

# **The Council Meeting**

Council Chamber, Town Hall

11 December 2008 at  
6:00pm

# Information for Members of the Public

## Access to information and meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. You also have the right to see the agenda, which is usually published 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available at [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) or from Democratic Services.

## Have Your Say!

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

## Private Sessions

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

## Mobile phones, pagers, cameras, audio recorders

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

## Access

There is wheelchair access to the Town Hall from West Stockwell Street. There is an induction loop in all the meeting rooms. If you need help with reading or understanding this document please take it to Angel Court Council offices, High Street, Colchester or telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call, and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

## Facilities

Toilets are located on the second floor of the Town Hall, access via the lift. A vending machine selling hot and cold drinks is located on the ground floor.

## Evacuation Procedures

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

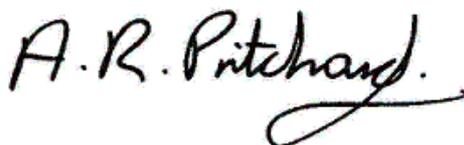
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# COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

23 December 2008

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall on **11 December 2008 at 6:00pm** for the transaction of the business stated below.



**Chief Executive**

## AGENDA

### **Pages**

#### **1. Welcome and Announcements**

(a) The Mayor to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to invite the Chaplain to address the meeting. The Mayor to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

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

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

#### **2. Have Your Say!**

(a) The Mayor to ask members of the public to indicate if they wish to ask a question, make a statement or present a petition on any matter relating to the business of the Council – either on an item on the agenda for this meeting or on a general matter not on this agenda (Council Procedure Rule 6(2)).

(b) The Mayor to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to address the Council on a general matter not on this agenda.

(Note: A period of up to 15 minutes is available for general statements and questions under 'Have Your Say!').

#### **3. Minutes**

**1 - 9**

A ... Motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### **4. Mayor's Announcements**

Mayor's Announcements (if any) and matters arising pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 8(3).

## 5. Declarations of Interests

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

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 judgment of the public interest.

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

## 6. Items (if any) referred under the Call-in Procedure

To consider any items referred by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel or the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel under the Call-In Procedure because they are considered to be contrary to the policy framework of the Council or contrary to, or not wholly in accordance with the budget.

## 7. Recommendations of the Cabinet, Panels and Committees

- Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester

10 - 14

B... Motion that the Council consider Cabinet's recommended response to the Essex County Council consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester as set out in draft minute 41 of the Cabinet's meeting of 3 December 2008, subject to the amendments below, and to further inform the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships before a formal response to the consultation is submitted. The recommended response to be amended as follows:-

(a) In the first sentence of paragraph 3, the word "any" to be deleted and replaced by the word "the".

(b) The text in paragraph 3(a) to be deleted and replaced with the following:-

*(a) a written guarantee stating categorically that such an establishment will be located at the existing Charles Lucas Art College site.*

- ii. Visual Arts Facility - firstsite:newsite **15 - 17**
- C... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 42 of the Cabinet meeting of 3 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- iii. Office Accommodation Strategy: Purchase of Rowan House **18 - 19**
- D... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 43 of the Cabinet meeting of 3 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- iv. Borrowing Limits and Prudential Indicators - purchase of the freehold of Rowan House **20**
- E... Motion that the recommendation (a) contained in draft minute 44 of the Cabinet meeting of 3 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- v. Borrowing Limits and Prudential Indicators - firstsite:newsite
- F... Motion that the recommendation (b) contained in draft minute 44 of the Cabinet meeting of 3 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- vi. Appointment of Deputy Mayor **21**
- G... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 46 of the Cabinet meeting of 3 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- vii. Adoption of the Colchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document **22 - 23**
- H... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 12 of the Local Development Framework Committee meeting of 2 December 2008 be approved and adopted.
- 8. Schedules of Decisions taken by Portfolio Holders **24 - 31****
- To note schedules covering the period 26 September 2008 - 28 November 2008.
- 9. Questions to Cabinet Members and Chairmen pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10**
- To receive and answer pre-notified questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10(1) followed by any oral questions (ie not submitted in advance) in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10(3).
- (Note: A period of up to 90 minutes is available for pre-notified questions and oral questions by Members of the Council to Cabinet Members and Chairmen (or in their absence, Deputy Chairmen)).
- The following pre-notified questions have been received:-
- Questioner: Councillor Bouckley**
- To the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity:-
- The LGA publicises a pioneering partnership between the disability organisation DisabledCO and local authorities so that disabled people may find out in advance from an online guide whether a building is accessible for wheelchair

