABGI	(50)		0		(50)	(100)
HPDG	(250)		0		(398)	(648)
Area Based Grant (ABG)	(23)		0			(23)
Grants to Parish councils	202		0			202
CLIA (net interest)	(322)		960			638
Min Revenue Provision	549		13			562
Pensions	2,198		154			2,352
Redundancy Provision	120	(120)	0		150	150
ECC Second Homes	(144)		0			(144)
Heritage Reserve	12		0			12
Contribution to capital	80	(80)	0			0
I2Save			0		(34)	(34)
FSR	0		0		(100)	(100)
Icelandic Investment Impairment			615			615
GF/HRA adjustments	(2,421)		(6)			(2,427)
Total Below the Line	(624)	(200)	1,996	0	(432)	740
Total incl Below the line	24,432	(330)	2,677	125	(1,234)	25,670
Funded by:-						
General Reserve	(484)	484	(671)			(671)
Capital Expenditure Reserve	(661)	361	(910)			(1,210)
Regeneration Reserve	(221)	55	0			(166)
Other Reserves - S.106	(60)		0		(10)	(70)
Insurance	(100)	100	0			0
Government Grant (RSG / NNDR)	(12,681)		0		(230)	(12,911)
Council Tax	(10,225)		0		(368)	(10,593)
Collection fund Transfer	0		0		(49)	(49)
Total	(24,432)	1,000	(1,581)	0	(657)	(25,670)

**General Fund Balances
Current Position**

	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 31 March 2009 (As per Statement of Accounts)		2,891
Movement on balances during 2009/10:		
• Financing carry forwards		(222)
• Funds released in previous years to carry forward to 09/10 (includes invest to save projects)		(178)
• Supporting 2009/10 budget:-		
Items included in 2009/10 budget	(484)	
Emerging pressures agreed	(285)	
Further pressures identified	(250)	
		(1,019)
Forecast outturn 2009/10 - underspend		(699)
Projected Balances as at 31 March 2010		2,171
Less anticipated support to 2010/11 budget		671
		1,500
 Proposed minimum balance		 1,500

Note:

- This forecast is on the basis that there are no further calls on balances during the remainder of the year and that the current year's outturn is delivered on budget.
- A proposal is made within the main report (paragraph 10.6) to use £671k from balances to support the 2010/11 budget.

Renewals and Repairs 2010/11 Releases

Scheme	Requested Value of Release
Various	
Building Maintenance Programme	760,000
Environmental and Protective Services	
Environmental Control - Noise Equipment	18,800
Cemetery - Memorial Repairs	10,000
Crematorium – Cremators (part of capital project), floors, carpets & curtains.	241,000
Life Opportunities (All Colchester Leisure World)	
Leisure Pool Change Refurbishment	10,000
Teaching Pool and Thermal Pool Filters	40,000
Aqua Springs Feature Refurbishment (money from a scheme previously released but no longer needed)	20,000
CLW Miscellaneous (including swimming retail outlet agreed)	35,000
Street Services	
Bus Station - maintenance	19,500
Car Park – equipment (hand held computers etc)	30,000
Total	1,184,300

Medium Term Financial Forecast				
2011/12 to 2013/14				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base Budget	24,432	25,670	25,462	25,792
Remove one-off items	(330)			
Cost Pressures	2,677	(745)	405	375
Growth Items	125	(70)	0	0
Savings	(786)	(163)	(75)	0
Changes to Gov't grants (LABGI, HPDG etc)	(448)	770	0	0
Forecast Base Budget	25,670	25,462	25,792	26,167
Government Grant	(12,911)	(12,265)	(11,652)	(11,070)
Council Tax	(10,593)	(10,963)	(11,346)	(11,743)
Collection Fund Surplus	(49)	0	0	0
Use of Reserves	(2,117)	(370)	(370)	(370)
Total Funding	(25,670)	(23,598)	(23,368)	(23,183)
Budget (surplus) / gap before changes (cumulative)	0	1,864	2,424	2,984
Annual increase		1,864	560	561

Key Assumptions

Inflation - Pay assumed at 0%, other cost and income circa 1 / 1.5%

Gov't Grant – The grant for 2011/12 and beyond is assumed to reduce in cash terms by 5% p.a.

Council Tax – 2.47% increase + 1% increase in tax base assumed for 10/11 and beyond.

No general recovery in income from planning, car parks, interest earnings etc.

Next pensions actuarial review will impact in 11/12 and a planning assumption of £250k has been assumed for all years

Cost Pressures				
General Inflation	140	140	140	140
Net Inflationary changes (e.g. energy)	(207)			
Corporate safeguarding co-ordinator (new)	10			
Impact of foregoing Layer Rd Capital Receipt	60			
General impact on net interest earnings	900			
Pensions	154	250	250	250
MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision)	13	10		
Core Strategy Examination (one off)	150	(150)		
Place Surveys	15	(15)	15	(15)
Shortfall in income targets	60			
Shortfall in salary targets	200			
Iceland (one off)	615	(615)		
VAF (one off)	250	(250)		
Cemetery and Crematorium income	64			
Licensing Income	15			
Planning Policy staff	75			
Benefits Staff / Reduction in grant (one off)	70	(70)		

Medium Term Financial Forecast				
2011/12 to 2013/14				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost of scanning (funded through CER)	45	(45)		
Audit costs	23			
General Fund / Housing Revenue Account impact	23			
Total	2,677	(745)	405	375
Growth Items				
Green Infrastructure Study (one off HPDG funded)	25	(25)		
Graffiti	55			
Census (one off)	15	(15)		
20mph	15	(15)		
Child Poverty	15	(15)		
Total	125	(70)	0	0
Savings / additional Income				
Corporate Management	4	(2)		
Executive Management Team	14	(10)		
Resource Management	17	(4)		
Environmental & Protective Services	16			
Strategic Policy and Regeneration	10			
Street Services (including market and trade waste)	92			
Angel Court (net savings)	200			
Sport and Leisure	45			
Museum Service - Back office functions	15			
Facilities Management	43			
Cultural Services	30			
Invest to Save (Sport & Leisure)	15			
Spatial Policy	19			
Planning income (less costs)	138			
Legal Services	13			
Legal costs across service areas	16			
Invest to Save (remote printing)	8	7		
Invest to Save (balance)	26	(26)		
High Woods Car Park	10			
NNDR Savings	27	(27)		
less provision for one-off costs	(150)	150		
Fundamental Service Reviews				
Housing	75	75	75	
Revenues and Benefits	48			
Museums	30			
Street	25			
Total	786	163	75	0
Decrease in Government Grants				
LABGI	(50)	100		
Housing and Planning Delivery Grant	(398)	648		
Area Based Grant		22		
Total	(448)	770	0	0

Medium Term Financial Forecast				
2011/12 to 2013/14				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Use of Reserves				
Balances (General)	671			
S106 monitoring reserve	70	70	70	70
Regeneration Reserve	166			
Capital Expenditure Reserve:-				
Community Stadium	300	300	300	300
Iceland and VAF	865			
Other	45			
Total	2,117	370	370	370

Addressing the Budget Gap

The MTFF shows a budget gap of circa £3m over the three years from 2011/12. This is an increase on the previous situation reflecting the increased pressures on the Council's budgets and some of the one-off savings used to balance the budget.

There is no doubt that the current economic climate has impacted on the Council's budget proposals for 10/11 and is likely to continue having an impact during next year and beyond.

Risk Areas / Comments

The key risk areas to the forecast are:-

Ref	Risk / Area of uncertainty	
1	<i>Government Grant and the Comprehensive Spending Review 10 (CSR10)</i>	What the CSR10 will provide is difficult to predict, however, it is clear that public finances are continuing to come under increasing pressures. The MTFF assumes a reduction in grant of cash reduction of 5%pa for the next three years. For illustrative purposes a 1% change in the level of grant equates to £130k.
2	<i>Government grants and partnership funding</i>	The Council's budget has changed over recent years with a greater emphasis on funding from both partner organisations and Government bodies. These funding streams can rarely be guaranteed and can therefore add to our cost pressures. The 2010/11 budget includes funding in respect of HPDG and the LABGI scheme. 2010/11 sees the end of the funding period for these grants. Given the uncertainty over public finances the MTFF assumes these grants will cease.
3	<i>Pensions</i>	An allowance has been built in for increases in pensions costs based on the results of the recent actuarial review and therefore are fixed for 2010/11. However, an updated review will be undertaken that will inform the cost for 2011/12 onwards. The recent and ongoing economic downturn is highly likely to impact on the pension fund and therefore whilst an increased allowance of £250k each year from 11/12 has been made for this it will need to be reviewed when more reliable estimates are available.
4	<i>Concessionary Fares</i>	CLG and DoT consulted on the future administration of the concessionary fares scheme. The favoured option being a transfer of responsibility to upper tier authorities (e.g. Essex County Council). In many ways this would mirror existing locally negotiated arrangements. There is a second consultation on the amounts of funding to be transferred. The method of assessing costs is not yet known so this represents a risk to the Council which could be positive or negative.
5	<i>Fees and charges</i>	As has been seen in the past few years we have experienced pressures arising from changes in income levels. In 2008/09 we experienced significant shortfalls in income in respect of planning and building control fees and car park revenue (on and off street). Looking ahead to 2010/11 and beyond it is difficult to estimate how income

Ref	Risk / Area of uncertainty	
		levels may continue to be affected, however, the 10/11 budget assumes some increase in revenue from planning which has recovered to an extent during the last 12 months. At this stage no allowance has been built in for any further changes to income levels.
6	<i>Inflation</i>	An allowance for general inflation has been built into the 10/11 forecast and MTF, and specific increases allowed for items such as pay (which has been agreed for 09/10 and 10/11) The current (November 2009) CPI is 1.9% and RPI is 0.3%. The economic forecasts published by HM Treasury point to inflation figures for 2010 of 1.9% and 2.9% for CPI and RPI respectively. Not all the Council's costs are directly linked to RPI and therefore we will continue to monitor the impact of inflation on all Council costs with particular attention on energy costs for which an overall reduction has been included in the 10/11 budget figures reflecting agreed prices for the period October 09 – October 10.
7	<i>Use of reserves</i>	The budget position for 10/11 includes proposals to use certain reserves and also reflects the impact of reserves used in 09/10. The forecast position on general balances shows that they remain at our recommended level with no headroom.
8	<i>Legislation</i>	There may be new legislation over the life of the MTF for which any available funding may not cover costs.
9	<i>Impact of renaissance programme e.g. car park closure and staff resources</i>	As the renaissance programme progresses there will be an impact on income from car parks due to temporary and permanent closure of certain car parks and also the introduction of park and ride. We are currently using the Regeneration Reserve to meet some staffing costs to provide increased capacity to deliver the renaissance programme. The budget forecast includes funding for 2010/11 to ensure that the team can continue work. However, this will exhaust the Reserve and therefore any future costs will need to be considered as part of the budget.
10	<i>ICT strategy – change programme</i>	The ICT strategy was updated in 2007 there have been a number of financial implications arising from changes. This has resulted in some costs in the short-term leading to longer term savings. This has been examined as part of detailed budget proposals and as part of the implementation of accommodation and flexible working changes and will be monitored to assess in ongoing financial issues.
11	<i>Property review</i>	A review of our assets was carried out and a 5-year Building Repairs and Maintenance Plan produced. There will continue to be financial implications arising from this for both the revenue budget and capital programme and these will be continue to be considered in detail by the council's Property Forum and included in the on-going updates of the MTF.
12	<i>Impact of growth in the Borough and</i>	A number of Local Authority services are directly impacted by the increase of population in the Borough, such as waste

Ref	Risk / Area of uncertainty	
	<i>demand for services</i>	<p>services, planning, benefits etc.</p> <p>As part of the budget it will be necessary to consider whether there is a need for additional resources in these or other areas in order to maintain levels of service.</p> <p>A further area of risk is any increase in the demands for Council services arising from the impact on residents of the economic environment.</p> <p>At this stage no allowance for these areas has been provided within the MTFF. Fundamental Service Reviews (FSR) have been carried out or are being undertaken on some of the key areas affected by growth and /or also the economic climate such as benefits, housing and street services. The financial assumption made is that these reviews will assist in identifying efficiencies to cope with changes in demand.</p>
13	<i>Delivery of budget savings</i>	<p>The 2010/11 budget continues to set some challenging targets for savings although for 10/11 these have been reduced to reflect the current economic climate such as the salaries target. The MTFF assumes these targets will be delivered at these amended levels.</p>
14	<i>Net earnings Interest</i>	<p>The budget is influenced by a number of factors including interest rates and cashflow movements. The treasury management strategy highlights the outlook for interest rates in the medium-term which points to continuation of unprecedented low levels into 2010/11.</p> <p>The 2010/11 budget as proposed shows a significant reduction in interest earnings and the MTFF currently assumes no further recovery in this area. This will be monitored and considered again as part of the 2011/12 budget.</p>

All these issues will remain as risks to be managed over the course of the MTFF.

Schemes Recommended for Removal

Scheme	Funded £'000	Unfunded £'000	Total £'000	Description	Reason for removal / implications
Backlog Repairs	0.0	150.0	150.0	Required maintenance to civic buildings.	The budget provision for the buildings maintenance programme is currently being reviewed. Condition surveys are expected to be completed by the end of 2009 and then turned into a programme of works for 2011/12 and beyond.
Public Conveniences	139.0	0.0	139.0	Toilet refurbishment works.	The rest of the public conveniences programme has now been reviewed by the Portfolio Holder in line with the Cabinet's wishes and no further refurbishments are planned.
Maritime Projects	0.0	150.0	150.0	Provision for maritime project works.	Projects not started - funding could be withdrawn.
Opportunity Purchases	53.0	0.0	53.0	Fund for purchase of opportunity purchases	Small balance does not represent the cost of any likely purchases.
Castle Park Improvements	2.3	0.0	2.3	Design work to create plans showing overall improvements to the park in a coordinated approach.	Work complete. Balance is an underspend.
ICT Strategy Development	0.0	200.0	200.0	New capital investment	Projected outturn shows £200k underspend.
Computer Upgrade	0.0	800.0	800.0	Personal Computer Upgrade (including Councillors Computers). To keep personal computer stock updated	No longer required due to the adoption of VDI technology as part of the ICT strategy scheme.
East Colchester, Hythe Regeneration	222.1	0.0	222.1	A general provision for the cost of progressing elements of the regeneration of the area from master planning to matchfunding individual projects such as B-Sure.	Alternative funds for delivery currently being accessed.
Town Centre Signs (Phase 2)	90.0	0.0	90.0	Extension of Town Centre signage scheme.	Reconsider funding when St Botolphs regeneration takes place as new street signage will be required at that time.
Total	506.40	1,300.00	1,806.40		

Service / Scheme	Total Funded Prog. £'000	Funded		Unreleased Total £'000
		09/10	10/11	
		£'000	£'000	
SUMMARY				
Corporate Management	2,168.9	2,067.4	101.5	0.0
EMT	236.7	236.7	0.0	0.0
Resource Management	629.0	489.5	139.5	0.0
Street Services	453.2	453.2	0.0	96.0
Environmental & Protective Serv.	1,027.4	637.4	390.0	300.0
Strategic Policy & Regeneration	15,859.3	10,264.4	5,594.9	545.0
Life Opportunities	4,543.4	3,239.7	1,303.7	55.0
Completed Schemes	98.0	98.0	0.0	0.0
Total (General Fund)	25,015.9	17,486.3	7,529.6	996.0
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT				
Town Hall	106.8	105.3	1.5	0.0
E-Government	43.8	43.8	0.0	0.0
GIS/Gazetteer	11.3	11.3	0.0	0.0
Electronic Service Delivery	190.0	190.0	0.0	0.0
ICT Strategy Development	1,717.0	1,717.0	0.0	0.0
Customer Service Centre Redesign	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
TOTAL - CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	2,168.9	2,067.4	101.5	0.0
EMT				
Support for Parish Councils and Community Groups	236.7	236.7	0.0	0.0
TOTAL - EMT	236.7	236.7	0.0	0.0
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT				
Financial Systems Migration	3.1	0.0	3.1	0.0
DDA Measures	522.9	427.9	95.0	0.0
Site Disposal Costs	61.6	61.6	0.0	0.0
Moler Works Site	41.4	0.0	41.4	0.0
TOTAL - RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	629.0	489.5	139.5	0.0
STREET SERVICES				
Public Conveniences	71.8	71.8	0.0	0.0
PowerPerceptor Voltage Optimisation Equipment	132.9	132.9	0.0	0.0
Shrub End Waste Transfer Plant	89.7	89.7	0.0	0.0
Flat Recycling Extension	106.5	106.5	0.0	0.0
Upgrade of CCTV Equipment	52.3	52.3	0.0	96.0
TOTAL - STREET SERVICES	453.2	453.2	0.0	96.0

Service / Scheme	Total Funded Prog. £'000	Funded		Unreleased
		09/10	10/11	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000
ENVIRONMENTAL & PROTECTIVE SERVICES				
Heritage Fund - incl. Roman Walls	139.4	139.4	0.0	200.0
Heritage Fund - Castle Park Interpretation	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Heritage Fund - St Nicholas Square	20.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Cemetery Extension	125.0	0.0	125.0	0.0
Replacement of Cremators	350.0	350.0	0.0	0.0
Roman Circus	78.0	78.0	0.0	0.0
Redevelopment of Castle Museum	265.0	0.0	265.0	100.0
TOTAL - ENV & PROT SERVICES	1,027.4	637.4	390.0	300.0
STRATEGIC POLICY & REGENERATION				
Park & Ride	124.4	124.4	0.0	0.0
Community Stadium Pre-development	71.3	71.3	0.0	0.0
Community Stadium - Build	56.1	56.1	0.0	0.0
B I C North	2,360.2	2,360.2	0.0	0.0
Hythe Station Environmental Improvements	737.7	737.7	0.0	0.0
King Edward Quay	117.2	117.2	0.0	0.0
St Botolphs Regeneration	946.0	473.0	473.0	545.0
St Botolphs Public Realm Phase 1	387.2	387.2	0.0	0.0
St Botolphs Public Realm Phase 2	180.0	180.0	0.0	0.0
Historic Town Centre Improvements	160.0	160.0	0.0	0.0
Town Centre Improvements Phase 1	50.8	50.8	0.0	0.0
Town Centre Improvements Phase 2	150.0	150.0	0.0	0.0
A12 Junction Facilitation	350.0	350.0	0.0	0.0
Creative Business Hub	125.0	125.0	0.0	0.0
Visual Arts Facility (VAF) Main Scheme	2,429.5	2,429.5	0.0	0.0
Visual Arts Facility (VAF) Fit-out	6,750.0	2,000.0	4,750.0	0.0
Assistance to Registered Social Landlords	688.9	492.0	196.9	0.0
Public Realm Works	175.0	0.0	175.0	0.0
TOTAL - STRAT POLICY & REGEN	15,859.3	10,264.4	5,594.9	545.0
LIFE OPPORTUNITIES				
Community Development - St Annes	29.3	29.3	0.0	0.0
Improving Life Opportunities	40.4	40.4	0.0	55.0
Hythe Community Centre	10.8	10.8	0.0	0.0
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	1,811.6	1,011.6	800.0	0.0
Private Sector Renewals - Loans and Grants	1,069.4	684.4	385.0	0.0
Highwoods Community Facilities	19.0	19.0	0.0	0.0
St Annes MUGA	2.7	2.7	0.0	0.0
Colchester Leisure World - Fitness Pool LACM and Modernisation	776.5	769.0	7.5	0.0
Old Heath MUGA Installation & Landscape Improvements	75.0	75.0	0.0	0.0
Castle Park - Playground Refurbishment	118.7	118.7	0.0	0.0
Messing Village Hall Refurbishment S106	28.2	28.2	0.0	0.0
St Leonard's Church Wall	95.0	95.0	0.0	0.0

Service / Scheme	Total Funded Prog. £'000	Funded		Unreleased
		09/10	10/11	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000
Resource Centre - Highwoods Country Park	181.0	178.2	2.8	0.0
Highwoods Country Park Improvements	33.4	0.0	33.4	0.0
Boada Skatebowl	102.4	102.4	0.0	0.0
Monkwick MUGA	75.0	75.0	0.0	0.0
Repairs to walls of closed church yards	75.0	0.0	75.0	0.0
TOTAL - LIFE OPPORTUNITIES	4,543.4	3,239.7	1,303.7	55.0
COMPLETED SCHEMES (OR WHERE RETENTION ONLY OUTSTANDING)				
Angel Court Atrium Roof	4.8	4.8	0.0	0.0
SOS Bus	3.5	3.5	0.0	0.0
Public Art - Section 106	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Mersea Pontoon	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0
Groundsmen's Building Castle Park	10.5	10.5	0.0	0.0
Mill Road	4.4	4.4	0.0	0.0
Westlands Country Park Playground	70.0	70.0	0.0	0.0
West Mersea	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL - COMPLETED SCHEMES	98.0	98.0	0.0	0.0
Note: The above programme excludes housing schemes which form part of the Housing Investment Programme (HIP).				

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT and ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2010/11

1 *Introduction*

The Revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice 2009

1.1 In the light of the Icelandic situation in 2008, CIPFA has amended the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice (the Code), Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes and Guidance Notes and the template for the revised Treasury Management Policy Statement. As the Code has been revised, the Council is asked to formally adopt the revised Code and the revised Treasury Management Policy Statement. The revised Code has emphasised a number of key areas including the following:

- a) All councils must formally adopt the revised Code and four clauses
- b) The strategy report will affirm that the effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of the Council's treasury management activities.
- c) The Council's appetite for risk must be clearly identified within the strategy report and will affirm that priority is given to security of capital and liquidity when investing funds and explain how that will be carried out.
- d) Responsibility for risk management and control lies within the organisation and cannot be delegated to any outside organisation.
- e) Credit ratings should only be used as a starting point when considering risk. Use should also be made of market data and information, the quality financial press, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of the government support.
- f) Councils need a sound diversification policy with high credit quality counterparties and should consider setting country, sector and group limits.
- g) Borrowing in advance of need is only to be permissible when there is a clear business case for doing so and only for the current capital programme or to finance future debt maturities.
- h) The main annual treasury management reports MUST be approved by full council.
- i) There needs to be, at a minimum, a mid year review of treasury management strategy and performance. This is intended to highlight any areas of concern that have arisen since the original strategy was approved.
- j) Each council must delegate the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body.
- k) Treasury management performance and policy setting should be subjected to prior scrutiny.
- l) Members should be provided with access to relevant training.
- m) Those charged with governance are also personally responsible for ensuring they have the necessary skills and training.
- n) Responsibility for these activities must be clearly defined within the organisation.

- o) Officers involved in treasury management must be explicitly required to follow treasury management policies and procedures when making investment and borrowing decisions on behalf of the Council (this will form part of the updated Treasury Management Practices).

1.2 This strategy statement has been prepared in accordance with the revised Code. Accordingly, the Council's Treasury Management Strategy will be approved annually by the full Council and there will also be a mid year report. In addition there will be monitoring reports and regular review by the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel. The aim of these reporting arrangements is to ensure that those with ultimate responsibility for the treasury management function appreciate fully the implications of treasury management policies and activities, and that those implementing policies and executing transactions have properly fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to delegation and reporting. The Council will adopt the following reporting arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the revised Code:

Area of Responsibility	Council/Committee/Officer	Frequency
Treasury Management Policy Statement (revised)	Full council	Initial adoption in 2010
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy	Full council	Annually before the start of the year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – mid year report	Full council	Mid year
Treasury Management Strategy / Annual Investment Strategy / MRP policy – updates or revisions at other times	Full council	As required
Annual Treasury Outturn Report	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel	Annually by 30 September after the end of the year
Treasury Management Monitoring Reports	Head of Resource Management	Quarterly
Treasury Management Practices	Full council	As required
Scrutiny of treasury management strategy	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel	Annually before the start of the year
Scrutiny of treasury management performance	Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel	Six Monthly

Revised CIPFA Prudential Code

1.3 CIPFA has also issued a revised Prudential Code which primarily covers borrowing and the Prudential Indicators. Three of these indicators have now been moved from being Prudential Indicators to being Treasury Indicators:

- authorised limit for external debt
- operational boundary for external debt
- actual external debt.

1.4 However, all indicators are to be presented together as one suite. In addition, where there is a significant difference between the net and the gross borrowing position, the risks and benefits associated with this strategy should be clearly stated in the annual strategy.

Revised Investment Guidance

1.5 It should also be noted that the Department of Communities and Local Government is currently undertaking a consultation exercise on draft revised investment guidance that will result in the issue of amended investment guidance for English local authorities to come into effect from 1 April 2010. A separate report will be made to members to inform them when this guidance has been finalised. It is not currently expected that there will be any major changes required over and above the changes already required by the revised Code.

Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11

1.6 The Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations requires the Council to 'have regard to' the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

1.7 The Act therefore requires the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (as required by Investment Guidance issued subsequent to the Act); this sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

1.8 The suggested strategy for 2010/11 in respect of the following aspects of the treasury management function is based upon officers' views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the Council's treasury advisor, Sector Treasury Services. The strategy covers:

- The Treasury Management Policy Statement, revised code of practice and scheme of delegation.
- the economic background and prospects for interest rates;
- the current portfolio position;
- the borrowing strategy;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- prudential indicators to 2012/13;
- the MRP strategy

Balanced Budget Requirement

1.9 It is a statutory requirement under Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for the Council to produce a balanced budget. In particular, Section 32 requires a local authority to calculate its budget requirement for each financial year to include the revenue costs that flow from capital financing decisions. This means that increases in capital expenditure must be limited to a level whereby

increases in charges to revenue caused by borrowing to finance capital expenditure, and any increases in running costs from new capital projects are limited to a level which is affordable within the projected income of the Council for the foreseeable future.

2 Treasury Management Policy

Treasury Management Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Council defines its treasury management activities as: “The management of the authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.
- 2.2 The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation.
- 2.3 The Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.”

Revised Code of Practice 2009

- 2.4 The revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities requires that a report be submitted to the Council setting out four amended clauses that should be formally passed in order to approve adoption of the new version of the Code and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. It has also set out various requirements that have been summarised in the introduction to this Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
- 2.5 CIPFA recommends that all public service organisations adopt the following four clauses:
 1. This organisation will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:
 - a treasury management policy statement, stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities
 - suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.

The content of the policy statement and TMPs will follow the recommendations contained in Sections 6 and 7 of the Code, subject only to amendment where necessary to reflect the particular circumstances of this organisation. Such amendments will not result in the organisation materially deviating from the Code’s key principles.

2. The Full Council will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities, including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its TMPs.
3. The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel, and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Head of Resource Management, who will act in accordance with the organisation's policy statement and TMPs.
4. The Council nominates the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

Scheme of delegation

- 2.6 Full Council
 - receiving and reviewing reports on treasury management policies, practices and activities
 - approval of annual strategy
 - budget consideration and approval
 - approval of the division of responsibilities
- 2.7 Cabinet
 - approval of/amendments to the organisation's adopted clauses, treasury management policy statement and treasury management practices
- 2.8 Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel
 - reviewing the treasury management policy and procedures and making recommendations to the responsible body
 - receiving and reviewing regular monitoring reports.
- 2.9 The treasury management role of the Section 151 Officer:
 - recommending clauses, treasury management policy/practices for approval, reviewing the same regularly, and monitoring compliance
 - submitting regular treasury management policy reports
 - submitting budgets and budget variations
 - receiving and reviewing management information reports
 - reviewing the performance of the treasury management function
 - ensuring the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function
 - ensuring the adequacy of internal audit, and liaising with external audit
 - recommending the appointment of external service providers
 - approving the selection of external service providers and agreeing terms of appointment.
- 2.10 The Council has appointed Sector Treasury Services as external treasury adviser to the Council. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury

management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon the external service providers.

3 Economic Background

- 3.1 The credit crunch of August 2007 eventually fed through to the near collapse of the world banking system in September 2008. This then pushed most of the major economies of the world into a very sharp recession in 2009, accompanied by a dearth of lending from banks anxious to rebuild their weakened balance sheets. Many governments were forced to recapitalise and rescue their major banks, and central banks cut their bank rates to between 0.10 – 1.00% in order to counter the recession.
- 3.2 Most major economies have resorted to a huge expansion of fiscal stimulus packages in order to encourage a fast exit from recession. This, together with expenditure on direct support provided to ailing banks, has led to a drastic expansion in government debt levels which will take many years to eliminate and to restore the previous health of national finances.
- 3.3 The long awaited start of growth eventually came in Quarter 3 2009 in the US and the EU, however the UK failed to emerge from recession.
- 3.4 Inflation has plunged in most major economies and is currently not seen as being a problem for at least the next two years due to the large output gaps and high unemployment putting a lid on wage growth. In many countries there have been widespread pay freezes in 2009 and these are likely to be persistent for some time. Deflation could become a threat in some economies if they were to go into a significant double dip recession.
- 3.5 The current big issue is ‘how quickly will the major world economies recover?’ There is a sharp division of opinion on whether we are now seeing normal cyclical recovery, or the current economic cycle is not a normal business cycle but balance sheet driven. Both of these scenarios are founded on major assumptions and research which may or may not turn out to be correct. At the current time it is difficult to have confidence as to exactly how strong the UK economic recovery will prove to be.
- 3.6 Sector Treasury has assisted the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. **Appendix A** draws together a number of current City forecasts for short term (Bank Rate) and longer fixed interest rates, and highlights the differing views on the strength of economic recovery.
- 3.7 Sector has adopted a more moderate view between the two scenarios i.e. a moderate return to growth. However, Sector feel that the risks that long term gilt yields and PWLB rates will rise markedly are high. There are huge uncertainties in all forecasts due to the major difficulties of forecasting the following areas:
- degree of speed and severity of fiscal contraction after the general election
 - timing and amounts of the reversal of Quantitative Easing,
 - speed of recovery of banks’ profitability and balance sheet imbalances
 - changes in the consumer savings ratio
 - rebalancing of the UK economy towards exporting and substituting imports

- 3.8 The overall balance of risks is weighted to the downside if the recovery from the recession proves to be weaker and slower than currently expected, and Bank Rate increases are delayed and / or lower. There is an identifiable risk of a double dip recession and deleveraging creating a downward spiral of falling demand, falling jobs and falling prices and wages leading to deflation but this is considered to be an extreme view on the basis of current evidence.
- 3.9 The Council's treasury portfolio position at 31 December 2009 comprised:

		Principal £m	Av. rate %
Fixed rate funding	PWLB	27.9	4.58
	Market	34.5	6.74
TOTAL DEBT		62.4	5.77
Overnight		2.5	0.80
up to 3 months		4.0	0.90
up to 6 months		4.0	0.75
up to 1 year		0.0	0.00
over 1 year		4.0	6.34
frozen		4.0	5.81
TOTAL INVESTMENTS		18.5	1.77

4 **Borrowing Strategy**

- 4.1 The table below summarises all new borrowing that has taken place in the current and previous financial years, together with estimates of future borrowing needs. This assumes that the Council will borrow internally for the foreseeable future in respect of the purchase of Rowan House, additional funding for the Visual Arts Facility, the Business Incubation Centre, new cremators, and the upgrading of communal aerial systems from analogue to digital in the Council's housing stock.

	2008/09 £'000 actual	2009/10 £'000 probable	2010/11 £'000 estimate	2011/12 £'000 estimate	2012/13 £'000 estimate
New borrowing during year	4,000	0	0	0	0
Alternative financing arrangements	13,332	1,660	200	0	0
Replacement borrowing	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	17,332	1,660	200	0	0

- 4.2 Forecasts for new borrowing rates from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) are shown in **Appendix A**. In view of these forecasts, the Council's borrowing strategy will be based upon the following information:
- Rates are expected to gradually increase during the year, so It should therefore be advantageous to time new long term borrowing for the start of the year when 25 year PWLB rates fall back to or below the central forecast rate of about 4.65%, a suitable trigger point for considering new fixed rate long term borrowing.

- Variable rate borrowing is expected to be cheaper than long term borrowing and will therefore be attractive throughout the financial year compared to taking long term fixed rate borrowing.
- PWLB rates on loans of less than ten years duration are expected to be substantially lower than longer term PWLB rates offering a range of options for new borrowing which will spread debt maturities away from a concentration in long dated debt.
- There is expected to be little difference between 25 year and 50 year rates so therefore loans in the 25-30 year periods could be seen as being more attractive than 50 year borrowing as the spread between the PWLB new borrowing and early repayment rates is considerably less. This would maximise the potential for debt rescheduling and allow the Council to rebalance its debt maturity profile.
- Consideration will also be given to borrowing fixed rate market loans at 25 – 50 basis points below the PWLB target rate and to maintaining an appropriate balance between PWLB and market debt in the debt portfolio.

4.3 In normal circumstances the main sensitivities of the forecast are likely to be the two scenarios noted below. The Council officers, in conjunction with the treasury advisors, will continually monitor both the prevailing interest rates and the market forecasts, adopting the following responses to a change of sentiment:

- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short term rates, e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation, then long term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.
- if it were felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates were still relatively cheap.

External v Internal Borrowing

4.4 This Council currently has a difference between gross debt and net debt (after deducting cash balances) in the region of £18.5m. The general aim of this treasury management strategy is to reduce the difference between the two debt levels over the next three years in order to reduce the credit risk incurred by holding investments. However, measures taken in the last year have already reduced substantially the level of credit risk so another factor that will be carefully considered is the difference between borrowing rates and investment rates to ensure the Council obtains value for money once an appropriate level of risk management has been attained to ensure the security of its investments.

4.5 The historically abnormally low Bank Rate provides a continuation of the current window of opportunity to fundamentally review the strategy of undertaking new external borrowing and consider the potential merits of internal borrowing. Over the next three years, investment rates are therefore expected to be below long term borrowing rates and so value for money considerations would indicate that value could best be obtained by avoiding new external borrowing and by using

internal cash balances to finance new capital expenditure or to replace maturing external debt (this is referred to as internal borrowing). This would maximise short term savings.

- 4.6 The running down of investments also has benefits of reducing exposure to interest rate and credit risk. However, short term savings by avoiding new long term external borrowing in 2010/11 will also be weighed against the potential for incurring long term extra costs by delaying unavoidable new external borrowing until later years when PWLB long term rates are forecast to be significantly higher.
- 4.7 However, short term savings by avoiding new long term external borrowing in 2010/11 will also be weighed against the potential for incurring additional long term extra costs by delaying unavoidable new external borrowing until later years when PWLB long term rates are forecast to be significantly higher.
- 4.8 The Council has examined the potential for undertaking early repayment of some external debt to the PWLB in order to reduce the difference between its gross and net debt positions. However, the introduction by the PWLB of significantly lower repayment rates than new borrowing rates in November 2007 has meant that large premiums would be incurred by such action and would also do so in the near term; such levels of premiums cannot be justified on value for money grounds. This situation will be monitored in case the differential is narrowed by the PWLB or when repayment rates rise substantially.
- 4.9 Against this background caution will be adopted with the 2010/11 treasury operations. The Head of Resource Management will monitor the interest rate market and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances, reporting any decisions to the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business at the next available opportunity.

Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 4.10 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be considered carefully to ensure value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds. In determining whether borrowing will be undertaken in advance of need the Council will:
- ensure that there is a clear link between the capital programme and maturity profile of the existing debt portfolio which supports the need to take funding in advance of need
 - ensure the ongoing revenue liabilities created, and the implications for the future plans and budgets have been considered
 - evaluate the economic and market factors that might influence the manner and timing of any decision to borrow
 - consider the merits and demerits of alternative forms of funding
 - consider the alternative interest rate bases available, the most appropriate periods to fund and repayment profiles to use.

5 Debt Rescheduling

- 5.1 The introduction of the new PWLB rates structure in 2007 that created a spread between the rates applied to new borrowing and debt repayment, has meant that PWLB to PWLB debt restructuring is now much less attractive than before. However, significant interest savings may still be achievable through using LOBOs (Lenders Option Borrowers Option) loans and other market loans in rescheduling exercises.
- 5.2 As short term borrowing rates will be considerably cheaper than longer term rates, there are likely to be significant opportunities to generate savings by switching from long term debt to short term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of their short term nature and the likely cost of refinancing those short term loans once they mature, compared to the current rates of longer term debt in the existing debt portfolio. Any such rescheduling and repayment of debt is likely to cause a flattening of the Councils maturity profile as in recent years there has been a skew towards longer dated PWLB.
- 5.3 Consideration will also be given to the potential for making savings by running down investment balances to repay debt prematurely as short term rates on investments are likely to be lower than rates paid on current debt.
- 5.4 The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:
- the generation of cash savings and / or discounted cash flow savings;
 - to help fulfil the strategy outlined above; and
 - to enhance the balance of the portfolio (amend the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).
- 5.5 There has been much discussion as to whether the size of spread between long term PWLB repayment and new borrowing rates should be revised (downwards) in order to help local authorities currently dissuaded from using investment cash balances to repay long term borrowing and thereby reduce counterparty and interest rate risk exposure. The DMO / PWLB have issued a consultation document with suggested options to revise the methodology used to calculate the early repayment rate. The consultation period ended in January 2010 and the Council will monitor developments in this area and may amend its strategy if significant changes are introduced.
- 5.6 All rescheduling will be reported to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel at the meeting following its action.

6 Investment Policy

- 6.1 The Council will have regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments issued in March 2004, any revisions to that guidance, the Audit Commission's report on Icelandic investments and the 2009 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes. The Council's investment priorities are the security of capital and the liquidity of its investments.

- 6.2 The Council will also aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. The risk appetite of this Council is low in order to give priority to security of its investments. The borrowing of monies purely to invest or on lend and make a return is unlawful and the Council will not engage in such activity.
- 6.3 Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are detailed in **Appendix B**. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council’s Treasury Management Practices – Schedules.
- 6.4 Specified investments will be sterling denominated, with maturities up to maximum of one year, meeting the minimum ‘high’ rating criteria where applicable. Non-specified investments are those that do not meet these criteria. A maximum of £20m will be held in aggregate in non-specified investments.
- 6.5 The Council, in conjunction with its treasury advisor Sector, will use Fitch, Moodys and Standard and Poors ratings to derive its credit criteria. All credit ratings will be monitored weekly. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Sector creditworthiness service.
 - If a downgrade results in the counterparty/investment scheme no longer meeting the Council’s minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
 - If a body is placed on negative rating watch (i.e. there is a reasonable probability of a rating change in the short term and the likelihood of that change being negative) and it is currently near the floor of the of the minimum acceptable rating for placing investments with that body, then no further investments will be made with that body.
- 6.6 In addition to the use of Credit Ratings, the Council will be advised of information in movements in Credit Default Swap spreads and other market data and information on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in the downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council’s lending list. The duration of all investments will also be checked against Sector’s colour code bands that indicate creditworthiness and suggest duration limits as part of their weekly credit list.
- 6.7 The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from countries with a sovereign credit rating of ‘AAA’ from Fitch Ratings, as well as those from the UK. There are currently 14 ‘AAA’ rated countries that qualify using this credit criteria at the date of this report, which are shown below. This list will be amended by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

Canada	Denmark	Finland	France
Germany	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Norway
Singapore	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland
UK	USA		

- 6.8 The Council will take into account other professional advice that is available, and will follow the approach suggested by CIPFA by always using the lowest rating from all three rating agencies to determine creditworthy counterparties.

- 6.9 Since the credit crunch crisis there have been a number of developments which require separate consideration and approval for use:
- 6.10 Nationalised banks in the UK have credit ratings which do not conform to the credit criteria usually used by local authorities to identify banks which are of high credit worthiness. In particular, as they no longer are separate institutions in their own right, it is impossible for Fitch to assign them an individual rating for their stand alone financial strength. Accordingly, they have assigned an ‘F’ rating which means that at a historical point of time, this bank failed and is now owned by the Government. However, these institutions are now recipients of an ‘F1+’ short term rating as they effectively take on the creditworthiness of the Government itself. They also have a support rating of ‘1’, meaning that on both counts, they have the highest ratings possible.
- 6.11 Some countries have supported their banking system by giving a blanket guarantee on ALL deposits. The UK Government has NOT given a blanket guarantee on all deposits but has underlined its determination to ensure the security of the UK banking system by supporting eight named institutions with a £500bn support package. Other countries such as the US, countries within the EU and Switzerland are currently providing major support packages to their banking systems.
- 6.12 The Council’s approach will be to add UK Nationalised banks and the eight named institutions on the Governments support package to its list of investment instruments. However, the Council will not invest with foreign banks on the basis that they are covered by guarantees and support packages, but will continue to consider the credit ratings of the individual banks.

7 Investment Strategy

7.1 The Council’s in-house managed funds are mainly cash-flow derived and there is a core balance available for investment over a 2-3 year period. Investments will accordingly be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates. The Council’s investments that mature beyond 2009/10 are shown in the table below.

Principal Sums Invested for over 364 Days	Amount £'000	Maturity	Rate %
Term Deposits - Banks & Build. Socs.	2,000	Jun-10	1.11
Term Deposits - Banks & Build. Socs.	2,000	Jul-10	6.44
	4,000		

- 7.2 The Council will avoid locking into longer term deals while investment rates are down at historically low levels unless exceptionally attractive rates are available that make longer term deals worthwhile. For 2010/11 the Council will budget for an investment return of 0.9% on investments placed during the financial year.
- 7.3 For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its business reserve accounts and short-dated deposits (over night to three months) in order to benefit from the compounding of interest.

7.4 The Council will report on its investment activity to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel at the half-year stage, as well as at the end of the financial year as part of its Annual Report on Treasury Management. The Panel will also be informed of any other significant matters as part of the quarterly Capital Monitor report.

7.5 The Council currently has the following investments frozen in Icelandic banks.

	Amount £'000	Date Invested	Maturity Date	Rate %
Landsbanki Islands	3,000	02-Sep-08	02-Dec-08	5.82
Landsbanki Islands	1,000	10-Sep-08	10-Dec-08	5.8
	4,000			

7.6 The Council has taken advantage of capital finance regulations allowing the impact of the impairment on these investments to be deferred to 2010/11. The impairment is expected to total £615k, which assumes a recovery rate of 88%, with repayments being made in four equal instalments between March 2011 and December 2013. It also assumes that all local authority claims have priority status, as per the decision by the Landsbanki winding up board in October 2009. The Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel will be kept up to date with any further developments in this area.

8 Prudential Indicators 2010/11 to 2012/13

8.1 The aims of the Prudential Code are to assist local authorities to ensure that:

- Capital expenditure plans are affordable
- All external borrowing is at a prudent and sustainable level
- Treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good practice
- The authority is accountable in taking decisions by providing a clear and transparent framework
- The framework is consistent with and supports local strategic and asset management planning and proper option appraisal.

8.2 The prudential indicators are designed to support and record decision making in relation to capital expenditure plans, external debt and treasury management. Estimating capital expenditure for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years is the starting point of the calculation of prudential indicators, and the Council has made reasonable estimates of its total capital expenditure.

8.3 **Prudential indicators of affordability.** The Prudential code specifies a range of indicators that inform whether the borrowing and resulting revenue costs of alternative levels of capital expenditure are affordable. These include the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream and the incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the council tax and housing rents.

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
	Actual	Probable outturn	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital expenditure					
Non-HRA	21,948	17,308	8,925	0	0
HRA	2,906	2,921	5,956	5,187	5,187
Total	24,854	20,229	14,881	5,187	5,187
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream					
Non-HRA	-9.77%	4.67%	4.17%	4.57%	4.52%
HRA	12.76%	11.13%	10.71%	10.26%	9.85%
Net borrowing requirement					
B/fwd 1 April	24,450	43,704	43,704	43,704	43,704
C/fwd 31 March	43,704	43,704	43,704	43,704	43,704
In year borrowing requirement	19,254	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March					
Non-HRA	25,524	26,435	25,873	25,204	24,544
HRA	50,883	51,083	51,283	51,283	51,283
Total	76,407	77,518	77,156	76,487	75,827
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions					
Council Tax (Band D)			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Housing Rents			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

- 8.4 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is a notional representation of the council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose, although this borrowing may not necessarily take place externally. It shows the amount of capital spending that has not yet been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income. It will increase when the Council relies on borrowing to fund capital expenditure.
- 8.5 **Prudential indicators of prudence** have an emphasis on Treasury Management, and have the objective of ensuring that external debt is kept within sustainable limits. For a financial strategy to be prudent, medium term net borrowing should only be used for capital purposes. To ensure this is the case, the Net Borrowing Requirement should not, except in the short term, exceed the total CFR in the previous year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years.

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
	Actual	Probable outturn	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Authorised limit for external debt					
Borrowing		80,692	80,992	80,992	80,992
Other long term liabilities		5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total		85,692	85,992	85,992	85,992
Operational boundary for external debt					
Borrowing		73,392	73,592	73,592	73,592
Other long term liabilities		3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total		76,392	76,592	76,592	76,592
Actual external debt	58,400	62,400	62,400	62,400	62,400
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure			100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure			50%	50%	50%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days			5,000	5,000	5,000
Maturity structure of new fixed rate borrowings during 2010/11					
	< 12 mths	1 - 2 yrs	2 - 5 yrs	5 - 10 yrs	> 10 yrs
Upper Limit	10%	50%	50%	70%	100%
Lower Limit	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%

- 8.6 Treasury management creates the link between the Council's CFR and the structure of its external debt. The treasury management indicators are relevant for the purposes of setting an integrated treasury management strategy. The first indicator is the adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management. The original 2001 code was adopted on 18 February 2004 by the full Council, and the revised Code will be adopted on 17 February 2010.
- 8.7 The level of external debt is a consequence of a treasury management decision about how much external borrowing to undertake. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the Council's financial transactions. There are two indicators for external debt that encompass all borrowing whether for capital or revenue; the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary.
- 8.8 The Authorised Limit is the outer boundary of the Council's borrowing. It should reflect a level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded but may not be sustainable. The capital plans to be considered for inclusion incorporate financing by both external borrowing and other forms of liability, such as credit arrangements. The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax and council rent levels is 'acceptable'.

- 8.9 The Operational Boundary differs from the authorised limit in that it is based on expectations of the maximum external debt of the Council according to probable events. Cash-flow variations may lead to the occasional breach of the operational boundary. It therefore should allow a sufficient margin to allow time to take corrective action before the authorised limit is breached.
- 8.10 There is a need for integration between the Capital Programme and treasury management for the Council to be able to demonstrate the affordability of Capital projects. Where capital receipts are not available, the Council should show how much it intends to borrow, and that this is within the authorised limits for the year.
- 8.11 A best practice approach to treasury management is to reduce uncertainty surrounding fluctuations in interest rates, whilst retaining a degree of flexibility. The Council has set upper limits to both fixed and variable interest rate exposures.
- 8.12 The total principal sums invested indicator is an upper limit for each financial year for the maturing of long-term investments. This is to minimise the possibility that investments will need to be realised early, with the risk of losing some of the principal sum. It also demonstrates that the Council is not borrowing more money than it needs or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit.
- 8.13 The Council could be exposed to the risk of having to refinance debt at a time when interest rates may be volatile. The code aims to assist authorities to avoid large concentrations of fixed rate debt that needs to be replaced at the same time. The indicator shows both the upper and lower limits of the maturity structure of borrowing. This expresses the amount of fixed rate borrowing that is maturing in each period as a percentage of the total projected fixed-rate borrowing.
- 8.14 There may be some changes to the Prudential Indicators arising from the finalisation of budget figures for the Housing Revenue Account and details of Parish Council Precepts. The Capital Programme will also be reviewed to confirm that there are no additional implications in respect of the 'Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions' indicator. This will be completed before approval by Council. The 'Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions' indicator currently takes into account additional funding required for flat recycling.

9 *Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement*

- 9.1 Capital expenditure is generally expenditure on assets which have a life expectancy of more than one year e.g. buildings, vehicles, machinery etc. It would be impractical to charge the entirety of such expenditure to revenue in the year in which it was incurred therefore such expenditure is spread over several years in order to try to match the years over which such assets benefit the local community through their useful life. The manner of spreading these costs is through an annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), which was previously determined under Regulation, and will in future be determined under Guidance.
- 9.2 Statutory Instrument 2008 no. 414 s4 lays down that: "A local authority shall determine for the current financial year an amount of minimum revenue provision

that it considers to be prudent.” This is a substitution for the previous requirement to comply with regulation 28 in S.I. 2003 no. 3146 (as amended). There is no requirement to charge MRP where the CFR is nil or negative at the end of the preceding financial year. The share of Housing Revenue Account CFR is not subject to an MRP charge.

9.3 Along with the above duty, the Government issued new guidance in February 2008 which requires that a Statement on the Council’s policy for its annual MRP should be submitted to the full Council for approval before the start of the financial year to which the provision will relate.

9.4 The Council is legally obliged to “have regard” to the guidance, which is intended to enable a more flexible approach to assessing the amount of annual provision than was required under the previous statutory requirements. The guidance offers four main options under which MRP could be made, with an overriding recommendation that the Council should make prudent provision to redeem its debt liability over a period which is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure is estimated to provide benefits. The requirement to ‘have regard’ to the guidance therefore means that:

- Although four main options are recommended in the guidance, there is no intention to be prescriptive by making these the only methods of charge under which a local authority may consider its MRP to be prudent.
- It is the responsibility of each authority to decide upon the most appropriate method of making a prudent provision, after having had regard to the guidance.

Option 1: Regulatory Method

9.5 Under the previous MRP regulations, MRP was set at a uniform rate of 4% of the adjusted CFR. This historic approach must continue for all capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, and new capital expenditure that is deemed to be part of the Council’s Supported Capital Expenditure (SCE) within the Revenue Support Grant.

Option 2: Capital Financing Requirement Method

9.6 This is a variation on option 1 which is based upon a charge of 4% of the aggregate CFR without any adjustment for factors which were brought into account under the previous statutory MRP calculation.

Option 3: Asset Life Method

9.7 This method may be applied to new capital expenditure for which no Government support is being given, and is therefore funded by prudential borrowing. Under this option, it is intended that MRP should be spread over the estimated useful life of the asset for which the borrowing is undertaken. There are two useful advantages of this option:

- Longer life assets e.g. freehold land can be charged over a longer period than would arise under options 1 and 2.
- No MRP charges need to be made until the financial year after that in which an item of capital expenditure is fully incurred and comes into service use. This is not available under options 1 and 2.

- 9.8 There are two methods of calculating charges under option 3:
- equal instalment method – equal annual instalments,
 - annuity method – annual payments gradually increase during the life of the asset.

Option 4: Depreciation Method

- 9.9 Under this option, MRP charges are to be linked to the useful life of each type of asset using the standard accounting rules for depreciation. This is a more complex approach than option 3. The same conditions apply regarding the date of completion of the new expenditure as apply under option 3.

MRP Policy Statement 2010/11

- 9.10 The Council implemented the new Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) guidance in 2008/09, and will assess their MRP for 2010/11 in accordance with the main recommendations contained within the guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 9.11 The major proportion of the MRP for 2010/11 will relate to the more historic debt liability that will continue to be charged at the rate of 4%, in accordance with option 1 of the guidance. Certain expenditure reflected within the debt liability at 31st March 2010 will be subject to MRP under option 3, and will be charged over a period which is reasonably commensurate with the estimated useful life applicable to the nature of expenditure, using the equal annual instalment method. For example, capital expenditure on a new building, or on the refurbishment or enhancement of a building, will be related to the estimated life of that building.
- 9.12 Estimated life periods will be determined with reference to the estimated life periods that are referred to in the guidance. However, the Council reserves the right to determine useful life periods and prudent MRP in exceptional circumstances where the recommendations of the guidance would not be appropriate.
- 9.13 As some types of capital expenditure incurred by the Council are not capable of being related to an individual asset, asset lives will be assessed on a basis which most reasonably reflects the anticipated period of benefit that arises from the expenditure. Also, whatever type of expenditure is involved, it will be grouped together in a manner which reflects the nature of the main component of expenditure and will only be divided up in cases where there are two or more major components with substantially different useful economic lives.

Interest Rate Forecasts

The data below shows a variety of forecasts published by a number of institutions. The first three are individual forecasts including those of UBS and Capital Economics (an independent forecasting consultancy). The final one represents summarised figures drawn from the population of all major City banks and academic institutions. The forecast within this strategy statement has been drawn from these diverse sources and officers' own views.

Individual Forecasts

Sector interest rate forecast – 23 November 2009

	Q/E1 2010	Q/E2 2010	Q/E3 2010	Q/E4 2010	Q/E1 2011	Q/E2 2011	Q/E3 2011	Q/E4 2011	Q/E1 2012	Q/E2 2012	Q/E3 2012	Q/E4 2012	Q/E1 2013
Base Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.50%	2.25%	2.75%	3.25%	3.50%	3.75%	4.25%	4.25%	4.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	3.05%	3.20%	3.30%	3.40%	3.60%	3.85%	4.15%	4.55%	4.60%	4.80%	4.80%	4.85%	4.85%
10yr PWLB Rate	4.00%	4.05%	4.15%	4.30%	4.45%	4.60%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.10%	5.15%	5.15%
25yr PWLB Rate	4.55%	4.65%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.00%	5.05%	5.10%	5.20%	5.30%	5.30%	5.35%	5.35%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.60%	4.70%	4.75%	4.90%	5.00%	5.10%	5.15%	5.20%	5.30%	5.40%	5.40%	5.45%	5.45%

Capital Economics interest rate forecast – 5 November 2009

	Q/E1 2010	Q/E2 2010	Q/E3 2010	Q/E4 2010	Q/E1 2011	Q/E2 2011	Q/E3 2011	Q/E4 2011
Base Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.65%	2.15%	2.15%	2.15%	2.15%	2.15%	2.15%	2.15%
10yr PWLB Rate	3.15%	2.65%	2.65%	2.65%	2.65%	2.65%	2.65%	2.65%
25yr PWLB Rate	3.95%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%	3.75%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.15%	4.05%	4.05%	4.05%	4.05%	4.05%	4.05%	4.05%

UBS interest rate forecast (for quarter ends) – 30 October 2009

	Q/E1 2010	Q/E2 2010	Q/E3 2010	Q/E4 2010	Q/E1 2011	Q/E2 2011	Q/E3 2011	Q/E4 2011
Bank Rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.50%	2.00%	2.50%	3.00%
10yr PWLB Rate	3.90%	4.05%	4.40%	4.75%	4.90%	5.15%	5.40%	5.40%
25yr PWLB Rate	4.45%	4.65%	5.00%	5.15%	5.40%	5.65%	5.90%	5.90%
50yr PWLB Rate	4.55%	4.75%	5.10%	5.25%	5.50%	5.75%	6.00%	6.00%

Survey of Economic Forecasts

HM Treasury – December 2008 summary of forecasts of 23 City and 12 academic analysts for Q4 2009 and 2010 published in November 2009. Forecasts for 2010 – 2013 are based on 21 forecasts in the last quarterly forecast – November 2009.

	Actual	Qtr Ended		Ave. Bank Rate			
		Q4 2009	Q4 2010	Ave. 2010	Ave. 2011	Ave. 2012	Ave. 2013
Median	0.50%	0.50%	1.30%	0.70%	1.80%	3.00%	3.70%
Highest	0.50%	0.50%	2.30%	1.30%	3.30%	4.30%	4.60%
Lowest	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	1.00%	1.40%

Investment Policy

ORGANISATION	CRITERIA			MAXIMUM AMOUNT	MAX. PERIOD		
	Short-term	Long-term	Individual		Support Rating		
					1	2	3
Deposits with Banks and Building Societies (including unconditionally guaranteed subsidiaries)	Minimum F1+	AAA, AA+, AA,	A, A/B, B	£7.5m	2 years	2 years	
	Minimum F1+	Minimum AA-	Minimum B/C	£2.5m	1 year	1 year	
	Minimum F1	A+, A	A, A/B, B	£2.5m	6 mths	6 mths	
			B/C	£2.5m	3 mths	3 mths	
UK nationalised or part nationalised financial institutions*	F1+		E, F	£1m	1 year		
UK Government support to the banking sector**				£1m	1 year		
UK Local & Police Authorities				£10m	1 year		
Debt Management Agency Deposits				£10m	10 years		
Money Market Funds		AAA		£3m	60 days		
Multilateral Development Banks		AAA		£3m	1 year		
Investment schemes (e.g. bond funds)		AAA		£7.5m	5 years		

Other Limits:

- Sovereign debt rating of AAA only
- Country limit £10m
- UK limit £25m (Banks and Building Societies)
- Limit in all Building Societies £10m
- Limit of £20m in aggregate in non-specified investments
- Limit of 20% of investment portfolio with one counterparty

* The maturity limit for Northern Rock is 3 months

** Where other criteria are not met. Banks supported by the UK bail-out package as follows: Abbey, Barclays, HBOS, Lloyds TSB, HSBC, Nationwide Building Society, RBS, Standard Chartered

27th January Cabinet – Additional Paper referred to in para. 26.1

NNDR Ratepayers Meeting 20 January 2010

Present:

Cllr Paul Smith, Portfolio Holder

Cllr Nigel Offen, Portfolio Holder

Lindsay Barker, Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration

Nigel Myers, Enterprise & Tourism Manager

Sean Plummer, Finance Manager

Representatives from:-

- Colchester Business and Enterprise Agency (COLBEA)
- Lion Walk Shopping Centre
- Colchester Retail Business Association (CORBA)
- Federation of Small Business (FSB)
- Institute of Directors
- Destination Colchester

Notes of Meeting

The meeting included a presentation of the Council's finances, budget process, budget position and medium term outlook. In addition, commentary was provided on a number of issues raised in previous years or areas of specific relevance to the business community.

Issues Raised / Questions

A number of questions and observations were asked throughout the meeting. These included:-

- The Council's Strategic Plan and the extent to which this is reviewed and the ability to respond to change. It was commented that the Council had been "light on its feet" to respond to issues but especially during the rapidly changing environment it was important that the Council could respond quickly
- The situation with Icelandic investments
- Clarification of business rates funding and the impact of the Small Business Rate Relief.
- More promotion of the positive initiatives being undertaken by the Council
- Comments on other budget pressures, growth items and savings. This included discussion on the Council process to minimise costs and improve efficiency through Fundamental Service Reviews.
- Asked whether CBC has made any provision in future budgets in respect of the Olympics. In addition it was said that businesses should be involved in any preparation work.

- Commented that the whilst the work in the Town Centre was very important it was also essential that business on the periphery should not be ignored as these helped to create, maintain and improve jobs which in turn supported Town Centre businesses.
- Consultation with the business community will take place regarding the improvements to the Town Centre
- Opportunities to attract more visitors to the borough, such as Cruise passengers in Harwich, will continue to be fully appraised where viable developed in partnership with the private sector
- The Council, working with others, had helped to promote the take up of small business rate relief.
- The Council had improved at listening and responding to business with the example of car parking charges / special offers.

The main recurring issues raised during the meeting were:-

- The Council need to try to do more to communicate quickly and positively relevant issues to the business community. For example through more use of regular email updates and it was agreed steps would be taken to achieve this.
- The Council needs to continue to promote Colchester as a destination and to provide facilities that encourage people to stay in Colchester.
- There was a need to co-ordinate / communicate to business groups. This may be a role fulfilled or facilitated by the Council.
- There was recognition that real progress has been made in building partnerships between the Council and business groups in the borough.

Overall, those present thanked the Council for the opportunity to comment on the budget and other issues.

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy & Regeneration	Author	Lindsay Barker Darren Brown ☎ 282253
Title	Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2010/11		
Wards affected	All		

This report presents the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) for 2010/11 to 2012/13

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 To approve the 2010/11 HRA revenue estimates as set out in Appendix A.
- 1.2 To approve dwelling rents as calculated in accordance with the rent restructuring formula (set out in paragraph 4.6).
- 1.3 To approve rents for garages (set out in paragraph 4.10).
- 1.4 To approve the management fee of £3,535,400 for Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) (set out in paragraph 4.23).
- 1.5 To note a revenue contribution of £407,000 to the Housing Investment Programme is included in the budget (paragraph 4.26 to 4.28).
- 1.6 To note the HRA balances position in Appendix B.
- 1.7 To note the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) set out at Appendix C.

2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1. Financial Procedures require the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration to prepare detailed HRA estimates for approval by the Cabinet, setting the new rent levels for the new financial year.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 As part of the process for setting the 2010/11 HRA budget, it is necessary to revisit the 2009/10 position to forecast the predicted level of HRA balances along with identifying any risk areas or cost pressures which could have an impact in future years.

2009/10 Revised Housing Revenue Account

- 3.2 Appendix A shows the Revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for 2009/10. There have been some amendments to the Original budget for 2009/10 during the course of the current financial year. A reconciliation is therefore provided in the following table between the Original and Revised budget for 2009/10:-

Reconciliation between Original and Revised 2009/10 HRA Budget

	Budget 09/10	Commentary
	£'000	
Original Budget Surplus	(213)	Agreed 28 th January 2009
2008/09 Budgets c/fwd	70	Agreed by Head of Resource Management/Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration
Revised Budget Surplus	(143)	

2009/10 Forecast Outturn Position

3.3 When considering the financial position of the HRA, in addition to the adjustments to the 2009/10 original budget shown in the above table, it is important to note the 2009/10 forecast outturn position for the HRA. It is currently predicted that the HRA will be underspent by £220k compared to the revised budget for 2009/10. The table below provides a breakdown of this forecast underspend. In addition, commentary is provided on the major variations;

	Budget 09/10
	£'000
Employee Costs	(150)
Premises Costs	(127)
Support Costs	(40)
Less Rental & Service Charge Income	97
Forecast 2009/10 Over-Recovery (including anticipated carry forward request)	(220)

- An underspend of £150k on Employee costs is predicted for the year primarily due to the effect of vacant posts to date, but also reflecting the lower than budgeted pay award for 2009/10.
- An underspend of £377k is predicted for the year on Premises costs. However, £250k of this reflects the anticipated level of funds which will not need to be released to CBH in the final Quarter of the financial year, given the services being provided in the current Deed of Variation. It is anticipated that this resource will be subject to a request for carry forward into 2010/11 to deliver Repairs and Maintenance works and thus will not be used to increase the HRA balance. Therefore, only the balance of £127k has been shown as an underspend which will contribute to HRA balances, which reflects the anticipated underspend arising from lower utility costs than assumed within the budget and savings made from the re-tender of the cleaning contract.
- An underspend of £40k is predicted for the year on Support Service costs, which reflects the anticipated impact the lower than budgeted pay award for 2009/10 has on recharges to the HRA.

- Less rental and service charge income of £97k is forecast due to a combination of fewer Right to Buy sales and a higher number of void properties and garages than assumed within the budget, along with the continued lower levels of income from court fees.

4. 2010/11 Housing Revenue Account Budget

- 4.1 Appendix A shows the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for 2010/11. This shows a predicted HRA surplus of £412K which will be used to increase the level of uncommitted HRA balances.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the MTFF included within the 2009/10 HRA budget cycle and considered by Cabinet on 28th January 2009 estimated a surplus for 2010/11 of £209K. Therefore, after taking into account the decrease in utility costs and savings arising from the housing service review and other budget reductions, the 2010/11 surplus is broadly in line with what would be expected. Whilst this is a positive outcome, it needs to be considered within the context of the HRA MTFF set out in Appendix C.

Balances

- 4.3 The estimated balances for the HRA are set out in Appendix B. The anticipated level of the uncommitted HRA balance as at 31st March 2010 is £893K. The recommended prudent level of balance is £600k, therefore it is anticipated that balances will be reinstated to more than the prudent level by March 2010. However, given the anticipated budget deficit reflected in the MTFF for 2011/12, it is intended to use the budget surplus for 2010/11 to increase the uncommitted balance as mentioned in paragraph 4.1.
- 4.4 The Medium Term Financial Forecast at Appendix C shows the uncommitted HRA balance increasing next year, but then decreasing each year thereafter as the expected loss of the ALMO allowance in 2011/12 takes effect. Indeed, if this trend were to continue, then it is currently estimated that the HRA balance would fall below prudent recommended levels by 2012/13. Given that the opportunities to increase income are limited as rent increases are set in accordance with national Government policy, then the Council would have to look at making cost savings within the HRA to reinstate the balances to the required minimum level.
- 4.5 A risk assessment has been undertaken to review the minimum prudent level of HRA uncommitted balance the Council should maintain. The results of this review are set out at Appendix D and show that it would be reasonable to retain the uncommitted balance at £600k.

Income

Housing Rents

- 4.6 2010/11 is the ninth year of transitional rent reform arrangements. The dwelling rents are set within Communities and Local Government (CLG) guidelines and so the annual increases in rents paid by tenants are set by reference to national Government policy. The average rent proposed for 2010/11 is £67.11 per week compared to a current average of £65.79 an increase of £1.32 (2.00%) per week. Given the current uncertainty over the level of inflation (RPI) in the short to medium term, and the Governments recent policy (for 2009/10 and 2010/11) of fixing guideline rents, it is difficult to anticipate future rent increases. However, modelling within the MTFF has been undertaken using reasonable estimates of inflation rates.

- 4.7 When considering the proposed rent increase for 2010/11, the following needs to be taken into account. CLG issues the rent increase guidelines for the forthcoming year in the annual HRA subsidy determination. For many years, they have issued the draft determination around October each year, with the final determination being issued mid-December. However, this year, the draft determination was issued on 10th December 2009, with the deadline for consultation responses being 25th January 2010. Therefore, the possibility does exist that CLG will alter the rent guidelines when they issue the final determination some time in late January, which could alter the proposed rent increase referred to in paragraph 4.6. If this were to happen, then it is proposed that the budget would be amended with approval sought from the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity.
- 4.8 Sales of council houses under the Right to Buy scheme could possibly reach 10 in 2009/10 (3 sold in 2008/09, and 28 sold in 2007/08), against sales of 20 expected in the 2009/10 HRA budget. The level of sales has remained at a low level in the current financial year, even when compared to the average number of sales per year of 30 since 2004/05. The 2010/11 budget has been set assuming the sale of 10 properties, being broadly in line with the current level and reflecting the national picture of diminishing numbers.
- 4.9 The budget for 2010/11 has been set using the assumption that there will be a loss of rental income of 1.25% resulting from empty properties. This is consistent with the 2009/10 budget and is reasonable given the actual void loss in recent years.

Other Income - Fees and Charges

- 4.10 The rent proposed for garages for 2010/11 is £6.95 per week compared to £6.81 in 2009/10. Although these rents are outside of the rent reform arrangements this increase is in line with the proposed increase in dwelling rents, i.e. 2.00%.
- 4.11 There are a range of other fees and charges for services which are made to Tenants and Leaseholders, which are agreed by the Portfolio Holders for Neighbourhoods and Culture & Diversity. The budget for 2010/11 assumes that the demand for these services will remain the same as the current financial year.
- 4.12 The de-pooling of services charges to individual tenants was implemented in 2008/09. There have been new service charges introduced in 2010/11 for Digital TV and Cleaning of Communal Bin Chutes, along with an update of existing charges to reflect the actual cost of the services provided.

Expenditure

Service Improvement Bids

- 4.13 The MTFF for the HRA shows that the level of uncommitted balances is expected to increase next year, although as discussed elsewhere in this report it is forecast to worsen in 2011/12. It is important therefore to consider the overall impact on the MTFF when approving any new Service Improvement Bids, or indeed continuing those previously agreed. It is proposed that all Service Improvement Bids will continue to be reviewed for effectiveness and affordability.
- 4.14 There are 2 new Service Improvement Bids proposed for 2010/11. Given the risks outlined in paragraph 4.29 and the need to safeguard the ongoing financial position of the HRA shown in the MTFF, it is suggested that service improvement bids will need to be reviewed against the MTFF from 2011/12 onwards to see if they are both affordable and meeting the service objectives. Details of the 2 new bids included for 2010/11 are as follows;

- An additional Neighbourhood Warden post. This represents an extension to the current service and a provision of £25,000 has been included with the CBH Management Fee to reflect this. It should be noted that this additional cost will be recovered from tenants and leaseholders as a service charge.
- Cleaning of Communal Bin Chutes. A provision of £8,000 has been included for this new service. It should be noted that this additional cost will be recovered from tenants and leaseholders as a service charge.

Repairs and Maintenance

- 4.15 The 2010/11 Housing Investment Programme has been drafted and is included elsewhere on the agenda for approval. New capital resources totalling £5,316,000 have been determined. In respect of revenue, £4,710,500 has been included in the budget for repairs and maintenance of which £4,407,000 (£4,197,000 in 2009/10) is specifically for the planned and responsive works programme being provided by CBH. Cabinet have agreed the external validation by benchmarking of the day to day repairs service to ensure the Council is achieving best value, which may potentially deliver budget savings or improved services for the Councils tenants.

Management Costs

- 4.16 The 2010/11 HRA budget includes £5,768,600 for management costs, a decrease from 2009/10 (£5,943,100). Management costs form a substantial part of the HRA annual expenditure, and they consist of budgets managed directly by the Council, as well as those which are managed on behalf of the Council by CBH. Further information along with an explanation for any material changes from the 2009/10 budget is given in the following paragraphs;
- 4.17 The budget for Employee costs has increased by £1,100 for 2010/11 which primarily reflects the cost of the agreed annual pay increase, along with a provision for any one-off costs and the anticipated Year 1 savings resulting from the fundamental service review considered by Cabinet on 2nd December 2009.
- 4.18 The budget for Premises costs has decreased by £182,000 for 2010/11. This is primarily due to a reduction of £193,900 in the budget for Utilities, which is discussed further in the following paragraph. The budget for Contract/Window Cleaning for 2010/11 has decreased by £15,400 which reflects the price of the new contract, whilst the budget for Grounds Maintenance remains largely unchanged.
- 4.19 The budget for Utility costs for 2010/11 is £483,800 (compared to £677,700 for 2009/10). The majority of these costs relate to our Sheltered Housing schemes and Homeless Persons Units. The Council procures electricity and gas through the use of the OGC (Office of Government Commerce) which aims to purchase energy in bulk to secure efficiency in procurement. Whilst energy costs have increased noticeably since 2008/09, the anticipated high level of increase for 2009/10 has not materialised, which has resulted in a saving in 2009/10 along with a reduction in the budget for 2010/11. Utility costs can be recovered from tenants as a service charge and are included in the Fees and Charges report for approval by Portfolio Holders. When the Cabinet agreed the charges for 2009/10 (in January 2009), it was agreed that whilst those fees & charges would be set on the understanding that there would be an under-recovery of costs in that year, the deficit would be closed in 2010/11 so that there was not any cross-subsidisation from other tenants. The proposed Fees and Charges for 2010/11 will enable the Councils costs to be fully recovered.
- 4.20 The budget for Supplies and Service costs has reduced by £32,500. A review of all budgets has been undertaken which has resulted in savings in 2010/11, with the main areas involving provisions for Printing, IT and Equipment costs.

- 4.21 The budgets for Third Party payments and Transfer payments remain largely unchanged for 2010/11. The only material variation is a reduction of £5,000 to the budget for removal and disturbance payments, which reflects the reduced level of decants.
- 4.22 The HRA receives a significant level of recharges from other Council services, along with a proportion of central support costs, such as Corporate and Democratic Core and Pension costs associated with the back-funding of the scheme. The total budget for 2010/11 is largely unchanged from 2009/10. There have been increases relating to IT costs and ongoing back-funding costs of the pension scheme following the tri-annual review by Essex County Council, which have been offset by a reduction in other recharges to the HRA.

Colchester Borough Homes Management Fee

- 4.23 The management fee payable by the Council to CBH is funded entirely from the Council's HRA. Other resources such as those for housing repairs and the capital programme are delegated to Colchester Borough Homes to manage but do not form part of the management fee. In line with the decision by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity, the 2010/11 Base Management Fee has been frozen in cash terms, which has resulted in a saving to the HRA of approximately £35k. However, the 2010/11 budget has been increased by £25k to reflect the growth item referred to in paragraph 4.14.

Capital Financing Costs

- 4.24 The budget includes the statutory charges to the HRA for the interest costs of the Council's borrowing in respect of the housing stock. These charges have increased greatly in recent years, given the significant level of investment in the housing stock from the decent homes programme, although the budget for 2010/11 has decreased which reflects the lower borrowing rates now being achieved. However, this decrease is offset by the decrease in the financing element of housing subsidy, which also includes the ALMO allowance. The ALMO allowance is the Government's revenue funding to support the cost of financing the capital investment in decent homes. It is currently paid at a rate of 8%. Given that the Council's Decent Homes borrowing approval has now been fully utilised, the level of HRA debt, and resultant interest costs, have stabilised and this is reflected in the MTFF.

Subsidy

- 4.25 The formula for calculating subsidy entitlement is largely unchanged for 2010/11, except that CLG have fixed the average guideline rent increase by changing the rent convergence date, to reflect the continuing economic conditions and that the September 2009 RPI figure was -1.4%. It has been assumed within the MTFF that the Government will continue to compensate authorities whose annual rent increases have been constrained in previous years, either due to the affordability limits placed on individual property increases as they move towards their target rent, or through the caps imposed by CLG on the overall level of average increase. This is known as the "caps and limits" adjustment and has resulted in less subsidy payable of £355K in 2010/11. The summary HRA shown at Appendix A includes Government subsidy in respect of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA). For 2010/11 this figure is £4.488million and has been taken into account when determining the 2010/11 Housing Investment Programme.

Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO)

- 4.26 The Council has continuously made revenue contributions to capital spending recognising the significance of targeting resources to invest in our Housing Investment Programme.

- 4.27 The revenue contribution included in the estimates is £407,000. Of this total, £140,000 has been provided for ICT, which is intended to support various projects. As the implementation phase of the review of the Housing Service progresses, there could be an impact upon how this budget is utilised. The revenue contribution also meets the Council's technical strategic asset management role within the repairs and maintenance arrangements with CBH, and supports the continuing work on ICT projects required to support the HRA and the maintenance and repairs programmes.
- 4.28 The balance of the RCCO, namely £150,000, will be used to fund the third and final year's programme of works to Sewage Treatment Plants. The 2010/11 Housing Investment Programme is included elsewhere on the agenda for Cabinet approval and the provision within the revenue budget reflects the funding for this capital scheme. Clearly, if the Housing Investment Programme is not agreed by Cabinet, then there will be a resultant impact on the figures contained within this report.

Risk areas and budget review process

- 4.29 Some of the key variables that may impact during the year are shown in the table below:-

Area	Comment
Rental Income	The budget makes assumptions on the future level of Right To Buy sales and void levels. These are to a certain extent demand led and due to the significance of Rental Income within the HRA, can have a significant effect on the level of the HRA balance.
Revenue Contributions to Capital (RCCO) / Prudential Borrowing	Work has been undertaken via CBH to establish the cost to complete the Decent Homes programme. Capital Resources have been provisionally allocated for 2010/11 within the Housing Investment Programme report contained elsewhere on the agenda. If these resources prove insufficient, then options exist to finance capital expenditure from revenue or undertake prudential borrowing, dependant on affordability. At the time of compiling the budget, no allowance has been made for either of these options. Clearly, if one of these options was pursued, then there will be a requirement to find additional resources from the HRA.
Repairs and Maintenance	There is an on-going pressure on Responsive and Void repair budgets. Given that this area is demand-led, any additional costs will have to be met either from savings elsewhere or from balances.
Utility costs	The budget makes assumptions on future prices for Gas and Electricity that are consumed within the Council's housing stock, such as Sheltered Schemes, Homeless Persons Units and Communal entrances in blocks of flats. Given the volatility of utility prices recently experienced, there is a risk that prices could rise again, the cost of which would have to be funded from existing resources or HRA balances.
2009/10 Outturn	An underspend of £220k is predicted for this year. Any variance on the forecast will either be a contribution to or from balances.

4.30 As shown in the table above several key variables have been identified. It is therefore essential that a programme of formal reviews of the HRA be set out to provide an opportunity to make changes to resource allocations during the year. The following schedule therefore sets out a suggested framework for these reviews.

Review	Comment
March 2010	Updated outturn forecast.
July 2010	Provisional pre-audit outturn / current year issues etc.
September 2010/ October 2010	Mid year review.
December 2010 / January 2011	Outturn review / Budget 2011/12.

Savings and Efficiencies

4.31 During the process of formulating the budget, officers have continued to review areas where savings and efficiencies can be made. A number of these savings have been built into the budget and include;

- Review of CBC budgets - £76K
- Reduction in Utility budgets - £194K
- CBH Management Fee frozen - £35K
- Fundamental Housing Service Review - £75K
- Sewage Treatment Plants - £17K

4.32 Given the pressure facing the Repairs and Maintenance budget in recent years, the Council and CBH will continue to work closely together to ensure that the cost reductions arising from the current service continue, and will explore further areas where savings and efficiencies may be achieved.

4.33 As indicated in paragraph 4.28 of this report and also the 2010/11 Housing Investment Programme contained elsewhere on the agenda, provision has again been made to undertake work to Sewage Treatment plants over a phased period which commenced in 2008/09. As these works are completed, it is proposed to transfer the sites to Anglian Water. The transfer of all the sites will achieve ongoing savings of approximately £70,000 per annum, as the requirement for the Council to maintain them will cease. These savings have been reflected in the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

4.34 It is recognised in the medium to long term that there will be substantial financial pressures on the HRA which will mean the Council working closely with CBH to identify areas where efficiencies can be made.

5. Supporting Information - Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF)

5.1 As part of the budget process for 2010/11 a MTFF has been produced for the HRA. This sets out the indicative budget position for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13.

5.2 By nature the HRA is complex with a large number of variables. Therefore, the MTFF should mainly be viewed as indicative.

5.3 Appendix C sets out the MTFF for the period analysed by the main areas of expenditure and income. This shows that the level of uncommitted HRA balance is anticipated to be restored to prudent levels by 31st March 2010. However, due to the likely removal in 2011/12 of the benefit arising from the ALMO allowance discussed in the following paragraph, the MTFF shows the uncommitted HRA balance falling below the prudent level in 2012/13 and that position increasing moving forward. The recommended level of uncommitted balance on a risk based approach is £600k. There are several factors which can affect the forecast position, namely:-

➤ **Capital financing / ALMO allowance**

There continues to be a benefit from the ALMO allowance, which is approximately £1,100k in 2010/11. This arises from the methodology used to calculate the subsidy figures and may change depending on borrowing rates and any potential amendments to legislation. Whilst CLG have not given a definitive response regarding the likelihood of this benefit remaining, it is understood they have indicated to other authorities that this arrangement is likely to end after the financial year 2010/11. To be prudent, provision has been made within the MTFF for the loss of this income from 2011/12 onwards. Clearly, if the benefit of the ALMO allowance is lost, then mitigating savings would need to be made within the HRA.

➤ **Rental income**

Rent forecasts have been updated for anticipated changes as the Council moves towards rent restructuring. A key component of this forecast is assumptions on future inflation levels but the CLG have not given any guidance on rates to assume when undertaking modelling of future rent increases. Rental income remains one of the areas of the MTFF in particular which is subject to change. The assumptions on the number of Right To Buy sales and the level of anticipated rent lost through void properties have been updated to reflect recent activity, but once again these are areas which can significantly alter the forecast of Rental Income and are to a certain extent demand led.

➤ **Housing subsidy**

There are regular changes to the methodology used to calculate housing subsidy, especially in respect of Management and Maintenance allowances. Furthermore, the assumptions used by the CLG for increases in notional rent income can have a major impact on the level of subsidy received. The MTFF assumes inflationary increases for future years broadly in line with those for 2010/11. As this is an area that is subject to CLG policy it is extremely difficult to forecast and therefore can have a significant effect on the financial forecast.

➤ **Temporary Accommodation Unit Review**

At its meeting on 2nd December 2009, the Cabinet agreed a number of in-principle decisions relating to the review of the Councils Temporary Accommodation that has been undertaken. When implemented, this review is expected to generate savings to the Housing Revenue Account in future years. However, given the early stage of this project, no provision has been made within the MTFF at this point in time.

➤ **National HRA Reform/Self Financing**

Following the conclusion of the CLG consultation on the proposed reforms to Council Housing Finance, it is understood that the Government are preparing to make a "voluntary offer" to all local authorities in February 2010 which would enable Councils to leave the current subsidy system, in return for a settlement or reallocation of national debt within the current subsidy system. The detail of how this will work has yet to be confirmed, but it could potentially change the position outlined in the current MTFF. It is understood that the Government's intention is that this change, if authorities agree to it, would take effect from April 2011. However, given that no decision has been made and that we have not been informed of the proposed adjustment to our existing debt and of any new accounting arrangements, the MTFF has been completed on the basis of the existing financing system.

➤ **Fundamental Service Review for Housing**

At its meeting on 2nd December 2009, the Cabinet agreed the detailed business case for transforming Colchester's housing services. Provision has therefore been made within the MTFF for the anticipated savings in 2010/11 and subsequent years.

5.4 The MTFE provides a baseline position against which to make decisions as to the allocation of HRA resources and to determine the budget strategy. The MTFE will be updated on a regular basis.

6. Strategic Plan References

6.1 The revenue estimates presented here have been drawn up in accordance with the priority given by members to the services within the strategic plan.

7 Consultation and Publicity

7.1 With the procurement process currently underway for certain repairs and maintenance services which are currently not provided by CBH, in particular the external overview contract, an appropriate amount of consultation will be undertaken during the course of the financial year. Additionally, a fully compliant OJEU process will be undertaken to procure the gas servicing contract, which will include a substantial consultation process.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Are set out in this report.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

9.1 This report has no specific human rights implications. Consideration has been given to equality and diversity issues in respect of any budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This has been done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

10. Community Safety Implications

10.1 This report has no significant community safety implications

11. Health and Safety Implications

11.1 This report has no significant Health and Safety implications

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 These have been taken into account in the body of the report.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2010/11
- Appendix B - HRA Balances Statement
- Appendix C - Medium Term Financial Forecast
- Appendix D - HRA Balances Risk Management Assessment

Background Papers

- None

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL			
Revenue Estimates 2010/11			
Housing Revenue Account			
Summary			
2008/2009		2009/10	2010/11
Actuals	Expenditure & Income Analysis	Revised	Original
£000's		Budget	Budget
		£000's	£000's
	INCOME		
(20,522)	Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(21,099)	(21,509)
(706)	Non-Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(738)	(732)
(2,273)	Charges for Services and Facilities	(2,350)	(2,388)
(251)	Contributions towards Expenditure	(279)	(283)
(23,752)	Total Income	(24,466)	(24,912)
	EXPENDITURE		
4,503	Repairs and Maintenance	4,522	4,711
3,499	CB Homes Ltd Management Fee	3,510	3,535
5,487	Supervision and Management	5,986	5,769
103	Rents, Rates and Other Charges	116	131
2,312	Payment of Subsidy to CLG	2,247	2,623
38	Increased provision for Bad or Doubtful Debts	125	125
2,855	Interest Payable	2,772	2,477
46,993	Depreciation and Impairments of Fixed Assets	7,951	6,279
185	Amortisation of Deferred Charges	200	200
30	Debt Management Costs	33	49
66,005	Gross Expenditure	27,462	25,899
42,253	Net Cost of Services	2,996	987
(39,226)	Net HRA Income from the Asset Management Account	(200)	(200)
200	Amortised Premiums and Discounts	200	200
(35)	HRA Investment Income (including mortgage interest and interest on Notional Cash Balances)	(19)	(15)
3,192	Net Operating Expenditure	2,977	972
455	Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure	402	407
(3,667)	Transfer to/(from) Major Repairs Reserve	(3,522)	(1,791)
(20)	Deficit/(Surplus) for the Year	(143)	(412)
(1,498)	Deficit/(Surplus) at the Beginning of the Year	(1,518)	(1,661)
(20)	Deficit/(Surplus) for the Year	(143)	(412)
(1,518)	Deficit/(Surplus) at the End of the Year	(1,661)	(2,073)

Housing Revenue Account - Estimate Balances

	£'000
Balance as at 1 April 2009	(1,518)
Committed - Capital Spending in 2009/10 and onwards	988
Plus budgeted surplus in 2009/10	(143)
Plus Forecast underspend in 2009/10	(220)
<i>Unallocated balance at 31st March 2010</i>	(893)
Plus Proposed Contribution to balances from 10/11 Budget	(412)
Estimated uncommitted balance at 31st March 2011	(1,305)
Recommended level of Balances	(600)
Forecast balances above prudent level at 31st March 2011	(705)

Note:

This forecast is on the basis that there are no further calls on balances during the remainder of the year and that the 2009/10 budget underspends by £220k, as currently predicted at this stage. Any deviation from this forecast underspend would either increase or decrease our uncommitted balances.

Housing Revenue Account – Medium Term Financial Forecast

Area	Revised Budget 09/10	Budget 10/11	Budget 11/12	Budget 12/13
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income				
Housing Rents	(20,974)	(21,384)	(22,436)	(23,570)
Other Income	(3,367)	(3,403)	(3,472)	(3,542)
	(24,341)	(24,787)	(25,908)	(27,112)
Expenditure				
Repairs & Maintenance	4,522	4,711	4,784	4,858
Running Costs	9,612	9,435	9,405	9,514
Capital Financing	7,415	7,199	7,281	7,380
Subsidy Payable	2,247	2,623	4,540	5,686
RCCO	402	407	257	257
Contribution to Balances	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
	24,198	24,375	26,267	27,695
Budgeted (Surplus)/Deficit	(143)	(412)	359	583
Forecast 2009/10 Underspend	* (220)	0	0	0
Revised (Surplus)/Deficit	** (363)	(412)	359	583
Opening Balance	(1,518)	(893)	(1,305)	(946)
Committed Balance	988	-	-	-
(Surplus)/Deficit	(363)	(412)	359	583
Uncommitted Closing Balance	(893)	(1,305)	(946)	(363)

* The forecast 2009/10 underspend is after taking into account anticipated carry forward requests. These will be considered by the Head of Resource Management as part of the 2009/10 closure of accounts process.

** It should be noted that it is currently forecast the HRA will be underspent by £220k in 2009/10, which will result in a contribution to balances. Clearly, if this level of underspend is not achieved, then there is the potential that the HRA balance will fall below our prudent levels.


Review of Housing Revenue Account Balances 2010/11

Risk Management Assessment

Factor	Assessed Risk		
	High £'000	Medium £'000	Low £'000
Cash flow (1% of £50m)	500		
Capital			
Inflation		75	
Emergencies		25	
Housing Subsidy			
New Spending		100	
Litigation			50
Partnerships			
	500	200	50

	Minimum Provision £'000
High Risk – 100%	500
Medium – 50%	100
Low – 10%	5
Sub Total	605
Other - say	-5
	600

27 January 2010

Report of	Pam Donnelly, Executive Director	Author	Claire Holland
Title	Single Equality Scheme		 506452
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report seeks approval for the Council's Single Equality Scheme

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the Single Equality Scheme.
- 1.2 To recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Single Equality Scheme and its addition to the Council's Policy Framework.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The Council achieved Level Three of the Equality Standard for Local Government in March 2009. The Equality Standard has since changed to the Equality Framework for Local Government and we have migrated across to the Achieving Level of the framework. One of the recommendations of the review was that the Council considered moving to a Single Equality Scheme.
- 2.2 Once in post the new Equality and Diversity Officer began developing a Single Equality Scheme, because of the strategic, operational and financial benefits to amalgamating our existing equality schemes for race, gender and disability, and having one scheme for all equality groups.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative option is that we continue to have three separate equality schemes for race, gender and disability, each of which is required to be reviewed annually and a new scheme written every three years. Current dates for existing schemes are: Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009; Gender Equality Scheme 2007-2010 and Race Equality Scheme 2008-2011.

4. Supporting Information

Current Race Equality Scheme

- 4.1 The Council's Race Equality Scheme was refreshed in 2008. This scheme outlines our commitment and our intentions to meeting the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. It replaces the previous scheme published in 2002 and details how we intend to respond to the needs of all people in our increasingly diverse communities and promote race equality across the borough.

- 4.2 Our intentions remain to provide excellent examples of good practice in developing policies, working with our communities and improving service delivery. In addition, under this new scheme we commit to work in partnership with the community to ensure that all sections of the community have equal access to services regardless of other factors but particularly ethnicity.
- 4.3 These experimental mid-2007 ethnic group estimates show that 92.1% of Colchester's resident population categorise themselves as 'White' (161,600 people). This is a slight decrease from 92.9% in the previous year (mid-2006 ethnic group estimates).
- 4.4 The statistics indicate that ethnic minority groups, (excluding 'other white') account for 7.9% of the total population, an increase from 3.8% on Census Day 2001. This is also higher than the Essex proportion of 6.5%, although some of this could be attributed to the University being situated in Colchester Borough.
- 4.5 AT the end of year 2008/09 2.8% of Colchester Borough Council's employees identified themselves as being from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) group.
- 4.6 Colchester has the fourth largest proportion of ethnic minority groups in Essex County behind Epping Forest (10.1%), Harlow (8.8%) and Brentwood (8.2%) which have all increased in the last year.
- 4.7 Colchester Borough Council's website includes 'Babelfish' and 'Google Translate' – both can be used to translate content of our website from English into other languages.
- 4.8 Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Borough Homes are active participants in the Hate Crime Panel which seeks to monitor and prevent the level of hate crimes and harassment which take place in the borough. We work in partnership with the Police and TaCMEP (Tendring and Colchester Minority Ethnic Partnership) to identify areas where hate crimes occur and take action to prevent them.

Current Disability Equality Scheme

- 4.9 In December 2006 Colchester Borough Council adopted a Disability Equality Scheme. Its key aims are promote equal opportunities regardless of disability in the delivery of its services and employment of staff. This Scheme also seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against, directly or indirectly, as a result of their disability.
- 4.10 The Disability Equality Scheme set in motion a number of initiatives to ensure people with disabilities in the borough and Colchester Borough Council staff were not discriminated against. A key achievement of this scheme has been the way in which the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act have been met. This includes making sure premises more accessible and inclusive, and that services have been delivered differently to ensure disabled people can benefit from them equally.
- 4.11 The Disability Equality Scheme recognised that approximately 12.5% of the population has some form of disability or impairment, and they can experience barriers to accessing services and employment. Through the actions in this scheme and conducting a series of Equality Impact Assessments, the Council has made significant progress in removing or minimising these barriers. An example is the Town Hall where the installation of a lift was completed in July 2009 and the renovation of the Old Library, due to be completed early 2010, will greatly improve community access to this Grade 1 listed building. This is a complex project because of the particular challenges of making such an historic building accessible, both in terms of the design of the building itself and the number of parties that need to be brought together in agreement to achieve the desired outcomes.

- 4.12 The website has been developed to enhance its ease of access for all visitors, ensuring it meets the needs of disabled users, and offers individual choice by being viewable in the widest possible range of web-browsing technology. This includes software like Browsealoud which enables people with visual, learning or literacy difficulties the option to have the information on the website read out loud to them. We ensure that all information meets accessibility standards set out by organisations such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), and ‘tag’ pdf documents to enable people who use screenreaders to access the information they contain more easily.
- 4.13 The Council also aims to reflect the diversity of the borough’s population in its workforce. As at June 2009, 4% of the Council’s staff had a declared disability.
- 4.14 The Disability Reference Group of staff meets quarterly to discuss issues around disability including accessibility, communications, EqlAs and feedback from service areas, and acts as a support group to its members. In addition, the group acts as a consultation resource. An example of this is their input into the Council’s flexible working practices and the proposals for Rowan House as staff move there from Angel Court.

Current Gender Equality Scheme

- 4.15 In August 2007 Colchester Borough Council adopted a Gender Equality Scheme. Its aims are to overcome potential discrimination that may be experienced because of gender, either in service delivery or in employment. It recognised that the significant issues facing women are around equal pay and occupational segmentation, their increased caring responsibilities and domestic violence.
- 4.16 A wide range of organisations were consulted and involved in the creation of the Gender Equality Scheme to identify and understand the barriers women face as customers and employees and the scheme sets out plans to overcome and minimise these barriers. Achievements since its publication include the provision of private areas available for breast feeding in the Customer Service Centre as well as child-friendly areas while customers are waiting.
- 4.17 The Council works closely with a number of local organisations who assist the victims of domestic violence and their families, including the Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Colchester Domestic Abuse Forum. Colchester Borough Council provide revenue funding for the Women’s Refuge and in 2008 gave additional funding through the Life Opportunities Capital Fund to purchase new premises
- 4.18 Examples of initiatives and actions from working together with our partners and stakeholders include: the production of a directory of services and supporting leaflet for Colchester, containing useful contacts, advice and guidance for both those agencies dealing with victims of domestic abuse and the actual victims of domestic abuse; provided one refuge place per 10,000 population in Colchester; produced a multi-agency strategy to tackle domestic abuse in Colchester.
- 4.19 Future projects include the launch of Sanctuary Scheme for Colchester – a scheme which enables victims of domestic abuse and their children to remain in their own home, should they choose to do so.
- 4.20 Legislation gives certain employees the legal right to request to work in a flexible way, giving them with the opportunity to balance work and family life/personal responsibilities whilst being compatible with and beneficial to the efficiency of Council services. The Council’s ‘Way We Work’ programme is taking this further, and helping us to “embrace

flexibility in our thinking and behaviours to make best use of technology and new ways of working." Across the Council there are many services already being delivered outside the familiar 9-5 working pattern in order to best meet the needs of our customers, and this can offer flexibility in working patterns to the staff concerned – both female and male.