users, or if a restaurant offers menus in large print or Braille, for example; Chelmsford is on the site, but not Colchester, and will the portfolio holder kindly indicate if we will be cooperating with this scheme, and, if so, when?

**Questioner: Councillor Bouckley**

To the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity:-

Will the portfolio holder confirm that no direct financial support will be given to West Mersea Town Council in providing allotments on the island for the first time to meet the growing demand from residents?

**Questioner: Councillor Harris**

To the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business

Could the Portfolio Holder tell how the bus concessionary fare scheme is going – is it on budget or is the Council in credit?

**Questioner: Councillor Harris**

To the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity:-

Could the Portfolio Holder tell how far the swimming scheme is going for Over 60s and Under 16s – how is the funding coming from government?

**Questioner: Councillor Harris**

To the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods:-

How is the new "post Inspace" organisation going - how is it bedding in?

**Questioner: Councillor Naish**

To the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy

Could the Leader of the Council give an undertaking that if any contractual or financial irregularities are found to have taken place in regard to the Visual Arts Facility under the previous administration that the appropriate authorities will be informed to take action against those members involved?

**Questioner: Councillor Naish**

To the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration

Could the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration give an update on the proposed A12 road junction and Park and Ride at the Cuckoo Farm location?

**Questioner: Councillor Barlow**

To the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business

The Portfolio Holder will know that reviews of the Residents Parking schemes for St. Marys, the Dutch Quarter and Castle and Roman Road, all in Castle Ward, have been overdue for some years. Can he update me on the progress of these reviews?

**Questioner: Councillor Goss**

To the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business

Could the Portfolio Holder tell us his views about the very false statements issued by the opposition on the following:

- (i) Councillor Sue Lissimore claiming in the Evening Gazette that Council Tax would rise by around £60 for each householder due to the £4,000,000 being temporarily stuck in Iceland.
- (ii) Councillor Robert Davidson claiming in the postbag of the Standard that on May 1<sup>st</sup> all monies were moved away from Iceland by the Conservatives.
- (iii) The Conservative "In-touch" that has been put out across Colchester claiming that the Tories first raised this in March 2008.

**Questioner: Councillor Goss**

To the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

What are your views about the very false statements issued by the opposition that weekly black sack collections would cease under this administration. What are the facts please?

**Questioner: Councillor Goss**

To the Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers

What is your view on the state of the VAF when you picked it up? How did you feel and what were your first impressions please?

**Questioner Councillor P. Higgins**

To the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services

Can the Portfolio Holder organise a more sensible scheduling time for the sweeping of streets in, for example, New Town?

This is prompted by the observation, often made, that the sweeping vehicles try and sweep streets before 8 in the morning when the streets are clogged with vehicles and the gutters are inaccessible, and on the day before the rubbish collection. If the sweep were in the middle of the day after the collection, the spillage could be cleared and there would be far fewer vehicles to obstruct the sweeping.