- 4.21 One of the borough's senior civic roles is currently held by a woman –the Leader of the Council. The council also has an equal female/male split of cabinet Members. At the year end 2007/08 28.4% of senior managers were women.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The Equality Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and published on Monday 27 April 2009, and seeks to streamline and consolidate more than 100 pieces of legislation that relate to equality and diversity in the UK. The Bill will also introduce a new Public Sector Duty on local authorities and public bodies. In response to this Colchester Borough Council have decided to draft and introduce a Single Equality Scheme, which will replace the existing schemes for race, gender and disability, as well as including religion or belief, age and sexual orientation duties in the scheme. The Scheme will also detail how we intend to meet the new Public Sector Duty under the Equality Bill.
- 5.2 The draft scheme brings together the three existing schemes for race, gender and disability and extends to cover age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender. The scheme includes information about each equality group in the borough where information is available; examples of work the council has been doing with the equality groups and a three year action plan which includes equality objectives.
- 5.3 The scheme will be reviewed annually, with progress against the equality objectives and action plan being reported to the Policy Review and Development Panel, and the scheme will be refreshed, with a new action plan being drafted every three years.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The vision set out in the Council's Strategic Plan 2009-12 is "Colchester: a place where people want to live, work and visit." The Plan makes a strong commitment to ensuring that all the residents of Colchester can expect a good quality of life and wherever possible receive services that suit them and their circumstances. It also highlights this commitment to tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity as one of the core values of the organisation, which are integral to the way it works.
- 6.2 The Strategic Plan is also underpinned by the Council's statement on access and participation, which states that:

"We are committed to promoting equity and equal opportunities for access and participation for everyone, whatever their personal circumstances. This includes the use of all the services and facilities which we provide. We are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and to eliminating all forms of harassment.

We will allocate and spend money on services as fairly as possible according to the needs of local people."

7. Consultation

- 7.1 The draft scheme had a six week consultation period. An executive summary of the scheme, draft equality objectives and action plan were sent out to more than 100 partners, stakeholders, voluntary and community groups, and the 29 Parish and Town Councils in the borough by email and post. A press release was issued and copies of the draft scheme, executive summary, equality objectives and action plan were sent to all libraries in the borough, to be made available for public viewing.
- 7.2 The draft scheme was published on the council's website, with an electronic survey form to complete to feedback comments on the scheme. Five responses were received via this method. Those who wanted to comment on the scheme were also able to email the Equality and Diversity Officer directly by post, email or telephone, with seven responses being received via these methods.
- 7.3 The council has three internal equality groups, the Diversity Steering Group, the Disability Reference Group and the Member Liaison Group. All three internal groups were asked to review and comment on the scheme.
- 7.4 In addition, the draft scheme was also sent to the East of England Regional Assembly Equality and Diversity Network Members and the Essex Equality and Diversity Network Members.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 The Council's website has a section on Diversity and Equality where all related documents are published, with an opportunity provided for feedback and comments.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 Colchester Borough Council will be in a stronger position to lever in resources from external funders as an organisation that has embedded diversity throughout its practices. Credibility would be improved and it would enable the organisation to take advantage of opportunities for funding, building capacity and organisational growth.
- 9.2 The East of England Regional Assembly, in conjunction with Improvement East, the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) for the East of England, has identified equality and diversity as one of the areas where performance needs to improve across the region's 60 authorities. Support is being offered in the form of subsidised network events where Equality and Diversity issues are discussed and training given, for example, Equality Impact Assessments and the forthcoming Equality Bill. The network events also give authorities the chance to share best practice and encourage partnership working.
- 9.3 The new post of Equality and Diversity Officer commenced in March 2009 as a joint post with Colchester Borough Homes, following a reconfiguration of existing resources. This is an effective way to create synergy by sharing knowledge, learning and best practice, as well in the new resource which this officer and their co-ordination role will bring to both organisations. This role has been key in taking forward the new requirements of the Equality Framework, the Council's Single Equality Scheme and the Equality Bill as these develop.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 10.1 The entirety of this report is about the equality and diversity implications of the Council's activities.
- 10.2 A summary of completed Equality Impact Assessment is attached and published on www.colchester.gov.uk/diversity

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Tackling hate crimes and harassment in the borough, whether based on race, sexuality or disability, is integral to tackling inequality and valuing diversity. The work undertaken in the Hate Crimes Panel will help to not only make the borough a safer place to live but will help to improve community cohesion. This work also extends into Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAPs) and to the extensive work of the Domestic Violence Forum.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no specific Health and Safety Implications to this report.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 If Colchester Borough Council is unsuccessful in embedding diversity principles throughout its practices a number of risks need to be faced. The most significant of these is the risk of not achieving our corporate aims that "we will make sure all our residents have the opportunities they need", and "we will support a range of sustainable employment choices that match the aspirations of our residents". There are numerous examples of links between groups who are deprived or disadvantaged and those who face discrimination. Probably the clearest example of this is the link between facing discriminatory barriers in employment and living in poverty. There are numerous other examples, and the Council needs to acknowledge the effects of discrimination on individuals and communities and take appropriate action.
- 13.2 As an employer and provider of public services, the Council may face legal challenges from individuals who have been discriminated against because of discriminatory practices, however unintended. The work undertaken by services to review their functions and conduct EQIAs will have reduced this risk significantly. Legal cases brought on grounds of discrimination do not have upper limits like those brought through employment tribunals so it imperative that the Council meets its responsibilities to ensure it does not discriminate in order to avoid the potential for significant financial claims.
- 13.3 There are risks to the Council's reputation and profile as an excellent organisation and an employer of choice if the organisation does not show that it has understood and met its responsibilities under the equalities legislation currently in place. Strong evidence of embedded equality and diversity is a cornerstone of the Comprehensive Area Assessment which, from April 2009, will be the "*new approach that will provide the first independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will assess and report how well public money is spent and will ensure that local public bodies are accountable for their quality and impact.*"

Background Papers

The following documents have been published, are in the public domain and are available on Colchester Borough Council's website:

- Diversity Policy and Plan
- Race Equality Scheme

- Disability Equality Scheme
- Gender Equality Scheme
- Equality Impact Assessment on adopting a Single Equality Scheme

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 In completing this section you should consider whether as a result of the decision there would be any harm to the health and safety of the general public and ensure that the actions taken as a result of the decision are as safe as is reasonably practicable. For help contact Mike Thurston 2396.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 In completing this section you should keep the details to the implications of the decision made i.e. the effect of agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendation, not necessarily the risks of the report item. Identify the risks and opportunities. If there are strong risks or opportunities associated with the item these should be made clear in the main body of the report. This section is a summary of the potential effect of the decision. Any implications for other items or projects should be outlined with further details in the main body if applicable. For help contact the Risk and Insurance section ext. 2387

If your report does not impact on any of the standard references, please consider using the following paragraph as an alternative to the separate paragraphs above.

6. Standard References

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

Background Papers

Provide a list of documents here that you have relied upon to formulate the report but you do not need to list any document already in the public domain. Please be aware that any document listed must be shown to anyone who asks to see it. You should take this into consideration before listing any confidential documents.

Colchester Borough Council

**Draft Single Equality Scheme
2010 – 2013**

www.colchester.gov.uk

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Foreword

Colchester Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone can access and use its services and has the opportunity to participate in their community.

This Equality Scheme is part of the council's wider Diversity Policy and Plan and outlines our commitment and our intentions to meeting the requirements of equalities legislation, including the forthcoming Equality Bill. This scheme replaces our existing schemes for race, gender and disability.

Our intentions remain to provide excellent examples of good practice in developing policies, working with our communities and improving service delivery. In addition, under this new scheme we commit to work in partnership with the community to ensure that all sections of the community have equal access to services, no matter who they are.

In developing this scheme we have consulted with our partners, stakeholders and communities. We will continue to work closely with them to implement this scheme, build upon our work and achievements to date as well as meeting our statutory requirements.

As councillors and officers we reinforce this commitment to ensuring that everyone can access and use its services and has the opportunity to participate in their community, and will ensure that our policies and services are as responsive and inclusive as they can be, for those who live in, work in and visit the borough of Colchester.

Adrian Pritchard – Chief Executive
Anne Turrell, Leader of the Council
Councillor Paul Smith – Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity

Introduction

Colchester Borough Council currently has three existing Equality Schemes:

- Disability Equality Scheme 2006 – 2009
- Gender Equality Scheme 2007 – 2010
- Race Equality Scheme 2008 – 2011

We have decided to combine these schemes into one overarching Equality Scheme, which also covers age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This will allow us to focus on delivering our aims, objectives and actions for all strands of equality and diversity, as well as meeting our statutory requirements under equalities legislation including:

- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religions or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

What is equality and diversity?

Equality and diversity can be defined in many ways, but we see them as being:

Equality means treating everyone with fairness and respect and appropriately to their needs. An equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be.

Diversity means recognising that individuals are unique, and using these differences to the benefit of the organisation and its customers. Recognising these differences can help to create a productive and effective workforce to deliver services to diverse communities.

There are currently six strands of equality legislation – which means that laws have been passed in six main areas to try to ensure that people are treated equally. The six strands are:

- age
- disability
- gender
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

Our equality and diversity visions and values

The Council's current Strategic Plan makes a strong commitment to ensuring that all the residents of Colchester can expect a good quality of life and wherever possible receive services that suit them and their circumstances. It also highlights this commitment to tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity as one of the core values of the organisation, which underpin the way it works.

The Council's commitment means:

- We will provide services that are appropriate, sensitive and accessible to everyone
- We will not discriminate in employment or through service delivery on the grounds of disability, gender, race, age, religion or belief, and sexual orientation or any other unjustifiable grounds
- We are committed to working with partners and communities to promote good relations and to combat prejudice, discrimination, harassment and negative stereotyping
- We will ensure that the crucial links between equality and quality are reflected through all our policies and service plans

This scheme will also ensure that the current legal requirements set out in equality legislation are met. However, we know that there is always more to do. We recognise that in our society, groups and individuals continue to be unfairly discriminated against and we acknowledge our responsibilities to actively promote good community relations, equality of opportunity and combat discrimination in all its forms.

We believe in openness and equality in our dealings with each other and in the way we provide services to members of our community. Every individual is entitled to dignity and respect. Care for the users of our services goes hand in hand with care for our employees.

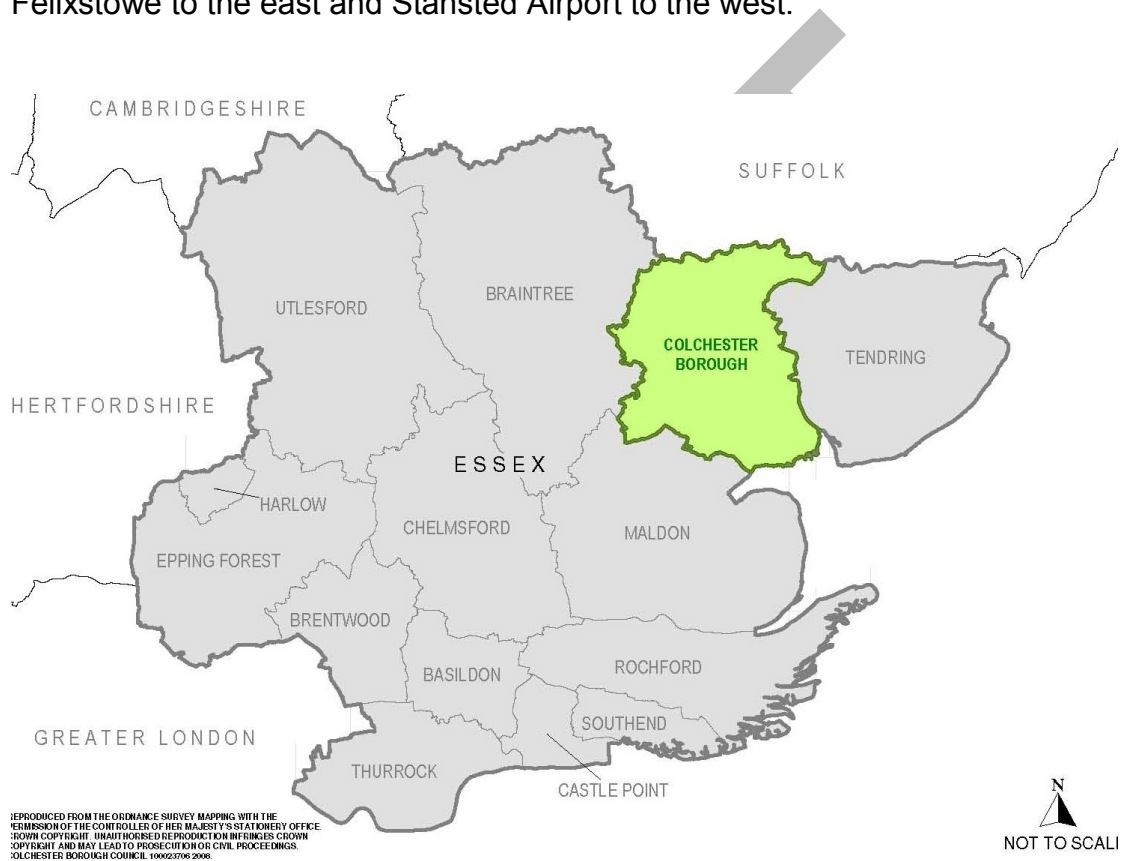
We recognise:

- that some people in our community are members of more than one group that may experience discrimination
- that to treat people equally does not necessarily mean to treat them all the same. It may involve the provision of different or extra facilities for some people to avoid potential or actual discrimination

We aim to ensure that all groups and individuals within the community are given full opportunity to benefit from the services and job opportunities we provide. No service user or potential service user; employee or potential employee; Member or potential Member will be discriminated on any ground because of age, colour, disability, ethnic or national origins, race, gender, gender preference, marital status, political or religious beliefs, or any other unjustifiable grounds.

A Profile of Colchester Borough

The Borough of Colchester is located in the county of Essex in the east of England, covering an area of approximately 329 square kilometres. The Borough is situated 62 miles north east of London. The main town is Colchester (with about 95,000 people¹) but there are many surrounding small towns and villages of which the largest are Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. The countryside areas of the Borough are mainly used for agriculture. The Borough lies in a key gateway location between the UK and Europe, with access to Europe via the nearby Ports of Harwich and Felixstowe to the east and Stansted Airport to the west.



Population

Data from the 2001 Census put the Borough population at approximately 158,900. However, mid-year estimates from the Census Office indicate that Colchester's population has seen a growth of 12.5% since mid-2001 to 175,500 in mid-2007.²

As the largest district in Essex County, Colchester accounts for 12.8% of the Essex population and based on these mid-2007 figures the average population density of Colchester was 533 people per square kilometre. This is an increase from 2001 when there were 474 people per sq km.

The population of Colchester is expected to grow by 30.9% to 223,500 people in 2021. This is an increase of 52,700 people over a 15 year period. This is the largest population growth in Essex County by 12.2%. In 2021, older

people (65 year and over) are expected to make up 16.1% of Colchester's population, a slight increase from the estimated 2007 proportion of 14.5% (1.6% increase between 2007 and 2021). The proportion of young people will see a very small decrease of 0.7% between 2007 and 2021. ⁵

1 Census 2001, the Office for National Statistics (ONS). © Crown Copyright, 2008.

2 Mid-2007 Population Estimates. Population Estimates Unit, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2008.

4 Census 2001, the Office for National Statistics (ONS). © Crown Copyright, 2008.

5 2006-based Subnational Population Projections, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2008.

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Race

According to the 2001 Census 92.90% of the borough's population described themselves as 'White British'. In order to annually update this data the Office for National Statistics (ONS) also produce experimental mid-year ethnicity estimates. The most recent ethnicity estimates (mid-2007) indicate that 92.1% of Colchester's resident population categorise themselves as 'White' (161,600 people), a slight decrease from 2001.

Appendix four shows the Mid-2007 Experimental Population Estimates by Ethnic Group Colchester Borough and Essex areas and includes: a summary of ethnicity in Colchester in Mid-2007; ethnicity by age and gender; and all ethnic groups broken down by areas of Essex.

General duty

In 2000 amendments were made to The Race Relations Act 1976, with statutory orders being introduced in 2001, which gave public authorities a statutory duty to promote racial equality (commonly referred to as the Race Equality Duty). Therefore all public bodies need to ensure that they are meeting the challenge of ensuring and promoting race equality by:

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination;
- promoting equality of opportunity between persons of different racial groups; and
- promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Specific duty

This duty requires us to produce a coherent strategy and race action plan, covering all relevant functions and policies. We have to make clear how we plan to meet both the general and specific duties; linking our corporate aims and objectives to our overall approach to racial equality and include an action plan, setting out how this will be delivered. We are required to:

- Monitor by racial group the numbers of:
 - applicants for employment, training and promotion; and
 - staff in post.

In addition, as we employ more than 150 full-time staff, we must also monitor by racial group staff who:

- benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures;
- cease employment;
- are involved in grievance procedures;
- are the subject of disciplinary procedures; and
- receive training.

The results of the above monitoring have to be published annually, and we must use the data collected to show that we are actively meeting the three elements of the general duty in employment functions.

With regard to the specific duties for policy making and service delivery, we are required to publish a Race Equality Scheme (this Single Equality Scheme) which includes:

1. a statement of the functions and policies we have assessed as being relevant to the general duty to promote race equality; and
2. our general duty to promote race equality, setting out our arrangements for meeting the duty by:
 - a. monitoring policies for any adverse impact on race equality;
 - b. assessing, and consulting on, the likely impact of proposed policies;
 - c. publishing the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring;
 - d. making sure that the public have access to information and services; and
 - e. training staff on the general duty.

Colchester Borough Council work closely with Tendring and Colchester Minority Ethnic Partnership (TaCMEP), offering advice and support. Past work includes offering training for health champions in basic welfare rights and advice and being involved in TaCMEP's Diverse Culture's Festival. Colchester Borough Council also Chair the Migrant Workers Forum.

Cultural services lead on two year project in 2007/08 and 2008/09 to support the establishment and development of an annual Black History Month programme within the Borough. In 2009/10 Black History Month is being supported via the Cultural Services delivery partnerships in place with Colchester Arts Centre, firstsite and Mercury Theatre. This is in line with the requirement for equality and diversity action plans each of the organisations must have in place to qualify for CBC funding.

Cultural Services developed an event in 2009 to mark Chinese New Year, because people who identify as Chinese make up the greatest representation of minority ethnic groups within Colchester population. The event was supported by workshops in schools which reached 2,000 students and a celebration that attracted 500 people to share in cultural celebrations. The event made use of the focus within the arts across the UK to pick up the theme of the handover of the Olympic and Paralympic games from Beijing to London.

Working through partnership delivery arrangements, Cultural Service ensures that arts delivery partners have equality and diversity action plans in place that take into consideration the mix of their programme to ensure that it is, where reasonable and possible, suitable to BME communities within the Borough. For example, the Mercury have appointed a person of Asian background to their Board and worked with the Asian community to programme dance celebrations.

Equality Bill

There will be a specific duty requiring all public bodies with 150 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap, their ethnic minority employment rate and their disability employment rate.

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Disability

The 2001 Census shows that 24,843 people (out of a total population of 158,900) have a limiting long-term illness. More recent figures from the Office of National Statistics show the following:

Claim	Period	Colchester	East of England	England
Incapacity Benefit Claimants	August 2008	4900	160,770	1,925,200
Severe Disablement Allowance	August 2008	900	20,270	207,410
Disability Living Allowance	August 2008	6870	215,250	2,453,310

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

According to the Act, disability is defined as:

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

A further explanation of the terms used by the Act are as follows:

Impairment

The above definition covers physical and mental impairments, which include:

- physical impairments affecting the senses, such as sight and hearing
- mental impairments, including learning disabilities and mental illness (if it is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion) – for example, this would include dyslexia, dyspraxia and depression.

Substantial

For an effect to be substantial, it must be more than “minor”.

The following are examples that are likely to be considered as “substantial”:

- inability to see moving traffic clearly enough to cross a road safely
- inability to turn taps or knobs
- inability to remember and relay a simple message correctly.

Long-Term

These are effects of the condition that:

- have lasted at least 12 months;
- are likely to last at least 12 months; or
- are likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

Long-term effects include those which are likely to recur. For example, an effect will be considered to be long-term if it is likely both to recur, and to do so at least once beyond the 12-month period following the first occurrence.

Day-to-Day Activities

Day-to-day activities are normal activities carried out by most people on a regular basis, and must involve one of the following broad categories:

- mobility - moving from place to place
- manual dexterity - for example, use of the hands
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- the ability to lift, carry or move ordinary objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory, or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; *or*
- being able to recognise physical danger.

Under the Act, the Government has issued guidance about whether an impairment has a substantial or long-term effect. This guidance does not in itself impose legal obligations on an employer or service provider, but when considering a complaint about discrimination a tribunal or court must take into account any guidance which appears to be relevant.

General duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a statutory General Duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. The 2005 Act provides an increasingly robust legislative framework which requires Council's to actively promote disability equality. This means that, in carrying out our services and functions, we must have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others;
- eliminate unlawful disability discrimination;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disability, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other people.

Specific duty

The specific duties state that we must:

- publish a disability equality scheme (included in this Single Equality Scheme);
- involve disabled people in producing the scheme and action plan;
- show what actions are taken in the scheme, and what appropriate outcomes are achieved; and
- report on progress and revise the scheme.

The specific duties are intended to provide a framework to help us to plan, deliver and evaluate action to meet the general duty and to report on these activities. Guidance on what is meant by a disability is attached at appendix three.

Colchester Borough Council recognises that promoting equality will improve public services for everyone. Our aim, therefore, is to make equality a central part of the way the Council works by putting it at the centre of policy making, service delivery, regulation and enforcement, and employment practice.

Disability Reference Group

This group consists of staff and councillors who meet to discuss issues around disability. Issues discussed include:

- Accessibility
- Communications
- Flexible training
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Equality Training
- Feedback from service areas
- Updates from the Diversity Steering Group

Member's Liaison Group

Officers from the Diversity Steering Group (DSG) meet with Councillors representing each of the four political groups that make up our Council. This is an opportunity for the DSG officers to inform Councillors of the diversity activities the Council has been undertaking as well as consult them on a range of general diversity issues that have occurred within the wards of the borough.

Disability Double Tick Standard

We were awarded the disability (double tick) symbol which is a recognised award given to organisations which can demonstrate their commitment to employing disabled people.



One of our commitments under this scheme is that all disabled people who apply for a job with the Council, and who met the eligibility criteria, are guaranteed an interview.

Employers who use the disability symbol make five commitments regarding recruitment, training, retention, consultation and disability awareness.

These commitments are:

- to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and to consider them on their abilities
- to discuss with disabled employees, at any time but at least once a year, what both parties can do to make sure disabled employees can develop and use their abilities
- to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment
- to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work
- to review these commitments each year and assess what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans

Equality Bill

The new public sector duty will improve protection for disabled people:

- New duty on landlords and managers of residential properties to make alterations to hallways and stairs where reasonable to do so.

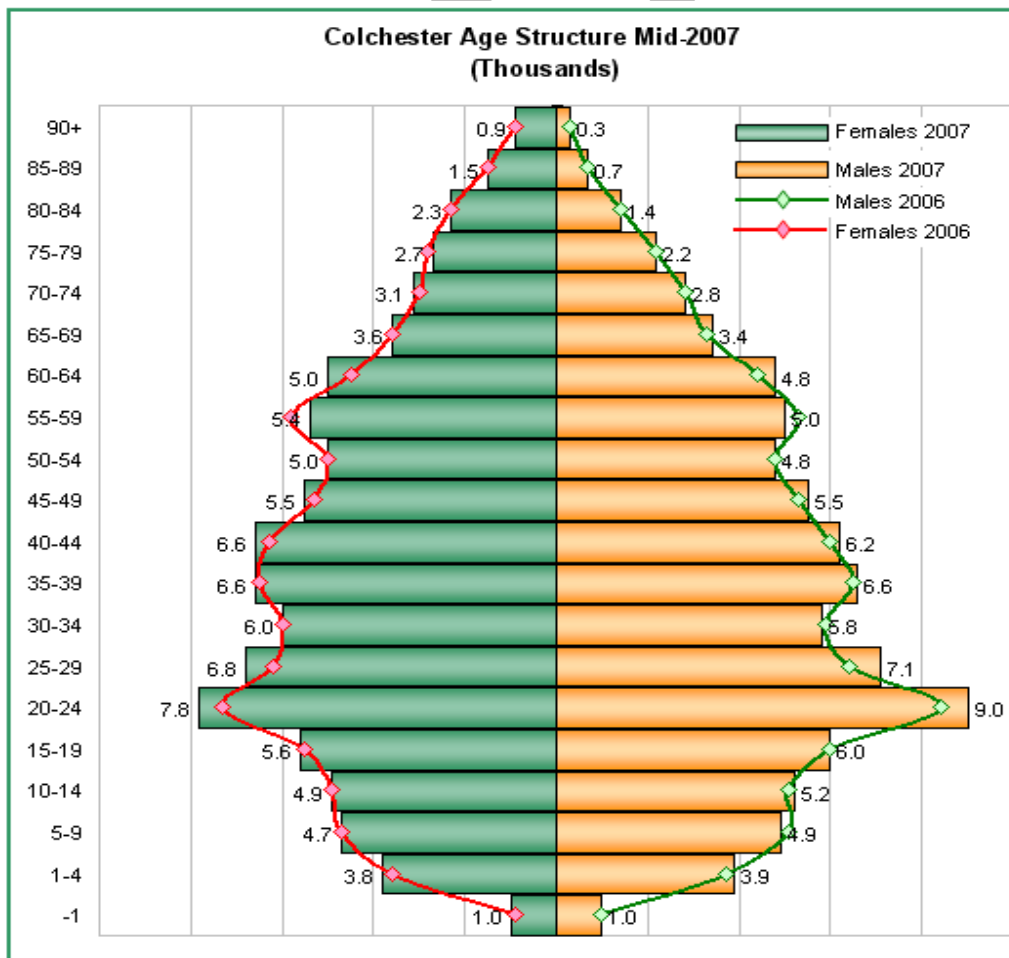
Gender

Data from the mid-2007 population estimates indicate that there is an almost equal gender split in Colchester Borough with men accounting for 49.3% of the population and women accounting for 50.7%. This is very similar to the Essex and England percentages as can be seen in the table below.

Area	Males	Females
Colchester	49.3%	50.7%
Essex	48.8%	51.2%
England	49.2%	50.8%

Data from the Department of Health puts the estimated life expectancy at nearly 78 years for men and 82 years for women.

The population pyramid below illustrates the gender and age structure of the borough and compares it to the previous year's mid-2006 population estimates.



With effect from 6 April 2007, the Equality Act was amended introducing a statutory gender equality duty on public bodies, such as Colchester Borough Council. This means that when carrying out its functions the Council must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

“Unlawful discrimination” in relation to gender is defined as:

- Direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex
- Discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity leave
- Discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment
- Direct and indirect discrimination against married persons and civil partners
- Victimisation
- Harassment and sexual harassment.

The general duty applies to the Council’s policy-making function, its role as an employer and provider of local services and also its responsibility to enforce or make any statutory discretion and decision-making. Furthermore, the duty extends to public services and functions that are undertaken by contractors.

The duty will be enforced by judicial review and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) will have the power to issue compliance notices if there is a breach of the duty.

As well as considering issues of gender equality when making decisions about the future, the Council must also take action to tackle the consequences of decisions in the past which failed to give due regard to gender equality. This will entail identifying and addressing any significant inequalities resulting from policies currently in place.

Whilst there is a tendency to focus on equality for women when looking at gender issues, this Scheme equally applies to men as well as the particular needs of transsexual and transgender people.

In 1999 the Sex Discrimination Act was amended by the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations to make it clear that transsexual men and women are expressly included in the SDA where they suffer discrimination because they have undergone, or are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Specific Duties

The general duty is the first positive step towards ensuring that men and women receive services and are offered employment and development opportunities that meet their needs, abilities and aspirations more closely. To support progress in delivering the general duty, there are also a number of specific duties that the Council must comply with and these are to:

- Prepare and publish a gender equality scheme (included in this Single Equality Scheme) to show how the Council intends to meet its general and specific duties as well as set out its gender equality objectives;
- Gather and use information on how the Council's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workplace and in the delivery of services;
- Consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap;
- Consult appropriate stakeholders such as employees, trade unions, service users and other community organisations and take account of relevant information when determining the Council's gender equality objectives;
- Assess the impact of our current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality;
- Implement the actions set out in this scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so; and
- Produce a report on the progress of the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

Violence against women and domestic violence

Domestic violence is essentially a pattern of behaviour characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person over another within the context of an intimate relationship. It is manifested in various ways, which include but are not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and the imposition of social isolation, and is most commonly a combination of them all.

Research shows that a majority of the victims of domestic violence are women and the perpetrators predominantly men. The British Crime Survey (2001) suggests that one in four women and one in six men will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime. Such acts of violence can also take place in lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transsexual relationships.

The Council works closely with a number of local organisations who assist the victims of domestic violence and their families, including the Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Colchester Domestic Abuse Forum. Initiatives and actions from working together with these organisations include:

- The production of a directory of services and supporting leaflet for Colchester, containing useful contacts, advice and guidance for both those agencies dealing with victims of domestic abuse and the actual victims of domestic abuse;
- Provided one refuge place per 10,000 population in Colchester;
- Produced a multi-agency strategy to tackle domestic abuse in Colchester;
- Participated in a quarterly Colchester Domestic Abuse Forum to raise awareness of domestic abuse and implement actions to tackle and reduce incidents of abuse;

- Included a new clause in the Colchester Borough Council Tenant Agreement stating that the perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered for grounds of eviction; and
- Participated in two multi-agency training events for Colchester to raise awareness and provide help, advice and guidance for those agencies dealing with victims of domestic abuse.

Colchester Borough Council provide revenue funding for the Women's Refuge and in 2008 gave additional funding through the Life Opportunities Capital Fund to purchase new premises.

Future projects include:

- Further multi-agency training events for Colchester to raise awareness and provide help, advice and guidance for those agencies dealing with victims of domestic abuse;
- Launch of Sanctuary Scheme for Colchester – a scheme which enables victims of domestic abuse and their children to remain in their own home, should they choose to do so; and
- Production of a domestic abuse/self awareness education packs to be delivered to year 10/11 students in all Colchester Secondary Schools.

Equality Bill

There will be a specific duty requiring all public bodies with 150 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap, their ethnic minority employment rate and their disability employment rate.

Age

The latest available data on the age of Colchester's population come from the mid-year 2007 estimates. These show that:

- The two largest age groups in Colchester mid-2007 were the 20-24 years age group with 16,800 people and the 25-29 year age group with 13,900 people.
- In comparison the smallest age group in Colchester is those aged over 90 years with 1,200 people and those aged less than one year with 2,000 people.
- Data also indicates that there are approximately 40,900 young people living in the borough aged between 0 and 19yrs. This accounts for 23.3% of the total population at mid-2007.
- The 2001 Census defined the 'working age population' (the age where people are available to work, regardless of whether they do or not) as 16 to 74 years. However, mid-2007 estimates are only available at 5-year age intervals, so in estimating the new 'working age population' we need to calculate from age 15 to 74 years (a difference of just one year). By doing this we see that 134,100 people in Colchester are of working age, making up 76.4% of the total population.
- The table below also indicates that there are 10,800 men aged 65 or more and a further 19,100 women aged 60 or more. Combined, this means that 29,900 people are of retirement age in Colchester, regardless of whether they work or not. This accounts for 17.0% of the population.

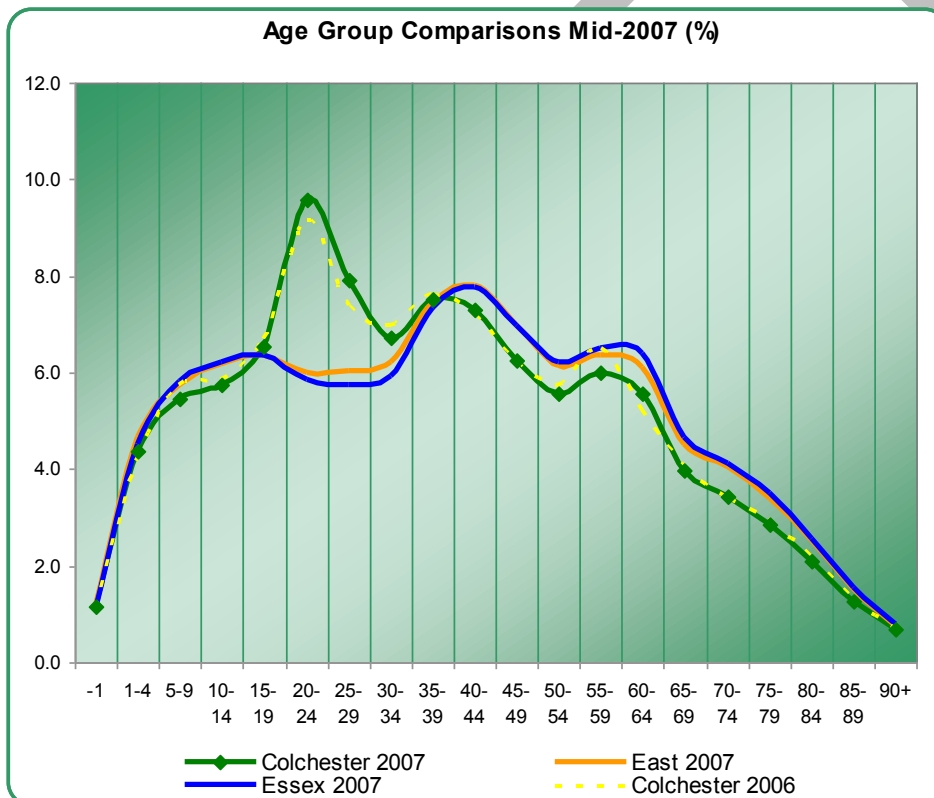
Mid-2007 Age & Gender Structure for Colchester (thousands)

All Ages	All People	Males	Females
Under 1	2.0	1.0	1.0
1-4	7.7	3.9	3.8
5-9	9.6	4.9	4.7
10-14	10.1	5.2	4.9
15-19	11.5	6.0	5.6
20-24	16.8	9.0	7.8
25-29	13.9	7.1	6.8
30-34	11.8	5.8	6.0
35-39	13.2	6.6	6.6
40-44	12.8	6.2	6.6
45-49	11.0	5.5	5.5
50-54	9.8	4.8	5.0
55-59	10.5	5.0	5.4
60-64	9.8	4.8	5.0
65-69	7.0	3.4	3.6
70-74	6.0	2.8	3.1
75-79	5.0	2.2	2.7
80-84	3.7	1.4	2.3
85-89	2.2	0.7	1.5
90+	1.2	0.3	0.9
Total	175.5	86.5	89.0

The chart below illustrates the age structure of Colchester in mid-2007 compared with the mid-2006 Colchester estimates, Essex mid-2007 and the East of England mid-2007. It indicates that between the ages of 20 and 34 years, there is a marked difference between Essex and the East. This could be attributed to Colchester's large student population resident at Essex University.

From the 35 to 39 age group, Colchester's population gradually begins to decline and in doing so, falls below the Essex and East of England averages for these age groups.

The chart also shows the comparison between Colchester's age structure in mid-2006 and mid-2007. Although the age structure remains broadly the same, there are small differences in certain areas. For example, the proportion of young people aged between 5 and 14 years has decreased slightly, whilst the proportion of young people aged between 20 and 24 years has increased slightly. There has also been a decrease in the 50-59 years age groups.



The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 made age discrimination illegal in the workplace and all staff must ensure they comply with the new law. These regulations came into force on 1 October 2006.

We recognise the importance of retaining valuable employees and will not use age, or age-related criteria in recruitment and selection. As part of the job application process, candidates can voluntarily complete an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form which remains separate from the main application

and the recruiting manager does not see this information. The monitoring form includes the candidate's age and HR analyse this data on an annual basis.

The age profile of the existing workforce is also monitored every six months and this data is given to the HR Business Partners to do succession planning and producing annual HR Service Plans.

Colchester Borough Council work with the Older People's Forum. The forum includes agencies and voluntary sector groups that provide services to older people. The forum members are working together to address issues outlined their action plan.

The Mercury Theatre has a programme of community workshops for people who are 50+.

Equality Bill

The Bill bans discrimination against someone aged over 18 because of age when providing services or carrying out public functions.

- Defence of justification e.g. bus passes
- Timed introduction – financial services 2012 public services?
- Ongoing review of practical action to tackle age discrimination in health and social care reporting in October. Need to be in line with proposed EU Directive on Equal Treatment covering age.

Religion or belief

Data from the 2001 Census shows us that the borough's population are predominantly Christian, see table below:

	Colchester	East of England	England
All people (persons)	155,796	5,388,140	49,138,831
Christian (persons)	111,501	3,886,778	35,251,244
Buddhist (persons)	549	12,065	139,046
Hindu (persons)	758	31,386	546,982
Jewish (persons)	238	30,367	257,671
Muslim (persons)	1,181	78,931	1,524,887
Sikh (persons)	117	13,365	327,343
Any other religion (persons)	564	15,471	143,811
No religion	28,810	902,145	7,171,332
Religion not stated	12,078	417,632	3,776,515

Source – Office for National statistics 2001

The European Union's Equality Framework Directive 2000 became law in December 2003, making it illegal to discriminate either directly or indirectly against anyone on the grounds of religion or belief. The Equality Act 2006 also applies to religion and belief, and offers additional protection to people who do not have a faith.

Employees

As at March 2009, 36.1% of employees had stated their religion as Christian, with 1.5% Buddhist, Muslim and other. 13.8% declared that they had no religion and 48.6% of employees had not provided the Council with this information.

Sexual orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful to discriminate in employment or training on grounds of sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 make it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation.

Employees

Since April 2008, Colchester Borough Council has included sexual orientation on its Equality and Diversity monitoring form. This information will be analysed annually, along with the other equality monitoring information to see if there are any trends, or groups that are underrepresented in the workforce.

Colchester Borough Council carry out regular staff surveys and equality monitoring questions are asked as part of the surveys. This enables the council to gather and analyse data on its staff with regards to equality monitoring. These questions are optional for staff to complete, and as with the equality monitoring form given to all candidates and new employees, it allows the council to gather valuable equality monitoring data on its workforce.

There have been no reported incidents of bullying or harassment due to sexual orientation reported to HR in the past few years.

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Our responsibilities as a service provider

As a service provider we have different responsibilities under each of the duties. In this section we detail the methods we will use to meet the different requirements of the duties.

Equality Impact Assessments

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a tool for identifying the potential impact of our policies, services, strategies and functions on those who live in, work in and visit the borough. The assessment must include the potential impact on the following equality groups: age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We also need to consider those who live in rural isolation, are on a low income or who do not have English as their first language. By assessing the potential impact we can ensure that the services we provide reflect the needs of our communities. By carrying out EqIAs, we may also ensure that the services we provide fulfil the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.

By carrying out EqIAs we can:

- improve our work - our policies, services, strategies and functions
- make sure we do not discriminate
- promote equality
- make sure everyone, no matter who they are, can access our services

For further information on our EqIA Toolkit see appendix two.

Equality Standard for Local Government

In March 2009, we achieved Level Three of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG). Following an independent assessment by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), we successfully met the criteria set out for level three of the Equality Standard.

Only 21 district councils have reached level three of the Standard, so this is a significant achievement and places the Council within the top 10 percent in the country. The Equality Standard for Local Government is about the importance of fair equal treatment in services and employment. It also relates to the employment and training of its staff.

The assessment highlighted the Council's:

- strong leadership and commitment to equality and diversity
- clear vision to embed equality and diversity at all levels
- awareness of changing requirements of customers – such as taking the SOS bus out into communities to help residents with the credit crunch
- genuine attempts to involve communities in determining service delivery
- staff at all levels being committed to deliver services of excellence.

In April 2009 The Standard was replaced by the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) and has three levels instead of five levels, Developing, Achieving and Excellent. As we had achieved Level three of the old Standard we were moved across to the Achieving level and are working towards Excellent. There are five performance areas in the framework:

- Knowing your communities and equality mapping
- Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern and diverse workforce

We will be reassessed against the Framework in 2011.

Equality monitoring and how the information will be used

We are working on gathering more data about the borough of Colchester as we recognise that, in many cases, we have only limited information and evidence about the extent to which our services and functions take account of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

We acknowledge that it will take time to build up a body of evidence against which we can monitor progress. However, we recognise the need to gather information and evidence about the effects of our services on race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief equality, as well as the views of our users and non-users. We will use some of the following methods to gather information:

- equality impact assessments;
- disability reference group, made up of disabled employees;
- formal surveys required by the government;
- locality networks;
- our own customer and resident surveys;
- analysis of complaints;
- service/policy specific monitoring and consultation
- feedback at community events; and
- staff and councillor surveys.

We also recognise that monitoring by equality strands can be a sensitive issue, and that some people do not understand why we want to have this information about them. We will ensure that with any monitoring we undertake, we will fully explain the reasons why we are collecting the data and that it will help us to ensure that our services are accessible by all and that no barriers exist when people are trying to access our services.

We will ensure our that our staff are trained in equality monitoring and confident at explaining to customers why we are asking for the information and what it will be used for. When asking for equality monitoring information the following explanation could be used:

- Colchester Borough Council is committed to delivering more choice and better value to everyone who uses our services. We want to make sure that the right services are reaching the right people at the right time. To help us make sure we are doing this correctly it would be helpful if you would answer the questions about yourself. Some of the questions may feel a little personal, but the information we collect is anonymous and cannot be traced back to you. If you would like to know more about how we have used this information, please contactservice contact name...

We recognise that implementing monitoring arrangements across the entire organisation is an area which requires further development for all equality strands. Therefore, our aim is to ensure that monitoring arrangements are proportionate to the size of the relevant service, the nature of the policies concerned and the potential impact on the public, especially with regard to race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

We recognise that people can experience different barriers depending upon who they are and their personal circumstances. However, we are aware that the collection of personal information can only be justified under the Data Protection Act 1998 if it is going to be used for specific purposes.

We currently have a statutory duty to monitor for any adverse and differential impact in terms of race, gender and disability. Under the Equality Bill, we will also have a duty to monitor for any adverse and differential impact in terms of age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. Any information gathered will be used to improve existing services and functions, or introduce new ones, as appropriate. The information also informs EqlAs and the development of service equality objectives and targets which are fed into service plans.

In addition, the information can be used to monitor the impacts of our policies and practices on recruitment, development and the retention of employees.

Procurement

In support of its public duty to promote equality of opportunity, Colchester Borough Council aims to achieve a robust and consistent approach to equality in the delivery of services and will work with partners and suppliers to ensure that suppliers are, as a minimum, compliant with the relevant legislation, both at the inception of contracts and through their effective life. The council will engage proactively with key suppliers to promote equality and positive practices in their operations and their provision of services to customers on behalf of the Council.

There are a number of actions to support this approach:

- Complete and maintain an Equality Impact Assessment of the Strategy, the current state and identify priority remedial actions;
- Completion and maintenance of a contract register of all material contracts with suppliers;

- Supporting the Procurement Hub in promoting best practice through the application of relevant tests at the pre-qualification stage of any procurement, the accreditation process for the Portal;
- Bringing contracts and suppliers in compliance with this strategy at inception or renewal of contracts or earlier where opportunities allow;
- Working with fellow councils in the Hub to develop common monitoring and remediation approaches via the Hub, both to stream-line processes within the Council and simplify business arrangements for businesses working with the Hub.
- Promoting compliant contracts and suppliers within the Council to services to channel expenditure through compliant suppliers.

The forthcoming equality bill will put a new duty on the public sector regarding procurement, a set of specific duties which will help public bodies to use public procurement to contribute to delivery of their equality objectives under the Equality Duty. These consist of requirements on contracting authorities:⁷⁷ As defined by the Public Sector Directive (Directive 2004/18/EC).

- a)** when setting out their equality objectives and the steps they intend to take to achieve them, to include how they will ensure that equality factors are considered as part of their public procurement activities to help contribute to the delivery of those objectives;
- b)** to consider the use of equality-related award criteria where they relate to the subject matter of the contract and are proportionate; and
- c)** to consider incorporating equality-related contract conditions where they relate to the performance of the contract and are proportionate.

Responsibility as an employer

Equality of opportunity in employment

We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of employment and are committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all staff. Assessment for recruitment, selection, and appraisal, training and career progression purposes is based entirely on the individual's ability and suitability for the work.

We are committed to providing staff of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to maximise their skills and achieve their potential, offering flexible working arrangements wherever possible. We encourage a diverse workforce and aim to provide a working environment where staff are valued and respected, and where discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated. This responsibility is shared by everyone in the organisation and includes both councillors and staff.

We carry out staff surveys to keep up to date with staff opinions and this helps us work out what we can do better. The surveys ask for opinions on a range of subjects including:

We are committed to monitoring employment and recruitment to ensure equal opportunity of employment, regardless of age, gender, religion, race or disability. This includes monitoring the following activities:

- job applications;
- access to training and internal promotions;
- performance related pay as a result of outcomes of Performance Development Reviews (PDRs);
- grievances/discipline matters;
- leavers from employment;
- staff affected by redundancy and early retirements;
- flexible working requests; and
- instances of bullying.

To help us to continually improve our approach to equality we are committed to regularly reviewing our recruitment and employment policies and practices. Our obligations as an employer are outlined in section eight of this scheme. In addition we have a number of employment policies and procedures which relate to equality.

Arrangements for gathering information: employment

We undertake audits of our staff to update our human resources records. The information gathered is used for monitoring purposes and greater reference is put on obtaining data relating to gender, race and disability. We continue to encourage staff to share with us any information regarding race, gender and disability issues they may have, whilst ensuring that their privacy is respected. Any information about our staff helps us to understand the make-up of our

workforce and how it reflects that of our community. It also helps us to identify if there are instances of occupational segregation.

We will continue to collect and monitor information on staff profiles, recruitment data, training provision and disciplinary procedures across the different equality strands and publish these on the Colchester Borough Council website.

Our aim is to ensure that Council staff reflect the ethnic diversity of the borough. We will continue to analyse the data and develop plans to address any areas of inequality. We will take action to remove any barriers and promote equality of opportunity.

In terms of recruitment, we gather information about each applicant, for example on race, gender and if they have any disabilities. This information is monitored to ensure that our advertising is reaching all sectors of the community. As a result of our achievement of the disability symbol more detailed monitoring is carried out before short listing to ensure that all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria are guaranteed an interview.

Monitoring continues throughout the career of the applicant and provides a detailed, accurate database, capturing the following information:

- activities leading to promotion (for example mentoring);
- disciplinary and grievance (stating outcomes and sanctions);
- exit interviews;
- grade at entry;
- performance development review (stating outcomes leading to pay awards); and
- training and development (offered and undertaken).

Equality Bill

There will be a specific duty requiring public authorities with 150 or more employees to publish the gender pay gap in their organisation and the percentage of ethnic minority and disabled people they employ.

Disability Reference Group

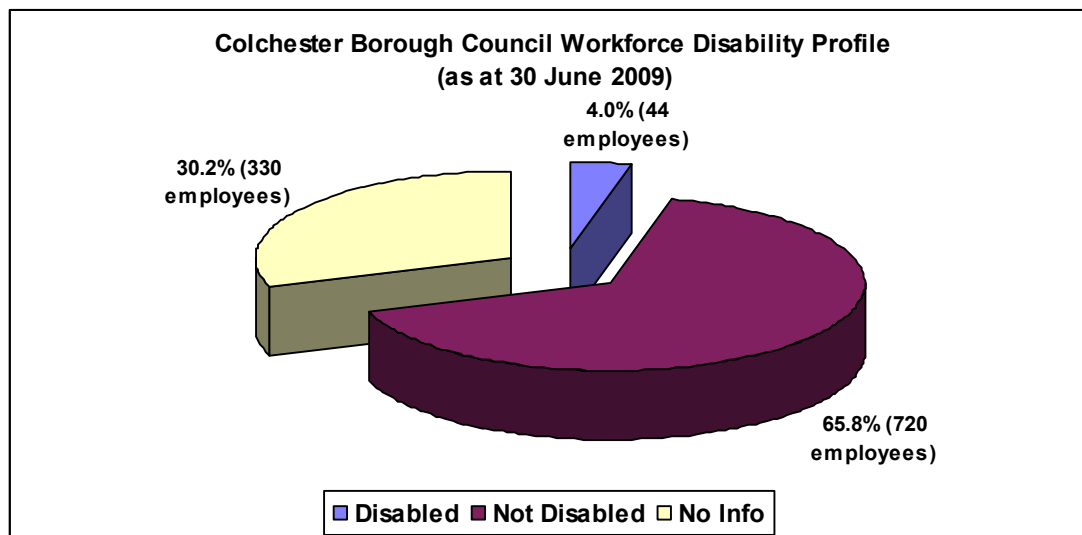
This group consists of staff and councillors who meet to discuss issues around disability.

Issues discussed include:

- Accessibility
- Communications
- Flexible training
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Equality Training
- Feedback from service areas
- Updates from the Diversity Steering Group

Employees with Disabilities at Colchester Borough Council

The pie chart below demonstrates the extent to which Colchester Borough Council has a representative workforce in respect to the population of Colchester as a whole. Colchester Borough Council Workforce Disability Profile



Employment and equal pay – including recruitment

The gender pay gap refers to the difference in average hourly earnings of men and women. Despite the introduction of the Equal Pay Act in 1970, latest figures from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) show:

The gender pay gap (as measured by the median hourly pay excluding overtime of full-time employees) widened between 2007 and 2008. The gap between women's median hourly pay and men's was 12.8 per cent, compared with a gap of 12.5 per cent recorded in April 2007, when it was at its lowest since records began. The median hourly rate for men went up 4.4 per cent to £12.50, while the rate for women increased by 4.1 per cent to £10.91.

One requirement of the gender equality duty is that the Council must:

“consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap”

Such objectives must focus on the three main causes of this gap, which are pay discrimination, caring responsibilities and occupational segregation. The last category means that, if necessary, the Council must avoid the concentration of men and women into particular occupations, which can promote traditional gender stereotypes such as women doing admin work and men undertaking more manual roles.

To ensure that women are not under-represented in the higher paid jobs within the Council (often referred to as the “glass ceiling effect”), every year the Council provides data to the Audit Commission showing the percentage of

its female employees who are in the top 5% of its overall earners (known as BVPI 11a). As at March 2008 this was 28.4%.

Staff and councillor development/organisational learning

We recognise the importance of raising awareness of our specific duties under the Single Equality Scheme and general equality duties for all our staff. Therefore we commit to the following:

- We will continue to provide Equality and Diversity Training to all new staff who join Colchester Borough Council, as well as regular refresher training for all existing staff.
- We will provide Equality and Diversity training to new elected Councillors.
- We will continue to provide access to our Equality and Diversity e-learning to front line staff.
- We provided Equality Impact Assessment training for all managers and relevant staff in 2009. We will continue to train managers and staff on a rolling programme.
- We will review our training programmes for staff and Councillors every three years.

Protection of carers

Under the proposed new Public Sector Equality duty there is going to be Protection for carers. This extends protection for persons who are 'linked to' or 'associated with' a person who is of another sexual orientation, race or religion, to disability, gender and age or gender reassignment.

Working with others

Partners

We work in partnership with other organisations to achieve best practice and ensure the best use of resources across Essex. Key partnerships include:

- Essex Local Strategic Partnership
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Locality Planning Networks
- town and parish councils,
- other district councils,
- voluntary organisations,
- community groups
- Colchester Borough Homes,
- businesses through the town centre management, and
- Colchester Chamber of Commerce.

Colchester Compact

Colchester Borough Council is a signed up member of the Colchester Compact and sits on the Steering Group. The Colchester Compact is a written agreement, developed locally through consultation between representatives from the voluntary and community sector and statutory organisations.

It is not a legal document but it does establish a set of good working practices that signatories can draw upon and seeks to develop trust and understanding between partners.

Consultation, publishing arrangements and communications

There are many organisations that we work closely with including:

- North Essex NHS,
- North Essex Partnership Foundation Trust,
- Essex Probation Services;
- Colchester Institute;
- Tendring District Council;
- Colchester and Tendring Police Division;
- North Essex Mental Health Trust;
- Essex Rivers Trust;
- University of Essex;
- Victim Support;
- Essex Fire and Rescue;
- Colchester Sixth Form College;
- Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Essex Race Equality Council
- MENTER
- Colchester 2020
- Colchester Borough Homes
- Town and Parish Councils
- Tendring and Colchester Minority Ethnic Partnership
- CCVS.

These organisations will be consulted with on this scheme, as will local community groups, third sector organisations, district and county councils in the east of England, town and parish councils and the wider population and communities.

We will be communicating the consultation of the scheme in a variety of methods, including:

- Press release
- Letter
- Email
- Publication of draft scheme on our website
- Having the scheme available to view in our central and local libraries, customer service centre at Angel Court and local housing offices.

Feedback

Following the consultation, feedback will be published on our website in January 2010.

Implementation of the scheme

Identifying policies and functions relevant to the Single Equality Scheme

The Council completes Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) for all policies, procedures and practices which have an impact on the people it employs as well as the customers it provides services to. This is part of our overall commitment to creating a culture of equality and diversity throughout the Council.

This process involves a rolling programme to conduct and update Equality Impact Assessments to cover all equality strands for existing policies and conduct equality impact assessments for all new functions and new and revised policies. We will consult with our communities on the rolling programme to help us prioritise where negative impacts may occur.

Assess and consult on the impact of policies on promoting equality

We will continue to seek feedback from all our customers on our service performance and consult widely on our plans and policies. We will do this by:

- Publishing information and policies on our website and encouraging feedback via our e-consultation tool.
- Actively engage with our diverse community who will be most affected by equality issues and the development of services.
- Seek feedback on our services via customer surveys and Touchstone customer feedback; specifically on the accessibility of services and the customer experience.
- Ask customers to provide information on themselves, for example their gender, ethnicity, age, whether or not they have a disability, their sexual orientation and religion or belief, when providing feedback so we can check the impact of services against different groups.

Publish the results of assessments, consultations and monitor;

We will publish the results and action plans arising from equality impact assessments and consultations on the Colchester Borough Council website www.colchester.gov.uk

We will consult on and publish our Single Equality Scheme Colchester Borough Council website.

Monitoring will enable us to assess whether specific areas of our activities disadvantage or discriminate ethnic communities.

Following the publication of the Single Equality Scheme all actions set out in the Action Plan will be assessed, monitored and evaluated to ensure that they have not had an adverse impact on equality. This will be conducted via the Diversity Steering Group which provides an active forum for the discussion of

involvement in corporate equality and diversity issues that affect the Council and consists of one representative from each service, Colchester Borough Homes and UNISON.

In addition we will monitor the impact of our activities with regard to the Single Equality Scheme through the following:

- Place Survey - Colchester Borough Council's resident survey
- Customer Satisfaction surveys
- Diversity Steering Group
- Employment monitoring data.

Make sure that the public have access to information and services

We operate a Customer Service Centre where trained staff can help customers with information and access to services in a way that suits their needs; including face-to-face, phone, e-mail and on-line.

We publish The Courier every four months and deliver it to every Colchester resident and interactively via the website. The Courier provides residents with as much information as possible about the services the council provides and plans for the future. We are now working with the Essex Blind Charity to review drafts of The Courier before it goes to print, to ensure that we are making it user friendly for those with visual impairments, and will continue to consult with them regularly.

We provide information on our plans, policies and services via the Council website. We provide an on-line language translation service to enable residents to access information easily. We also use Language Line which offers customers an interpretation service if this is needed.

We will monitor our performance for the different ethnic groups and addressing those areas where we may have issues such as satisfaction results, percentage of BME applications and BME candidates being recruited.

We are also working toward compliance with the Model Publication Scheme for Principal Local Authorities which requires us to show how people can access our services and information about them.

Collect and monitor information on staff, job applicants, training and grievance and disciplinary procedures

We will continue to collect and monitor information on staff profiles, recruitment data, training provision and disciplinary procedures across the different equality strands and publish these on the Colchester Borough Council website.

Our aim is to ensure that Council staff reflect the ethnic diversity of the borough. We will continue to analyse the data and develop plans to address

any areas of inequality. We will take action to remove any barriers and promote equality of opportunity.

Appendices

1. Equality objectives and three year action plan
2. EqIA toolkit
3. Meaning of disability
4. Mid-2007 Experimental Ethnicity Tables

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Appendix 1 - Equality objectives and three year action plan 2010 - 2013

Equality Objective 1: Ensure our plans and policies enhance the services delivered to our diverse communities

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Ensure Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are carried out on all appropriate new, or amended existing, policies, strategies, services and functions.	<p>Group Management Team (GMT) – all service groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing based on the three-year timetable published on our website 	To ensure all new, or amended existing, policies, strategies, services and functions are assessed for potential impacts on all equality groups.	All
Implement an EqIA awareness programme for all service managers and appropriate staff on our new EqIA Toolkit.	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, supported by Human Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness programme to commence in December 2009 and thereafter ongoing, as required. 	To ensure all relevant staff are aware of EqIAs and that they are confident in carrying them out.	All
Review group service plan.	<p>All GMTs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually 	To ensure all group service plans consider equality and diversity implications and responsibilities and identify any areas for improvement and equality objectives for their service area.	All
Promote equality and diversity policies to the Council's contractors and consultants appointed on land and property contracts and building works, as required by the Equality Bill.	<p>Estate Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2010 onwards. 	To ensure the Council's contractors and consultants are aware of their equality and diversity responsibilities.	All

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Promote Equality and Diversity through Council procurement process and Strategy, to include written procedures for actions to be taken by Council if equality and diversity requirements breached.</p>	<p>Resource Management, Finance Team and Essex Procurement Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2010 • To be reviewed when Equality Bill comes in 	<p>To ensure Council's contractors and consultants are aware of their equality and diversity responsibilities. In addition, to ensure the Council meets its legal requirements under the forthcoming Equality Bill.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Services to refer to and use the Customer Access and Channel Management Strategy, which has been designed to provide all customers with equal opportunity to access our services, and which is adopted across the organisation as best practice in order to improve customer access for all.</p>	<p>All services and the Corporate Team responsible for running the Fundamental Service Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy to be promoted in January 2010 to ensure services are using it • Review by end 2010 	<p>To ensure all customers can access our services using a variety of methods.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to implement the requirement that all Cultural Services delivery partners must have an Equality and Diversity action plan that covers all areas of their operation in place to qualify for the Council's support and review and report performance against these plans at least annually.</p>	<p>Cultural Services Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually 	<p>To ensure that the Council's delivery partnerships are in line with its equality targets and requirements</p>	<p>All</p>

Equality Objective 2: To improve the ways we engage with the borough's diverse communities to ensure that services meet specific needs

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Use the SOS bus and other methods to meet the variety of people and groups in our community. Examples include using the SOS bus to offer advice and support to local people at various locations in the borough as part of the Council's 'tackling the credit crunch' initiative.</p>	<p>All services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2010 onwards 	<p>To engage with our communities and services users, across all equality groups.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Through the Customer Insight group we will bring representatives from across the Council together to coordinate our research and engagement activities and use the results to gain a deeper understanding of our customers service needs.</p>	<p>Strategic Policy and Regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2010 onwards 	<p>To coordinate our research and engagement activities and use the results to gain a deeper understanding of our customers service needs.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to measure our ethnic minority and migrant worker populations alongside the changing demographics of the Colchester borough.</p>	<p>Strategic Policy and Regeneration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing – at least annually 	<p>To gain a better understanding of the communities we serve.</p>	<p>Race</p>
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to engage with the borough's</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development</p>	<p>To identify opportunities for people of any faith to fully engage in and access council services.</p>	<p>Religion and Belief</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>faith groups to find out if there are any barriers stopping people of any faith from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>and Cultural Services and Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By February 2010 		
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to engage with the borough's disabled community to find out if there are any barriers stopping people with disabilities from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development, Disability Reference Group and Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2010 	<p>To identify opportunities for people with disabilities to fully engage in and access council services.</p>	<p>Disability</p>
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to engage with the borough's lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities to find out if there are any barriers stopping lesbian, gay or bisexual people from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development and Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	<p>To identify opportunities for lesbian, gay, or bisexual people to fully engage in and access council services.</p>	<p>Sexual orientation</p>
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to engage with the borough's transgender community to find out if</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development and Diversity Steering</p>	<p>To identify opportunities for transgender people to fully engage in and access council services.</p>	<p>Transgender</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>there are any barriers stopping transgender people from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By August 2010 		
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to find out if there are any women or men's group running in the borough; and if so to engage with them to find out if there are any barriers stopping individuals from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development and Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By October 2010 	<p>To identify opportunities for Women and men to fully engage in and access council services.</p>	<p>Gender</p>
<p>Work with partners, stakeholders, voluntary sector and community groups to engage with the borough's young and older people to find out if there are any barriers stopping them from accessing council services, and if so what we can do to help them access our services.</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer, with support from Community Development and Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By December 2010 	<p>To identify opportunities for young and older people to fully engage in and access council services..</p>	<p>Age</p>
<p>To analyse results of engagement with the borough's equality groups and suggest how we can make improvements to service delivery to</p>	<p>Diversity Steering Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As results are collected and analysed for each 	<p>To ensure that results of engagement are used to improve access to services for all our communities.</p>	<p>All</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
ensure that our services are accessible to all of our communities	equality strand results to be reported to Diversity Steering Group for review and action planning.		
Implement the Community and Engagement Participation Strategy across the organisation.	Strategic Policy and Regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	To implement and embed this policy across the organisation so all service areas use the same strategy and are consistent in their approach to engagement and participation.	All
Develop and implement a protocol to standardise survey design across the organisation.	Strategic Policy and Regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol to be launched 2010 	To standardise survey design across the organisation.	All
Continue to work with the Customer Service Centre focus group.	Revenues and Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets every three months 	To gain feedback from customers.	All
Implement e-claim to widen choices for claiming benefits including consultation with focus group.	Revenues and Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-claim to be available on website November 2009 • To be available to use at the counter and by phone in January 2010. 	To widen choices for customers to claim benefits.	All

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Ongoing claim take-up campaigns (working with Welfare Rights) and Money Market Day (working with other agencies) to raise awareness – (both) aimed at all sections of our community.</p>	<p>Revenues and Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<p>To raise customer awareness of help available with benefits.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Build on the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Action Panels to help identify priorities for action in different geographic communities.</p>	<p>Executive Director for Place-shaping/Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 onwards 	<p>To identify priorities for action in different geographic communities.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Identify new approaches to engage young people in the provision of new play and recreation facilities.</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2010 onwards 	<p>To engage with young people using alternative methods of communication.</p>	<p>Age – Young</p>
<p>Check ethnic breakdown of Community Alarm clients and compare to ethnicity population data. If above action shows less service usage from particular ethnic groups then target groups for appropriate promotional activities.</p>	<p>Community Operations team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2010 onwards 	<p>To analyse take up of community alarm service by equality groups. To promote service to underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>Race</p>
<p>Review how Community Alarm services are provided for people who do not have English as a first language. Develop contact with representative groups of ethnic minorities in Colchester to gain an understanding of the needs of various</p>	<p>Community Operations team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2010 onwards 	<p>To ensure service is fully accessible to those people who do not have English as their first language.</p>	<p>Those people who do not have English not first language.</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>groups. Work with individuals who apply for the Community Alarm service and ensure that information is obtained on the most appropriate communication method if their first language is not English.</p>			
<p>Review how recycling and waste services are provided for people who do not have English as a first language. Develop contact with representative groups of ethnic minorities in Colchester to gain an understanding of the needs of various groups. Work with individuals who seek information and guidance on recycling and waste minimisation and ensure that information is provided to them appropriately in relation to their needs.</p>	<p>Strategic Waste team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	<p>To ensure service is fully accessible to those people who do not have English as their first language.</p>	<p>Those people who do not have English not first language.</p>
<p>Continue to implement additional ways of offering advice and help for customers who contact the Council either by visiting, phoning or using the online facilities.</p>	<p>CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<p>To ensure customers have a variety of methods to contact the Council.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to develop the advocacy service that the CSC offers which is designed to meet the needs of the individuals, in the whole community, which may be very specific to their circumstances.</p>	<p>CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<p>That individuals needs specific to their circumstances are met through the provision of an advocacy service.</p>	<p>All</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Continue to develop relationships with partners such as the County Council, Police, Fire and Rescue and PCT to implement their services within the main council public office in order for them to reach the wider community.</p>	<p>CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<p>To continue to develop relationships with partners listed to improve services for customers.</p> <p>The provision of a broad range of services which is accessible to customers in one central location.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to work with all the borough libraries and town and parish councils as community outposts for providing Colchester Borough Council services, advice and help including online facilities.</p>	<p>CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<p>To continue to develop relationships with partners listed to improve services for customers.</p> <p>All borough libraries and parish councils are community outposts for Colchester Borough Council services and can provide customers with help, advice and access to online information.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to implement the requirement for Cultural Services delivery partners to have audience development and engagement plans in place, and review their activity at least annually.</p>	<p>Cultural Services Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually 	<p>To ensure that we meet the needs of the diverse community, and do so more effectively through delivery partnerships</p>	<p>All</p>

Equality Objective 3: Identify and consult groups using a variety of communication methods to ensure equal accessibility to services for all

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Annual benefits survey in conjunction with benchmarking group and neighbouring councils.	Revenues and Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually • Next due Nov/Dec 2009. 	To measure how the Council compare to others in benchmarking group.	All
Review database to identify people in need (for example direct debit failures, indicating people affected by credit crunch) as possible targets for benefits take-up campaigns.	Revenues and Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews to take place annually 	To help those people identified as requiring assistance with payments.	All
Develop use of Mosaic customer profiles to identify target groups for promotional activities (such as benefits take-up, promoting direct debit).	Revenues and Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By end of 2010. 	To use data from Mosaic customer profiles to help customers identified as needing assistance.	All
Results of our survey of users of our benefits and taxation services as part of fundamental review to be analysed. From the analysis, we will be able to identify if there are any actions we need to take to amend or shape future service delivery.	Resource Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	To consult and involve local people in shaping our future service delivery.	All
Explore text messaging opportunities for reporting faults, damage and incidents in children's play areas	Parks and Recreation Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	To improve reporting of faults, damage and incidents in children's play areas.	All

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Ensure that a full range of methods are used to communicate with customers and that consideration is given to those who have a visual or hearing impairment, those with low levels of literacy and those who do not have English as their first language.</p>	<p>All services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately 	<p>To ensure all people are considered when we communicate with our customers and the wider communities.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Use customer-based data from the extra 'how do you contact the Council?' questions asked in the Place Survey to give further insight into how people have been accessing the Council's services, and to ensure we are offering appropriate choices.</p>	<p>CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By February 2010 	<p>To react to customer feedback from Place Survey regarding the access of Council services.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Continue to develop relationships with educational establishments such as Colchester Institute to improve knowledge of methods of accessing council services.</p>	<p>CSC and Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Equality and Diversity is a member of Colchester Institute's Equality and Diversity Advisory Group. 	<p>To improve knowledge of methods of accessing Council services.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Food hygiene training courses to be held in Bengali and Chinese</p>	<p>Food Safety Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually and as 	<p>To ensure food hygiene is accessible to those people who do not have English as</p>	<p>Those people who do not have</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
(annually) and in Turkish / other languages (as required).	required	their first language.	English not first language.
<p>Survey of users of our benefits and taxation services as part of a fundamental service review.</p> <p>Use results of survey to shape future service delivery.</p>	<p>Resource Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2009 • January 2010 onwards - once results analysed and actions identified. 	To consult and involve local people in shaping our future service delivery.	All
To promote and signpost people to help available to them, for example ESOL classes being run in the borough for those who do not have English as their first language.	<p>Community Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As available 	To ensure we promote initiatives and help that are available	All

Equality Objective 4: Ensure staff and members understand their equality and diversity duties to promote equal opportunities and deliver customer excellence

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQIA for recruitment and selection to ensure strategy and practice is aligned to equality and diversity policy and reflects best practice. • Promote recruitment and selection training for officers and Members involved in such activities. 	<p>All GMTs / Human Resources Business Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring of practices when new legislation relevant to recruitment is introduced 	<p>To ensure the Councils recruitment process is up to date and that staff involved in selection panels are trained.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>To ensure that all staff receive equality and diversity training on all equality strands, and that training includes promotion of the council's equality and diversity policies, to ensure they are communicated, understood and mainstreamed into CBC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new staff to receive an induction into Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities • Refresher programme for staff who have not received recent training • Colchester Learning Pool – the Councils e-learning programme – to be used to provide ongoing and refresher training in equality and 	<p>All GMTs / Human Resources / Diversity Steering Group / Disability Reference Group and Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As required • By end of 2010 and every 3 years thereafter or as necessary (role change). • Starting 2010 	<p>To ensure all new and existing staff receive regular equality and diversity training.</p>	<p>All</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>diversity and cultural awareness</p> <p>All services to ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities under equalities legislation and apply them in their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data on awareness training attended by staff • Identify gaps and training needs within PDP • Organise relevant training and information sessions for staff as required. 	<p>All Heads of Service / GMTs/ line managers / all staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End March 2010 • End May 2010 • Ongoing 	<p>To ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities under equalities legislation and apply them in their work.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Set employment equality targets for recruitment, staff retention, workforce profiles for each equality strand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate and analyse workforce data across the Council. • Collate and monitor data on People segment of the Performance Dashboard by the Performance Management Board. • Use data to identify and implement actions as part of review of recruitment to address areas of under representation. • Identify if there are any barriers to accessibility and participation, in relation to employment. 	<p>Human Resources and Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually and ongoing • Quarterly and annually • By June 2010 • By June 2010 	<p>To analyse employment data by equality groups to identify if workforce reflects local communities. If there are any underrepresented groups, identify actions to increase employment.</p>	<p>All</p>

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Members to be offered equality and diversity training, on indication and as identified within their personal development plan, and that the training covers all equality strands.</p> <p>Committee Chairs and Cabinet to have Equality and Diversity training as part of the induction to these roles.</p>	<p>Members to identify needs as part of PDP process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually <p>Committee and Civic Services with support from Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As required 	<p>To ensure that Members are aware of their statutory responsibilities and that they have the skills to deal with equality issues in their role as elected representatives and champions of their communities.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Evaluate the existing delivery of corporate equality and diversity training, ensuring that issues of equality within service delivery and employment are being effectively addressed</p>	<p>Diversity Steering Group and Service representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	<p>A report focusing on the results, conclusions and recommendations of this review will be produced to determine how equality and diversity training should be delivered using blended learning in the future.</p>	<p>All</p>

Equality Objective 5: We will encourage the development of ways of working that take into consideration the flexibility needs of everyone

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Promote and encourage wider flexible working practices across the Council (where such systems are operationally possible and covered by specific legislation) and monitor these requests to ensure the process is free from discrimination.	All services supported by strategic Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	A flexible and motivated workforce that provides services in accordance with business needs and efficiency requirements	All

Equality Objective 6: We will assess how employee and customer data already held by the Council can be more effectively utilised when developing strategies for improved service delivery

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Maximise the use of information collected across the Council on customer demographics and feed this information into the development of future service delivery.	Customer Excellence / All Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	A better understanding of our customers' needs will result in improved service delivery and customer satisfaction	All
Use customer profile research to develop and agree targets to improve the reach and accessibility of Cultural Services and embed these targets in the Funding Agreements that the Council has in place with delivery partners.	Cultural Services Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2010 	To use data we hold to drive targets and improve service delivery through working in partnership	All

Equality Objective 7: We will identify any gaps in the employee and customer data we have and devise appropriate methods to obtain this information where it could be of benefit to the service and/or employee

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
<p>Develop methods of collecting informative and localised equality monitoring data, including using the Mosaic system for data collection across the equality strands, and put in place a process for analysing the data and intelligence, so that it can be used to improve service delivery within the Colchester borough.</p>	<p>All Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June 2010 	<p>Service provision and workforce practices can develop within a framework that promotes equality</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Enhance current procedures around sharing data with the Local Strategic Partnership and other stakeholders to ensure a two-way process.</p>	<p>All Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By end of 2010 	<p>To ensure that we work with others to share information and best practice on our customers and communities.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>To ensure a consistency of information that is collected and monitored across services and the council.</p>	<p>All Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By end of 2010 	<p>To ensure there is a consistency of equality monitoring data across services and the council.</p>	<p>All</p>

Equality Objective 8: We will challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviour and take formal action where necessary

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Ensure cases of bullying or harassment in the workplace are not tolerated by the Council, apply the disciplinary and grievance procedures and monitor data where necessary	All Services supported by Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review cases annually to identify any trends and take appropriate action to tackle any issues 	Provision of a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment on any or no grounds	All
Ensure that staff working with external partners, stakeholders, voluntary or community groups or customers are not subject to bullying or harassment on any grounds.	All services supported by Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support ongoing 	To ensure staff are not subject to bullying or harassment by external partners, stakeholders, voluntary or community groups or customers.	All

Equality Objective 9: We will work in partnership to enable people to actively participate in their community

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
We will work closely with our partners and stakeholders to enable people to actively participate in their community. For example, working with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Essex Police, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.	All Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	To ensure people can actively participate in their community by working with others to share, knowledge, information and best practice.	All

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Continue to develop and implement annual performance targets that will measure the range and diversity of residents' participation in Cultural Services, and review and report activity at least annually.	Cultural Services Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually 	To ensure people can actively participate in their community	All

Equality Objective 10: We will involve people in the changes and improvements we make to policies and service delivery

Action	Responsibility and timescales	Desired Outcome	Equality Group
Publish the results of the consultations.	All services undertaking consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once consultation complete 	To ensure those consulted with and the wider community are made aware of findings and recommendations of consultation carried out.	All
Ensure a consistent approach to feedback to service users following consultation across services	All services undertaking consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once consultation complete 	To ensure those consulted with and the wider community are made aware of findings and recommendations of consultation carried out.	All
Monitoring and reporting of the Single Equality Scheme actions through agreed consultation method/s. Ensure staff and customers are kept up-to-date with the progress of the action plan	Annual assessment and monitoring through Diversity Steering Group and the Equality and Diversity Member Liaison Group to Senior Management Team and Policy Review Panel, Equality and Diversity Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually 	Satisfaction across the authority of progress made under the Scheme. The Scheme and action plan is amended where necessary	All

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

Colchester Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

What is an Equality Impact Assessment? An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a tool for identifying the potential impact of our policies, services, strategies and functions on our residents, visitors and staff. The assessment must include the potential impact on the following equality groups: age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We also need to consider those who live in rural isolation, are on a low income or who do not have English as their first language. By assessing the potential impact we can ensure that the services we provide reflect the needs of our communities.

By carrying out EqIAs, we may also ensure that the services we provide fulfil the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.

Relevance Test

Please use the relevance test below to decide whether your policy, service or strategy requires an EqIA:

Relevant

- The policy, strategy or service will impact on people (residents, visitors and staff).
- The policy, strategy or service is intended to benefit people.

Not relevant

- The policy, strategy or service has no clear impact on people.
- The policy, strategy or service is a support function or administrative.

How do I use the toolkit?

The toolkit is easy to use and does not require any specialist knowledge to be able to use it. The assessment is in two sections; initial screening and full impact assessment. Once you have completed the initial screening you will know whether or not you need to complete a full impact assessment. If you require further information on how to complete an EqIA please contact Claire Holland, Equality and Diversity Officer on 01206 506452 or by email Claire.holland@colchester.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Screening

Name of strategy, project or policy to be assessed		Is the strategy/project/policy:	
		New	Existing
Lead officer completing assessment	Job title	Date of assessment	
Responsible department		Head of Service	

1. What is the main purpose of the policy, service or strategy?

2. List the main activities of the policy, service or strategy? (for strategies list the main policy areas):

3. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy, service or strategy?

4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy, service or strategy?

5. Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the policy, service or strategy? If so, please give details below.

6. What data, information or knowledge do you have to enable you to assess the impact on equality target groups? Please list below. (For example, think about performance indicators and targets, user satisfaction, uptake of services, consultation or involvement, workforce monitoring data, complaints, external verification and eligibility criteria).

7. Are there any concerns that the policy, service or strategy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?

Use the table below to indicate:

- Where you think that the policy, service or strategy could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups, for example, it could disadvantage them;
- Where you think that the policy, service or strategy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups;
- Provide an explanation as to why you think there is a positive or negative impact;
- The key elements of people’s lives affected by this policy, service or strategy. For example, finance, accommodation or welfare; and
- If you identified any data in question 6, use it to help your explanation below.

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
Gender	Women			
	Men			
	Transgender			
Race	White – British			

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
(census categories)	White – Irish			
	White – other background			
	Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
	Mixed – White and Black African			
	Mixed – White and Asian			
	Any other mixed background			
	Asian/Asian-British - Indian			
	Asian/Asian-British - Pakistani			
	Asian/Asian-British – any other Asian background			
	Black/Black British – Caribbean			
	Black/Black British – African			
	Black/Black British – any other Black background			
	Chinese			
	Gypsies/Travellers			
	Any other group (write in)			
Disability	Physical			
	Sensory			
	Learning			
	Mental health issues			
	Other – please specify			
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual			
	Older people (60 +)			

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
	Younger people (17-25), and children (0-16)			
Belief or Religion	Buddhist			
	Christian			
	Hindu			
	Jewish			
	Muslim			
	Sikh			
	Other – please specify			
Language	English not first language			
Social inclusion	Low income			
	Rural isolation			
Equal opportunities and /or improved relations				

8. Based on the explanations you have given in question 7, could the policy, service or strategy discriminate against any group(s) either directly or indirectly? If yes, please state how.

Note: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

9 a) If you have identified any negative impacts in question 7, how could you minimise or remove this negative impact?

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9 b) If you have identified any positive impacts in question 7, how could you improve or promote this positive impact?

10. What consultation has been carried out on the policy, service or strategy? Who with? Please give the findings of the consultation below.

11. Do the findings from the consultation remove any negative impacts identified in question 7? Please give an explanation below.

--

12. If consultation has not been carried out, and you have no data or information available which monitors the impact of the policy, service or strategy on equality target groups, how do you intend to make a decision on the impact?

--

13. Please give details of how you (or how you intend to) collect monitoring data in relation to any of the following equality target groups:

Age:	Disability:
Gender/transgender:	Race:

Religion and belief:	Sexual orientation:
Low income:	Rural isolation:
English not first language:	Other (please state):

14. Which main audience, users or customers identified in question 3 have you involved in producing this EqIA?

--

15. Summary of initial screening

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with data or information. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and finish.
Negative impacts were identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Implement actions identified in question 9a then sign off initial screening and finish.
Negative impacts were identified but have not been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and complete a full impact assessment.
Insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and complete a full impact assessment.

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to the relevant director and one to the Equality and Diversity Officer.

Name:		Copy sent to Head of Service? (Please name)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Job title:		Copy sent to Equality and Diversity Officer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of completion:		Copy reviewed by Diversity Steering Group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date for review of this screening:		Copy published on CBC website	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Summary

Name of strategy, project or policy assessed		Is the strategy/project/policy:	
		New	Existing
Lead officer completing assessment	Job title	Date of assessment	
Responsible department			
Director			
Main purpose of strategy, service, project or policy			
Findings of EqIA – list any positive or negative impacts identified.			
If negative impacts have been identified through the EqIA process, list any amendments or actions to be taken to minimise or remove the negative impact, where applicable.			

A full copy of this EqIA can be accessed via our website: http://www.colchester.gov.uk/Info_page_two_pic_2.asp?sec_id=1988

If you have identified any negative impact which is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact, you must complete Section Two, Full Impact Assessment. Please contact the Equality and Diversity Officer for further information.

Full Equality Impact Assessment

In the EqIA screening you identified negative impacts that have not been minimised or removed, or there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement, therefore you now need to complete a full impact assessment:

- You need to show what information, data or evidence you have gathered, including consultation, and the findings; and
- You are required to complete the action plan to show how you will use the information gathered to minimise, reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified.

Once you have completed these sections you can sign off the full EqIA.

If you require further information on how to complete an EqIA please contact Claire Holland, Equality and Diversity Officer on 01206 506452 or by email Claire.holland@colchester.gov.uk

1. What information has been gathered, including consultation with target equality groups, on how the policy, service or strategy could impact on equality target groups. This could include consultation with the general (i.e. whole) population analysed by certain groups? If there has already been consultation what does it indicate about negative impact of this strategy, project or policy?

Equality target groups	Information gathered and findings
Women	
Black and minority ethnic people (including Gypsies	

Equality target groups	Information gathered and findings
and Travellers)	
Young people and children	
Older people	
People with disabilities	
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people	
Transgender people	
People with religious faith or beliefs	
People on low incomes	
People living in rural areas	
People without English as their first language.	

Equality target groups	Information gathered and findings
CBH Staff	

2. As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will be any changes made/planned to the policy, service or strategy. If yes, please state changes to be made below.

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3a) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the policy, service or strategy?

YES NO

3b) How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups/ensure the policy, service or strategy is non-discriminatory?

Action Plan

Equality strands	Negative impact	Action to minimise or remove negative impact	By who?	By when?	Progress to date
Gender					
Race					
Disability					
Sexual orientation					
Age					
Religion or belief					
Low income					
Rural isolation					
English not first language					

Sign off full EqIA

Name:		Copy sent to Head of Service? (Please name)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Job title:		Copy sent to Equality and Diversity Officer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of completion:		Copy reviewed by Diversity Steering Group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date action plan will be reviewed:		Copy published on CBC website?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 3 - The meaning of disability

This appendix is included to aid understanding about who is covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. It is taken from the national Statutory Code of Practice.

When is a person disabled?

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

What about people who have recovered from a disability?

People who have had a disability within the definition are protected from discrimination even if they have since recovered.

What does 'impairment' cover?

It covers physical or mental impairments; this includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing.

Are all mental impairments covered?

The term 'mental impairment' is intended to cover a wide range of impairments relating to mental functioning, including what are often known as learning disabilities.

What is a 'substantial' adverse effect?

A substantial adverse effect is something which is more than a minor or trivial effect. The requirement that an effect must be substantial reflects the general understanding of disability as a limitation going beyond the normal differences in ability which might exist among people.

What is a 'long-term' effect?

A long-term effect of an impairment is one:

- which has lasted at least 12 months, or
- where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months, or
- which is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

Effects which are not long-term would therefore include loss of mobility due to a broken limb which is likely to heal within 12 months and the effects of temporary illness, from which a person would be likely to recover within 12 months.

What if the effects come and go over a period of time?

If an impairment has had a substantial adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities but that effect ceases, the substantial effect is treated as continuing if it is likely to recur; that is if it is more probable than not that the effect will recur.

What are 'normal day-to-day activities'?

They are activities which are carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis. The term is not intended to include activities which are normal only for a particular person or group of people, such as playing a musical instrument, or a sport, to a professional standard or performing a skilled or specialised task at work. However, someone who is affected in such a specialised way but is also affected in

normal day-to-day activities would be covered by this part of the definition. The test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activities is whether it affects one of the broad categories of capacity listed in Schedule 1 to the Act. They are:

- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- continence;
- manual dexterity;

- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- mobility;
- perception of the risk of physical danger;
- physical co-ordination; and
- speech, hearing or eyesight.

What about treatment?

Someone with an impairment may be receiving medical or other treatment which alleviates or removes the effects (though not the impairment). In such cases, the treatment is ignored and the impairment is taken to have the effect it would have had without such treatment. This does not apply if substantial adverse effects are not likely to recur even if the treatment stops (that is, the impairment has been cured).

Does this include people who wear spectacles?

No. The sole exception to the rule about ignoring the effects of treatment is the wearing of spectacles or contact lenses. In this case, the effect while the person is wearing spectacles or contact lenses should be considered.

Are people who have disfigurements covered?

People with severe disfigurements are covered by the Act. They do not need to demonstrate that the impairment has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Are there any other people who are automatically treated as disabled under the Act?

Anyone who has HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis is automatically treated as disabled under the Act. In addition, people who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist are automatically treated under the Act as being disabled. People who are not registered or certified as blind or partially sighted will be covered by the Act if they can establish that they meet the Act's definition of disability.

What about people who know their condition is going to get worse over time?

Progressive conditions are conditions which are likely to change and develop over time. Where a person has a progressive condition he or she will be covered by the Act. This will be from the moment the condition leads to an impairment which has some effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This applies even though it is not a substantial effect, if that impairment is likely eventually to have a substantial adverse effect on such ability.

Are people with genetic conditions covered?

If a genetic condition has no effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, the person is not covered. Diagnosis does not in itself bring someone within the definition. If the condition is progressive, then the rule about progressive conditions applies.

Are any conditions specifically excluded from the coverage of the Act?

Yes. Certain conditions are to be regarded as not amounting to impairments for the purposes of the Act. These are:

- addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than as a result of the substance being medically prescribed);
- exhibitionism;
- seasonal allergic rhinitis (eg hayfever), except where it aggravates the effect of another condition;
- tendency to physical or sexual abuse of other persons;

- tendency to set fires;
- tendency to steal; and
- voyeurism.

Also, disfigurements which consist of a tattoo (which has not been removed), non-medical body piercing, or something attached through such piercing, are to be treated as not having a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

DRAFT

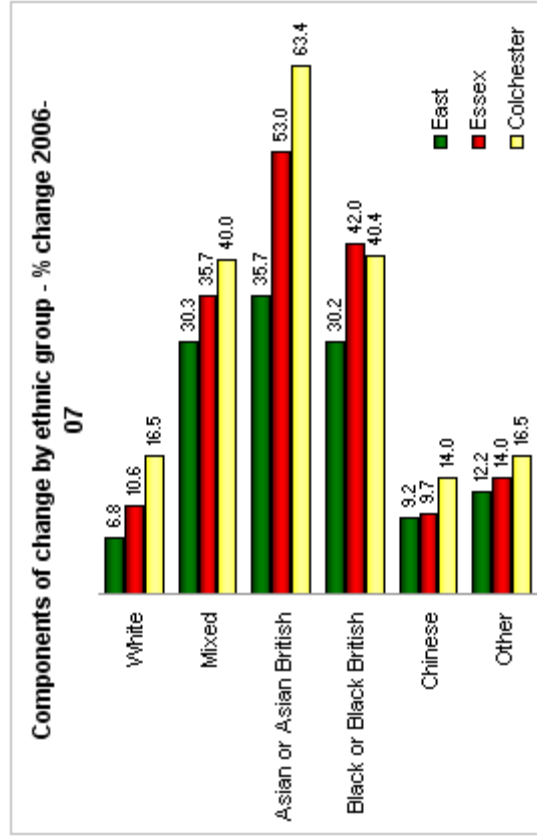
Appendix Four - Mid-2007 Experimental Population Estimates by Ethnic Group Colchester Borough and Essex areas

Table 1 – Ethnic Groups in Colchester by age and gender, mid-2007

	White		Mixed		Asian or Asian British		Black or Black British		Chinese		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
All People	175.5	92.1	2.9	1.7	4.5	2.6	2.5	1.4	2.0	1.1	2.0	1.1
Males	86.5	92.0	1.5	1.7	2.3	2.7	1.3	1.5	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0
Females	89.0	92.1	1.4	1.6	2.2	2.5	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.1
Age												
0-15	31.4	91.4	1.0	3.2	0.8	2.5	0.5	1.6	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.6
16-64/59*	114.0	90.6	1.8	1.6	3.4	3.0	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.5
65/60**	30.1	98.3	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0

Summary of ethnicity in Colchester mid-2007

- These experimental mid-2007 ethnic group estimates show that 92.1% of Colchester's resident population categorise themselves as 'White' (161,600 people). This is a slight decrease from 92.9% in the previous year (mid-2006 ethnic group estimates).
- The statistics indicate that ethnic minority groups, (excluding 'other white') account for 7.9% of the total population, an increase from 3.8% on Census Day 2001. This is also higher than the Essex proportion of 6.5%, although some of this could be attributed to the University being situated in Colchester Borough.
- Colchester has the fourth largest proportion of ethnic minority groups in Essex County behind Epping Forest (10.1%), Harlow (8.8%) and Brentwood (8.2%) which have all increased in the last year.
- As the chart opposite illustrates, the majority of growth in Colchester between mid-2006 and mid-2007 is estimated to have

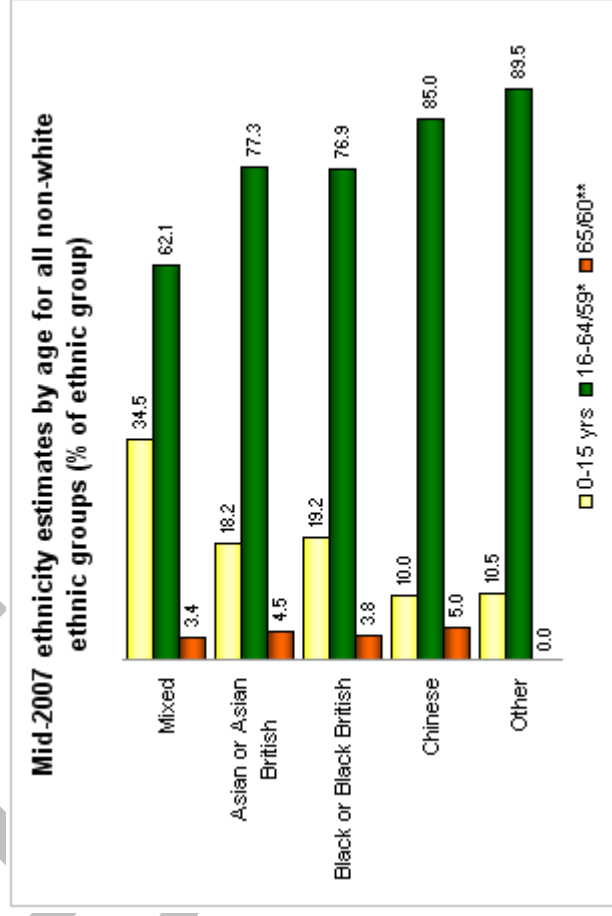


occurred in the 'Asian or Asian British' ethnic group (63.4% growth). This follows a similar pattern to Essex County whose 'Asian or Asian British' population is estimated to have grown by 53.0%.

- These estimates also highlight significant growth for the 'Black or Black British' ethnic group (40.4%) and the 'Mixed' ethnic group (40.0%).
- In comparison the 'White' group has only estimated to have grown by 16.5% between 2006 and 2007, although this is above the Essex and Eastern averages.

Ethnicity by age mid-2007

- The estimates also provide a breakdown of Colchester's ethnic groups by age. As table 1 above shows, a total of 161,600 people are estimated as classifying themselves as 'White' (92.1%). Of this proportion, the majority (63.9%) are estimated to be aged between 16 and 64/59 years.
- The chart opposite concentrates on the remaining five ethnic groupings and the proportion of people in each age group.
- The estimates indicate that the '16-64/59 years' age group is the most predominant age group in all ethnic categories especially in the 'Other' and 'Chinese' categories (89.5% and 85.0%).
- It is interesting to note that four out of the five ethnic groups all had over three quarters of their ethnic population aged 16-64/59 years.
- However, the 'Mixed' ethnic group had less than two thirds of its population in this age category. In this ethnic group there was also a significant proportion of young people aged 0 -15 years (34.5%). These higher proportions of young people are mirrored in the other four ethnic groups as can be seen in the chart opposite.



- By comparison, just 17.8% of the 'White' ethnic group are estimated to be aged 0 – 15 years.

Ethnicity by gender mid-2007

- The mid-2007 ethnicity estimates also provide some details on the gender structure within the different groups.
- For the 161,600 people estimated to be 'White,' 50.7% of them are female and 49.3% are male.
- This is similar to the gender split in both the 'Chinese' (52.6% female) and 'Other' ethnic groups (52.6% female).
- Alternatively, in the 'Mixed' (51.7 male) and 'Asian or Asian British' (51.1% male) ethnic groups the majority were male.
- However, it is worth noting that in terms of numbers these differences are marginal.