**10. Notices of Motion pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11**

I... (i) Greenways Care Home

Proposer: Councillor J. Young

This Council:

· Notes with concern the closure of Greenways Care Home in

Colchester and supports the need for a serious case review into the circumstances of the closure and the treatment of the former residents;

- Agrees to inform Essex County Council that many warnings were given from many different quarters of the potential pitfalls and dangers of selling off its remaining council-owned care homes of which Greenways was one;

- Demands that Essex County Council discloses what intentions are proposed for the Greenways site as, at present, day care services are still being offered there and assurances are required that this will continue;

- Requires written confirmation from Essex County Council that the care of older people in Colchester will remain of the highest priority for Social Services and would offer an invitation to the relevant County Portfolio Holder to attend the Borough Council's Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Panel to explain the circumstances which have led to the recent situation at Greenways.

## **11. Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer**

**32 - 33**

B... Motion that the recommendations contained in the Head of Corporate Management's report be approved and adopted.

## **12. Reports Referred to in Recommendations**

**34 - 242**

The following reports are submitted for information and are referred to in the recommendations specified in item 7 on the agenda for the meeting:-

Cabinet report on Essex County Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester

Cabinet report on Visual Arts Facility - firstsite:newsite

Cabinet report on Office Accommodation Strategy: Purchase of Rowan House

Cabinet report on Borrowing Limits and Prudential Indicators

Local Development Framework Committee report on Adoption of the Colchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document

## **13. Urgent items**

To consider any business not specified in this summons which by reason of special circumstances the Mayor determines should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

## **14. Exclusion of the Public**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 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).



# COUNCIL MEETING

## 8 OCTOBER 2008

*Present:-*            **The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Spyvee)**  
**Councillors Arnold, Barlow, Barton, Bentley, Blandon, Blundell, Bouckley, Chapman, Chillingworth, Chuah, Cook, Cope, Cory, Davidson, Davies, Dopson, Elliott, Fairley-Crowe, Fisher, Ford, Foster, Gamble Goss, Hall, Hardy, Harris, Hazell, P. Higgins, T. Higgins, Hogg, Hunt, Jowers, Kimberley, Knight, Lewis, Lilley, Lissimore, Maclean, Manning, Martin, Naish, Offen, B. Oxford, G. Oxford, P. Oxford, Pyman, Quarrie, Scott-Boutell, Smith, Sutton, Sykes, Taylor, Tod, Turrell, Willetts, J. Young and T. Young.**

The meeting was opened with prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain, The Reverend Doctor Chris Garland

### **17. Election of Mayor**

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Davidson, SECONDED by Councillor Hunt and SUPPORTED by Councillors T. Young and G. Oxford and –

*RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY* that Councillor Margaret Fairley-Crowe be elected Mayor of this Borough for the remainder of the 2008-09 Municipal Year.

Councillor Fairley-Crowe took the customary oath and made and subscribed the declaration of acceptance of office.

The Mayor then took the Chair and returned thanks for her election.

The Mayor indicated that Pam Purcell would act as the Mayor's Escort and that the Mayor's chaplain and charities would remain as appointed by the Late Mayor.

### **18. Adjournment**

*RESOLVED* that the meeting be adjourned for a short period.

## **COUNCIL MEETING 8 OCTOBER 2008 (RECONVENED)**

*Present:-*           **The Mayor (Councillor Fairley-Crowe)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Spyvee)  
Councillors Arnold, Barlow, Barton, Bentley,  
Blandon, Blundell, Bouckley, Chapman,  
Chillingworth, Chuah, Cook, Cope, Cory,  
Davidson, Davies, Dopson, Elliott, Fisher, Ford,  
Foster, Gamble Goss, Hall, Hardy, Harris, Hazell,  
P. Higgins, T. Higgins, Hogg, Hunt, Jowers,  
Kimberley, Knight, Lewis, Lilley, Lissimore,  
Maclean, Manning, Martin, Naish, Offen, B.  
Oxford, G. Oxford, P. Oxford, Pyman, Quarrie,  
Scott-Boutell, Smith, Sutton, Sykes, Taylor, Tod,  
Turrell, Willetts, J. Young and T. Young.**

### **19. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 May 2008 and 17 July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **20. Have Your Say**

Jim Watson addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(2). On three occasions his plastic recycling had not been collected. He had raised this with the Council each time it had happened but the problem kept recurring and on the most recent occasion his black bag waste had also not been collected. Councillor T. Young, Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services, responded and assured Mr Watson that he these problems were being addressed.

Ronessa Knock addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(2). She explained that funding for the arts by Colchester Borough Council, Essex County Council and the Arts Council had brought great benefits to the community and asked how committed the Council now was to sustaining continued investment in the arts in Colchester. Councillor T. Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity, explained that the Council remain committed to the arts in Colchester and that a full written response would be sent.

Nick Chilvers addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(2) about communication issues. He believed that the Council needed to think more carefully about how it communicated with the public. The lack of communication on sensitive subjects allowed myths and rumours to grow. For example people wanted a clear unambiguous statement on wheelie bins. A clearer statement about the position on the bus station should have been made when the administration came into office. The lack of public comment on the termination of the Inspace contract heightened the perception of a whitewash. Better use should be made of the notice boards outside the Town Hall and of

libraries. The Council should ban the use of jargon. The Council had an opportunity to be candid in the forthcoming report on the Visual Arts Facility.

Paula Whitney addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(2). She believed that the consultation process leading to the identification of Bradwell as a site for a new nuclear power station had been flawed. The Council's withdrawal from the PFI bid and its opposition to the Waste Strategy was welcomed. She called on the opposition not to take a party political stance on this issue and support the administration.

Andy Hamilton addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 6(2). He explained that he had met the Council's auditor on 2 September. He believed that the Audit Commission's Inspection letter for 2007/08 about the Council's accounts was misleading in respect of the Visual Arts Facility. He believed that the Council had been cavalier in allocating expenditure to the correct account. He had been disappointed with the Auditor's response to his concerns and he would be approaching the relevant government department.

## **21. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor announced that the Courier had won the "External Newspaper or Magazine" award at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) Excellence Awards.

Councillor Hogg presented the Mayor with a golden euro minted in 1997 especially for Avignon which had been presented to him on a recent visit to Avignon. The Mayor thanked Councillor Hogg.

## **22. Schedules of Decisions taken by Portfolio Holders**

It was *RESOLVED* that the schedules of decisions taken by Portfolio Holders be noted.

## **23. Questions to Cabinet Members and Chairmen**

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Pre-notified Questions</b>		
Councillor Cook	Can the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services update the full council on how far he has got on the following improvements to help safe public movement in the night time economy:-  (i) installing a public safety barrier between the queuing public and the taxi rank outside Marks & Spencer's store in the high street;  (ii) the other Taxi initiative of increasing the number of taxi ranks in the town centre to include one in Head Street and another smaller one in Queen Street.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
Councillor Lilley	After spending an evening with the Licensing Enforcement Team and seeing the vast amounts of rubbish and food thrown down on the pavements in the High Street, could the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services tell me who does the cleaning up and do the Food outlets in the High Street contribute towards the cost of cleaning up their rubbish and if not, why not?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor J. Young	Was the Leader of the Council aware that this year is the 60 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the NHS. We also know that both our health trusts are performing well keeping residents of Colchester healthy. What plans does the Borough have to mark this momentous occasion?	Direct oral answer given by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy
Councillor P. Higgins	Last year saw the abandonment of some recycling collections because of high winds. However this bad weather was forecast well in advance. Does the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services agree that there should be contingency plans in place to deal with adverse weather and have steps been taken to minimise disruption to collections in the coming winter?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor P. Higgins	The Council Care Home at 95 Winnock Rd is now in a dilapidated and perhaps hazardous state and great concern has been expressed by local residents at a number of public meetings on the matter. When will the home be closed and what steps are being taken in the meantime to ensure that it is in a reasonable state of repair?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods.