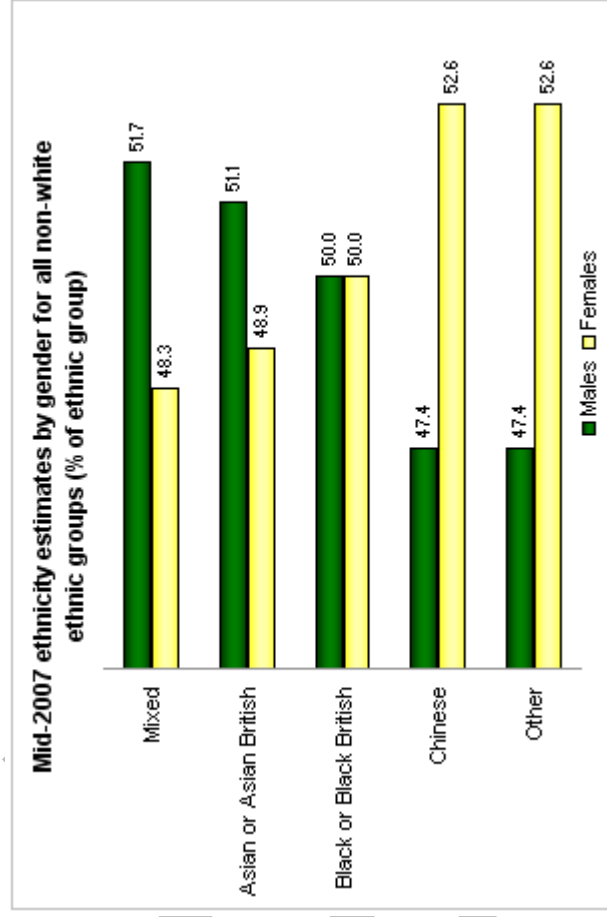


Table 2 – Ethnic groups for Essex and Colchester, mid-2007

Area	White:			Mixed:			Asian or Asian British:				Black or Black British:				Chinese or other ethnic group:	
	All Groups	British	Irish	Other White	White & Black African	White & Black Asian	Other Mixed	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Other Asian	Black Caribbean	Black African	Other Black	Chinese	Other
East of England	5,661.0	4,920.4	60.6	206.1	11.7	26.5	22.7	88.2	59	29.8	26	41.4	56.8	10.6	39.5	35
Essex	1,376.4	1,236.3	12.6	38.1	2.6	5.8	4.8	15.6	6.3	5	6.2	7.6	13.1	1.9	7.9	7.2
Basildon	169.8	153	1.6	3.9	0.8	0.6	0.6	2.2	0.9	0.6	0.7	1	1.9	0.3	0.8	0.7
Braintree	140.9	130.1	1.2	3.2	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.1	0.4	0.5
Brentwood	71.6	62.1	0.9	2.7	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.6	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.5	0.4
Castle Point	89.2	82.7	0.7	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.3	0.3
Chelmsford	164.5	147.3	1.6	4.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	2.2	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8	1.6	0.2	1.1	0.7
Colchester	175.5	152.5	1.2	7.9	0.6	0.9	1.0	1.8	0.6	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.5	0.2	2.0	2.0
Epping Forest	123.3	105	1.5	4.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	2.7	1.3	0.7	0.8	1.4	2	0.2	0.7	0.6
Harlow	78.3	68.3	1.0	2.1	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.9	0.2	0.8	0.6
Maldon	62.4	58.1	0.5	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2
Rochford	82.2	76.5	0.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.2
Tendring	146.2	134.8	1.3	2.4	0.5	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.2	0.1	0.5	0.7
Uttlesford	72.5	65.8	0.6	2.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.4
Southend-on-Sea	162	143.6	1.6	4.3	0.5	0.8	0.6	2.3	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.8	2.2	0.2	1.0	0.8
Thurrock	150	130.5	1.5	3.2	0.8	0.7	0.5	2.5	0.9	1.4	0.7	1.3	3.8	0.3	0.9	0.8
England	51,092.0	42,736.0	570.5	1,776.3	282.9	260.9	212	1,316.0	905.7	353.9	339.2	599.7	730.6	117.6	400.3	376.1

Notes:

a) Source: Population Estimates Unit, Office for National Statistics (ONS). © Crown Copyright, 2009.

b) These estimates are consistent with the mid-2007 population estimates which are available to view at

www.colchester.gov.uk/community

c) This data is not available below this geographical level.

d) Figures may not sum due to rounding.

e) *16-64 for males; 16-59 for females.

f) **65 and over for males; 60 and over for females.

FREE
TRIAL

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2010**

22. Single Equality Scheme

The Panel considered a report by Executive Director, Pam Donnelly, inviting the Panel to review the contents of the draft Single Equality Scheme.

Pam Donnelly and Claire Holland, Equality and Diversity Officer, attended the meeting to assist members in their discussions.

The Council achieved Level Three of the Equality Standard for Local Government in March 2009. The Equality Standard has since changed to the Equality Framework for Local Government and we have migrated across to the Achieving Level of the framework. One of the recommendations of the review was that the Council considered moving to a Single Equality Scheme.

The Equality Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and published on Monday 27 April 2009, and sought to streamline and consolidate more than 100 pieces of legislation that related to equality and diversity in the UK. The Bill would also introduce a new duty on local authorities and public bodies. In response to this the Council had decided to draft and introduce a Single Equality Scheme, which would replace the existing schemes for race, gender and disability, as well as including religion or belief, age and sexual orientation duties in the scheme. The scheme also included information about each equality group in the borough where information was available; examples of work the council had been doing with the equality groups and a three year action plan which included equality objectives.

It was intended that the Scheme would be reviewed annually, with progress against the equality objectives and action plan being reported to this Panel, and the scheme would be refreshed, with a new action plan being drafted every three years.

An executive summary of the Scheme, draft equality objectives and action plan were sent out to more than 100 partners, stakeholders, voluntary and community groups, and the 29 Parish and Town Councils in the borough by email and post. A press release was issued and copies of the draft scheme, executive summary, equality objectives and action plan were sent to all libraries in the Borough, to be made available for public viewing. The draft scheme was also published on the council's website, with an electronic survey form to complete to feedback comments on the scheme. In addition, the council had three internal equality groups, the Diversity Steering Group, the Disability Reference Group and the Member Liaison Group, all three of which were asked to review and comment on the scheme. The draft scheme was also sent to the East of England Regional Assembly Equality and Diversity Network Members and the Essex Equality and Diversity Network Members.

The Equality and Diversity Officer circulated an Equality Impact Summary sheet which had been drafted with the intention that it be used in future to accompany reports to the Panel on new policy initiatives, providing members with a brief overview of the outcomes of Assessments. It was also explained that, in response to recent comments made regarding the negative references in the Action Plan to 'barriers stopping access to services', these would be amended to 'opportunities identified to access services'.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity, attended the meeting and, with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Panel. He wished to thank the officers for their hard work in producing the document and welcomed the amalgamation of three schemes into one for all equality groups.

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that, subject to the inclusion of a summary sheet for future Equality Impact Assessments and the amendment to the wording of the Action Plan to replace any references to 'barriers' with references to 'opportunities', as referred to above, the draft Single Equality Scheme be approved and adopted.



Cabinet

27th January 2010

Item

9(i)

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration	Authors	Lindsay Barker Darren Brown John Rock
			Tel: 282762
Title	Housing Investment Programme (HIP) 2010/11		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report concerns the Housing Investment Programme for 2010/11

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the allocation of new resources totalling £5,316 million to the housing investment programme for 2010/11.
- 1.2 To note the Medium Term Financial Forecast for Capital (MTFFC) as set out at Appendix A.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 Each year as part of the process to agree the council's revenue and capital estimates the Cabinet is required to agree the allocations to the Housing Stock Investment Programme. These allow for work to be done to maintain, improve, and refurbish the housing stock and its environment.
- 2.2 Members will be aware of the cessation of the Inspace contract and that following discussions between Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) a Deed of Variation was signed to allow CBH to provide the Maintenance Services. The services defined under the Deed were restricted to the essential work elements and did not include a continuance of the Decent Homes programme. The Deed had an end date of 31 December 2009 but following representations made by CBH and subsequent Cabinet agreement on 9th September 2009, the Deed has been extended to 31st March 2013. This date is designed to match the current end date for the Management Agreement with Colchester Borough Homes.

- 2.3 Members will also be aware that following a full OJEU procurement exercise two contractors have been appointed by CBC to deliver our Capital Improvements Programme which is designed to include statistical decency by 31st December 2012. The contracts are commissioned for four years with the potential to continue for a further two years by one year extensions depending upon performance. Additionally, a further contract has been let designed to meet our obligations to convert the current analogue signals provided through our communal aerial systems into digital in time for the switchover date in 2011.
- 2.4 The CBH Board has not yet met to discuss and agree a 2010/11 Capital investment plan for submission to CBC for approval and funding. As such this report broadly seeks the release of funds under the same headings as described in the Deed of Variation but with approval and funding to support the continuation of the Capital Improvement Programme and Digital Conversion.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 This report is considered as part of agreeing the Housing Revenue Account estimates as the funding for the Housing Investment Programme (HIP), which covers capital investment in the housing stock, is very much linked to the overall level of resources for housing.
- 3.2 As part of the budget process for 2010/11 a Medium Term Financial Forecast for Capital has been produced for the HRA. This is shown at Appendix A and sets out the predicted expenditure requirements and available resources for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13.

How is the HIP funded?

- 3.3. The HIP is funded from the following sources:
- Major repairs allowance (MRA)
 - Prudential Borrowing
 - Revenue contributions to capital (RCCO)
- 3.4 The MRA resources are directed for capital spending in specific areas, and can only be spent on works to council stock, and improving the community and environment. MRA is paid to the Council as part of the HRA subsidy settlement, and is calculated on the basis of stock numbers and an allowance per dwelling archetype. Therefore, the MRA figures for future years are based on assumed stock levels and estimated increases in allowances, but provide a reasonable estimate of the likely resources available.
- 3.5 In the past we have contributed a significant amount from the revenue budget to support the housing capital programme. However in more recent years this contribution has been less, especially given the additional ALMO funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government. Given the pressures facing the revenue budget it is not considered appropriate at this time to make a Revenue Contribution to Capital (RCCO) to finance works to Council dwellings.

3.6 The estimated **new** resources in 2010 for 2010/11 are as follows:

	2010/11
	£0'000
MRA	4,488
Borrowing	0,421
RCCO	0,407
TOTAL	£ 5,316 Million

3.7 The estimated RCCO in 2010/11 is £407k. In recent years, this has been used to fund non-works programmes, such as Housing ICT and the capitalisation of costs associated with the Strategic Policy and Performance team. For 2010/11, provision has again been made within the RCCO to fund works required to Sewage Treatment Works, with this being the third and final year for this requirement. Further details are given in paragraph 5.7 below.

3.8 The MRA for 2010/11 is estimated as £4.488m. Of this total sum, £4.430m has been set aside to fund the Capital Investment Plan which CBH will recommend to the Council for approval. The remaining £58k has been earmarked for capital expenditure on properties where the Council has a lease responsibility for maintenance and the management responsibility sits outside the ALMO.

3.9 The estimated borrowing requirement for 2010/11 is £421k. This will be used to fund the upgrading of communal aerial systems from analogue to digital reception in the Council's housing stock, which as previously mentioned is now a tendered figure. However, given there is a balance of MRA resources available which has arisen from the temporary suspension of the Decent Homes programme in 2008/09, the potential exists to use MRA resources to fund the digital upgrade programme, thus removing the requirement to borrow and increase our level of HRA debt. It is therefore proposed that the financing of these works is considered as part of the overall financing of the capital programme at the year-end. The cost associated with these works is recoverable from those tenants in receipt of the service as a service charge.

4. Priorities for the Council

4.1 To allocate appropriate funding to our ALMO within the resources that are available to enable stock investment to proceed, improving housing conditions for our tenants.

4.2 To ensure delivery of decent homes' targets and programmes of work by December 2012 and to monitor delivery through the ALMO and to meet the switchover deadline in 2011 from analogue to digital reception.

4.3. To build upon current monitoring arrangements and ensure programme delivery and the effective targeting of resources particularly in respect of Decent Homes and Adaptations for the people with disabilities.

5. Proposals

5.1 The report sets out a summary of the proposed allocation of new resources for 2010/11 with the following comments setting out the basis for this allocation.

Improving Homes

- 5.2 **Decent Homes - £3.500 million** – This allocation acknowledges the work being done to determine the cost to complete but to allow the Decent Homes programme to continue, this substantial proportion of the overall allocation is recommended. It is also worth noting that the capital allocation provided for 2009/10 was knowingly held back to support this essential programme and following completion of the year end accounts a sum will be available for this programme.
- 5.3 **Aids & Adaptations - £0.500 million** - The allocation has been reduced from that of the current financial year, reflecting the reduction in demand. This will revert the budget to historic levels. The proposed allocation achieves the requirement to adapt Council dwellings to meet the special needs of our tenants and also meet the high priority that Members put on this service to Council tenants. The allocation for 2009/10 was £0.710 million.
- 5.4 **Emergency Failures (statutory obligation) - £0.180 million** – This allocation supports the experience gained through the first period of the Deed of Variation and generally reflects the necessity to recognise capital works in the voids process. It is possible that this work will actually be spent using the contractual arrangements entered into with our new Capital Improvement contractors.
- 5.5 **Emergency failures structural works - £0.250 million** – As with the previous allocation this reflects experience gained through the first period of the Deed of Variation and is generally associated with premature failure of structural elements and in particular the continuance of the canopy replacement programme.
- 5.6 **Digital TV - £0.421 million** – This allocation supports the upgrading of communal aerial systems from analogue to digital in the Council's housing stock, in readiness for the switchover in 2011. This proposal has already received Portfolio Holder support. The cost of this work will be recovered as a service charge from those tenants in receipt of the system.
- 5.7 **Non-Works Programmes - £0.257 million** – This is for the further development of the Academy Housing system, various other one off projects and also meeting the Council's technical strategic asset management role for repairs and maintenance capital projects.
- 5.8 **Sewage Treatment Works - £0.150 million** – A report was produced and given Portfolio Holder approval, to agree the proposed strategy for the transfer of all the local Housing Act Sewage Treatment works and associated land to Anglian Water commencing in 2008-9. The expenditure in 2010/11 therefore represents the third year of the intended 3 year programme of works. The disposal of the sewage treatment works to Anglian Water will significantly improve customer satisfaction and will generate ongoing savings within the Housing Revenue Account.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The strategic plan acknowledges the need to increase quality of life and tackle deprivation these being central components of a healthy and vibrant community in:
- Delivering Decent Homes to our tenants
 - Improving housing conditions
 - Reducing deprivation
 - Increasing our efficiency in making best use of e-government and technology.

7 Consultation

- 7.1 Members will be aware of the extensive consultation process which has been undertaken to arrive at a position where it has been possible to recommend the appointment of two contractors (Apollo and Mears) to deliver our Capital Improvement Programme and also the consultation process to appoint Campbell and Kennedy to deliver the Digital Switchover programme.
- 7.2 As previously stated this report sets out a broad allocation of resources and is submitted to meet the reporting timelines but will need to be subsequently revised in the light of the final survey findings and resultant cost to complete the Decent Homes programme and also the specific recommendations of the ALMO Board when submitted although these will need to match the Deed of Variation headings.
- 7.3 It should also be noted that thorough consultation will be carried out with tenants and leaseholders affected by any works to properties or areas as a result of further exposure of work to competitive tender.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 Any housing investment has a significant impact on the quality of life for local people. As a consequence the targeting and effectiveness of the programme has huge interest for members and the public as a whole. It is recognised that ongoing publicity will need to be conducted particularly as the Decent Homes programme continues and updates will be publicised to the tenants in the areas remaining.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 As set out in the report.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 10.1 The equality of all tenants has been considered when planning this programme, with a particular emphasis on people with disabilities being able to remain in their homes as a result of adaptations being carried out. Equality Impact Assessments have been produced where appropriate, in line with agreed policies and procedures.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 These are taken into consideration in delivery of the HIP programme.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 CBH will be responsible for implementing the delivery of this programme in a manner that reflects Health and Safety legislation, although the Council does retain the responsibility to ensure that all procedures are in place and being implemented.

13 Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 Risk management will be considered as the programme is developed, particularly the issues around the completion of the Decent Homes programme.
- 13.2 However, there is a general awareness that some areas of expenditure may need to be increased in future financial years in order to maintain the fabric of the stock and the appearance of the areas.

HRA Capital Medium Term Financial Forecast – 2010/11 to 2012/13

Appendix A

Expenditure	Notes	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000
Decent Homes		4,140	4,000	4,000
Adaptations		500	500	500
Emergency Failures/Structural Works		430	430	430
Digital TV	The programme of works is intended to be completed in 2010/11.	421	0	0
Stock Investment Sub - Total		5,491	4,930	4,930
ICT		140	140	140
SAMS		117	117	117
Sewage Treatment Works	The programme of works is intended to be completed in 2010/11.	150	0	0
Other Works Sub - Total		407	257	257
Total Programme		5,898	5,187	5,187

Resources	Notes	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000
MRA	Resources include unused MRA from previous years where required.	5,070	4,930	4,930
Prudential Borrowing	To fund expenditure on Digital TV	421	0	0
RCCO		407	257	257
Total Funding		5,898	5,187	5,187



Cabinet

27 January 2010

Item
9(ii)

Report of	Head of Corporate Management	Author	Lucie Breadman 📞 282726
Title	Half yearly Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	'Not applicable'		

Members are invited to consider the performance report for the period up to end of September 2009 which includes progress of our Performance measures and an update of progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plan.

1. Action required

- (i) To consider / comment upon the combined performance update, as at Appendix 1, for the period up to the end of September 2009 in relation to our Organisational performance measures and progress update of the Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) as at Appendix 2.
- (ii) Consider the proposals from the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as per section 4 below, following their review of the report on the 5th January 2010.

2. Background information

The council has agreed a number of key performance areas which it uses as part of its Performance Management Framework to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides an update of our Organisational indicators along with a half yearly review of progress against our Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP). (See Appendix 1 & 2 attached).

3. Performance Summary

- Our overall basket of organisational performance measures shows that 21 (68%) of indicators are forecast to meet year end targets.
- 9 Indicators (29%) are showing amber alerts and as such are being monitored closely with 1 indicator (3%) being shown as having a red alert - 'average time to re-let council houses', an update of this indicator is included on appendix 1 attached.
- Monitoring of the actions within our Strategic Plan Action Plan shows that 86% of actions progressing well and we already have some positive outcomes.
- The council has also received a number of awards and accreditations highlighted at the end of appendix 1.

4. Proposals from Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The half year performance report including the SPAP update (as per Appendix 1 and 2) was scrutinised by SOSOP on the 5th January 2010. The following proposals were agreed for Cabinet to consider:

Proposal 1 - The Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel proposed that Cabinet consider showing the three separate elements of the ex-212 Average time to relet council houses indicator in future performance reports, which will assist with future analysis of performance.

Proposal 2 - The panel proposed that they continue their scrutiny of the Average Relet Time performance in May or June by reviewing the outcomes of the Sheltered Housing Accommodation review currently being undertaken by the Council as part of the Asset Management Strategy, when it is finalised, along with the VOIDS performance report and recommendations drawn up by CBH.

5. Strategic Plan references

This report provides an update of progress against the Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) developed to support the delivery of the Councils agreed Strategic Plan Priorities.

6. Consultation

The contents of this report do not have any direct implications with regard to consultation however the Strategic Plan and priorities were agreed following wide public consultation.

7. Publicity considerations

The National Indicators are a statutory requirement and our performance against them needs to be published on an annual basis, by us and by the Audit Commission.

In addition, those indicators which are specifically referenced in the Local Area Agreement are collated by the County Council and shared with our partners.

The performance report contains key measures for National Indicators, Local Indicators and our SPAP many of which are used to monitor the performance of our services and as such these may be of public interest.

8. Financial implications

The financial implications of the action plans to deliver the national indicators form part of the budget setting process.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

The National Indicators were introduced by central government to improve the quality of life for local people across the country by using a consistent set of data. Thus progress and improvement of these and many of the actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) support our aims of improving the lives and services for everyone in the Borough.

10. Community Safety implications

There are performance measures and actions within the SPAP which aim to improve community safety and as such this report provides progress updates in this area.

11. Health and Safety implications

This report has no direct implications with regard to Health and Safety.

12. Risk Management implications

We aim to deliver against the National Indicators and the SPAP as both form a key part of our organisational performance assessment and as such could reflect on how well we deliver services to our residents.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

1.0 Included in this Report

Performance Summary	Page 1
Progress of National Indicators	Page 2 - 4
Progress of CBC 'Have Regard to' LAA Indicators	Page 5 - 6
Progress of our Local Indicators	Page 7 - 9
Progress of our People Indicators	Page 9 -10
Progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plan	Page 11-12
Other Performance News	Page 12-13

2.0 Performance Summary

The Council has agreed a number of key performance areas which it uses as part of its Performance Management Framework to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides an update on our 'Organisational' and 'People' performance indicators along with a half-yearly review of progress against our Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP).

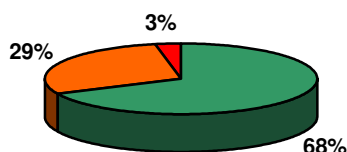
Overall the Council is on target with 68% of our basket of organisational indicators, with only 1 indicator currently being reported as red. 86% of our strategic plan actions are progressing well at this stage of the year.

The remainder of this report takes a more detailed look at these specific areas along with a summary of other performance areas at the end of the report.

Green Alert – Indicator is forecast to meet or exceed target set given current performance.

Amber Alert – Indicator is at risk of not meeting the target set at yr end given current performance.

Red Alert – Indicator is unlikely to meet target set at year end given current performance.

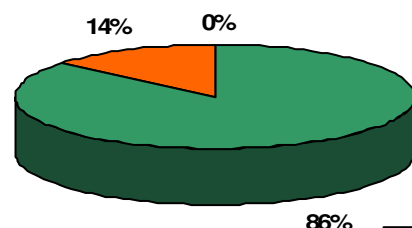


Performance Indicators

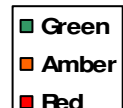


Strategic Plan Actions: The graph below shows we currently have an overall position of:

- 0% forecast as unlikely to achieve (red)
- 14% forecast at risk (amber)
- 86% forecast to achieve (green)



Strategic Plan Actions



Organisational Indicators: As the graph above shows we currently have an overall position of:

- 3% forecast as unlikely to achieve (red)
- 29% forecast at risk (amber)
- 68% forecast to achieve (green)

3.0 Progress of our National Indicators

The table below provides the latest data from our basket of organisational performance measures in relation to the National Indicators that we are monitoring at a corporate level. Each indicator has its current performance against the target set for the year and a comment from the Head of Service in relation to progress or improvement.

Overall in this section performance is positive with the majority of indicators predicted to meet year end targets at this stage. There are a number of ‘Amber’ alerts where targets are at risk and as such leads are monitoring progress closely. Some key areas to highlight:

- The time taken to Process new claims to housing and council tax benefit (NI181) has improved and represents good performance given the increase in claims, improvement since last year and the economic climate.
- Planning performance has improved across all three categories.

The National Indicator Table Results for Period to September 2009

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
NI14 Avoidable contact	n/a	16.2% No alert	This indicator measures the number of contacts that are of low or no value and could have been avoided. The 16.2% covers the range of services that the CSC are the first point of contact (telephony only) meaning that the range is wide and differentiates greatly between services. Some services are reported as 5% whereas others are as high as 40%. The percentage of contacts measured is still significantly lower than the number of contacts received council wide. The measurement of this indicator is still in the very early stages and rolling it out council wide will take some time. While there are no nationally set target our performance, when compared to the 40% average stated by the Audit Commission, shows that we are doing well. Lead: Leonie Rathbone
NI 35 Building resilience to violent extremism	Level 2	GREEN	Prevent Strategy and Action Plan now complete with government funding for Prevent Officer secured for 12 months. Colchester and Tendring CDRPs, councils and LSPs have agreed to jointly work together across North East Essex to deliver the Prevent Action Plan. This work is led and co-ordinated by the Colchester Community Safety Team. Lead: Gareth Mitchell

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
NI 157 Processing of planning applications v targets for 'major', 'minor' and 'other' application types	major 60%	major 69.6%	Performance over the first half of the year April-Sept has been excellent. All three categories significantly exceed the national targets (60%, 65% & 80% respectively). In terms of the more stretching local targets we are currently above for majors of 60%. We have edged closer to the 'minors' and 'others' target. Currently it is one out of three with a reasonable prospect to boost the other two categories once the staff secondments have finished and resources return to the service. Other structural changes within the service are planned and these will boost performance further. Lead: Beverley Jones
	minor 85%	minor 73.3%	
	other 95%	other 90.5%	
	AMBER		
NI 159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites	830	GREEN	The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is currently being updated and will be used to inform the Housing Trajectory and Annual Monitoring Report. We are able to demonstrate a 15 year housing land supply. Lead: Lindsay Barker
NI 170 Previously developed land vacant /derelict over 5 years	n/a	GREEN	Updated table of sites will be made available when this year's figures have been processed, ref comments at NI 154. Lead: Lindsay Barker
NI 180 housing/council tax benefit entitlement Changes	21,000	15,685 GREEN	This is a cumulative target and as such is ahead of profile at this stage of the year and if this trend continues our target will be passed substantially. Lead: Charles Warboys
NI 181 Time to process benefit new claims/change events	13 days	14.09 days GREEN	While processing is currently one day behind the targets set this does represent improved performance given the increased claims and economic climate and if this trend continues it indicates outturn will hit target or better. Lead: Charles Warboys
NI 182 Satisfaction of businesses with LA regulation services	85%	79% AMBER	Full year figure counts, but slight reduction could reflect increased pressures felt by small businesses in recession. Target is challenging - only six Essex LAs (including CBC) exceeded our current figure last year. Lead: Colin Daines

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
NI 184 Food establishments in area, broadly compliant with food hygiene law	95%	92.04% AMBER	Premises inspected are different to those responsible for 2008-09 figure, making year to year comparisons slightly misleading. Good response to tough target. <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Colin Daines</p>
NI 185 CO2 reduction from local authority operations	850 tonnes of CO ²	N/A (annual target) GREEN	This indicator is reported annually. The results for the baseline year showed that the Council emits 10,076 tonnes of CO ² . Projects through the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme planned for this year including the replacement of the fitness pool roof, the new cremators and the introduction of the Power Perfector system should enable us to meet the agreed annual target reduction. <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Matthew Young</p>
NI187 Fuel Poverty - % of people receiving inc based benefits living in homes with low energy rating.	SAP < 35 = 6% SAP > 65 = 33%	N/A (annual target) GREEN	We have commissioned the survey work which is being co-ordinated in the region by Carbon Action Network East. The surveys are due to be sent out in October with the results expected in the new year. <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Matthew Young</p>
NI 194 Level of air quality – % reduction in NO _x and primary PM ₁₀ emissions through CBC's estate and operations	2% less	AMBER	The indicator follows the same processes as NI185 for data collection. For 08-09 (baseline year) the Council produced the following from buildings and operations; PM10 (kg) = 14,148. NOx (kg) = 364. Work through travel planning and the LACM will reduce these emissions, we will be developing a process calculating the potential reduction from these projects to support target setting in the future. <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Matthew Young</p>
NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness-flytipping	590	265 GREEN	Fly tips are down by 18% Targeted local and national campaigns have had an effect on fly tipping figures in 2009 although after the first 2008 campaign in July reports increased due to public awareness of how to report fly tipping. An extension to the free bulky collections may also have had an effect. <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Matthew Young</p>

4.0 Progress of our LAA ‘Have Regard to’ Indicators

Local Area Agreement (LAA) Indicators are national indicators that have been agreed as priorities by partner organisations across Essex. There are some which Colchester Borough Council ‘has regard’ to and as such we monitor these separately. Progress of their performance up to the end of September is included in the table below and key areas include:

- We are on track to deliver the agreed number of affordable homes this year and official figures for last year are now included below.
- The number of people in temporary accommodation has reduced which is important to us and is the result of partnership working and improved activities which are ongoing.

The Local Area Agreement Table Results for Period to September 2009

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
NI 154 Net additional homes provided	855	GREEN	Annual net figure of 1041 for period 1.4.08 – 31.3.09. Figures for the first part of this year are not available as yet but the SHLAA indicates we should meet the target of 855 for 09/10. Lead: Lindsay Barker
LAA LI2.2 / NI 155 No. of affordable homes delivered (gross)	128	90 (cum) GREEN	The information for this indicator is collected quarterly although it is reported annually (annual target). The mid-year cumulative result suggests that this indicator is on track to meet the year end target. Lead: Lindsay Barker
NI 156 Number of households in temporary accommodation	200	212 AMBER	The outturn 219 is a snapshot position of the number of households in temporary accommodation at 30 th September. This is an improvement on our position for the same period last year which was 224. During the last quarter there has been a sustained reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation which has reduced to 17 households this quarter from 23 in the previous quarter. The reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast has continued during October and at the end of October there were 13 households in Bed and Breakfast Lead: Gareth Mitchell



Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
NI 186 CO2 reductions per head in CBC's area	0.3 tonne less per capita	n/a GREEN	This indicator is reported annually, however the data provided by DEFRA runs 2 years behind. Data for 2007 was released in September 09 and although we cannot comment on year 08/09 we can see that emissions per capita are reducing. The reduction between 2005 (baseline) and 2007 is 6.3% (or 0.4 tonnes CO2 per capita) Lead: Matthew Young
NI 188 Planning to adapt to climate change	level 2	n/a GREEN	This indicator is reported annually through a self assessment matrix. We are on track to meet Level 2. Lead: Matthew Young
NI 191 Residual household waste per household	508kg	200.395 kg GREEN	Waste to landfill has reduced by 7.07% compared to the previous year. This equates to a 1412.95 tonnes reduction in waste sent to landfill against the same point in 08/09. The reasons for this reduction are a combination of the economic climate forcing a reduction in food thrown away, increased waste awareness and a reduction in the food packaging by consumers and industry. In addition, Colchester's figures have been reduced by the introduction of a trial recycling street sweepings - the figure recycled and therefore diverted from landfill for September 09 was 163 tonnes, an actual turnaround of 326 tonne. Lead: Matthew Young
NI 192 Household waste reused, recycled and composted	40.0%	42.6% GREEN	As NI191 explanation figure shown April to September 2009. We will also expect to see further increases as a result of the extension of recycling facilities to all flats and the 'door stepping' campaign which commenced in October 2009. Lead: Matthew Young
NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting)	Litter 5.6%, Detritus 11%, Graffiti 5%, Fly posting 1%	Litter 8% Detritus 9% Graffiti 4% Flyposting 0% GREEN	April to July figures included - next report due December for Aug - Nov. Unable to forecast as different areas used for each assessment. Comparable to last year, litter figures increased 4% while graffiti, detritus and flyposting have decreased 2% Lead: Matthew Young

5.0 Progress of our Local & Life Chances Indicators

We have a number of indicators that have been selected because they are relevant to local priorities and progress of these for the period up to the end of September is included in the table below. A summary of some key areas includes:

- While sickness figures have improved year on year, this latest report shows a drop in performance of nearly half a day.
- Where a decision against a planning application is appealed we are performing well when compared to the national average.
- The average time taken to re-let council houses has improved this quarter to 36 days from 39 and from 40 days this time last year. However this is still behind the target we want to achieve and progress and improvement activities are therefore being closely monitored.

The Local and Life Chances Indicator Table Results for Period to September 2009

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
ex-8 Invoices paid on time	98.5%	98% AMBER	Quarter 2 figure has much improved from quarter 1 but as ever services need to remain vigilant as this is a stretching target. Lead: Charles Warboys
ex-9 Council Tax collected	98.5%	64% GREEN	Despite the difficult economic situation, collection rate to date remains at the same level as this time last year, when the target was met. Lead: Charles Warboys
ex-10 Business Rates collected	98.5%	67.3% GREEN	Collection rate at the half year was slightly lower than for the same period last year due to a retrospective increase in the RV of the Garrison which had not been paid. This has now been paid and collection rate is slightly ahead of last year. Lead: Charles Warboys
ex-12 sickness rate (average working days /employee)	8 days	8.54 AMBER	Rate per employee is up almost half a day on last quarter. Swine Flu - The total number of employees who have been affected between April and September 2009 is currently 22 and 108.29 working days have been lost. Stats will be monitored as we approach the colder months when flu is usually more prevalent. Lead: Lucie Breadman
ex-79a Benefit claims processed correctly	90%	88.58% AMBER	Figure reflects quality checks of entire process and recently focused on new staff who are gaining more experience. Lead: Charles Warboys

Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
ex-204 Planning appeals allowed against our decision to refuse	30%	11% GREEN	Better than the national average in so far as we are winning more appeals than most other authorities. Our commitment to pre-application negotiation is likely to mean fewer schemes are unacceptable. We also had 16% of appeals being withdrawn by the appellants. Lead: Beverley Jones
ex-218b % abandoned vehicles removed in 24 hours	80%	92% GREEN	As there are currently less vehicles being abandoned our contractor is easily exceeding the 24 hour deadline to remove those that are. Lead: Matthew Young
ex-212 Average time to relet council houses	28	36 (Cum) RED	The quarter 2 result of 33 days has improved on quarter 1's 39 days, with the cumulative average being an improvement on mid-year 08/09 (40 days). However this indicator is still not meeting the target. The voids process is being closely monitored through the void operational group where long standing voids are analysed. Work continues to review the void process within CBH to ensure any delay in the process is reduced. Despite the improvement actions being in place and improvement in the current performance the fact that this is a cumulative average annual measure means that it is unlikely that this indicator will meet the year-end target. The projection for year-end 09/10 is 32 days (40 days end 08/09). Lead: Lindsay Barker
ex-213 Homelessness cases prevented as % per 1,000 households	4%	2% (cum) GREEN	The number of cases where homelessness has been prevented has improved in quarter 2 to 86 giving a cumulative total of 154, slightly lower than at mid year 08/09. This indicator is on track to meet the year end target. Lead: Gareth Mitchell
Life Chances 10 Reduce Decent Homes gap	50 homes by 2013	n/a AMBER	This indicator aims to reduce the gap between the borough average and the worst affected area for private sector houses falling below the decent homes standard by bringing 50 homes in New Town up to the decent homes standard by 2013. Portfolio Holder agreement is being sought to fund a feasibility study for an area improvement in New Town. Lead: Gareth Mitchell



Indicator	Target 09/10	April - Sept	Comment / Update on progress if reported annually
Life Chances 13 Reduce 'bad debt' evictions	30	10 GREEN	<p>This indicator aims to reduce the number of tenants evicted as a result of debt and not exceed 30 evictions per year by providing pro-active assistance.</p> <p>The position at mid-year is an improvement on the number of evictions for the same period last year which was 13 and are on track to achieve the annual target despite a difficult economic period for tenants.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Lead: Lindsay Barker</p>

6.0 Performance in relation to our 'People'

The Council monitors a number of People related performance measures including sickness absence, those on formal ill health capability, staff with Personal Development Plans, completion of appraisals and the diversity of our workforce. In addition to these quantitative measures our Human Resource Business Partners meet regularly to discuss other more qualitative people related issues and feed this information back to managers and Heads of Services regularly.

Key Performance Areas

The most recent Strategic HR Team meeting discussed a number of strategic and corporate performance areas across all services. The following areas have been highlighted over the last quarter:

Sickness Absence – The rate per employee is almost half a day up on the last quarter, from 8.09 to 8.54. While Swine Flu has not had a significant impact there have been 22 people affected between April and September 2009 and 108.29 working days have been lost. Stats will be monitored as we approach the colder months when flu is usually more prevalent. In Street Services a new sickness reporting procedure has been implemented and a number of employees are being dealt with under the ill health capability procedure. Overall sickness figures have still improved over the last few years from around 12 days down to the current level and this is a closely monitored indicator within all services.

Flexible Working – Service moves to Rowan House and VDI deployment are well under way. Various workshops have been run to ensure effective communications and HR Business Partners continue to provide support but it is inevitable that there will be some disruption in the coming months.

Recruitment – Vacancies above CMG9 continue to be agreed by SMT and a new process ensuring additional scrutiny, HOS sign off and consideration of internal recruitment as a priority is being drawn up and agreed in November. Turnover remains very low at just over 1%.



Learning and Development – Learning Pool has been launched and demonstrated at most GMTs. HR are looking at alternative delivery channels for the CLM, coaching qualifications and leadership development. Mid-year PDPs will be reviewed for any additional training identified since April 09.

Performance and Reward – Unison consultation continues and we are hopeful of a decision to ballot members on this issue. Mid-year reviews should be well underway. A sample audit of approx. 8% of the workforce has been performed to assess how embedded SMART objectives are and the effectiveness / quality of this process. Overall seems positive but business partners are analysing the results and will discuss any areas of concern with the relevant Head of Service. % of SMART objectives will be confirmed after mid-year reviews.

Employee Survey – Electronic and hard copies were issued on 5th November with a 2-week closing date. Minimum response rate of 40% required to obtain data from Best Companies; results available in the New Year. We will undertake benchmarking again and the survey relates to all the public sector and not just councils.

Health & Safety – Key areas of focus include: i) year-long awareness campaign supported by Communications team to raise profile of H&S; ii) Incident stats remain low in this quarter and these will continue to be monitored; iii) an audit of the “5 Cs” (Co-operation, Co-ordination, Communication, Control and Competence) centralised information system used in all council buildings to ensure our staff as well as contractors work safely has been performed and results are to be acted upon; iv) Fire Service inspections at Ascot House and Angel Court. Levels of safety must be maintained during the move to Rowan House over the coming months.

Fundamental Service Reviews – *Housing*: Business Plan complete and going to SOSP in November and Cabinet in December. Implementation plan currently being drafted whilst employees and Unison are kept informed. *Revenues & Benefits*: Review beginning in early November with a projected completion date of end of February 2010.

7.0 Progress of our Strategic Plan Action Plan

The Strategic Plan is focused on providing direction and vision for the aspiration for Colchester as a place for its people. We have developed an action plan to help delivery the strategic improvement priorities set out in the Strategic Plan.

Appendix 2 provides a table with all the current actions and their performance. In summary no actions a currently forecast to fail, 86% of the are currently progressing on target and 14% are being monitored closely.

Some key areas to highlight from each of the priority areas include:

Addressing Older People's Needs

- A younger and older people's resource secured within the Council.
- Agreed a service level agreement with Age Concern to provide benefits take up work with older people.
- A multi-agency 'Older People's Forum' has been established.

Addressing Younger People's Needs

- Regular meetings established between Cabinet and Colchester Young Essex Essex Assembly / Youth Council Members.
- Promotion of the MEND scheme (to reduce childhood obesity) at 6 parent information evenings.
- Revised play area development and action plan agreed

Community Development

- 11 Community champions trained and some have successfully moved into employment already.
- Safer Colchester Pilot has attracted £150,000 of funding and is progressing well.
- Two successful 'Days of Action' held to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- SOS Bus operating Friday and Saturday with 112 volunteers and day-time events.

Congestion Busting

- Personalised travel planning underway in Highwoods.
- North Colchester Integrated travel plan launched.
- A12 Junction work progressing well.
- 2.5km of foot and cycle paths improved through Highwoods residential area.

Enabling Job Creation

- 'Promoting Colchester as a Cultural Hub' event held in October in partnership with Regional Cities East and Centre for Urban Renaissance.
- LAA reward grant being used to increase the level of business start ups.
- Town Centre Project Plan in place and consultation processes in place with local business community.

- Achieved target to increase proportion of working age population qualified to level 3 NVQ or higher
- NVQ level 2 training provided to 75 local residents to help secure employment with Waitrose. A further 100 people will receive this training for possible opportunities with Sainsbury's.

Healthy Living

- Joint post recruited with the NHS to work on Health Priorities in the area.
- Delivery of certain health initiatives, such as body care, tennis coaching and tri golf have had to be revised downwards due to staff vacancy.
- Six new health walks have been introduced against a target of three.
- More than 300 residents have already been advised on better insulation and heating in their homes this year well ahead of the target of 500 for the year.

Homes For All

- Homechoice to be integrated into CSC/Infopoint from November 2009
- 30 properties have been improved through the fuel poverty scheme but timescales have slipped on the request for funding to conduct a survey of properties in New Town, now looks likely in March 2010.
- 46 empty properties have been bought back into use as at September 2009.

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

- Kerbside recycling service extended to all flats.
- Door stepping project commenced in October to increase levels of participating in recycling.
- Monthly 'blitz cleans' taking place along with 'days of action'.
- Free recycling service now provided to all schools.

8.0 Other Performance News

In addition to the key monitoring processes that we have in place with our Performance Indicators and Strategic Plan Action Plan, there are many activities and improvements taking place on an ongoing basis within services and in partnership. A summary of some of these are included below:

Performance - The Council has received confirmation that it has been awarded a level 3 overall for our Use of Resources Assessment - a key part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment Framework introduced in April 2009.

Customer Excellence - We received the Institute of Customer Service's Approved Centre Certificate in September, which recognises the successful implementation and operation of our ICS awards programme.

Customer Excellence - We are providing free, confidential and impartial advice for local businesses in the economic downturn regularly on Tuesdays. This new service is being run together with the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency and Jobcentre Plus.

Customer Excellence - 'Combating the Credit Crunch' – our use of customer data to pinpoint those in most need of our help was recognised in the Cabinet Office's 'Customer Matters'.

External Funding - Our SOS Bus and crime reduction partnership received further recognition at the East Of England Innovations Day in October with their excellent funding bid receiving the full £15,000 requested in the 'Pirate's Cove' competition. We also received the full £10,000 requested for Leadership training from Improvement East.

Place Survey – the final results showed that of the 18 NIs collected via this survey, the Council was above the national average for 8 and below the average for 10 National Indicators.

Partnership Working - Colchester was one of only two districts invited to a GO-East regional workshop to contribute to the DCLG's project on the future direction of the NI set.

Awards and accreditations include:

- Community Stadium being runner-up in the 'community benefit' category of the national RICS awards, having already achieved the RICS 'project of the year' award at the eastern regional finals.
- Communications team has been shortlisted in both the Local Authority PR Team of the Year and the Outstanding in-house PR team in the Goods Communications Awards 2009 and CIPR Pride Awards respectively.
- Lexcel – national practice management accreditation for legal services.
- 'Honourable mention' for the cemetery in Memorial Awareness Board awards.
- Green Flags for Castle Park, High Woods, cemetery and crematorium.
- Park Mark accreditation for all Council owned car parks.
- Sport and Leisure Service were rated as 'Highly Commended' for their Sports Development work following an assessment undertaken in September 09 through the Quest scheme. The rating received was 78%; a 5% increase on our 2007 assessment.

Strategic Plan action plan – 2009-10 actions

Addressing older people's needs

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Survey, analyse and review services using existing insight from partners and top 5 issues from older people's groups	Appropriateness and focus of services tested against the local priorities for older people	Agree with partners our top 5 priorities for action in Colchester Develop action plans for these priorities	May 2009 August 2009	Matt Sterling	The Older People's Forum has agreed 5 priorities and actions to achieve these.	Green
Create a "Younger and Older People's Community Development" resource	Officer capacity to progress the Strategic Plan priorities around younger and older people	Officer capacity within the Life Opportunities Service group secured	March 2009	Gareth Mitchell	Capacity secured in the Community Development team.	Green
Engage Essex County Council and NHS North East Essex as primary partners with strong links to named officers in both organisations	Effective partnership working with the two key statutory agencies for older people's services	Named link officers identified Establish effective communication/joint-working with named link officers	April 2009 March 2010	Gareth Mitchell	Achieved with NHS North East Essex. Link officer identified with ECC, but further work required to establish joint working.	Green
Encourage take up of benefits by older people through Welfare Rights team	Increased incomes for residents aged 60+	Agree Service Level Agreement with Age Concern Help older people access £300,000 extra income	April 2009 March 2010	Matt Sterling	A Service Level Agreement has been signed with Age Concern to provide benefits take-up work with older people. Performance data will be available shortly.	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Set up a quarterly Colchester 'Older People's Forum' that feeds into setting annual key priorities	Clearer understanding of priorities for older people's services	First meeting held Agree work plan for this forum	April 2009 July 2009	Matt Sterling	This multi-agency forum has been established and is establishing shared priorities.	Green
Use the assessment of older people's housing needs to prioritise investment including investigating the potential of a Care Village	Improve the feelings of safety for citizens in later life Promote independence in the home Dispel the myth that people in later life are a burden	Options paper to relevant Portfolio Holder(s) setting out needs, opportunities and constraints	March 2010	Tina Hinson	Cabinet considered and approved project to proceed with disposal of former football ground at Layer Road to enable development of extra-care sheltered housing scheme for older people.	Green

Addressing younger people's needs

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Lead the Colchester Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CCYPSP) in focusing on priority needs	Effective local delivery of children and young people's services	PFH for Performance and Partnerships appointed Chair of the CCYPSP	March 2009	Gareth Mitchell	PFH for Performance and Partnerships chairs the CCYPSP (CCYPSP Board to be replaced with a North East Essex Children's Trust Board late in 2009 – CBC role to be established).	Green
Work with key partners to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children	Safeguarding children is a priority for CBC and our partners when developing joint initiatives	Safeguarding agenda embedded in the work of the CCYPSP	December 2009	Gareth Mitchell	Safeguarding is a standing item on CCYPSP board agendas and attendance from relevant partner agency is established. S11 Audit underway.	Green
	Completion of Section 11 (Children Act 2004)		March 2010			

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Increase collaboration between the council, local schools and their students	Effective communication and partnership working between CBC, local schools and students	Audit of CBC's safeguarding arrangements and resulting action plan. Cabinet to regularly meet Colchester Young Essex Assembly/Youth Council members Agree with CCYPSP partners (including schools) a "Life Opportunities" target around primary school attendance	Ongoing September 2009	Gareth Mitchell/Matt Sterling	Quarterly meetings with Cabinet diarised. South area primary schools agreed to new collaboration on attendance in October – target to cover 09-10 academic year.	Green
Create a "Younger and Older People's Community Development" resource	Officer capacity to progress the Strategic Plan priorities around younger and older people	Officer capacity within the Life Opportunities Service group secured	March 2009	Gareth Mitchell	Capacity secured in the Community Development team.	Green
Assist in enabling a broader provision of voluntary/charitable youth groups/activities based in local communities	More positive activities for young people	Positive activities identified in the Colchester Children and Young People's Plan and CCYPSP Commissioning themes Make Community Development officer capacity available to community/voluntary groups	September 2009 April 2009	Gareth Mitchell	CCYPSP commissioning round completed and services around positive activities commissioned. Capacity secured in the Community Development team.	Green
Actively work with NHS North East Essex Healthy Schools Team to implement	Reduced levels of childhood obesity and teenage pregnancies	Promote anti-obesity programmes such as MEND through Healthy School workers	May 2009	Matt Sterling	Community Development workers have promoted the MEND scheme at 6	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
prevention services targeted at children and families in deprived neighbourhoods.					Parent Information events at Primary schools and with School Nurses. 3 programmes will be delivered this year (one completed, one underway, one planned for January 10).	
Review and deliver the Colchester Play Strategy	Improved access to play opportunities for children and young people	Agree revised Play Area Development Plan and begin implementation of the action plan	March 2010	Bob Penny	Play Area Review incorporating domains to identify deprivation and areas of need completed. Report to be presented to Portfolio Holder in November 09.	Green
Ensure the work on raising skills levels in the Economic Prosperity Strategy is focused on youth skills priorities	Provide younger people with the skills to enable them to compete effectively in changing economic conditions	Work with the Learning Skills Council, North East Essex Education Business Partnership, including Heads of Schools and the Colchester Institute, to help ensure that the 14-19 agenda including the Diploma and Apprenticeship has the appropriate level of business engagement	March 2010	Nigel Myers	Proposed the post of Employer Engagement Manager for Colchester Skills Diploma Area Planning Group; participating in the APG group and in particular, the Creative and Media Diploma element; researching and working to develop the uptake of Apprenticeships by individuals and employers under the newly launched	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
					National Apprenticeship Service.	

Community development

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Develop a Place Shaping strategy to delegate decision making and service delivery to local communities and respond to the opportunities provided by the Sustainable Communities Act 2007	Clear CBC approach to Sustainable Communities Capacity building within Community for delegated decision making	Citizens Panel established Constitution amended to reflect new legislation Paper on strategy to Leadership Strategy adopted	October 09 October 09 June 09 Mar 10	Ian Vipond	Paper on Sustainable Communities Act and Empowerment white paper went to leadership and Council agreed to adopt its objectives. Various elements of the constitution have been amended. 'Citizen Panels' are being used in Task and Finish work but no single 'Panel' has been created.	Green
Work with a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations to deliver the projects in the action plans for the skills and worklessness 'Life Opportunities' targets	Increased skills levels and decreased levels of worklessness amongst residents	Support 11 Learning Champions (ongoing) Agree Grant to Signpost	Ongoing April 2009	Matt Sterling	11 Champions have been recruited and trained. Some have moved into employment but others are being recruited. A grant for Signpost has been approved.	Green
Invest in voluntary sector organisations to direct work at our Strategic Plan priorities	The voluntary sector contributes work to achieve our strategic priorities	Grants agreed Grants awarded Monitor performance	February 2009 April 2009 October 2009 and March 2010	Matt Sterling	6-monthly grant awards were made in April, with a Portfolio Holder decision for the second period just signed. Performance data is currently being	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Work with communities to release resources from a range of sources to deliver tangible community provision using the community facilities audit	More community facilities	Development Team attended fortnightly by Community Development Co-ordinator Community Facilities Audit completed New Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document adopted	Ongoing June 2009 March 2010	Matt Sterling	sought for the first 6-month period. Development Team is being attended regularly; the Community facilities audit is now complete (but with the capacity to be regularly updated); and the revised SPD is about to be adopted.	Green
Identify and work with residents to build their skills to work in their communities	Increased volunteering and pride in communities	Quarterly action planning meetings held with 1 Learning Champions Mini-conference held to support resident NAP members	April 2009 to March 2010 April 2009	Matt Sterling	Regular action planning sessions are being held with the Learning Champions. A mini-conference was held to support NAP panel members in Spring 09.	Green
Engage residents and community groups in target wards to foster increased community spirit and achieve community priorities	Increased pride in communities, increased volunteering, reduced fear of crime	Finalise proposal for a Safer Colchester pilot with Essex Management Board	July 2009	Matt Sterling	This project successfully attracted about £150,000 of external funding. The Co-ordinator is in post and the project started in September.	Green

Community safety

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Co-ordinate a series of 'Days of Action' to tackle crime and	Reduced anti-social behaviour and fear of crime	3 days organised and delivered	Ongoing	Matt Sterling	2 successful days held this year so far with a third planned. The	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods					days have been extended with external funding into the Safer Colchester pilot.	
Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the town centre in the evening and encourage greater use by people of all ages	An increased positive perception of the Town Centre during the evening which generates a diverse range of people who are attracted by a wider range of events/activities on offer. The wider range of town centre users promotes a self-regulating approach to anti-social behaviour which reduces the reliance on enforcement activity	Final report from the Night time Economy Task & Finish Group which includes short, medium and long-term action recommendations to be fed into ongoing work related to the Town Centre. Workshop in May to gain customer insight and engage key stakeholders Peer Research to gain customer insight	Update Report by August 09 Workshop in May 09 Peer Research in November & December 09 Final Report by end March 2010	Beverley Jones	Workshop organised in May 09 with insight, actions and recommendations captured and provided as part of the update report in August 09. Peer Research questionnaire designed and subject to continuing support from Elected Members will commence in November 09. A brief for commissioning the Best Practice Research has been written and we are starting discussions with University of Essex. Further consultation to be carried out by Colchester Police during a series of evenings. This is also due to commence prior to Christmas.	Green
Support the	Financial sustainability	Open Road operate	Ongoing	Matt Sterling	The SOS Bus now	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
development and extension of the SOS and Community Bus Project	for the SOS Bus	the Bus Friday and Saturday evenings			operates Friday and Saturday evenings with 112 volunteers and has a wide range of day-time bookings.	
Together with our partners enable communities to challenge anti-social behaviour and develop Neighbourhood Action Panels to ensure community issues are being actioned and resolved	Reduced anti-social behaviour and improved responsiveness by Police, CBC and ECC	CDRP funding for bus performance managed 15 panels serviced on a monthly or bi-monthly basis Mini-conference for participants held Border changes implemented	October 2009 and March 2010 Ongoing April 2009 July 2009	Matt Sterling	15 Panels are being serviced throughout the borough. A mini-conference was held in the spring, and border changes implemented during the summer 09.	Green

Congestion busting

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Devise planning policy which ensures new developments incorporate walking, cycle routes and public transport services at the initial planning stages	Planning documents which articulate our plans and can be used to influence others including our partners, the private sector (developers) and funding bodies such as the HGP, EERA, EEDA Increase funding for transportation measures to address congestion through behavioural change.	Updated Transport Strategy Document for Colchester for inclusion in LTP3. Transportation policies included within Development Control Policies and land for transport infrastructure identified in the Site Allocations	December 2009	Paul Wilkinson	Development Control Policies DPD has been published and is due to be submitted in November.	Green
Set up a travel	Increase the number of	Residential	June 2009	Paul	Personalised travel	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
behavioural change programme working with existing communities	people using alternative methods of travel to access the station, the town centre, schools and places of employment.	Sign contract with "personalised travel" planning company. Introduce travel planning in the High Woods area linked to the Cycling Town initiative	2009/10	Wilkinson Nigel Myers Nigel Myers	planning underway in Highwoods. North Colchester Integrated Travel Plan launched and continued engagement in reducing vehicle congestion in area through employer-engagement events.	Green
Work in partnership to release land and deliver the A12 junction, the Northern Approaches Road and the Busway.	Provide new access and release land for housing and economic development through delivery of the A12 Junction and relieve congestion around the North Station area.	Education Workshop held with ECC and partners to identify priorities and actions for education, residential and business Business Approval of the Severalls Travel Plan CIF2 funding awarded Renegotiation of Severalls s106 Notice served on agricultural tenant and Land released for construction of the infrastructure	April 2009 March 2010 July 2009	Karen Syrett / Fiona Duhamel	Funding agreed. Work to start on site imminently.	Green
Consider a planning application and make available land to allow delivery of Park and Ride at North	Increase the attractiveness of the town centre as a place to live, work, shop and visit. Reduce greenhouse	Location and site included in LDF Site Allocation document Provide support to ECC in order to secure	November 2009 March 2010	Karen Syrett / Fiona Duhamel	Park and Ride site shown on the Proposals Map published in Sept. 09. Site Allocations DPD due to be submitted to	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Colchester	gasses produced by transport	funding			PINS in November.	
Upgrade existing and construct new cycle routes using newly acquired Cycling Town status and improve cycle security at rail stations to encourage residents to use bikes/public transport	Increase the levels of people cycling. Reduce greenhouse gasses produced by transport	1.5km of Foot and Cycle paths improved across High Woods Country Park. 2.5km of foot and cycle paths improved through the Highwoods residential area. Launch the improved High Woods Town Centre to Community Stadium Route	March 2010 June 2009 June 2009	Paul Wilkinson	Complete. Complete. North Station to stadium route launched.	Green Green Amber
Commence the changes to the town centre to reduce traffic and improve reliability of the bus operation	Increase the operational reliability of passenger transport especially in the town centre.	Improve the routes linking Greenstead to the Hythe Station area Reach agreement between CBC and ECC on key fundamentals to be agreed for delivery. Agree a programme of delivery for Town Centre Transport Project Deliver a number of "quick wins" to improve public realm and transport	March 2010 April 2009 May 2009 December 2009	Paul Wilkinson / Fiona Duhamel	Underway. Agreed. Good progress – steering group established looking at Town centre as a whole – delivery programme not yet completed. Fire Office will be completed Dec 09. Continue to work with	Green Green Amber Amber

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Improve the environments in and around Colchester's stations, increase the length of platforms at the Hythe station to allow for improved train operation and approve a pilot Travel Plan for Colchester Station	Increase the number of people using alternative methods of travel to access the station and places of employment. Reduce greenhouse gasses produced by transport	Lengthened platforms at the Hythe Improved environment to the Hythe Station Submit Pilot Station travel plan to ATOC. Set up governance arrangements with Partners Improve and increase level of cycle parking at North Station	September 2009 September 2009 May 2009 May 2009	Fiona Duhamel	Completed. Complete except hoardings. Pilot Station Travel Plan submitted to ATOC. Part of Travel Plan.	Green Amber Green Green
Work with Essex County Council to deliver acceptable sustainable changes to the A133	Provide new access and release land for housing and economic development through delivery of the A12 Junction and relieve congestion around the North Station area.	Modifications to the Albert, Colne Bank and Essex Hall Roundabout	April 2009	Paul Wilkinson	Short term measures completed.	Green
LDF Preparation; Site Allocations DPD – submission November 2009, examination March 2010 and adoption August 2010.	Spatial planning plays a central role in the overall task of place shaping and in the delivery of land uses and associated activities.	Site Allocations DPD Dev Policies DPD	Submission November 2009	Karen Syrett	Site Allocations DPD – submission November 2009, examination March 2010 and adoption August 2010.	Green
Development Policies DPD - submission November 2009,		NS Masterplan Nrth Col. Masterplan	April 2010 April 2010		Development Policies DPD - submission November 2009,	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
examination June 2010 and adoption November 2010.		Community Facilities SPD	September 2009		examination June 2010 and adoption November 2010.	Green
Supplementary Planning Documents due for adoption 2009 – 11.		Affordable Housing SPD Backland Dev SPD	September 2009		Supplementary Planning Documents due for adoption 2009 – 11.	
Complete East Transit corridor Feasibility Study	Identification of feasible options to deliver improved connections between East Colchester and Town Centre	Feasibility Study Report to allow consideration of options	April 2009	Paul Wilkinson / Fiona Duhamel	Initial study complete.	Green

Enabling job creation

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Exploit Colchester's strategic location between London, Stansted and the Haven Gateway ports to promote international trade, secure inward investment and major infrastructure projects	Create 10 new jobs through Foreign Direct Investment Refresh 'Choose Colchester' inward investment promotion pack Launch tactical campaign directed at 200 key relocation decision makers in the UK Lobby East of England International to shortlist Colchester for all appropriate foreign direct investment enquiries Use culture led place marketing to attract	LAA2 Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-2010 National, regional and local targeted publicity	March 2010	Nigel Myers	Working on 2 active leads with East of England International to secure FDI. Campaign refresh and launch planned for Spring 2010. Continue to actively lobby EEI which has resulted in active leads. In partnership with Regional Cities East (RCE) and the Centre for Urban for Urban Renaissance (CURE) staging an event	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Ensure the availability of sufficient quality employment land via our planning process to meet the needs of our residents	inward investment	LDF Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-2010	March 2010	Nigel Myers	aimed at public and private sector 'Promoting Colchester as a Cultural Hub' on 8 October. Working towards the inclusion of Stane Park (7 ha.) as a high quality site; now included as an extension of the Stanway Strategic Employment Zone. Also, influenced the LDF Core Strategy to bring forward sustainable rural development sites, now included in the Site Allocations Submission Document. Working with one landowner to bring forward 4 redundant rural units into commercial use.	Green
Use planning gain and other funding streams to raise the number of apprenticeships and increase the take up of training and employment opportunities	Adoption of Supplementary Planning Gain proposal to utilise S.106 funding for the provision of training and apprenticeships Create in partnership with the North East Essex Education	LAA2 Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-2010	March 2010	Nigel Myers	Draft SPD presented to Development Team and now being submitted to Spatial Policy as an additional and necessary key document. Decision on adoption likely by November 2009.	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Increase incubation and grow-on space to sustain business growth	Secure funding and management arrangements for incubation and grow on space in North Colchester Influence and provide policy expertise for the development of additional incubation and grow on space at other sites such as Stane Park	LAA2 Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-2010	March 2010	Nigel Myers	Funding secured for North Colchester Business Incubation Centre (BIC) through attraction of a higher, later bidder; planning application submitted with decision due in December. Negotiations for agreement of lease for the management of the North Colchester BIC are ongoing but must be completed before the construction contract is awarded. Stane Park outline planning contains requirement to build a business incubator. Advice and input being given on the grow-on space which	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09 RAG
<p>Support the creation of new businesses by working in partnership with other agencies nationally and regionally to market Colchester as a preferred business location</p>	<p>Actively support campaigns such as National Enterprise Week in November 2009 to encourage the growth of self employment and business start up activity Utilise LAA1 Reward Grant and partner contributions to increase the level of business start up particularly from those who are currently under represented in the business community Promote Colchester through targeted trade publications using editorial rather than paid for advertising</p>	<p>LAA2 Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-2010</p>	<p>December 2010</p>	<p>Nigel Myers</p>	<p>will be the Creative Hub. Heads of Terms agreed with developer of Cultural Quarter to provide 7,500sq ft for Creative Hub facility and a further 12,000sq ft lettable space within Phase 1 of the Cultural Quarter. Support to be provided to Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) for the National Enterprise Week in November 2009 and the 'Grow your own business and prosper' event on 8 October. LAA Reward Grant is being deployed in partnership with COLBEA to increase the level of start ups – Service Level Agreement targets are currently being exceeded. Successfully placed several free editorial articles in key local, regional and national</p>

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Sustain and where possible strengthen the independent retail sector within the retail offering of the borough	<p>Work with the Colchester Town Centre Business Planning Group to agree and implement projects in the town centre which will increase footfall and retail expenditure</p> <p>Identify and prioritise opportunities outside of the town centre for strengthening the retail offer</p> <p>Use Festival to improve Colchester's profile as a destination for visitors and businesses</p> <p>Contribution to other Town Centre land place marketing initiatives to improve sense of place eg night time economy</p>	<p>Programme of coordinated events including the Christmas Lights and Colchester in Bloom</p> <p>Deliver Year 1 actions from the festival development strategy and evaluate and report findings</p> <p>Set of principles and priorities for the Town Centre agreed and action plans in place to address key issues and opportunities</p> <p>Investigation into the benefits of an Area action plan for the Town Centre</p>	January 2010	Nigel Myers/Fiona Duhamel	<p>Project plan agreed and implemented by the Colchester Town Centre Business Group to coordinate Christmas activities</p> <p>Project plan and partnership involving cultural providers, community groups and business community delivering GiFT. Full evaluation frame work in place to measure economic as well as social impact, and review strategy supported by Colchester2020 funding.</p> <p>Principles and priorities paper drafted for 5 a side and Renaissance Partnership Board.</p> <p>Town Centre Project Plan in place.</p> <p>Mechanisms in place to ensure the business community can be consulted on future</p>	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
<p>Raise the skill levels of the local workforce to obtain better paid employment by innovative collaboration with employers, educational institutions and other key partners</p>	<p>Work with LAA partners to increase the proportion of the working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher by 1%</p> <p>Use s.106 funding to provide NVQ 2 training for up to 150 residents to secure employment with Sainsbury's and Waitrose</p> <p>Effectively signpost in collaboration with partner organisations skills and employment opportunities in the borough</p> <p>Work with the North East Essex Education Business Partnership, including Heads of Schools and the Colchester Institute, to help ensure that the 14-19 agenda including the Diploma and Apprenticeship has the appropriate level of business engagement</p> <p>Implement the Colchester</p>	<p>LAA2 Economic Prosperity Strategy 2007-201</p>	<p>November 2010</p>	<p>Nigel Myers</p>	<p>Target has been achieved.</p> <p>NVQ Level 2 training has been provided to 75 local residents to help secure employment with Waitrose. NVQ Level 2 training for 100 local residents will be provided to help secure employment with Sainsbury's; development forecast to commence on-site December 2009 with pre-meetings to ensure delivery of full pre-employment and training scheme to coincide with opening in late 2010.</p> <p>Re-branding of "Services for the Unemployed Committee" as "Colchester Works!" and formal launch and website under</p>	<p>Green</p>

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
	internship/company placement scheme with the University of Essex.				development. Providing employer contact information for key sectors to APG Employer Engagement Manager and planning some key sector events, including Financial, Construction, Creative and Media, Social Care and Retail. CBC support in 2009 enabled the University of Essex/Shell Step Programme to successfully place 15 graduates in local businesses	

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Healthy living

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Work with a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations to deliver the projects in the action plans for the Local Area Agreement and 'Life Opportunities' targets on childhood obesity, smoking and teenage pregnancy	Reduced levels of childhood obesity, smoking, and teenage pregnancies	Agree Joint Appointment with NHS NEE Review of action plans with NHS NEE With PSP partners, commission projects to contribute to this work using PRG funding	May 2009 July 2009 April 2009	Matt Sterling	Joint post recruited and has started work. Initial work plan agreed with NHS NEE. Projects commissioned using PRG funding (MEND, additional dietician capacity).	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Co-ordinate the Lottery-funded MEND (childhood obesity) scheme	Increased awareness of healthy eating and exercise	Secure continuation funding	June 2009	Matt Sterling	Continuation funding for 09-11 secured from the Local Area Agreement.	Green
Deliver the NHS North East Essex collaboration plan for healthy lifestyles and attract funding for new health initiatives	More people leading healthy, active lifestyles, reduced levels of childhood obesity and more adults participating in sport	Deliver Body care Roadshows in 10 schools	March 2010	Simon Grady	<i>Targets revised downwards in-year due to staff vacancy in service.</i> By year-end Body care Roadshows will have been delivered in 6 schools.	Amber
		Deliver sports coaching in 20 schools	March 2010		By year-end tennis coaching will have been provided in 12 schools, Tri Golf in 4 schools, and volleyball coaching in one school.	Amber
		Introduce 3 new health walks	September 2009		New health walks have been introduced in Aldham, Dedham, Fordham, Gt Tey, Wivenhoe and Layer Breton.	Green
Give advice to residents on accessing grants to better insulate their homes	Warmer homes and reduced fuel bills for residents aged 60+	Provide 4-day-per-week service Advise 500 people on better insulating and heating their homes	Ongoing March 2010	Matt Sterling	4-day per week service launched and advising residents throughout the borough. 300+ residents advised so far this year.	Green
Deliver the NHS-funded fuel poverty	Improved healthiness amongst target group	Follow-up contact made with patients	April 2009	Matt Sterling	Targeted Warm Homes 2 scheme	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Scheme ('Warm Homes 2')		who have not responded Fund heating and insulating work in 15 homes Report on pilot scheme outcomes	January 2010 January 2010		launched; letters sent to over 200 residents; reminders sent to non-responders; on track to achieve the outcomes target by Jan 10.	
Deliver the Community Sport Network action plan and the Development Plan for Sport	More people leading healthy, active lifestyles, reduced levels of childhood obesity and more adults participating in sport External investment in sports provision in Colchester	Launch new "Active Colchester" website to incorporate all local opportunities provided by CBC and its partners New borough-wide development plan produced including local priorities for sport and leisure provision	June 2009 September 2009	Simon Grady	Decision made to develop this website in conjunction with the CBC website refresh. Will be achieved by March 2010 Development Plan being produced in context of changing external environment for sport and leisure and availability of S106 funding.	Amber Amber
Work with partners to deliver the London 2012 Partnership Plan	More people leading healthy, active lifestyles, reduced levels of childhood obesity and more adults participating in sport	Co-ordinate the Colchester 'offer' to Olympic and Paralympic Committees to maximise the chances of securing a pre games training or preparation camp in the Borough	Ongoing	Simon Grady	Positive links made with India and Barbados, new partners brought onto the Partnership.	Green

Homes for all

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescale	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Co-ordinate, provide	More people are	Recommendations	March 2010	Peter	Transformational	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescale	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
and promote an advice service with partners to make sure people get all the help they need to remain in their own homes.	able to remain in their own homes	made as part of Housing Services Review.		McDonagh	service opportunities identified from Housing Review form basis for Business Case to December Cabinet. Phased implementation from January 2010.	
		Investigate opportunities that arise from introduction of 'Public Sector village'.			"Homechoice" will be integrated into the CSC/Infopoint Colchester from November 2009.	
		Reduction in homelessness applications. Increase in homelessness prevention figures.			There has been a reduction in homelessness applications, the number of households accepted as homeless and the number of households in temporary accommodation compared with the same quarter in 2008.	
		Decrease in the use of temporary accommodation.				
Lead a review of private and publicly owned sites including rural exception sites to deliver new affordable housing across the borough.	Land assets are used efficiently to maximise the delivery of affordable housing. Public sector land is made available for affordable housing.	Identify ownership of land 2009/2010.	March 2010	Tina Hinson / Karen Syrett	Review of Council owned land on target to be completed by end of 2009/2010.	Green
Implement Colchester's Local	The Planning system is used	Draft policy completed March 09.	October 2009	Karen Syrett	Draft policy completed by target date.	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescale	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Development Framework, including a robust Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document to seek 35% of all new homes to be affordable on sites with 3 or more homes in rural areas and 10 or more homes in urban areas.	effectively to deliver safe, secure, decent and affordable homes.	Consultation completed June 09. Final document approved October 09.			Consultation completed by target date. Slippage on approval of final document due to the complexities of setting a contribution level that is viable in current housing market. Recommend date is changed to March 2010.	
Adopt a site allocations development plan document to ensure a 15 year rolling supply of housing sites.	The Planning system is used effectively to deliver safe, secure, decent and affordable homes.	Submission of DPD November 2009. DPD adopted and published August 2010.	August 2010	Karen Syrett	On target to be submitted November 2009.	Green
Ensure that all Council homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.	Ensure that all Council homes meet the Decent Homes Standard by December 2012.	To complete the procurement and restart the Decent Homes programme.	October 2009	Mike Scarlett	On target – EU Procurement process has been completed. Cabinet are due to award the contract in October, to restart the Decent Homes programme.	Green
Identify private properties to target for improvement to the Decent Homes standard and seek external funding to deliver.	Prioritized risk based inspection of all properties in New Town with completed report.	A detailed survey of properties in the New Town area to be completed. Recommendations for action reported to Portfolio Holder. Investigate possible	Inspections completed October 2009 Final report December 2009	Peter McDonagh	Timescales have slipped, but Cabinet will consider at its 2 December Meeting, the request for funding to conduct the survey of properties in New Town. If successful, the	Amber

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescale	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Encourage the return of empty properties to use.	A reduction in the number of properties on the council tax register as being empty over 6 months in the borough.	sources of additional / external funding. Work with Fuel Poverty Officer to identify properties for work that would make them "decent".	March 2010	Peter McDonagh	survey will be completed by end of March 2010, producing a report of findings with recommendations. In the meantime, a total of 30 properties have been identified that have been improved through the Fuel Poverty scheme (Warm Homes 2) and which may contribute to this target.	Green
		Rewrite and implement 'Empty Homes Strategy' prioritising action on the longest standing empty properties first. Target: 80 empty properties bought back into use.			Draft revised Empty Property Strategy due December 2009. Consultation will take place after that date with the final report planned for March 2010. As at 30 September 2009 46 empty properties had been returned to use.	

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Reduce, reuse, recycle						
Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Prepare an options appraisal to identify potential future service delivery	Further exploration of the options identified within the appraisal	The establishment of a Member Task and Finish group through the Policy Review and Development Panel Recommendations to Cabinet on the option	Task and Finish group to commence April 2009 and report back to Policy Panel October 2009	Chris Dowsing	The Task and Finish Group is established and has narrowed down the options from 20 to 4. After discussion with Cabinet the timetable has changed to allow for a	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
		to be taken forward	Recommendations to Cabinet from panel by December 2009		public consultation to take place around the four potential options including an open public meeting to be held 1 December. The Task and Finish group will now report its findings to the Policy Panel 1 March 2010.	
Extend the kerbside recycling service to all flats	Extended recycling facilities to residents living in flats	Increased levels of recycling helping to achieve the Councils recycling targets. Greater participation and levels of satisfaction	Procurement of materials from April 2009 with installation and extended service Summer 2009	Dave McManus	Extension of service now complete but ongoing for new developments. All residents in flats now have facilities in place.	Green
Carry out education and information programmes that persuades and encourages residents to reduce their waste and recycle all materials	An increase in waste minimisation, reuse and participation in the Council's recycling services	Increased levels of participation in the Council's kerbside recycling collection service Increased levels of recycling to meet LAA2 targets Reduction in the overall levels of waste arisings going to landfill	Door steppers project to commence May 2009	Chris Dowsing	The Council has let a contract to carry out the Door steppers project. This commenced on 7 September with participation monitoring and door-stepping will commence on 14 October. The start date for the project was amended to account for the return of the student population as they constitute a large population in the areas being door -stepped.	Green
Carry out cleaning blitzes and increase visibility of street	Highly visible street cleaning service with in depth cleansing	Increased levels of street cleaning on specified days.	Commenced January 2009.	Dave McManus	Monthly programmed blitz cleans taking place and ongoing. Days of	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
based staff and resources	operation. Additional resources targeting areas where routing cleaning is inadequate	Involvement of ward members and residents groups Increased customer satisfaction	Programme currently in place until December 2009		action are a supplement to this and now taking part in Safer Colchester project.	
Investigate a food waste collection service	Food waste collections fully investigated and understood as part of an effective waste and recycling collection scheme	The collection of food waste will be investigated further by the Member Task and Finish group set up to look at the options in more detail.	Task and Finish group to commence April 2009 and report back to Policy Panel October 2009	Chris Dowsing	The Task and Finish group has taken account of food waste collections as part of its overall considerations. Each of the four options being taken forward for consultation involves the separate weekly collection of food waste.	Green
Provide a free recycling service to all Schools	Schools and young people are recycling more in conjunction with the Eco schools programme	The collection of recycled materials from schools Increased educational work and behavioural changes	A free recycling service is now offered to all schools who sign up to CBC as customers for residual waste. The extension to the flat recycling scheme is envisaged to provide the capacity to enhance this service	Dave McManus	Complete – all schools have access to free service.	Green
Investigate the potential benefits to	The potential benefits of an Inter	An agreement is reached with Essex	Meetings with Essex County	Chris Dowsing	Further consideration on the benefits of	Green

Action	Outcome	Outputs	Timescales	GMT lead	Update as at Sept 09	RAG
Colchester of an Inter Authority Agreement with Essex County Council	Authority Agreement with Essex County Council are explored through the East Area Waste Management Joint Committee and through 1-2-1 discussions with Essex County Council.	County Council to enter into or not an inter authority agreement.	<p>Council will take place in March 2009.</p> <p>If an agreement is reached the decision will go forward to Cabinet.</p>		entering into an inter-authority agreement with ECC was undertaken with the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships in negotiation with ECC. It was decided that the benefits did not outweigh CBC's objections to the wider joint municipal waste strategy and the county wide PFI contract and as such an inter-authority agreement was not entered into.	
Work with voluntary and charitable organisations to promote and enable the reuse of a range of household items and materials	More material is taken from the waste stream and diverted for reuse rather than being sent to landfill	Support is provided by the Council to voluntary and charities willing to engage in the reuse of materials	<p>This will be an ongoing engagement with these groups to take advantage of opportunities as they arise</p>	Chris Dowsing	<p>The Council has supported interested groups as opportunities have arisen including support for schools and community groups. The Council also publicises the benefits of reuse to the wider community.</p>	Green



Cabinet

27 January 2010

Item
10(i)

Report of	Head of Corporate Management	Author	Richard Clifford
Title	Councillor Development		☎ 507832
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report concerns the introduction of a Councillor Development Policy, Councillor roles and a Councillor Self Assessment process

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the Councillor Development Policy at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To approve the Councillor Roles at Appendix 2.
- 1.3 To agree the introduction of a Councillor self assessment process as proposed at paragraph's 4.9 – 4.12.
- 1.4. To recommend to Council the adoption of the Councillor Development Policy and Councillor Roles.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The proposals in this report are aimed at improving the Council's Councillor learning and development procedures so that Councillor development is delivered in a more consistent and coherent way and so that the opportunities provided meet the requirements of Councillors.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to obtaining Member Charter status. Each of the political groups has indicated its support to the principle of seeking Charter status. The proposals in this report are consistent with good practice elsewhere and are in line with the requirements for Charter Status. Charter status is externally validated recognition of good practice in member development issues and as such would be a significant asset to the Council in external assessments of the Council.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not to agree a Councillor Development Policy and Councillor Roles and not to agree a Councillor Self Assessment process. However, this would mean that it would be unlikely that the Council would achieve Member Charter Status.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The role of a local councillor is a complex one. In order to support councillors in this role, the Council provides training on relevant knowledge and skills. Training and development is provided in-house on a range of core subjects such as planning and licensing, scrutiny and the Code of Conduct. Skills based training is also offered. In addition to the training

and development offered in house, each political group has a budget which can be used to fund external training and development.

- 4.2 The Council is seeking to improve its processes and procedures in respect of Councillor training and development. This is to ensure the relevance of the training and development opportunities provided to Councillors and to ensure that the training and development provided meets the needs of Councillors and contributes to the Council's strategic objectives. It will also help ensure that best value is obtained from the Councillor Development budget.

Councillor Development Policy

- 4.3 The introduction of a Councillor Development policy is intended to establish a clearer, consistent and more structured approach to Councillor development. The draft Councillor Development policy is at appendix 1. The aim of the policy is to articulate the Council's commitment to councillor development, to set out the general principles that apply to councillor development and to define the roles and responsibilities of councillors and officers.
- 4.4 The key element of the Councillor Development policy is the introduction of a learning and development plan. This will identify the key development priorities for Councillors, based on the assessment of individual, group and corporate requirements. It will link to the Council's strategic priorities and will provide the foundation for the training and development events funded by the Councillor training budget.
- 4.5 The Councillor Development policy also sets out the Council's policy for attendance at the IDEA's Leadership Academy. The policy encourages the attendance at Leadership Academy of cabinet members and Group Leaders. In view of the cost of places at Leadership Academy only one place per year can be guaranteed funding from the Council's core training budget and it is proposed that this place be nominated by the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Role Profiles

- 4.6 The Council has not previously sought to define the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the various positions Councillors may hold. However, given the emphasis on the role of the Councillor as community champion in recent government legislation, it seems appropriate to seek formally set out the roles and responsibilities.
- 4.7 Councillor role profiles set out the roles and responsibilities of the various positions held by Councillors and identify the skills needed for the role. They are intended as a guide, rather than being prescriptive. Role profiles will be of particular value in helping Councillors assess their training and development needs, especially when they have taken on a new role. They will also have a wider use, for instance in the recruitment of candidates for election. Profiles for the following roles are at Appendix 2:-
- Ward Councillor;
 - Cabinet Member;
 - Leader of the Council;
 - Deputy Leader of the Council;
 - Leader of Opposition Group;
 - Shadow Cabinet member;
 - Chairman of Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
 - Chairman of Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel

- Chairman of Policy Review and Development Panel;;
- Chairman of Planning Committee;
- Chairman of Licensing Committee.

4.8 It is intended that the role profiles be kept under review and be adapted as roles and responsibilities change.

Assessment of Councillor Learning and Development Needs

4.9 In order to ensure that the Council provides learning and development opportunities that meet Councillors needs, a system of assessment of Councillor training and development needs is proposed.

4.10 It is proposed that Councillors be invited to complete an assessment form. The form builds upon that developed in the Councillor Development Centre project, but also offers more scope for open comment rather than simply ticking boxes. A copy of the form is at Appendix 3. The form is made up of three elements.

- Part A: A review of the past twelve months identifying successes and areas for development, using the IDEA's political skills framework as a guide;
- Part B: Identifying ambitions and future work plans in the role as a Councillor;
- Part C: Identifying training and developments to address the needs identified in the Parts A and B of the form.

The form can be completed either as a self assessment or in discussion with a colleague. There is no obligation to disclose the first two parts of the form. The third part of the form would be forwarded to either the relevant development representative or Democratic Services. The results from this process would be fed into the development of the annual learning and development plan. Whilst there is no guarantee that all needs identified from this process will be met, it will enable the Council to ensure that the opportunities it provides are relevant to councillors needs.

4.11 A slightly different form will be used for Cabinet members (appendix 4) due to the fact that the political skills framework on which the form is built contains additional skill competencies for Cabinet members.

4.12 It is proposed that Councillors be invited to complete the assessment form on an annual basis, early in the municipal year.

5. Proposals

5.1 It is proposed that Cabinet-

- Approve and adopt the Councillor Development Policy at appendix 1;
- Approve and adopt the Councillor role profiles to Cabinet at appendix 2;
- Approve the Councillor Self Assessment process outlined above.

6. Strategic Plan References

6.1 There are no direct references to the Strategic Plan but the introduction of an improved system of identifying councillors learning and development needs should help the Council meet the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications. No additional expenditure is proposed. The proposals outlined in this report are designed to ensure the best value is obtained from the existing councillor training budget and from the officer resource supporting Councillor development. The costs of administering the self assessment process will be met from existing budgets.

8 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

8. The Councillor Development Policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, which can be accessed via the link below.

http://www.colchester.gov.uk/servedoc.asp?filename=member_development_policy_EIA_2.doc

9. Other Standard References

- 91 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations; or community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Councillor Development Policy

Introduction

Colchester Borough Council is committed to supporting local councillors in carrying out their roles as democratically elected representatives of the community and community leaders, and recognises the need to provide appropriate training, learning and development opportunities to help councillors undertake these roles.

Scope and Purpose

1.1 This policy applies to all Councillors.

1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to set out the Council's commitment to provide appropriate learning and development opportunities for all councillors, to enable them to acquire the knowledge and skills they require to be effective across all their roles and to provide a structured and planned approach to learning and development activities.

1.3 The Council recognises that continuing investment and commitment to Councillor's learning and development is integral to achieving the Council's strategic objectives and the delivery of high quality services.

Key Principles

Equality of Access and Opportunities

2.1 All Councillors will have equal access to and participation in learning and development opportunities, subject to their personal needs, taking into account those with work or family commitments.

2.2 Councillors will have the opportunity to benefit from training and development opportunities, regardless of disability, race, national ethnic or social origin, sexuality, age or religion.

Councillor-led Approach

2.3 The Council's approach to learning and development will be Councillor-led with representatives from all political groups invited to participate in the planning, delivery and evaluation of Councillor development activities. Councillors are encouraged to identify their own development needs and participate fully in learning and development events.

Resources

2.4 The Council will allocate a budget for Councillor learning and development. The Member Development Group will regularly review the level and allocation of Councillor learning and development budget.

2.5 Councillor entitlements to travel and subsistence for attendance at learning and development events is stated in the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Identifying Learning and Development Needs

3.1 To support the Council strategic priorities there will be a process for identifying learning and development needs at all levels:-

- Individual
- Political Groups
- Corporate/Constitutional

3.2 To identify training and development needs at an individual level, every Councillor will be offered the opportunity to complete an assessment of their individual development needs on an annual basis.

3.3 Identification of learning and development needs at political group level will be through the political group representatives on the member development group.

3.4 Identification of learning and development needs at a corporate or constitutional level will be thorough the Council's business planning processes, including the Leadership Team.

3.5 The Council will prepare a Plan to meet the learning and development needs identified. This shall be a rolling programme which will bring together different levels of needs – individual, group and corporate. The Member Development Group will have responsibility for the preparation of the Learning and Development Plan.

Delivery of Activities

4.1 The Council will seek to use a wide range of methods to provide Councillors with the opportunities to meet identified learning and development needs.

4.2 Information about learning and development events will be published well in advance and appropriately publicised.

Evaluation

5.1 The Council will ensure that learning and development is evaluated in benefits and impacts, including value for money. This will include both immediate review of individual learning and development activity and high level evaluation of how learning and development has contributed to the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.

Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Individual Members are responsible for identifying their learning and development needs and for seeking opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their potential. They are responsible for sharing knowledge and skills amongst other members.

6.2 The Member Development Group will be responsible for helping Councillors identify and find opportunities to meet their learning and development needs, and for the preparation of the Learning and Development Plan. The Group will also monitoring the core councillor training budget , overseeing the evaluation of learning and development and monitoring the application of this policy.

6.3 The day to day management of appropriate councillor learning and development will be the responsibility of Democratic Services and a named officer will be identified with responsibility for councillor learning and development.

Leadership Academy

7.1 The Council is committed to the development of the leadership of the Council and all members of the Cabinet and Group Leaders are encouraged to attend the IDEA's Leadership Academy. The Council will fund one place, at Leadership Academy each year from the core councillor training budget. The place will be allocated by the Leader of the Council.

WARD COUNCILLOR**Role and Responsibilities****Leadership within the Community**

- To undertake case work for constituents and act as an advocate in resolving concerns or grievances;
- To communicate with local people and answer enquiries:
 - about decisions that affect them,
 - about opportunities in the community,
 - regarding the rights of constituents within Colchester,
 - as to why decisions are made;
- To lead and champion the interests of the local community and effectively represent the interests of the Ward and its constituents;
- To meet and liaise regularly with local interested parties and involve and consult them on key Council decisions;
- To support and promote citizenship locally and encourage the community to participate in the governance of the area;

Representation

- To inform the debate at Full Council meetings and contribute to the effectiveness of the Council meeting;
- To contribute to the formation and scrutiny of the Authority's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery;
- To contribute to the scrutiny of decision making and review of the policies and services of the council;
- To represent the authority to the community and the community to the council;
- To develop and maintain a knowledge of the Council and develop working relationships with its officers;
- To participate in the activities of any political group of which the councillor is a member;
- To represent the council on outside bodies and to participate effectively in the appointed role and, where appropriate, to represent those bodies within Colchester and elsewhere.

Other

- To fulfil the legal and local requirements placed on an elected member, in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

Skills**Leadership**

- Ability to lead and champion the interests of the local community.

Chairing

- Ability to chair meetings and facilitate discussions.

Organisational Skills

- Manage casework;
- Basic administration skills.

Other skills

- Ability to use information technology to communicate through Council systems e.g. e-mails, accessing agenda, minutes, reports, intranet, internet etc.;
- Community engagement skills;
- Influencing and persuading;
- Managing conflict and mediation skills

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Ability to develop relationships with key officers and partner agencies;
- Ability to build effective relationships with all sections of the community so as to be able to represent their needs to the Council.

Communication

- Ability to deal with the media, whilst being able to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented;
- Ability to communicate with a range of audiences;
- Active listening and questioning skills;
- Presentation skills;
- Public speaking.

Knowledge

- Understanding of how the Council works;
- Knowledge of the Council structure, key contact officers and services procedures;
- Knowledge of the political decision making structures;
- Understanding of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, ethics and standards and the role of the Standards Committee;
- Understanding of national policies and their impact on the Council;
- Knowledge of the strategic objectives and key policies of the Council;
- Understanding of legislation and Council policies to which Members must adhere (e.g. Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Equality and Diversity);
- Basic understanding of local government finances and audit processes;
- Knowledge of the Councils complaints procedure;
- For Members who sit on quasi-judicial panels, knowledge of legislation and policy relating to planning, licensing, and appeals is required and an understanding of the principles and importance of making rational decisions

CABINET MEMBER

Role and Responsibilities

- To take decisions on those matters within the terms of reference of their Portfolio, as set out in the Scheme of Delegation, seeking advice from Heads of Service as appropriate;
- To take personal responsibility, and to be held accountable, for any decisions taken, and to share with the appropriate Service Managers responsibility for the performance of services within their portfolio;
- To respond to or deal with any issues arising at Council meetings relating to their portfolio;
- To act as spokesperson within and outside the authority on those services and functions within their portfolio;
- To share the collective responsibility for decisions taken by the cabinet;
- To act as an advocate for the Council within the Authority and outside;
- To provide regular reports on progress and to undertake consultation on decisions as required;
- To attend Scrutiny and Policy Panels to discuss decisions taken or support the policy formulation process;
- To attend relevant informal Cabinet meetings and meetings of the Leadership Team;
- To represent the Council on outside bodies;
- To represent the Council and contribute the Colchester perspective on national, regional and sub regional bodies;
- To consult interested parties, ward councillors and citizens as part of the development and review of policy;
- As part of the cabinet to be involved in:
 - providing support to all councillors to help them develop constructive roles as Ward Members,
 - the consultation on, and drawing up of, the revenue and capital budgets,
 - leading the search for continuous improvement,
 - taking decisions on resources and priorities to deliver the strategies and budget approved by full council,
 - promoting and participating in Member development.

Skills

Leadership

- Advanced leadership skills for areas of individual responsibility and the ability to work with the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader as an executive team;
- High level decision making;
- Ability to challenge the status quo and deal with complex strategic issues and problems;

- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council.

Chairing

- Intermediate chairing skills to be able to chair meetings relating to their portfolio.

Organisational Skills

- Manage a busy and complex work load, often to tight timescales and deadlines;

Other Skills

- Research skills and policy development;
- Assimilating and analysing complex information.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Relationship building – with other Cabinet colleagues, Executive Management Team/senior officers, Overview and Scrutiny, Partners etc.;
- Ability to work as part of an executive team to drive forward the continuous improvement of the Council.

Communication

- Advanced communication skills to be able to work constructively with officers, Members and partners;
- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking skills;
- Ability to work with the media and to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the key areas relating to their Cabinet portfolio, particularly in relation to service performance issues, targets, and benchmarks etc.;
- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of Cabinet within the Council;
- Understanding of the role of a portfolio holder as part of an executive team;
- Detailed understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations;
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers;
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government;
- Understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development;
- Knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Council within them;
- Knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action;
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver;
- Understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies;
- Understanding of the principles and importance of making rational decisions.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

This role profile is to be read in conjunction with the role profile for Cabinet Member. It identifies the responsibilities, skills and knowledge required of the Leader of the Council, that are in addition to those set out for a Cabinet Member.

Role and Responsibilities

- To provide leadership to the Council;
- To undertake the role of community leader, building a vision for the area and leading the Council and its partners towards that vision;
- To represent the Council and provide leadership of the Local Strategic Partnership and other key local partnerships;
- To chair the Cabinet and take responsibility for its performance;
- To represent the authority, and be accountable for, discussions and negotiations with the community and with regional, national and international organisations;
- To undertake political executive responsibility for proposing and directing the overall strategy, budget, policy arrangements and service reviews;
- To act as spokesperson for the authority (in consultation with the Leader of other political groups and the Chief Executive as appropriate);
- To facilitate good communication so that people within and outside the authority are able to contribute constructively to the decision making processes of the Council;
- To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Skills

Leadership

- Advanced Leadership Skills;
- Ability to develop a vision for Colchester and drive the Council and its partners towards achieving that vision;
- Advanced Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council, particularly at the sub-regional, regional and national level;
- Ability to lead the Council towards continuous improvement;
- Ability to provide political leadership for their group;
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline Members of their political group.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Borough as a whole;
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny and other political groups;
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all groups.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of Council, Cabinet and its committees having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the Council.

Communication

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the council to ensure the community are able to engage in the Council's decision making processes;
- Advanced skills in working with the media whilst being able to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented;
- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking.

Knowledge

- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader of the Council;
- Detailed understanding of the legally defined role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers;
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Leader and Council within them;
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development;
- Detailed knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver;
- Detailed understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies;
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership;
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing elected Members and the practical implications for Colchester councillors.

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

This role profile is to be read in conjunction with both the role profile for Cabinet Member and Leader of the Council. It identifies responsibilities specific to the role of Deputy Leader in addition to those of a Cabinet Member.

Role and Responsibilities

- To assist the Leader of the Council in the formal processes and matters of leadership of the authority specifically set out in the profile for the Leader of the Council;
- To work with the Leader of the Council on the budget and policy development;
- To ensure that appropriate developmental steps are taken to equip the Deputy with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role of the Leader when called upon;
- To deputise for the Leader in his or her absence and undertake the above mentioned duties set out in the role profile for the Leader of the Council.

Skills

As it is expected that the Deputy Leader is able to deputise for the Leader, the additional skills and Knowledge set out for the Leader are copied here as they are also required of the Deputy Leader.

Leadership

- Advanced Leadership Skills;
- Ability to develop a vision for Colchester and drive the Council and its partners towards achieving that vision;
- Advanced Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council, particularly at the sub-regional, regional and national level;
- Ability to lead the Council towards continuous improvement;
- Ability to provide political leadership for their group;
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline Members of their political group.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of Council, Cabinet and its committees having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the Council.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Borough as a whole;
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny and other political groups;
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all groups.

Communication

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the council to ensure the community are able to engage in the Council's decision making processes;
- Advanced skills in working with the media whilst being able to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented;
- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking.

Knowledge

- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader of the Council;
- Detailed understanding of the legally defined role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers;
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Council within them;
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development;
- Detailed knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver;
- Detailed understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies;
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership;
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing elected Members and the practical implications for Colchester councillors.

LEADER OF AN OPPOSITION GROUP

Role and Responsibilities

- To lead an Opposition Group within the Council;
- To manage the work of Members within that Group;
- To manage the overall co-ordination of opposition spokespersons and the business of the Group;
- To shadow and scrutinise the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet in their duties;
- To represent the Council on key local partnerships;
- To act as the principal spokesperson for an Opposition Group of which he/she is leader and as a representative of the authority to external bodies and organisations as appropriate;
- To comment, challenge and review the Council's administration performance in the co-ordination and implementation of its policies and procedures;
- To establish and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy and priority;
- To develop opposition Group policies that are credible and could be implemented by the Council;
- To champion member development and manage the Group Secretary and/or Whip to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of its Members;
- To advise the Leader of the Council of the Group's position on issues relating to external relationships;
- To represent the Group on relevant formal and informal working groups;
- To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Where appropriate act as ambassador for the Council;
- To participate in the development of corporate strategies and policies.

Skills

Leadership

- Ability to provide political leadership of their Group and manage the tensions between the political demands and expectations of the Group, and the needs of the Council;
- Ability to hold the Executive to account;
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council both within and outside the Council including at regional and national level;
- Ability to, when necessary, discipline Members of their political Group;
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues with other Groups.

Chairing

- Intermediate chairing skills.

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Group.

Other Skills

- Assimilating and analysing complex information;
- Research skills and policy development.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups, to the benefit of the Colchester community;
- Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny and other political groups;
- Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues across all groups.

Communication

- Ability to facilitate effective communication within and across the Council, and ensure the community are given the opportunity to engage in policy development of the opposition group;
- Advanced skills in working with the media whilst being able to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council is positively represented;
- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking.