### **Oral Questions**

Councillor Scott-Boutell	Will the Leader of the Council write to the Leader of Wootton Bassett Town Council to offer thanks and support for the dignified manner in which the town and its residents mark the repatriation of Armed Forces casualties?	Direct oral answer given by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy.
Councillor Harris	The success of introducing a 9.00 am start to the concessionary fares scheme and whether other Essex authorities were following Colchester's lead on this issue.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
Councillor Harris	Could the Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers arrange publicity for the concessionary fares scheme in the next issue of the Courier?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers.
Councillor Harris	The provision of information about the scheme for free swimming for the over 60s and whether this could be extended to include swimming lessons.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.
Councillor Blundell	The timescale for a permanent appointment to the role of Town Serjeant.	Written answer to be provided by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy.
Councillor G. Oxford	Could the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services pass on thanks to all those involved in the successful day of action at Highwoods.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor G. Oxford	Whether the Council has any investments in the Icelandic bank, Landsbanki.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.
Councillor Ford	The provision of an opportunity to congratulate all Colcestrians who had taken part in the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games,	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.
Councillor Naish	The latest position on, and likely opening date of, the Visual Arts Facility.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers.
Councillor Naish	The guidance given to Councillors and Council employees on attending work if they have 'flu and whether the 'flu jab should be made available to all Councillors and Council employees.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.
Councillor Barlow	Whether the Council had received the £100 000 promised for recycling initiatives by Essex County Council?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships.

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
Councillor Chillingworth	The success of the clear plastic sacks introduced by the previous administration for the collection of recyclable materials and future waste collection arrangements.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Chillingworth	What Council services would be cut to fund the locking and unlocking of the Serjeant's Mess?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.
Councillor Maclean	The removal of funding for town centre traffic problems.	Direct oral answer provided by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning.
Councillor Willetts	Open government	Direct oral answer given by the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Strategy.
Councillor Willetts	The provision of an accessible customer service centre on the High Street after the closure of Angel Court.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Customers and Communication.
Councillor Willetts.	Expenditure by the Council in the local area.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.
Councillor Willetts	The future of the Chairman of Colchester Borough Homes.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods.
Councillor Willetts	The decision not to proceed with the installation of new public toilets at Mill Road Car Park, Dedham.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Chapman	Progress on establishing a sustainable fund for the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning.

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
Councillor Chapman	How savings would impact on the production of the Courier and whether it was planned to allow commercial advertising in the Courier?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers.
Councillor Hogg	What measures were being taken to consolidate the gains made in the Action Day at Highwoods and could the information be fed into Neighbourhood Action Panels?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Arnold	When would the administration implement the recommendation from the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 8 September 2008, accepted by Cabinet on 10 September 2008, that when funding was proposed to be withdrawn from an item previously agreed, a description of the impact of the changes should be published simultaneously?	Written answer to be given by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy.
Councillor Arnold	How would the Council capture the cultural legacy of the 2012 Olympics?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.
Councillor Arnold	How had the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships fulfilled the duty to promote partnership working with Essex County Council on waste issues?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships.
Councillor Arnold	How would the Council satisfy the need for car parking during the period of peak demand between October half term and early January?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.
Councillor Arnold	The timescale for publication of details of how the Council was meeting the targets in the Labour manifesto.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Lewis	The timescale for housing voids since the termination of the Inspace contract.	Written answer to be given by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy.

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Response</b>
Councillor Lewis	Whether any nightclubs or fast food outlets take responsibility for street cleaning outside their premises.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Hazell	The performance of the three major arts organisations in Colchester against their Service Level Agreements with the Council.	Written answer to be given by the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity.
Councillor Hall	Whether the Council would pursue an award under the Purple Flag scheme.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services.
Councillor Hall	When would the Council start to recycle cartons?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships.
Councillor Lissimore	The effect of the credit crunch on the workload at Angel Court and the current backlog of housing benefit claims.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business and written answer also to be provided.
Councillor Taylor	The current position on the Council's budget.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.
Councillor Taylor	What initiatives were in place to secure funding for the development of local road schemes to link into the new junction off the A12?	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration.
Councillor Bentley	The prospects of recovering Council investments in Landsbanki.	Direct oral answer given by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business.

**24. Notices of Motion // Ward Councillor Representations at Licensing Sub-Committee hearings**

It was proposed by Councillor Harris that:-

“This Council believes that:

- (i) The concept of the Licensing Act 2003 was to permit public consultation and for affected residents to “Have their Say”
- (ii) The effect of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005 is that a Ward Councillor is precluded from speaking at a Hearing on a licensing matter within their ward unless a resident living in the vicinity of the licensed premises nominates him/her to speak on his / her behalf.
- (iii) This Council believes in the right of residents to have their say and for elected Borough Councillors to also have this right.
- (iv) This Council further believes that the legislation should be changed so that a Ward Councillor should have a right to speak to the decision-making Licensing Sub-Committee as an elected representative of the appropriate ward.
- (v) This Council resolves to make representations to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport requesting that the legislation is changed to enable Ward Councillors to have this right (as already given at meetings of the Planning Committee).

The motion was thereupon approved and adopted (MAJORITY voted FOR).

**25. Local Highway Panel // Expenses Incurred by Parish Representatives**

*RESOLVED* that the recommendations in the Head of Corporate Management’s report be approved and adopted subject to the approval of expenses being backdated to the start of the 2008-09 municipal year.

## **Agenda item 8(i)**

### **Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 3 December 2008**

#### **41. Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester**

The Head of Life Opportunities submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix B to these minutes in the Minute Book. Gareth Mitchell, Head of Life Opportunities, attended to assist the Panel.

Bob Russell MP addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). He hoped that the Council would unanimously oppose the closures of Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley schools and that a named vote should be taken when the matter was considered by Council. He expressed support for the proposal put forward by Alderman Blaxill, Stanway and Thomas, Lord Audley schools to create a single school operating on three sites, commonly known as option 4. He was concerned that the consultation paper appeared to dismiss this idea before it had been properly considered.

Councillor Harris attended, and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. The closure of Thomas, Lord Audley school would rip the heart out of the local community. It would also increase the number of children having to undertake long journeys to school and impact on their ability to take part in after school activities. The senior management had worked hard to put the school on a sound footing and results were improving. He supported option 4 which he believed would bring long term benefits to future generations in Berechurch and also offer greater career choices to staff at the three schools.

Councillor Offen attended, and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet. He expressed concern that the County Council's preferred option would mean Colchester would no longer have any smaller secondary schools. A number of children thrived in smaller schools. There was little or no further room at Stanway or Philip Morant to take further pupils and if forced to take them, they would become too large. Option 1 would also impact particularly severely on service families, who deserved to be treated better. Ofsted had reported improvements in Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley and if option 4 was implemented, statutory targets on results would be met. Thomas, Lord Audley had recently been transformed and was now an effective school.

Councillor Naish attended, and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet in support of option 4. The closure of Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley would breakup the communities they served and

friendships amongst pupils. The increased travel that would result would be contrary to the Council's policies on carbon management.

Councillor Dopson, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnership, stressed the importance of issues involved in the consultation and in view of this, it was recommended that the Cabinet's recommended response be referred to full Council for a wider debate. In discussion Cabinet considered that the response to the consultation should address the following matters:-