Knowledge

- Understanding of the roles of Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members and the Leader of an Opposition Group within the Council;
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers;
- Detailed knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Council within them;
- Detailed understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development;
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government;
- Understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations;
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver and their relationship with the Council;
- Detailed understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies;
- Detailed knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action;
- Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership;
- Understanding of the wider, national issues facing elected Members and the practical implications for the Members in their group

SHADOW CABINET MEMBER

Role and Responsibilities

- To shadow the work of the relevant Cabinet member in their duties;
- To contribute towards the effective scrutiny of the relevant Cabinet member;
- To act as the principal spokesperson for the Opposition Group on issues within the portfolio they are shadowing;
- In conjunction with the Leader of the Opposition Group to develop Opposition Group policies that are credible and could be implemented by the Council;
- To represent the Opposition Group on relevant formal and informal working groups;

Skills

Leadership

- Leadership skills for areas of individual responsibility and the ability to work with the Leader of the Opposition Group and other Shadow Cabinet members as a Shadow Executive team.
- Ability to challenge the status quo and deal with complex strategic issues and problems;
- Ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Opposition Group both within and outside the Council.

Chairing

- Intermediate chairing skills to be able to chair meetings relating to their shadow portfolio.

Other Skills

- Research skills and policy development;
- Assimilating and analysing complex information.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Relationship building – with other Shadow Cabinet colleagues, Executive Management Team/senior officers, Overview and Scrutiny, Partners etc.;
- Ability to work as part of a Shadow Cabinet to provide an effective opposition

Communication

- Advanced communication skills to be able to work constructively with officers, Members and partners;
- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking skills;
- Ability to work with the media.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the key areas relating to their Shadow Cabinet portfolio, particularly in relation to service performance issues, targets, and benchmarks etc.;
- A detailed understanding of the strategic role of Cabinet within the Council;
- Understanding of the role of a portfolio holder as part of an executive team;
- Detailed understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations;
- Understanding of the legally defined role of certain senior officers;
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing local government;
- Understanding of the national policy framework and its impact on local policy development;
- Knowledge of the work of national, regional and sub regional bodies and the role of the Council within them;
- Knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action;
- Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver;
- Understanding of the Council's constitution, code of conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies;
- Understanding of the principles and importance of making rational decisions.

CHAIRMAN OF STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Role and Responsibilities

The Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for effective scrutiny in Colchester by:

Leading and Promoting the Overview and Scrutiny Function

- To maintain effective liaison with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to ensure that overview and scrutiny contributes to effective decision-making in Colchester;
- To represent overview and scrutiny in Council and be accountable to Council for the actions of overview and scrutiny;
- To ensure that overview and scrutiny is publicised and communicated to build understanding of its role both within and outside the Council;
- To represent Colchester at regional and national forums concerned with overview and scrutiny;
- To be responsible for the constitutional arrangements relating to portfolio holder decisions which are “urgent” and / or not on the forward plan.

Managing and Coordinating the Overview and Scrutiny Function

- To Chair meetings of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- To ensure that scrutiny work is properly coordinated;
- To maintain an overview of the work of all the panels in order to ensure effective co-ordination and progress of all work;
- To monitor progress of all scrutiny reviews and ensure that they are completed in reasonable time.

Development of Overview and Scrutiny

- To maintain an overview of scrutiny in Colchester and to learn from practice elsewhere;
- To ensure the continuing development of overview and scrutiny in Colchester through improving both how it is organised as well as the practice;
- To encourage the involvement of all interested parties and stakeholders, individuals, voluntary and community groups in overview and scrutiny matters.

Skills

Leadership

- Leadership of the scrutiny function within, and outside the Council;
- Leadership of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel as a team;
- Ambassadorial skills through the representation and championing of the scrutiny function inside and outside the authority;
- Objective setting and progressing those objectives on behalf of the scrutiny function

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills

Organisational Skills

- Assimilating and analysing complex information;
- Overseeing and prioritising scrutiny work, taking account of available resources;
- Planning and coordinating the work of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel and its' agenda;
- Coordinating the work of standing and ad-hoc scrutiny panels.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Relationship building– with Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel colleagues, Executive Management Team/senior officers, Panel Lead Members, the Executive, Partners etc.;
- Building effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. the executive, full council etc.;
- Ensuring effective contributions from each member of Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Communication

- Advanced listening skills and questioning skills;
- High standard of communication with officers, Members, partners, external bodies and members of the public;
- Advanced presentation skills;
- Advanced public speaking skills

Other Skills

- Dealing with complex strategic issues and problems on behalf of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the scrutiny function as a whole;
- Obtaining and weighing up evidence and making decisions and recommendations based on that evidence.

Knowledge

- Detailed awareness of the strategic importance of the scrutiny function within the Council;
- Detailed awareness of the constitutional arrangements relating to the scrutiny function and particularly those of the Chairman;
- Detailed awareness of Colchester's approach to overview and scrutiny and its relationship with the other parts of the Council's decision making structures;
- Detailed knowledge of the challenges facing the scrutiny function and the role of the Chairman in addressing the;
- Awareness of changes facing local government and an understanding of how these might impact on the Council's scrutiny function;
- Awareness of basic project management principles.

CHAIRMAN OF FINANCE AND AUDIT SCRUTINY PANEL

Role and Responsibilities

Managing and Co-ordinating the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel

- To Chair meetings of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel in accordance with its terms of reference;
- To foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the Members involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics;
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel;
- To have responsibility for the co-ordination of the management of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel;
- To review and amend the content of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel's work programme

Supporting the Development and Promotion of Scrutiny in Colchester

- To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel about the work of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel;
- To support the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel in the development and promotion of the scrutiny function within Colchester.

Skills

Leadership

- Leadership of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel within and outside the Council;
- Ambassadorial skills through the representation and championing of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel across the political groups and the Council as a whole.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Tact, diplomacy and the ability to mediate and broker agreement across the political groups within the context of the work of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel
- Relationship building – with Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel colleagues, Executive Management Team, senior officers, Panel Lead members, partners etc;
- Building effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure, principally the Executive, full council, scrutiny and Executive Management Team etc.;
- Ensuring the maximum contribution from each member of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel.

Organisational Skills

- Assimilating and analysing complex information.

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel having regard to its terms of reference and key challenges facing the Council;
- Prioritisation and managing the overall Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel's work programme including the deployment of available resources.

Communication

- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Communication skills – particularly with Panel Members and communicating the work and outcomes to all Councillors.

Other Skills

- Dealing with complex strategic issues and problems on behalf of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel.
- Obtaining and weighing up evidence and making decisions and recommendations based on that evidence.

Knowledge

- Detailed awareness of the strategic importance of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel and its relationship with Council;
- Detailed awareness of the constitutional arrangements relating to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel, particularly those of the Chairman;
- Detailed knowledge of local government finance and the Council's budgeting, accounting and auditing processes;
- Detailed awareness of Colchester's approach to Panel/Council meetings and its relationship with the other parts of the Council's decision making structures.

CHAIRMAN OF POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Role and Responsibilities

- To Chair meetings of the Policy Review and Development Panel in accordance with its terms of reference;
- To foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the Members involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics;
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Policy Review and Development Panel;
- To have responsibility for the co-ordination of the management of the Policy Review and Development Panel;
- To review and amend the content of the Policy Review and Development Panel's work programme.

Skills

Leadership

- Leadership of Policy Review and Development Panel within and outside the Council;
- Ambassadorial skills through the representation and championing of the Policy Review and Development Panel across the political groups and the Council as a whole.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Tact, diplomacy and the ability to mediate and broker agreement across the political groups within the context of Policy Review and Development Panel;
- Relationship building – with Councillors and senior officers;
- Building effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure, principally Chairmen of Task and Finish Groups, the Executive, full Council, scrutiny and Executive Management Team etc;
- Ensuring the maximum contribution from each member of Policy Review and Development Panel.

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Policy Review and Development Panel having regard to its terms of reference and key challenges facing the Council;
- Ability to delegate work to Task and Finish Groups and to effectively monitor the progress of Task and Finish Groups;
- Prioritisation and managing the Policy Review and Development Panel's work programme including the deployment of available resources.

Communication

- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Reporting and presentational skills;
- Communication skills – particularly with Policy Review and Development Panel Members and communicating the work and outcomes to all Councillors.

Other Skills

- Dealing with complex strategic issues and problems on behalf of the Policy Review and Development Panel.

Knowledge

- Awareness of main issues facing local government in general and Colchester Borough Council in particular in order to identify issues that may require review and improvement;
- Detailed awareness of the constitutional arrangements relating to the work of the Policy Review and Development Policy function and its relationship with the Executive and the scrutiny function.

CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Role and Responsibilities

- To chair the Planning Committee in accordance with the Procedure Rules;
- To foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the Members involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics including the protocol relating to planning procedures;
- To ensure that contributions by the public to meetings are facilitated and controlled in accordance with the agreed procedures;
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Planning Committee.

Skills

Leadership

- Ability to represent the Planning Committee to the community and the media.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills.

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Planning Committee having regard to its terms of reference and key challenges facing the Planning function.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Relationship building particularly with senior officers involved in the planning function, Leaders, other Councillors.

Communication

- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Communication skills – particularly with Members and Officers involved with the Planning Committee;
- Intermediate presentations skills;
- Intermediate public speaking;
- Ability to work with the media and to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council and the planning function is positively represented.

Knowledge

- In-depth understanding of planning issues and protocol relating to planning procedures and the Planning Committee;
- Understanding of the role of Ward Councillors in the Planning process and how to handle conflicts of interest between being a Ward Member and a member of the Planning Committee;
- Understanding of the role of Planning Officers.

CHAIRMAN OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

Role and Responsibilities

- To chair the Licensing Committee in accordance with the Procedure Rules;
- To foster and maintain a disciplined approach by the Members involved having regard to high standards of behaviour and ethics;
- To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the Committee;
- To represent the Committee's decisions in appeals to the Magistrates and higher Courts;
- To be aware of legislation and ongoing local and national developments on licensing matters and their implications.

Skills

Leadership

- Ability to represent the Licensing Committee to the community and the media.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills, including the ability to manage conflict.

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Licensing Committee having regard to its terms of reference and key challenges facing the licensing function.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Relationship building particularly with senior officers involved in the licensing function, Leaders, Councillors.

Communication

- Advanced listening and questioning skills;
- Communication skills – particularly with Members and Officers involved with the licensing function and Licensing Committee;
- Intermediate presentations skills;
- Intermediate public speaking;
- Ability to work with the media and to identify when additional support from the Communications Team is required, to ensure the Council and the licensing function is positively represented.

Knowledge

- In-depth knowledge of the standards, ethics and Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- Knowledge and understanding of relevant legislation and local/national developments on licensing matters – and their implications.



Councillor Self Assessment Form

Councillor:

Date:

Current roles held:

Colchester Borough Council is committed to supporting local councillors in carrying out their roles as democratically elected representatives of the community and community leaders. The Council recognises the need to provide appropriate training, development and learning opportunities to help councillors undertake these roles.

In order to help identify the council's training and development needs, all councillors are invited to evaluate their training and development needs by completing this form. The form may be completed as either a self-assessment or in discussion with a colleague, such as your Group Leader, your group's development representative or a fellow councillor.

The form is made up of three elements:-

- Part A: A review of the past twelve months identifying successes and areas for development, using the political skills framework as a guide;
- Part B: Identifying ambitions and future work plans in your role as a Councillor;
- Part C: Identifying training and developments to address the needs identified in the Parts A and B of the form.

You may wish to refer the Councillor role profiles, which identify the roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge for the various roles which Councillors hold.

Please note that there is no obligation to disclose Parts A and B of the form. The third part of the form should be forwarded to either your group's development representative

or to the Democratic Services team. The information collated from these forms will be used to develop the Council's Annual Training Plan.

When considering the issues raised in this form, you may wish to consider the Council's vision and corporate objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan.

The Council's vision is:

Colchester - a place where people want to live, work and visit

The Council has three corporate objectives:

- **to listen and respond**
- **shift resources to deliver priorities**
- **to be cleaner and greener.**

There are nine priorities for action, listed below in alphabetical order:

- **addressing older people's needs**
- **addressing younger people's needs**
- **community development**
- **community safety**
- **congestion busting**
- **enabling job creation**
- **healthy living**
- **homes for all**
- **reduce, re-use, recycle.**

Part A: Review of previous twelve months

1. Community Leadership

Key Characteristics: engages enthusiastically and empathetically with the community in order to learn, understand and act upon issues of local concern; mediates fairly and constructively, encouraging trust by representing all section of the community.

Issues to consider:

- **What sections of the community have you engaged with and canvassed opinion?**
- **How have you looked for new ways of representing people?**
- **How up to date are you with local concerns?**
- **Would others see you as approachable?**
- **Who have you built partnerships with?**
- **When did you last act as a mediator?**
- **How do you champion others needs?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

2. Regulating and Monitoring

Key characteristics: Understand and executes judicial roles by following protocol, evaluating arguments and making decisions that balance public needs and local policy. Ensures progress by monitoring and intervening where necessary.

Issues to consider:

- **Are your judgements based on evidence?**
- **How do you chair meetings and keep things on track?**
- **Do you know enough about the legal process?**
- **Do you monitor others to ensure progress?**
- **When have you sought feedback or looked for other opportunities to learn?**
- **How well do you understand and act on your judicial role?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

3. Scrutiny and Challenge

Key Characteristics: Acts as a critical friend by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback. Analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way.

Issues to consider:

- **What areas have you identified for scrutiny?**
- **How well do you deal with new information?**
- **Are your arguments always concise, meaningful and easily understood?**
- **Do you ask for explanations and check that things have happened?**
- **Are you objective and rigorous when challenging processes or people?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

4. Communicating with Others

Key characteristics: listens sensitively, uses appropriate language and checks for understanding. Communicates regularly with individuals and groups in the community, speaks clearly and confidentially in public and makes sure that people are informed.

Issues to consider:

- **How regularly do you use newsletters, emails, phone or local media to communicate?**
- **How well do you listen to others and adapt my style to their needs?**
- **What opportunities have you created to communicate with key groups?**
- **Are you confident when speaking in public?**
- **Do you regularly give feedback to others to keep them informed?**
- **Would others say you speak and write well?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

5. Working in Partnership

Key Characteristics: Builds positive relationships by making others feel valued, trusted and included and by working collaboratively to achieve goals. Maintains calm and focus, recognises when to delegate or provide support and is able to take a long term view to developing partnerships.

Issues to consider:

- Do you have good relationships with colleagues and officers?
- Would others describe you as focused and persistent in your efforts to achieve?
- How do you support and empower others?
- Do you value and include other people from different backgrounds?
- What networks and partnerships have you developed?
- Do you stay calm and focused under pressure?

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

6. Political Understanding

Key characteristics: Acts ethically, consistently and with integrity when communicating values or representing group views in decision making or actions. Works across group boundaries without comprising values or ethics.

Issues to consider:-

- Are your group's values reflected in what you do?
- How do you build cohesion within your group and improve communication?
- Does your campaigning reflect your political values?
- How have you developed your political intelligence?
- How have you promoted democracy and increased public engagement?
- When did you work across political boundaries?

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

Part B: Your future work as a Councillor

1. What do you hope to do over the next 12 month in your ward?

2. Are there any particular issues likely to arise in the borough which you particularly wish to influence?

3. Are you undertaking any new roles or responsibilities in your Council work?

4. What do you hope to achieve in your Council roles?

5. What are your aspirations in your career as a Councillor?

Part C: Training and Development

Using the information collated in parts A and B of the form consider what skills or knowledge you may need to develop in order to improve how you carry out the responsibilities of being a Councillor and to achieve the aspirations identified in part B.

Please note that there is no need to identify specific courses or development opportunities. The purpose of the form is to capture information about general areas of development that need to be addressed. However, if there are specific courses you wish to attend, or preferred methods of learning, please feel free to indicate these here.

Please return this part of the form only to either your development representative or Richard Clifford, Democratic Services Officer, Post Point 28.

Name:

Date



Councillor Self Assessment Form Cabinet member

Councillor:

Date:

Current roles held:

Colchester Borough Council is committed to supporting local councillors in carrying out their roles as democratically elected representatives of the community and community leaders. The Council recognises the need to provide appropriate training, development and learning opportunities to help councillors undertake these roles.

In order to help identify the council's training and development needs, all councillors are invited to evaluate their training and development needs by completing this form. The form may be completed as either a self-assessment or in discussion with a colleague, such as your Group Leader, your group's development representative or a fellow councillor.

The form is made up of three elements:-

- Part A: A review of the past twelve months identifying successes and areas for development, using the political skills framework as a guide;
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You may wish to refer the Councillor role profiles, which identify the roles and responsibilities, skills and knowledge for the various roles which Councillors hold.

Please note that there is no obligation to disclose Parts A and B of the form. The third part of the form should be forwarded to either your group's development representative or to the Democratic Services team. The information collated from these forms will be used to develop the Council's Annual Training Plan.

When considering the issues raised in this form, you may wish to consider the Council's vision and corporate objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan.

The Council's vision is:

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- **to listen and respond**
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There are nine priorities for action, listed below in alphabetical order:

- **addressing older people's needs**
- **addressing younger people's needs**
- **community development**
- **community safety**
- **congestion busting**
- **enabling job creation**
- **healthy living**
- **homes for all**
- **reduce, re-use, recycle.**

Part A: Review of previous twelve months

1. Community Leadership

Key Characteristics: engages enthusiastically and empathetically with the community in order to learn, understand and act upon issues of local concern; mediates fairly and constructively, encouraging trust by representing all section of the community.

Issues to consider:

- **What sections of the community have you engaged with and canvassed opinion?**
- **How have you looked for new ways of representing people?**
- **How up to date are you with local concerns?**
- **Would others see you as approachable?**
- **Who have you built partnerships with?**
- **When did you last act as a mediator?**
- **How do you champion others needs?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

2. Regulating and Monitoring

Key characteristics: Understand and executes judicial roles by following protocol, evaluating arguments and making decisions that balance public needs and local policy. Ensures progress by monitoring and intervening where necessary.

Issues to consider:

- **Are your judgements based on evidence?**
- **How do you chair meetings and keep things on track?**
- **Do you know enough about the legal process?**
- **Do you monitor others to ensure progress?**
- **When have you sought feedback or looked for other opportunities to learn?**
- **How well do you understand and act on your judicial role?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

3. Scrutiny and Challenge

Key Characteristics: Acts as a critical friend by seeking opportunities for scrutiny and providing constructive feedback. Analyses information quickly and presents arguments in a concise, meaningful and easily accessible way.

Issues to consider:

- **What areas have you identified for scrutiny?**
- **How well do you deal with new information?**
- **Are your arguments always concise, meaningful and easily understood?**
- **Do you ask for explanations and check that things have happened?**
- **Are you objective and rigorous when challenging processes or people?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

4. Communicating with Others

Key characteristics: listens sensitively, uses appropriate language and checks for understanding. Communicates regularly with individuals and groups in the community, speaks clearly and confidentially in public and makes sure that people are informed.

Issues to consider:

- **How regularly do you use newsletters, emails, phone or local media to communicate?**
- **How well do you listen to others and adapt my style to their needs?**
- **What opportunities have you created to communicate with key groups?**
- **Are you confident when speaking in public?**
- **Do you regularly give feedback to others to keep them informed?**
- **Would others say you speak and write well?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

5. Working in Partnership

Key Characteristics: Builds positive relationships by making others feel valued, trusted and included and by working collaboratively to achieve goals. Maintains calm and focus, recognises when to delegate or provide support and is able to take a long term view to developing partnerships.

Issues to consider:

- Do you have good relationships with colleagues and officers?
- Would others describe you as focused and persistent in your efforts to achieve?
- How do you support and empower others?
- Do you value and include other people from different backgrounds?
- What networks and partnerships have you developed?
- Do you stay calm and focused under pressure?

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

6. Political Understanding

Key characteristics: Acts ethically, consistently and with integrity when communicating values or representing group views in decision making or actions. Works across group boundaries without comprising values or ethics.

Issues to consider:-

- Are your group's values reflected in what you do?
- How do you build cohesion within your group and improve communication?
- Does your campaigning reflect your political values?
- How have you developed your political intelligence?
- How have you promoted democracy and increased public engagement?
- When did you work across political boundaries?

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

7. Providing Vision

Key characteristics: Creates a shared vision by establishing strategic policies and prioritising actions. Actively encourages involvement of others in policy formation and works collaboratively to analyse information and promote understanding. Open to new ideas and ways of doing things.

Issues to consider:-

- **As an executive member do you have responsibility to lead on specific areas of work or priorities? How do you ensure that you give clear leadership and direction on your portfolio of work?**
- **Do you feel as a member of the executive that you are able to communicate a clear, shared vision for the council to officers, other members, partners and residents?**
- **Do you feel able to influence the setting of the council's priorities and its work to ensure local needs are met?**
- **How do you work with officers to ensure that the priorities of the council are monitored and performance management systems are in place?**
- **Do you feel that the executive works as a team and individual members share knowledge and learning? Do you do this?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

8. Managing Performance

Key Characteristics: Works closely with others to develop, promote and achieve objectives and represents council at a strategic level. Encourages scrutiny, monitors performance and responds positively to feedback and ideas.

Issues to consider:-

- Are you able to set and communicate clear goals and objectives?
- How do you contribute to monitoring the performance of the council and its services?
- Do you welcome scrutiny and feedback on the decisions that you make?

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

9. Excellence in Leadership

Key characteristics: provides visionary and charismatic leadership; is well prepared, able to troubleshoot and juggle conflicting responsibilities. Works to shape a culture of excellence by acting as the public face of the council and a role model for others. Encourages co-operation and communication across political and council boundaries.

- **How do you use your skills to lead and inspire in setting the vision and priorities of the council?**
- **Do you feel able to champion the council's needs on a regional and national basis? If yes, how do you do this?**
- **Do you feel supported by officers and members in promoting a culture of excellence in the organisation and continual improvement?**
- **Are you able to juggle conflicting priorities and responsibilities in order to effectively undertake your role?**

Considering in particular the last twelve months, give examples of things you have done which demonstrate these skills and those areas which you consider you need to develop further:

Part B: Your future work as a Councillor

1. What do you hope to do over the next 12 month in your ward?

2. Are there any particular issues likely to arise in the borough which you particularly wish to influence?

3. Are you undertaking any new roles or responsibilities in your Council work?

4. What do you hope to achieve in your Council roles?

5. What are your aspirations in your career as a Councillor?

Part C: Training and Development

Using the information collated in parts A and B of the form consider what skills or knowledge you may need to develop in order to improve how you carry out the responsibilities of being a Councillor and to achieve the aspirations identified in part B.

Please note that there is no need to identify specific courses or development opportunities. The purpose of the form is to capture information about general areas of development that need to be addressed. However, if there are specific courses you wish to attend, or preferred methods of learning, please feel free to indicate these here.

Please return this part of the form only to either your development representative or Richard Clifford, Democratic Services Officer, Post Point 28.

Name:

Date

27 January 2010

Report of	Head of Life Opportunities	Author	Gareth Mitchell
Title	Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures		
Wards affected	All Wards		

This report seeks approval for the Council's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

1. Decisions Required

- 1.1 To approve the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures at appendix 1.
- 1.2 To recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and its addition to the Council's Policy Framework.

2. Reasons for Decisions

- 2.1 Section 11 of The Children Act 2004 places duties on organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Colchester Borough Council, as a district local authority, is one of the organisations specified in Section 11 of the Act.
- 2.3 The Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) is the body responsible under the provisions in the Children Act 2004 for improving outcomes for children by coordinating the work of local agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensuring the effectiveness of that work.
- 2.4 The ESCB has asked all relevant agencies in Essex to audit their safeguarding practices and procedures, and as part of the work to complete this audit for the Council, this revised Safeguarding Children Policy has been developed to reflect the current legislative environment and to ensure the Council is demonstrating best practice in this field.
- 2.5 The audit process requires the Council to demonstrate:
 - senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
 - a clear statement of the council's responsibilities towards children, available for all staff
 - a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare – and is informed by the views of children and families
 - safe recruitment procedures
 - training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or in contact with, children and families, including work on case studies
 - effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - effective information sharing.

2.6 The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures seek to set out the policy framework to comply with these requirements and a programme of work is in place, led by the Council's senior named officer for safeguarding (Head of Life Opportunities), to work towards best practice in this field.

3. Alternative Options

3.1 To not approve the Policy. This would prevent the Council from having up to date and compliant policy and procedures and put at risk the authority's ability to comply with the provisions of the Children Act 2004 and to respond to scrutiny from the ESCB.

3.2 To request amendments to the Policy. The Policy has been developed by the Council's senior named officer for safeguarding (Head of Life Opportunities) and safeguarding co-ordinator, and is believed to reflect current best practice in this field.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 The government has defined 'safeguarding children' as:

"The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully."

Lord Laming in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report said:

"The support and protection of children cannot be achieved by a single agency... every service has to play its part. All staff must have placed upon them the clear expectation that their primary responsibility is to the child and his or her family."

4.2 'Every Child Matters' – the government's vision for children's services – sets out five key outcomes. They are to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic wellbeing.

District councils contribute to these outcomes in several ways:

- housing – preventing homelessness, providing supported accommodation for young people
- planning – providing appropriate play facilities in new housing developments
- culture, leisure and learning opportunities – for example: provision of local leisure centres and museums
- environmental health services – for example: promoting the health of children, particularly in relation to food hygiene and nutrition.
- work on community safety and as a licensing authority
- delivering benefits
- local employment.

4.3 The scope of this policy includes the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service and discussions are underway with Colchester Borough Homes to audit the provisions for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children of the Council's tenants.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 That Cabinet approve the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures attached at Appendix 1
- 5.2 That Cabinet recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and its addition to the Council's Policy Framework.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 "Addressing younger people's needs" is one of the nine priorities for action identified in the Council's Strategic Plan 2009-12.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 No formal consultation has been conducted in the development of this Policy as it concerns compliance with statutory requirements.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 The adoption of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures can provide reassurance to residents and customers that the Council takes the welfare of children seriously.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There are no additional financial implications from the adoption of this Policy.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 10.1 The Equality, Diversity and Human Rights aspects of safeguarding children are a fundamental principle underlying this Policy and are reflected in the content of the document.
- 10.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for this Policy and can be found by clicking on the link below:-

http://www.colchester.gov.uk/Info_page_two_pic_2_det.asp?art_id=8001&sec_id=1988

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The links between the Safeguarding Children agenda and Community Safety are strong and are reflected in the multi-agency protocols and practices outlined in the Policy.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are strong links between the Safeguarding Children agenda and the Council's Health and Safety responsibilities and these are reflected in the Policy.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The welfare of children using and interacting with the Council's services is an area of potentially significant risk, and the principle purpose of this Policy is to manage and mitigate these risks.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures

January 2010



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Glossary

Introduction

All children are entitled to a safe and happy childhood regardless of age, race, disability, culture or gender. This includes having the right to protection from all forms of abuse.

Aims of the Policy

Colchester Borough Council has a wide range of services and facilities. This Policy aims to ensure that all of these are addressed with an overarching approach to Safeguarding.

Objectives of the Policy

- To demonstrate the value that Colchester Borough Council places on safeguarding children.
- To ensure that legal and moral obligations for safeguarding children are met.
- To raise awareness amongst all staff regarding safeguarding children and encourage best practice.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all services within the scope of Colchester Borough Council. In addition to all internal provision, it also applies to:

- Outside hirers
- Outside organisations delivering services involving children on behalf of Colchester Borough Council
- Contractors

Implementing the Policy

The introduction of a Safeguarding Policy helps to create a safe environment within Colchester Borough Council.

To be effective, the Policy must be well implemented. This will promote a consistent response to all safeguarding matters and maximise child safety and welfare.

Reviewing the Policy

Colchester Borough Council is committed to reviewing the Safeguarding Policy annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

Section 11 of The Children Act 2004 places duties on organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Whilst safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, the different roles that people have incur different, specific responsibilities. The following provides a guide as to what these are within Colchester Borough Council.

Chief Executive: overall accountability regarding safeguarding children.

Head of Life Opportunities: Senior Officer providing a lead on Safeguarding children within Colchester Borough Council.

Strategic HR Manager: Ensuring that stringent recruitment procedures are in place and that appropriate checks are made on staff working with children, including procedures being in place to ensure that ISA registration is in place prior to employment.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): The Local Authority is required to use the LADO case management framework where staff or volunteers who work with children have, or may have harmed children. Where the Local Authority considers any allegations against people who work with children, they are required to consider whether there should be a police investigation, enquiries and assessment by children's social care and/or consideration of disciplinary action. The LADO role is to provide co-ordination and to make sure that there is a strategy in place to ensure a fair and thorough investigation and that children's welfare is safeguarded in the process.

Managers: Ensure that 'safe' recruitment is in place for all job roles that involve working with children. Carry out the correct safeguarding induction process for all new members of staff including booking the appropriate training. Be aware of ISA registration requirements for all posts within the remit and communicate clearly with HR regarding recruitment and registration.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Work with the Head of Life Opportunities to ensure effective implementation of Safeguarding Policy and Procedures throughout Colchester Borough Council. Assess and reduce risks in relation to Safeguarding Children. Raise awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff, children and public. Establish and maintain effective multi-agency working with social care, police, safeguarding unit and other relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies. Identify and provide for staff training needs. Co-ordinate all reports made to the lead agencies (social care, police and safeguarding unit) when there is an incident, allegation or concern other than allegations against a member of staff (see LADO).

Designated Persons in Service Groups: Following correct reporting procedure with lead agencies (social care, police, safeguarding unit) when a report is made to them by a member of staff within their remit and then reporting to the safeguarding co-ordinator in all cases other than allegations against a member of staff or volunteer. In the case of an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the designated person should report to the LADO.

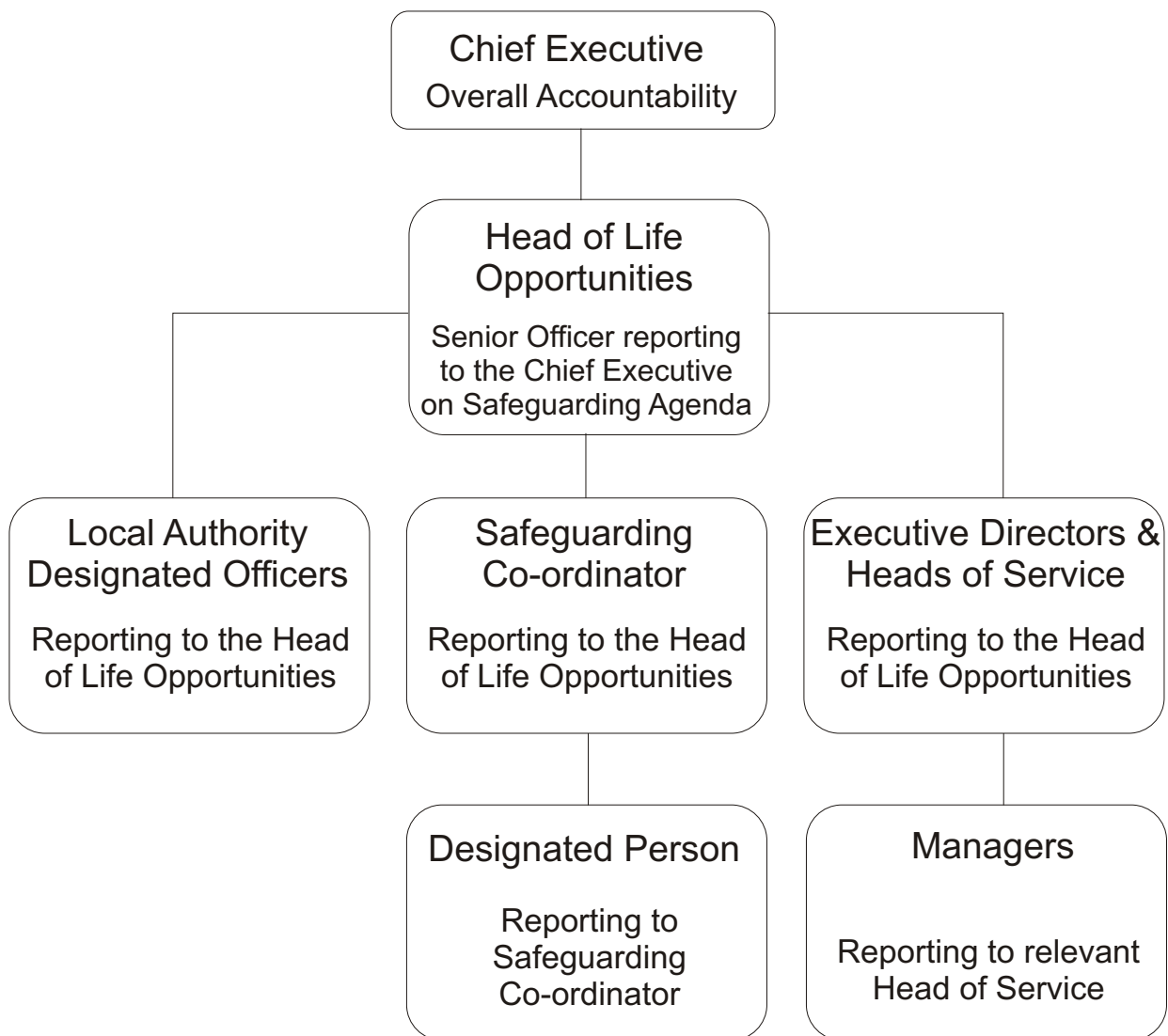
All employees: Adhering to best practice, participating in relevant training and reporting any disclosure, concern, incident or allegation to the designated person.

Outside organisations delivering services involving children on behalf of Colchester Borough Council: Agreement to comply with Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Policy and where relevant have own Policy and Procedures in place.

Outside Hirers: Agreement to comply with Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Policy. Satisfactory completion of outside hirer form.

Contractors: Must agree to comply with Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Policy and where relevant have own Policy and Procedures in place.

Lines of Accountability for Safeguarding Children



Communicating the Policy

Managers will be responsible for ensuring that all staff within their remit are made aware of the Policy and how to access both a hard and electronic copy.

All new staff will be made aware of this Policy as part of the induction process.

Colchester Borough Council will endeavour to use appropriate media to ensure that information regarding safeguarding is available to children and their families as well as the wider community.

Relevant Policies and Procedures

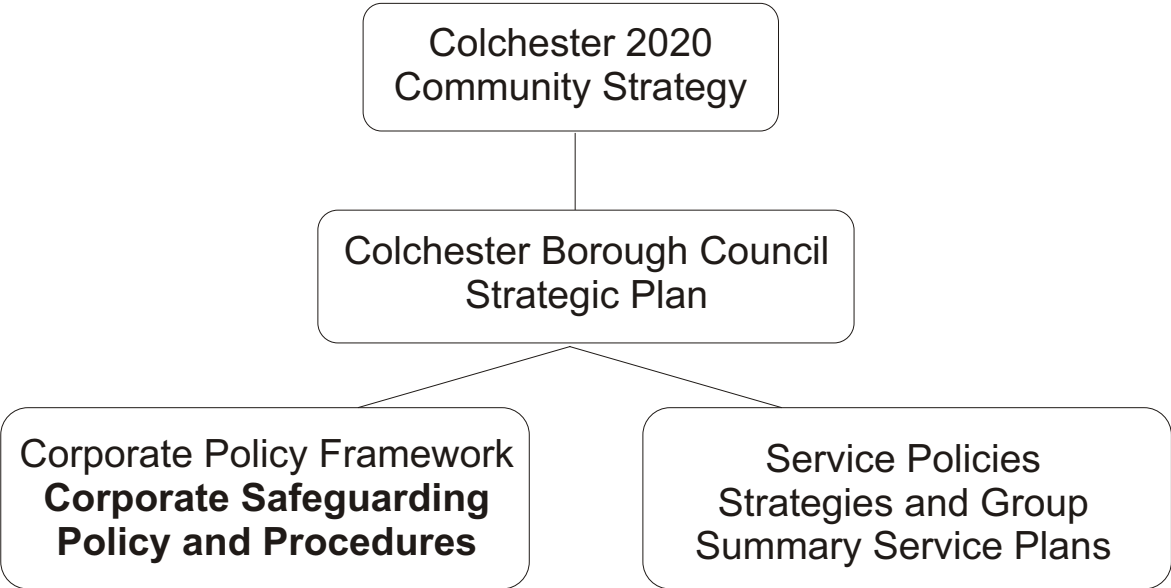
Safeguarding children is not a separate issue within Colchester Borough Council, but an inherent part of the culture permeating all areas of business. Other policies and procedures that are specifically linked to safeguarding are:

- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Equality and Diversity
- Complaints Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection
- Performance Manager Procedures
- Whistleblowing
- Disciplinary Procedures

All of these policies can be accessed on The Hub @ <http://the-hub.cbc.ad.colchester.gov.uk/>

Where this Policy fits:

The following diagram demonstrates where the Safeguarding Policy fits into the wider strategy framework used by Colchester Borough Council.



Policy Statement

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility.

The following legislation and statutory guidance has provided the framework for Colchester Borough Councils Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

- The Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children Act 2004
- Every Child Matters
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Essex Safeguarding Children Board SET Procedures

The welfare of children is paramount; therefore safeguards are in place to protect all children whilst they are using any of Colchester Borough Council Services or facilities.

Relevant agencies will be contacted and involved when necessary.

These Safeguards are:

- Safe recruitment for all staff working with children, including CRB/ISA checks
- Safeguarding induction and training for all staff
- Safeguarding policy and procedures in place to address all areas of the business
- Inter-agency working and information sharing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- A clear line of accountability

Relevant agencies will be contacted and involved when necessary.

Legislation and Guidance

The following legislation and guidance underpins the safeguarding Policy and aim to ensure that children are protected from harm.

- **The Children Act 1989**

The intention of the legislation is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met. This includes the need to be protected from harm.

- **The Children Act 2004**

This Act legislates for children in England and Wales and underpins a national framework of change for children and young people. Its implementation should be part of a wider process of change for children and young people focused on five key outcomes of wellbeing for children: being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing.

- **Every Child Matters: Change for Children** sets out the national framework in England for local change programmes.

- **Contact Point**

Contact Point is an initiative that was introduced as part of The Children Act 2004. It is an online directory which enables practitioners to quickly find out if any other agencies are working with a child or young person who is in need of support.

Contact Point is part of the Every Child Matters agenda which aims to support effective prevention and early intervention to improve the health, well being and safety of all children. Contact Point can only be accessed by authorised staff. (Appendix 1).

- **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)**

The CAF is an initiative that was introduced in The Children Act 2004. It plays an important part in improving services to children and families in line with the Governments Every Child Matters agenda. It promotes effective, early identification of additional needs and aims to improve integrated working by promoting co-ordinated service provision.

The CAF is a key part of delivering services that are integrated and focussed around the needs of children and young people.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should be contacted (Appendix 2) to co-ordinate any situations whereby a CAF referral is or may be required.

Please note:

The CAF does not replace any of the safeguarding procedures which must be followed at all times if there are any concerns relating to safeguarding a child.

- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by the UK Government in 1991)**

The convention is a set of minimum standards in protecting children's rights. It is a binding international treaty which the British Government signed at the United Nations, committing itself to give children the rights and protections written in the convention.

In the Convention 'a child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

- **The Protection of Children Act 1999**

This act ensures that a statutory list is held of people who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children.

- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

This act introduces changes to the ways in which employers and voluntary organisations are required to vet employees and volunteers.

More information regarding the above Legislation can be found in Appendix 1.

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**

This is a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

[Http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/)

- **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused**

This is a Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) document which provides information and guidance on best practice for those who work with children in order to safeguard their welfare.

A summary of this can be viewed in Appendix 4 or at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

The role of Essex Safeguarding Children Board

Essex Safeguarding Children's Board is a statutory multi-agency organisation. The organisation brings together agencies who work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Under Section 13 of The Children Act 2004, each children's services authority in England must establish a Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

The objective of an LSCB is to:

- Co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority by which it is established.
- Ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for those purposes.

What we are safeguarding against?

Abuse occurs in a wide range of settings. Children and young people may be abused in a family, community or institutional setting.

The effects of child abuse are far reaching and can cause immeasurable damage to a victim's life.

All children have the right to a safe and happy childhood free from danger and harm.

All Colchester Borough Council staff have a duty of care to ensure that we are providing such an environment for all children using our services or facilities.

Someone may abuse or neglect a child by causing harm, or by failing to take action to prevent harm occurring.

Child abuse is categorised in to four types, these being:

Physical abuse: which occurs when a child is physically hurt or injured by someone; hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm.

Sexual abuse: which occurs when a child is used by someone to meet their own sexual needs. This would include enforced sexual acts or showing a child sexual material.

Neglect: which occurs when a child's basic physical and emotional needs are not met. This includes; failure to provide food, clothing, warmth and shelter, to protect a child from harm or danger, provide appropriate medical care or treatment or failing to provide the necessary love, affection and positive attention that a child needs.

Emotional (including bullying): which occurs not just alone, but also alongside other forms of abuse. It is a psychological form of abuse whereby a child may be; taunted by adults or children, made to feel inadequate and unimportant as an individual, made to feel unloved and uncared for, constantly shouted at and criticised making them feel nervous, undermined and not valued.

Bullying can be carried out by adults or other children and can include:

- Physical bullying; such as hitting, pushing, kicking and pinching.
- Verbal bullying; such as name calling, spreading rumours, teasing sarcasm and making threats.
- Emotional bullying; such as peer group rejection, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring. This has more recently including cyber bullying via mobile phones and the internet.
- Racist bullying; taunts, graffiti and gestures.
- Sexual bullying; unwanted physical contact or abusive comment.

Physical and behavioural indicators of abuse can be seen in Appendix 5.

Colchester Borough Council is committed to providing an environment whereby no form of abuse is tolerated.

Procedures when dealing with concern/incident/allegation

The following procedures are in place:

Responding to a child's disclosure.

- Listen to the child without interrupting.
- Believe what the child is saying and do not allow them to see that you may be shocked or upset.

- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action by talking to you.
- Explain that you cannot keep the information secret, but that the information will be passed on *only* to relevant people who will be involved with trying to help and protect them.
- Act *immediately*, ensuring that the child is in a safe environment, either with the rest of the group if they are not distressed or with the relevant member of staff.
- Report to the relevant Designated Person and record all information that you have been given, using corporate concern/incident/allegation form (Appendix 6).
- Seek support from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator if you feel upset or worried by the disclosure that a child has made to you.
- Remember that this is not a subject to be discussed with anyone other than the Designated Person and relevant child protection agencies when necessary.

Responding to a concern

- Speak to the designated person about your concern as soon as possible.
- Do not worry if the concern seems small.
- Complete the concern/incident/allegation form so that a record can be maintained in case future concerns arise about the child.

Responding to an incident

- Report the incident to the designated person immediately (providing that all children are in a safe environment).
- Complete the concern/incident/allegation form.

NB: in any situation where an allegation of abuse is made, an incident occurs, a disclosure is made or there is any concern, however small, the matter must be reported to the designated person and all relevant details recorded *as soon as possible*.

The designated person will then instigate the correct reporting procedures which are:

- Assist with completing the concern/incident/allegation form.
- Complete the inter agency Referral Form ECC999 (Appendix 5)
- Contact social care (or the police in an emergency).
- Report factually the concern/incident/allegation.
- Send the Inter Agency ECC999 to the relevant agency.
- Contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and pass on all information and records relating to the concern/incident/allegation. The co-ordinator will then ensure that all information is stored confidentially and that the case is correctly followed up by liaising with the relevant agencies.

Responding to an allegation

An allegation may be made:

- By a child to a member of staff. (*Follow responding to a child's disclosure above*).
- By a parent regarding a member of staff or a child that they have concerns about.
- By a member of staff about concerns they may have regarding a child they have been working with (*see signs of abuse*).
- By a member of staff regarding another member of staff.

If an allegation is made:

- The designated person must be contacted *immediately* in order to deal with the allegation.
- If the conduct of a member of staff is in question, they must be removed from their work with children immediately pending investigations.
- The designated person must record the facts on the concern/incident/allegation form.
- The designated person must then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer who will contact and work in partnership with the Children's Safeguarding Unit.
- These allegations could potentially result in one of the following types of investigation:
 - Criminal
 - Child Protection
 - Disciplinary or misconduct

In the event of an allegation of abuse being made, the **Southend Essex Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures** must be adhered to.

These are multi-agency child protection guidelines that reflect all relevant law, regulation and statutory and non-statutory government guidance. The SET procedures can be downloaded at www.escb.co.uk

A flowchart of Colchester Borough Councils internal reporting procedures can be seen in Appendix 8.

Designated Person

There is a Designated Person/s for each service area. Names and contact numbers can be found in Appendix 9.

Role of the Designated Person:

- Take all reports seriously
- Support the member of staff reporting the

- Provide them with a suitable environment in which to complete the concern/ incident/allegation form and help them to complete the form if necessary
- Ensure that as much information as possible is taken
- Remind the staff member that the report must remain confidential and not be discussed other than with relevant staff in context
- As the named person, you should then complete the: Inter Agency Referral ECC999 Form: Children & Young People

The designated person must then contact:

- Social care for any concern, incident or allegation *unless* it is an emergency or an allegation against a member of staff.
- The police in an emergency, along with any other relevant emergency services that are needed.
- If there is an allegation against a member of staff, you must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer who will liaise with the Children’s Safeguarding Services (LADO contact Appendix 9).
- All information must be kept together confidentially and passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

NB: Whilst our internal procedure requires you to report to specific members of staff either during office hours or out of office hours, *you should be aware of the external reporting process*. This is available in ‘what to do if you’re worried a child is being abused - summary’ which can be downloaded at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk. (Appendix 4).

- It is your right and responsibility to follow these guidelines in the event of not being able to report internally.

Safe recruitment for staff working directly with children

Colchester Borough Council has a duty of care to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

This applies to all staff; full-time, part-time, casual and voluntary.

Safe Recruitment procedures outline actions to be followed in order to provide best practice in safeguarding.

Safe recruitment procedures can be seen in Appendix 10.

Safeguarding Induction for all new staff

All members of staff working for Colchester Borough Council have a duty of care with regard to safeguarding all children using our facilities and services.

Therefore, all new staff will undertake an induction process which will include:

- Covering basic elements of Safeguarding via a general induction.
- Reading and signing the Colchester Borough Council induction document. (Appendix 11).
- Taking an induction staff card for staff in contact with children. (Appendix 12).
- Line Manager booking the relevant level of staff training on the learning pool.

Staff Training

Different members of staff require different levels of training. These are categorised into four groups:

- Full day for staff with responsibility for being the designated person.
- Full day for staff working directly with children.
- Half day for staff members with indirect or limited contact with children.
- On line basic training for staff with no contact with children.

New staff must be booked onto the earliest relevant training session by the Line Manager.

Photography and electronic images

Colchester Borough Council provides a wide range of services and facilities for children. And their families. These are enjoyable activities that promote self development and personal/team achievement. It is therefore important that special events can be recorded via photography or video footage.

Unfortunately such an environment attracts a minority of people who may try to take unauthorised photographic images for wholly inappropriate reasons.

Colchester Borough Council Photography Policy is intended to encourage the legitimate recording of special events whilst preventing any unsuitable, unauthorised photography.

The Photography Policy can be seen in Appendix 13.

Physical contact, including restraint/intervention

The use of physical intervention should be avoided at all times in so far as is possible. It should only be used to manage a child or young person's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, another child or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in exceptional circumstances.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of a conscious decision and not as a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves if it is the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety. More information is available in Appendix 14.

Bullying

Colchester Borough Council does not condone or accept bullying. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

Bullying will be covered as part of the Safeguarding training for staff working directly with children.

Where a child's bullying behaviour is of a particularly violent or aggressive nature and the organisation is unable to address the behaviour through behaviour management, strategies or disciplinary measures within a reasonable time, it is worth considering instigating Safeguarding Procedures. More information is available in Appendix 15.

Adult to child ratios

The ratio requirements set out the minimum numbers of staff that must be present with children at any time. Information can be seen in Appendix 15.

Missing children

All staff working with children will have the correct qualifications, training, management and supervision to ensure that children will not go missing whilst using any of Colchester Borough Council Services or facilities.

In the unlikely event of a child going missing there is a procedure which must be adhered to. This is available in Appendix 16.

Uncollected children

Staff will ensure that the child is adequately supervised whilst waiting for collection.

If the parent/carer is more than fifteen minutes late, the supervisor will try to contact them by using the contact number or emergency contact number provided.

If a child is uncollected at the end of any session run by Colchester Borough Council, there is a procedure which must be adhered to. This is available in Appendix 17.

Transporting children

Risk assessments are carried out for any activity that involves taking children off site. All relevant contact and medical details are taken. Correct ratios are adhered to at all times.

Venues being visited are contacted in advance to inform them of the visit, obtain manager contact details, ensure Public Liability Insurance and gain knowledge of the Emergency Operating Procedures.

Children will be given an induction explaining any potential risks and hazards. Each child also has a wrist band with the supervisor's mobile phone number on it. All staff will have relevant first aid training and qualifications. More information is available in Appendix: 18

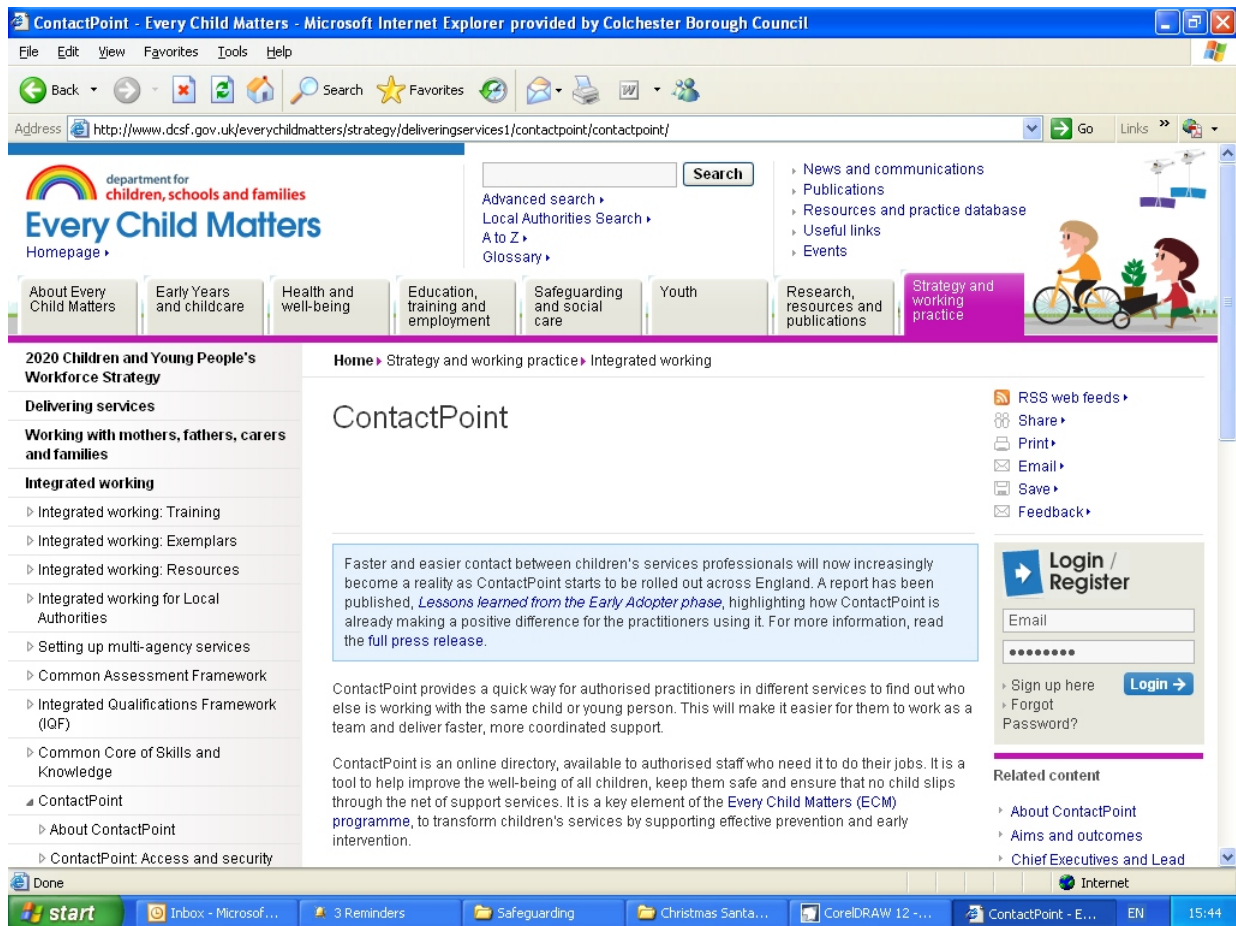
Best Practice when working with children

- Treat everybody equally
- Treat everyone with respect, patience and interest
- Be a good role model
- Be approachable to the children in your care
- Be professional in your verbal communication with children
- Be aware of, and deal with bullying at once
- Be clear about your role and responsibilities as stated in your job description
- Dress appropriately
- Avoid any action that may be misinterpreted
- Avoid physical contact games with children
- Do not allow children to use inappropriate behaviour or language unchallenged
- Always work alongside at least one other member of staff and adhere to correct ratios
- Never do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves

Some useful contacts are available in Appendix 20

Appendix 1: ContactPoint

Http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/deliveringservices1/contactpoint/contactpoint/



Appendix 2: Common Assessment Framework

Http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/deliveringservices1/caf/cafframework/

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) - Every Child Matters - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Colchester Borough Council

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites

Address http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/strategy/deliveringservices1/caf/cafframework/

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Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

July 2009
Updated documents and publications, now available:
[Common Assessment Framework \(CAF\) guides for managers and practitioners](#)
[Lead professional guidance for managers and practitioners](#)
[CAF form](#)

The CAF is a key part of delivering frontline services that are integrated, and are focused around the needs of children and young people. The CAF is a standardised approach to conducting assessments of children's additional needs and deciding how these should be met. It can be used by practitioners across children's services in England.

The CAF promotes more effective, earlier identification of additional needs, particularly in universal services. It aims to provide a simple process for a holistic assessment of children's needs and strengths; taking account of the roles of parents, carers and environmental factors on their development. Practitioners are then better placed to agree with children and families about appropriate modes of support. The CAF also aims to improve integrated working by

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Appendix 3: Legislation and Guidance

The following legislation and guidance underpins the Safeguarding Policy and aim to ensure that children are protected from harm.

The Children Act 1989

The intention of the legislation is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met. This includes the need to be protected from harm.

It is the duty of the Local Authority (Essex County Council: ECC) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area.

Section 17

States that Local Authority (ECC) have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children who are in need and they must provide a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.

Section 47

Places a duty on local authority (ECC) social services departments to make enquiries when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child in their area is likely to be or is suffering significant harm. This is the section that authorises children's social services to investigate concerns about child abuse.

The Children Act 2004

This Act legislates for children in England and Wales and underpins a national framework of change for children and young people. Its implementation should be part of a wider process of change for children and young people focused on five key outcomes of wellbeing for children: being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children sets out the national framework in England for local change programmes.

Section 10 establishes a duty on local authorities (ECC) to make arrangements to promote cooperation between agencies in order to improve children's well being, defined by reference to the five outcomes and a duty on key partners to take part in those arrangements. It also provides a new power to allow pooling of resources in support of these arrangements.

Section 11 creates a duty for the key agencies (of which Colchester Borough Council is one) who work with children to put in place arrangements to make sure that they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Section 12 allows further secondary legislation and statutory guidance to be made with respect to setting up databases or indexes that contain basic information about children and young people to help professionals working together.

Sections 13 - 16 require that local authorities (ECC) set up statutory Local Safeguarding Children Boards and that key partner's take part.

Section 17 establishes a single Children and Young People's plan (CYPP) to replace a range of current statutory planning.

Section 18 and 19 require local authorities (ECC) to put in place a director of children's services and lead member for children's services to be responsible for, as a minimum, education and children's social service functions. Local authorities have discretion to and other relevant functions, for instance leisure or housing, to the role if they feel it is appropriate.

Sections 20 - 24 require an integrated inspection framework to be established by the relevant inspectorates to inform future inspections of all services for children.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by the UK Government in 1991)

What is it? The convention is a set of minimum standards in protecting children's rights. It is a binding international treaty which the British Government signed at the United Nations, committing itself to give children the rights and protections written in the convention.

Who is a child? In the Convention 'a child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

What rights do children have? There are many rights written into the Convention which include, for example, rights relating to Protection from violence, abuse and exploitation. Each point of the Convention is called an article. Four articles which are especially relevant to children are:

- Article 2: no discrimination. The Government must make sure that children get equal rights and protection irrespective of their race, gender, religion, nationality, political opinion, ability or developing sexuality.
- Article 3: acting in the child's best interest.
- Article 4: making it happen. The Government has promised to make laws and change policies and procedures to give children these rights.
- Article 12: the child's right to express an opinion.

Are these all legal rights? Since the Government has ratified the convention, no law or administrative action should contradict it.

The Protection of Children Act 1999

This act has four principle objectives:

- A statutory list is held of people who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children.
- Regulated child care organisations are required to check the names of anyone they propose to employ in posts involving regular contact with children and not to employ them if they are listed.
- These child care organisations must also refer the names of anyone considered unsuitable to work with children for inclusion on the list.
- To allow the Criminal Records Bureau to act as a central access point for criminal records information and the above two lists.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

This Act introduces changes to the ways in which employers and voluntary organisations are required to vet employees and volunteers.

The Act came about as a result of the Birchard Inquiry following the deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman by Ian Huntley in 2002. Recommendation 19 on the Inquiry Report led to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which recognised the need for a single agency to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with vulnerable people.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is a non departmental body that was created to undertake this role. The ISA will work closely with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and The Home Office will oversee delivery of the scheme which is referred to as the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS).

The VBS aims to ensure that anyone who presents a risk to vulnerable groups is prevented from working with them.

Appendix 4: Summary of what to do if you're worried a child is being abused

Http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182/



Appendix 5: Physical and Behavioural Indicators of Abuse

Type of Abuse	Physical Indicator	Behaviour Indicator
Physical	Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries Bruises which reflect hand marks Cigarette burns Bite marks Broken bones Scalds	Fear of parent being contacted Aggressive or angry outburst Running away from home Flinching Depression Keeping arms/legs covered Reluctance to change clothes Withdrawn behaviour
Sexual	Pain/itching in the genital area Bruising/bleeding near genital area Stomach pains Discomfort when walking/sitting Pregnancy	Sudden change in behaviour Becoming aggressive/withdrawn Apparent fear of one person Running away Nightmares Unexplained sources of money Sexual drawings/language Bedwetting Overeating or anorexia Secrets which cannot be told to anyone Substance/drug abuse Advanced sexual knowledge Not allowed to have friends Sexually explicit behaviour Telling about the abuse

<p>Neglect</p>	<p>Constant hunger, stealing food Unkempt state Weight loss/underweight Inappropriate dress</p>	<p>Missing doctor/hospital appointments Truancy/late for school Constantly tired Few friends Regularly alone and unsupervised</p>
<p>Emotional</p>	<p>Developmentally delayed Sudden speech disorders</p>	<p>Neurotic behaviour Unable to play/take part Fear of making mistakes Sudden speech disorders Self harm or mutilation Fear of parents being contacted</p>

safeguarding

- concern
- incident
- allegation

form



Name of person reporting concern/incident/allegation

Job Role and Line Manager
(if relevant)

Place of report

Date

Time of report

am/pm

Name of child about whom there is a concern/incident/allegation

Date of birth

Age

Gender

M

F

Parent/Guardian name/s

Are parent/guardians aware of the concern/incident/allegation at the time this report is being made? YES NO

If no, will parents be informed and if so when?

If not, why not?

Contact telephone number for parent/guardian?

Home address for child and parent/guardian

Childs school

Activity attending (crèche etc)

Would you describe this report as a

CONCERN INCIDENT ALLEGATION

(circle as appropriate)

Where did this occur if relevant?

When did this occur?

Please record the concern/incident/allegation below. Only include the facts regarding what you have observed and/or what you have been told. Include as much detail as you can remember. Please include details of anyone else who witnessed the incident. (Use blank paper and attach if necessary). NB. Please use the body chart to indicate clearly where you have observed any injuries that may be relevant to this report.

Have there been any reasons prior to this report that you have had any concerns for this child?

YES

NO

If yes, please state what (use blank paper and attach if necessary)

On completion of this form, place in a safeguarding concern/incident/allegation envelope and hand it in person immediately to the

Designated Person

Position:

Remember that the information you have provided is confidential; do not discuss with anyone other than those directly involved and only then in a professional capacity.

Please sign..... Date.....

Name of person receiving this report

Position

Date report received

Action taken

Time report received am/pm

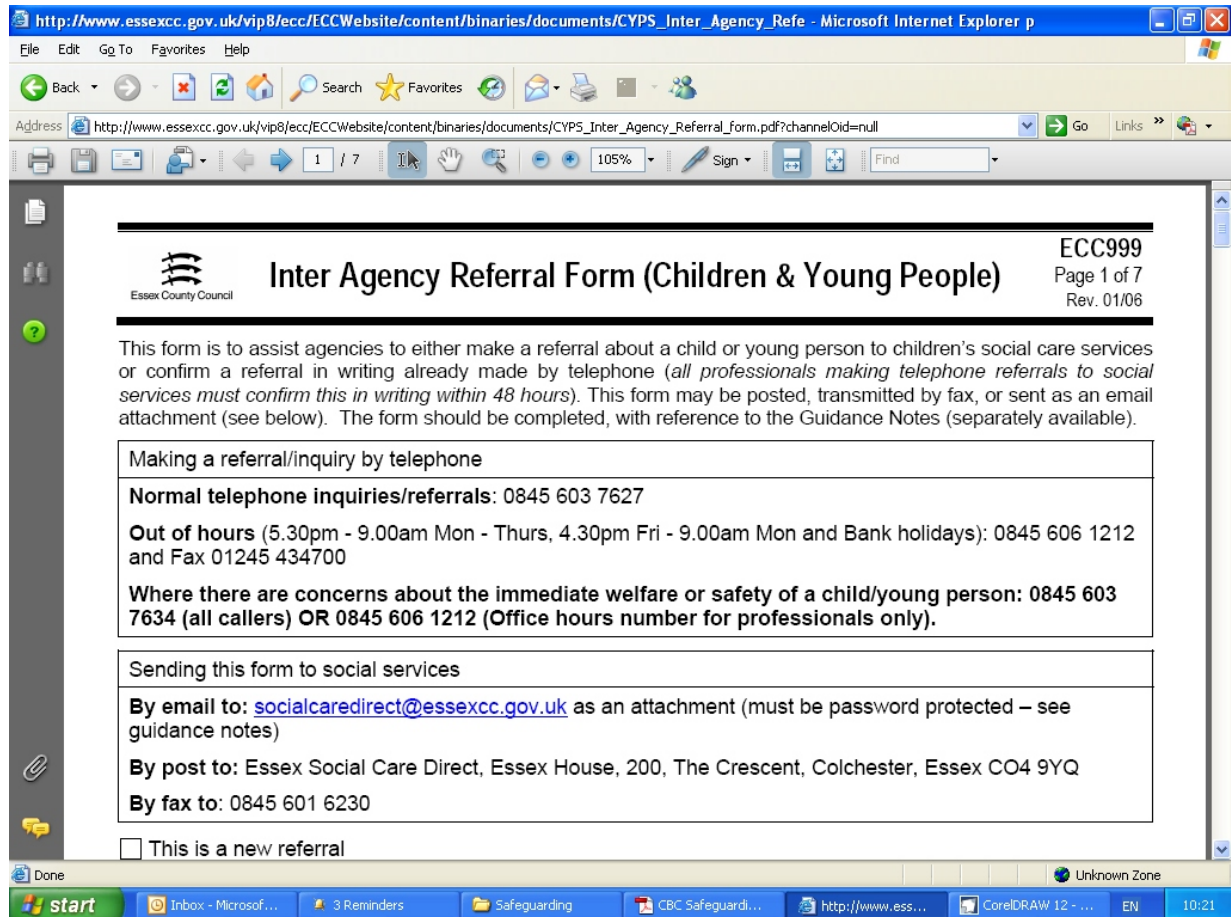
Agencies contacted including date, time and names of people spoken to and advice needed

Please ensure that this report is kept confidential. The Designated Person should contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible on 01206 282004 in order to record the concern/incident/allegation and co-ordinate any further interagency work.

Please sign..... Date.....

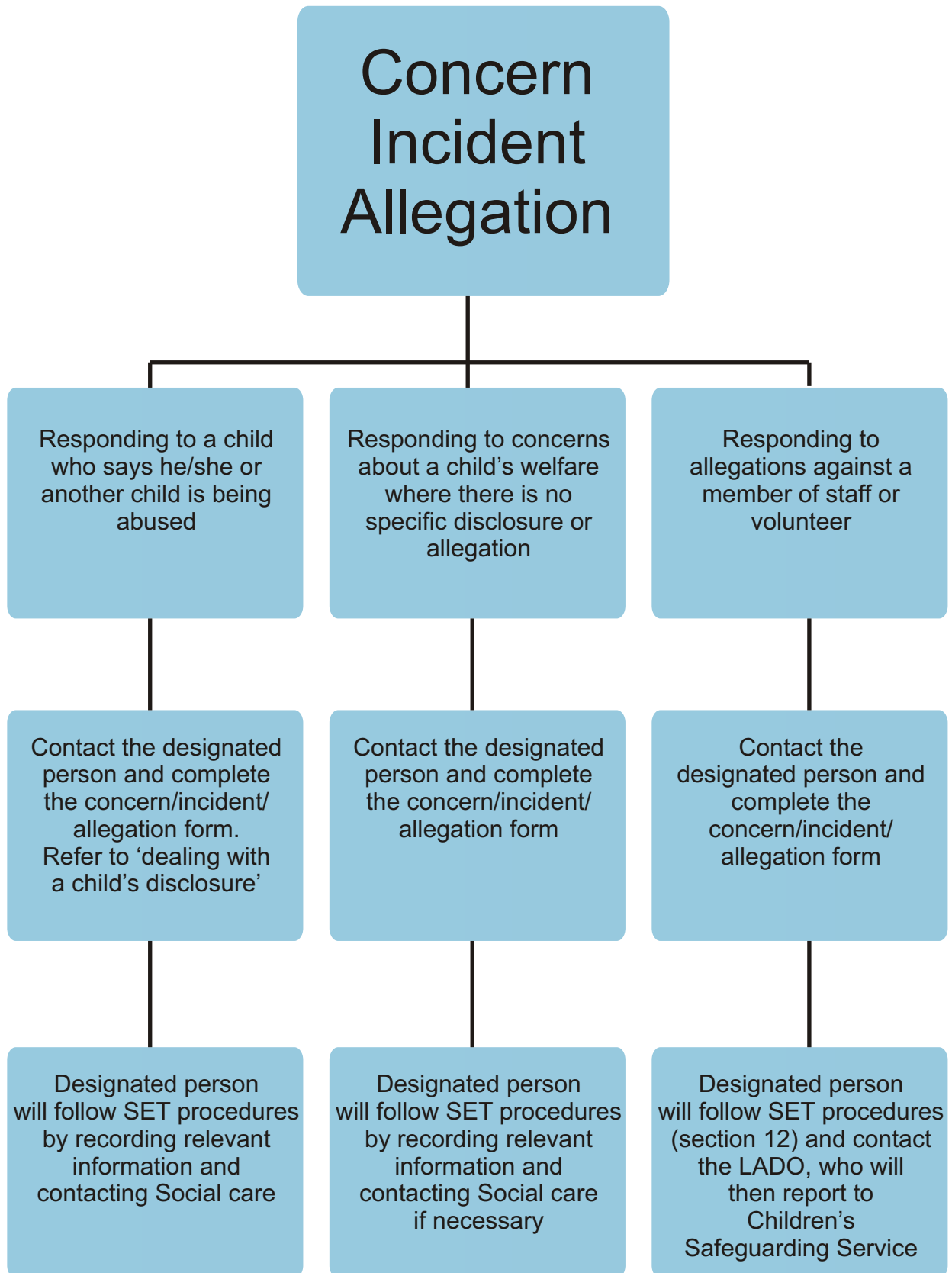
Appendix 7: Inter Agency Referral Form

Http://www.essexcc.gov.uk/vip8/ecc/ECCWebsite/content/binaries/documents/CYPS_Inter_Agency_Referral_form.pdf?channelOid=null



Appendix 8: Internal Reporting Flowchart

Flowchart of internal reporting procedure



Appendix 9: Designated Person and Local Authority Designated Officer Contact Details *(to be completed)*

Contact names and details for Designated Person for each service area and Local Authority Designated Officers LADO's

Service Area	Contact Name/s	Contact Details
Strategic Policy and Regeneration		
Corporate Management		
Human Resources		
Life Opportunities		
Street Services		
Environmental and Protective Services		

LADO name	Service Area	Contact details
Mike Thurston	Corporate Management	2396
Andrew Weavers	Corporate Management	2213

Appendix 10: Safe Recruitment Procedures

The following procedures outline actions to be followed by Managers and Human Resources to ensure safe recruitment.

Pre-application information available at www.colchester.gov.uk/jobs

- A statement that Colchester Borough Council is committed to safeguarding children must accompany all pre-application information regarding any jobs involving working with children.
- Advertisements for any job involving work with children must state a commitment to safeguarding children and the requirement for CRB/ISA checks.
- Information available must state that this is an 'exempted position' from The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- People applying for positions which give them "substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis" to anyone under 18 must declare all previous convictions. These are then subject to CRB checks. Applicants must also declare any cases pending against them. An applicant in this category can be offered a job subject to a successful CRB check. Information must be treated in confidence and not used unfairly against the applicant. NSPCC (2006).
- The job accountability statement must include a commitment to safeguarding, including undertaking relevant staff training.
- The personal specification must include a statement regarding Safeguarding responsibilities.
- A copy of the Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Policy statement must be sent out with all application forms.

Application

- An application form must be completed.
- An equality and diversity monitoring form, including self-disclosure of previous convictions - PER014/1 must be completed.
- Identity must be verified via passport with photocopy on record - PER014/1
- A Criminal Records Bureau/Independent Safeguarding Authority check should be completed. NB: staff working with children or working in a post that has been identified as needing a CRB/ISA check will not be issued with a contract before a clear check has been received.
- Two references must be taken, checked, and kept on record.

Interview

- Two people must interview staff who will be working with children, at least one of whom should have safe recruitment training and recruitment and selection training.
- Any gaps in employment must be identified and questioned.
- Qualifications must be checked and verified with photocopies kept in personal file.

Position Offered

- A contract and medical will be sent out.
- The line manager should arrange an induction, including booking training at the relevant level.
- The line manager should organise supervision and observation of the probationary period.

Appendix 11: Induction Document

All members of staff working for Colchester Borough Council Sport have a duty of care with regard to safeguarding all children who use our facilities and services.

As part of your induction process, you need to read the following Safeguarding Children Policy statement.

Please read this policy carefully, ensuring that you understand it fully.

Policy Statement

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility.

The following legislation and statutory guidance has provided the framework for Colchester Borough Councils Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

- The Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children Act 2004
- Every Child Matters
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Essex Safeguarding Children Board SET Procedures

The welfare of children is paramount; therefore safeguards are in place to protect all children whilst they are using any of Colchester Borough Council Services or facilities.

Relevant agencies will be contacted and involved when necessary.

These Safeguards are:

- Safe recruitment for all staff working with children, including CRB/ISA checks
- Safeguarding induction and training for all staff
- Safeguarding policy and procedures in place to address all areas of the business
- Inter-agency working and information sharing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- A clear line of accountability

Relevant agencies will be contacted and involved when necessary.

Child abuse is categorised into four types of abuse, these being;

- **Neglect**, which occurs when a child's basic physical and emotional needs are not met.
- **Physical**, which occurs when a child is physically hurt or injured by someone.
- **Sexual**, which occurs when a child is used by someone to meet their own sexual needs.
- **Emotional (including bullying)**, which is a psychological form of abuse that also occurs alongside other types of abuse.

Safeguarding children is everyone's business, and whilst it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has taken place, it is your responsibility to report any concern/disclosure/incident or allegation. The person you must report to is listed on your safeguarding staff card.

'Every Child Matters', states the five main outcomes for children as being:

1. Be healthy
2. Stay safe
3. Enjoy and achieve
4. Make a positive contribution
5. Achieve economic well being

Colchester Borough Council has an important role to play in the achievement of the five outcomes for children and young people.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

As part of your commitment to safeguarding children during your employment with Colchester Borough Council you must understand and agree to comply with our Safeguarding Children Policy, attend appropriate safeguarding training and follow the procedures that will be covered during the training.

I understand and agree to comply with Colchester Borough Council Safeguarding Policy statement and will attend the necessary training.

Name.....

Signed..... Date.....

Appendix 12: Safeguarding Children Staff Card

Best practice when working with children

- Treat everybody equally.
- Treat everyone with respect, patience and interest.
- Be a good role model.
- Be approachable to the children in your care.
- Be professional in your verbal communication with children.
- Be aware of, and deal with bullying at once (bullying management).
- Be clear about your role and responsibilities as stated in your job description.
- Dress appropriately.
- Avoid any action that may be misinterpreted.
- Avoid physical contact games with children.
- Do not allow children to use inappropriate behaviour or language unchallenged (behaviour management).
- Always work alongside at least one other member of staff and adhere to correct ratios.
- Never do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves.

Remember that it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to act upon any concern, incident or allegation that may occur.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. If you have any concerns, witness an incident or receive an allegation or disclosure, it is your responsibility to report it to the Designated Person for your service area. These are:

to be completed

If a child discloses information to you about abuse:

- Allow them to speak uninterrupted.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Offer support, but explain that you cannot keep this information secret.

It is your responsibility to report the information clearly to the relevant person above who will instigate the correct reporting procedures, whereby you will be required to record the facts. This must be done as soon as the child is in a suitable, safe environment.

Appendix 13: Photography Policy

Colchester Borough Council offer a wide range of services and facilities, for children. These are enjoyable activities that promote self development and personal/team achievement.

It is therefore important that special events can be recorded via photography or video footage.

Unfortunately such an environment attracts a minority of people who may try to take unauthorised photographic images for wholly inappropriate reasons.

Monitoring photography is becoming increasingly difficult due to advances in technology, for example, mobile phones are easy to conceal whilst the quality of pictures that they can take is improving continuously; any images taken can subsequently be downloaded on to the internet almost immediately.

Colchester Borough Council Photography Policy forms part of our overarching Safeguarding Children Policy and is intended to encourage the legitimate recording of special events whilst preventing any unsuitable, unauthorised photography.

In order to do this effectively, we aim and need to work in partnership with parents, children and all other service users in order to effectively safeguard children using any of our facilities.

Procedure

- Professional/official photographers; at events
- Parents
- Spectators
- Student or amateur photographers
- All other service users

- 1** Any person taking photographic or video footage of any kind must have prior authority to do so from the Manager. **Please note use of mobile phones for the purpose of taking photographic images will not be permitted.** Authorised people will sign in at Reception and then be given a badge which must be worn to inform people that permission has been given. This must be returned and signed back in once the photographs have been taken.
- 2** Photographs of children must never be taken without prior parental consent. This must be signed for using the consent form. In addition to this, the child must also consent to their photograph being taken.
- 3** Images taken for marketing, advertising and media purposes must never include a child's full name, and best practice is not to use a name at all; no personal details should be included about the child such as school, club etc.
- 4** Professional images should focus on the sport or event rather than individual children.
- 5** Images of children must be in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities such as swimming and gymnastics present a much greater risk of potential misuse and therefore best practice is to take photographs that depict children in tracksuits or similar. Exceptions to this would be action shots of the child/ren submerged in water during a race.
- 6** Photographers will never have unsupervised access to children. Staff appropriate to the event being photographed will be present (such as party staff for children's party photographs).
- 7** Photographs must never be taken in any changing areas under any circumstances whatsoever.
- 8** Any suspicion that someone is taking unauthorised photographs within any of the Colchester Borough Council facilities should be reported to management immediately.

Marketing photography refers to:

- Media photographers
- Professional photographers taking images for the purpose of advertising.

NB. Marketing photography is exempt from Procedure 1 as stated above. These photographers will be accompanied at all times by a member of the Marketing team. A log book, kept in the Marketing office contains a record of: date; company; name of photographer; purpose of photo shoot and images being taken.

In accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy this form must be completed by anyone wanting to take photographs or video footage on any premises run by Colchester Borough Council (inside or out).

Section A. Applicant

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Contact Number.....

Permission can only be given with proof of identity, such as photocard driving licence.

Proof of identity provided.....

Venue.....

Relationship of photographer to subject.....

Reason for request/intended.....
purpose for photograph/footage

I declare that the information given above is true and accurate and that any images/footage taken will be used for the stated purpose only.

Signed.....Date.....

Section B. Manager

Authorising Manager's Name.....

Date.....

Proof of identity seen and approved YES NO
(circle as appropriate)

Application approved YES NO
(circle as appropriate)

Date approved.....

Badge issued and signed for in photography badge book YES

Photography Policy and procedure read and understood YES

Signed.....Date.....

Parents/Carers Photography Consent Form

Colchester Borough Council recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all children.

In accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy, we will not permit photographs, video or other images of children and young people to be taken without the consent of parents/carers and children.

Colchester Borough Council will ensure that these images are used solely for the purpose that they are intended in so far as is possible.

Purpose of photograph/video.....

I (parent/carer)

I (child)

consent to the photographing or videoing

of(Name of child)
for the sole purpose as stated above.

Signed.....(parent/carer) Date.....

Signed.....(child) Date.....

Appendix 14: Anti Bullying Policy and Behaviour Management

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Racial or homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual comments and/or suggestions.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- Abusive text messages, phone calls, emails or chatroom messages.

The Individual

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect for individual's feelings and views.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Ensure safety by having anti-bullying rules and practices, developed with the participation of children and young people, carefully explained and displayed for all to see.

Behaviour Management if a child is behaving in an appropriate way:

Clearly and simply explain to the child what they are doing wrong and why it is inappropriate behaviour. Teach them that **they** can make a choice to change how they are behaving.

If the behaviour continues:

- Explain the consequences of their behaviour if it continues; this will be to sit at the side of the room for 5 minutes to allow time to think about what has happened. Ensure that the child understands why they are sitting out and remind them that they are choosing how they behave.

If the behaviour continues:

- Ask the child to sit out for the rest of the class. At an appropriate opportunity have an informal chat with them; try to find out if there is an underlying reason as to why they are continually choosing to misbehave; if this is the case, try to help them talk through the problem. Explain why it is inappropriate behaviour and what the consequences will be if it continues. It can be helpful to get the child to try and understand how their behaviour affects the rest of the group.

If the behaviour continues:

- Explain that it has become necessary to speak to their parent/guardian about the behaviour that has been causing problems. This should be dealt with by the activity co-ordinator and should be viewed as a positive problem solving situation whereby the child is involved.

If the behaviour continues:

- Continue to encourage the child to change their behaviour, always explaining why this is important. At this stage, the activity co-ordinator will need to speak to the Parent/Guardian once again and establish the suitability of the camp/activity for the child in the future if there is no positive way to improve the problem.

Appendix 15: Physical Intervention

- Contact should always be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts.
- Staff should never behave in a way that could be misinterpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interest of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Staff should consider the circumstances and the risks involved with using physical intervention compared to the risks of not using physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must be proportionate to the behaviour of the child and the nature of any harm or damage that they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force, that being the minimum amount of force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property and then applied for the shortest possible period of time.
- Staff should never use methods of physical restraint or intervention which may present an unreasonable risk to the child or staff.
- Staff must never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Any situations whereby physical intervention is used must be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by contacting the Designated Person and completing the concern/incident/allegation form.
- A risk assessment should be carried out after the incident to ensure that in so far as is possible, safeguards can be put in place to prevent any similar situation occurring.

Appendix 16: Adult to Child Ratios

Ratios of staff to children

Children aged under two

- At least one member of staff for every three children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification and have suitable experience of working with children under two.
- At least half of all other staff must hold a relevant level 2 qualification.
- At least half of the staff must have received specific training in the care of babies.
- The member of staff in charge of the babies room must have suitable experience of working with children under two years.

Children aged two

- There must be at least one member of staff for every four children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Children aged three and over

- At least one member of staff for every eight children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.
- At least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Children aged eight and over

- At least one member of staff for every 10 children.
- At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Appendix 17: Missing Children Procedure

When a member of staff becomes aware that a child has gone missing, the supervisor, manager and safeguarding co-ordinator will be informed immediately.

The manager will inform reception and all other operational staff, Reception staff will be responsible for watching the entrance and exits.

The supervisor will begin a thorough search of the building, using all supernumery staff. This will be carried out in a calm manner.

If the child has not been found after five minutes, the child's parents will be informed (if they are not already aware).

If the child has not been found after fifteen minutes, the police will be informed.

The search will continue with as many staff as are available (whilst safety of other children is maintained) until the police arrive and advise further action accordingly.

The manager/safeguarding co-ordinator will be responsible for communication with the police and the parents.

When the situation has been resolved, a thorough risk assessment of the circumstances surrounding the incident will be carried out, with safeguards being implemented where possible or necessary to prevent the situation occurring again.

All relevant agencies will be informed and a comprehensive record of the incident will be kept confidentially.

Appendix 18: Uncollected Children

Every effort will be made to contact a parent/carer using the details supplied on the booking form.

The child/ren will be supervised at all times whilst waiting for their parent/carer to arrive.

Under no circumstances will a member of staff take the child home.

If a child's parents/carers cannot be contacted by staff after one hour, the manager or safeguarding co-ordinator will contact social care direct (number in Appendix 19) for advice, which will be followed.

The child will remain under the care of staff until the parent/carer arrives or until social care takes over responsibility for the child.

Staff must continue to try and contact the parent/carers throughout this process.

All events must be clearly recorded by all relevant staff as well as the safeguarding co-ordinator and duty manager. This record will be kept confidentially by the safeguarding co-ordinator.

Appendix 19: Transporting Children

- All trips outside of any Colchester Borough Council facility must be planned to involve at least two members of staff. In addition to this, correct staff ratios must be adhered to at all times.
- Any potential risks must be identified when planning the trip via a thorough risk assessment which will be recorded in writing. Risk assessments should be continuously reviewed and updated where necessary.
- Adequate and relevant insurance cover must be checked and in place for any transport being used and facility being visited.
- One member of staff for any trip must have Safeguarding Children training. This will entail having responsibility for ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place throughout the trip as well as dealing with any concerns about the safety and welfare of the children.
- All medical details must be clearly recorded and kept by the Designated Person.
- All signing in and out information must be kept by the Designated Person.

Appendix 20: Useful Contact Details

Eastern Region leads for Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOS)	01245 436744
Social Care (all concerns) direct Central telephone numbers	01206 266101/266137
Emergency out of hours contact number	0845 606 1212
Children's Safeguarding Service (allegations against staff)	01245 436744
Police	0300 333 4444
Essex Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit	01206 762412
NSPCC: Free 24 hour Child Protection helpline (can be anonymous)	0808 800 5000
NSPCC: Childline Free 24 hour confidential helpline	0800 1111
NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	0116 2347278
Sports Coach UK (SCUK)	0113 2744802
Ofsted	08456 404040
Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)	01245 430436
Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children	01206 286650

Appendix 20: Useful Contact Details

Working together to safeguard children: Department of Health	www.doh.gov.uk
SET Child Protection Procedures: Essex Safeguarding Children Board	www.escb.co.uk
Every Child Matters: Department of Education and Skills	www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters
Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)	www.escb.co.uk
First Check (NSPCC)	www.nspcc.org.uk
Safer Activities for Everyone (SAFE)	www.safechildprotection.org.uk

Glossary

Agencies: Organisations in the statutory or voluntary sector where staff, paid or unpaid work with or have access to children and/or families. This includes, but is not exclusive to social work, health, education and the police.

Best practice: practice which adheres to professional standards.

Child: The word 'child' and 'children' refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Concern: A suspicion or belief that a child might be in need of help or protection, or that the conduct of another adult or child may be harmful to a child.

Consent: permission or agreement.

Disclosure: the act of a child making information about abusive or harmful experiences known to others.

Exempted positions: individuals appointed to an exempted position can legally be asked to disclose both spent and unspent conviction information. Child care positions are exempted positions.

Grooming: the process of forming a relationship with a child and significant people in the child's life with the ultimate aim of exploiting the relationships by sexually abusing the child.

Harm: actions or behaviours by others which have a detrimental effect on a child's physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Interagency: where more than one agency is working together.

Local Authority: Essex County Council.

Parents: those who have parental rights and responsibilities in relation to the child. For the purpose this Policy also covers carers, guardians and others with primary responsibility for the care of the child.

Partnership: more than one person, agency, professional or community are working together towards shared and agreed aims and share responsibility for decisions and actions.

Policy: a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organisation.

Prevention: to stop something from happening or arising.

Risk Assessment: identifying hazards and who might be affected by them and determining what action needs to be taken to reduce and manage the hazard.

Procedure: series of actions to be followed in order to ensure best practice.

Safeguarding: creating a safe environment for the whole younger generation, as well as protecting those children and young people who are vulnerable or have already been harmed.

PETITIONS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS

(i) Have Your Say speakers

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Andy Hamilton	Provision of storage for mobility scooters at the bus park.	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent by the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Communication, Customers and Leisure on 4 January 2010	4 January 2010
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Mr Barrow	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 2 December 2009	John Loxley	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	David Kennedy	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Richard Pettit	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Paula Whitney	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Tim Oxtan	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Martin Hunt	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	-	14 December 2009
Cabinet 2 & 14 December 2009	Nick Cope	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	-	14 December 2009
Cabinet 2 December 2009	Nigel Hildreth	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School and funding of arts organisations in Colchester	Oral response provided at the meeting and written responses sent on 17 December 2009 and 23 December 2009.	23 December 2009
Cabinet 2 December 2009	Elizabeth Hall	Funding of arts organisation in Colchester	Oral response provided at the meeting and a written response sent by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity on 23 December 2009.	23 December 2009

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet 2 December 2009	Anthony Roberts	Funding of arts organisations in Colchester	Oral response provided at the meeting and a written response sent by the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Diversity on 23 December 2009.	23 December 2009
Council 10 December 2009	Norman Bailey	Removal of trees in Crouch Street	Oral response provided at the meeting and a written response sent by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy on 11 December 2009.	11 December 2009
Council 10 December 2009	Roy Ward	Removal of sloping stairwell from the swimming pool at Leisure World	Oral response provided at the meeting and a written response sent by the Portfolio Holder for Communication, Customers and Leisure on 22 December 2009.	22 December 2009
Cabinet 14 December 2009	Nick Chilvers	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009

Date of Meeting	Details of Member of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet 14 December 2009	Ron Levy	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 14 December 2009	Mr Richards	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009
Cabinet 14 December 2009	Mr Davison	The transfer of land at Norman Way to provide a new access road for Philip Morant School	Oral response provided at the meeting and written response sent on 17 December 2009.	17 December 2009

(ii) Petitions

None received

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

**RECORD OF CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN AS A MATTER OF URGENCY
IN ACCORDANCE WITH CABINET PROCEDURE RULE 22**

Explanatory Note

The Council has established a provision whereby Cabinet Decisions can be taken earlier than the date of the next planned meeting when the Proper Officer considers that the matter is urgent.

By virtue of Cabinet Procedure Rule 22 (Matters of Urgency) such decisions are not subject to call in.

For decisions which are deemed to be Key Decisions, these must be included in the Forward Plan and 14 days must elapse between publication of the Forward Plan and the decision being taken.

In addition, by virtue of Access to Information Procedure Rule 21(1) (Urgency) if the decision is being taken earlier than the published date the decision taker must obtain the agreement of the chairman of Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel that the taking of the decision cannot be reasonably deferred.

Part A – To be completed by the appropriate Cabinet Member/Officer

Title of Report

North Colchester Business Incubation Centre – Construction Contract

Decision Taken

To agree to let the construction contract to Rose Builders Ltd to build the North Colchester Business Incubation Centre (BIC) - a key regeneration project for the borough

Key Decision

Yes

Forward Plan

For Key Decisions state whether details have been included in the Forward Plan (see information at top of this form regarding notice requirements)

Not included in Forward Plan but decision is being made with the consent of the Chairman of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Reasons for the Decision

Specify **all** the reasons for taking the decision

- 1 The project contributes to achieving:
 - The Regional Spatial Strategy's jobs target for the Borough of an additional 14,200 jobs by 2021
 - the Borough's Strategic Plan for 2009 to 2012 - 'enabling job creation' priority
 - The Borough's current Economic Prosperity Strategy for 2007 to 2010 and the carry forward of business incubation objectives in the new Strategy under preparation
 - The Sustainable Community Strategy to increase the new business registration rate in line with the targets set by the Local Area Agreement 2009 to 2012.
2. In particular, the Project offers a strong fit with LAA2 targets especially:
 - NI 151 – Increase the overall employment rate in the Borough
 - NI 171 – New business registration rate in the Borough
- 3 To fulfil the Council's agreement with the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA), the appointed specialist operator to provide new small business incubation space.
- 4 The business case produced by COLBEA shows the BIC will generate a surplus from year 3 onwards which offers the Borough a "profit share" in future years.
- 5 The Council will be the landlord for the building and is not exposed to any direct commercial risks other than default on rent payment.
- 6 The Council has secured funding of £1,000,000 from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). This funding must be spent by 31st March 2010.
- 7 Department Communities and Local Government (DCLG) funding of £960,000 was originally secured for this project, but due to delays Cabinet agreed on 12th March 2008 that this funding was transferred to the Community Stadium project. With the £960, 000 being replaced with Prudential borrowing or capital receipts.
- 8 Contracts are due to be exchanged in January 2010 for the sale of adjacent land and Cabinet has agreed the ring fencing of the receipt.
- 9 Tenders for the construction work have been evaluated and a preferred contractor selected. The tender process was managed by the procurement hub and complied with the Council Constitution. The expected value of the tender was well below the threshold for the OJEU process.
- 10 The project makes a significant contribution to the employment growth needed to match the expected growth in housing as set out in the Council's Core Strategy.

Alternative Options

Specify any other options considered and rejected

- 1 Abandon the project and sell the site for normal commercial development. This would mean that the policy rationale for the project – addressing “market failure” for new business premises – would not be delivered and funding already secured from EEDA would have to be relinquished. Hence, the level of ongoing employment creation envisaged would not be realised, and contributions towards other parts of the Strategic Plan 2009 to 2012 would not be realised. This alternative could not be recommended.
- 2 Rent or purchase existing space. Existing space tends not to be configured in the small to medium sized office footprint required for incubation. The private sector does not generally provide for this market because of perceived risk and low commercial returns. In addition, the EEDA funding of £1,000,000 has been provided on the basis of the creation of a new purpose built facility. This alternative could not be recommended.

Conflict of Interest

None

Type of Decision

Strategic

Dispensation

None

Authorisation

Signature _____ Amanda Chidgey _____

Designation _____ Proper Officer _____

Date _____ 7 January 2010 _____

Signature _____ Martin Hunt _____

Designation _____ Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Communication, Customers and Leisure

Date _____ 7 January 2010 _____

(NB For Key Decisions five clear days must have elapsed between the report being made available (see date in **Key Decision** box above) and the decision being taken ie signed)

Part B – To be completed by the Proper Officer

Reference Number

Democratic Services to allocate unique reference number for each decision
N/a

Implementation

Date decision can be implemented _____ 7 January 2010 _____

Please note that report accompanying this decision contains exempt information and is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

URGENCY AUTHORISATION

(Decisions that require urgent determination made in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 are not subject to the call-in procedure).

I hereby certify that the decision indicated below is urgent, that executive action cannot be delayed for the usual five working day period, and it will not be possible to provide five clear days' notice of the decision to be taken.

Signed: Andrew Weavers
Proper Officer

Dated: 7 January 2010.....

Signed: Christopher Arnold
Chairman of Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Dated: 7 January 2010.....

TITLE OF REPORT: North Colchester Business Incubation Centre – Construction Contract

RECORD OF DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - REF NO: N/A

OR CABINET MEETING DATE: 27/01/2010 ITEM NO:

PARTICULARS OF MATTER:

To agree to let the construction contract to Rose Builders Limited to build the North Colchester Business Incubation Centre (BIC) – a key regeneration project for the Borough.

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REASONS FOR CONSIDERING THE MATTER TO BE URGENT

The Council has secured £1,000,000 of funding for from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) for this project. This funding must be spent by the 31st March 2010 or it will be withdrawn. This would result in the Council needing to either replace the funding from other sources or cancel the project.

To ensure as far as practical that the EEDA funding is not lost a construction contractor needs to be appointed immediately. Delaying a decision until the next Cabinet meeting on the 27th January 2010 would put the funding in jeopardy.

NB: Copy of signed form to be circulated to Group Leaders and appropriate Group Spokespersons and placed in the Members' Room.