- Further clarification on the further funding referred to in the consultation document and written guarantees as to when this money would be spent on secondary schools in Colchester.
- Colchester's secondary schools had a history of good partnership working and this should continue, regardless of the outcome of the consultation.
- Primary schools had largely been left out of the consultation process, and an ongoing dialogue with the primary schools should be encouraged, regardless of the outcome of the consultation.
- The closure of Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley should be opposed.
- Option 4, which was a local solution and in line with the principles of localism supported by the County Council, should be supported by Colchester Borough Council. This would effectively put on a formal basis what was already happening.
- The infrastructure at Sir Charles Lucas Art College was not fit for purpose, but it remained an important focus for the community. Replacement buildings for Sir Charles Lucas would be welcomed, on the basis that it would continue to serve the existing priority admission areas. It should also retain the existing number of parent governors and terms and conditions for staff.
- If as result of the consultation, Philip Morant needed to expand this could lead to the loss of open land at Norman Way. The Cabinet firmly opposed any such loss.
- The impact of the proposals in the consultation on transport and congestion in Colchester should be addressed, together with the impact of long journeys to school on children and families.

*RESOLVED* that:-

(a) The Cabinet recommend that the Council respond to the Essex County Council consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester in the following terms:

*"1. The Council welcomes the announcement that £100 million will be invested in the town's secondary school education, but seeks written clarification from Essex County Council as to:-*

(a) *how such a precise sum has been arrived at;*

(b) *what discussion have take place between Essex County Council and the Department for Children, Schools and Families;*

(c) *A guaranteed timetable of when money will be spent on secondary schools in Colchester.*

2. *Colchester Borough Council does not, however, support the closure of the Thomas, Lord Audley College at Monkwick and the Alderman Blaxill School at Shrub End because this would leave both these communities – and the whole of South Colchester – devoid of a local secondary school, and therefore supports an alternative proposal known as option 4, which would put on a formal basis what is already operating in practice, as follows:*

*That Thomas Lord Audley Collage, Alderman Blaxill School and the Stanway School should operate as one school on the three existing sites under the stewardship of an Executive Head as proposed by the existing governing bodies of the three schools.*

3. *Colchester Borough Council recognises any replacement for the current buildings at Sir Charles Lucas Arts College would be welcomed conditional upon:-*

(a) *a written guarantee stating categorically that such an establishment will be located at Greenstead, with a strong preference for the existing Sir Charles Lucas Arts College;*

(b) *pupils from the existing priority admissions area of the St Anne's and St Andrew's Wards will be guaranteed places;*

(c) *there will be no reduction in the current number of parent governors;*

(d) *the existing terms and conditions of employment will be continued;*

(e) *it should be subject to democratic accountability in a similar way as all other secondary schools.*

4. *Colchester Borough Council notes that, for many years, secondary schools in Colchester have had a good partnership working arrangement. The Council therefore seeks assurances that all education establishments providing secondary school education will be required to particulate in future partnership working arrangements.*

5. *Colchester Borough Council strongly opposes the loss of any open land at Norman Way, between Prettygate and Christ Church wards, for new buildings or car parking for Philip Morant School.*

6. *Colchester Borough Council supports the principle of the Government's aim and objectives of sustainable communities, safe routes to schools and reducing transportation and therefore observes:-*

(a) *that the three options put forward for secondary school reorganisation in Colchester are, in some respects, contrary to government policies;*

(b) *will lead to increased traffic movements and traffic congestions on the town's already busy road system;*

(c) *the costs to parents of paying for transport for their children to attend school elsewhere will impact severely on family budgets so any changes which result in significant shifts in pupil populations should be accompanied by free bus routes;*

(d) *a reduction in the prospect for many pupils being able to participate in after-school activities.*

7. *Colchester Borough Council urges residents to support a final outcome that is based on Option 4, for the reasons set above, and pledges to campaign to urge Essex County Council and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, to accept what is a Colchester solution for Colchester's secondary education needs.*

8. *Colchester Borough Council welcomes an ongoing dialogue with Essex County Council as the Local Authority over the future of secondary education and any resulting impact on primary schooling during the length of the consultation process and beyond, regardless of the option(s) selected by Essex County Council."*

(b) The Cabinet's recommended response be referred to Full Council to gather the views of all Councillors prior to a formal response being submitted to Essex County Council.

(c) Responsibility be delegated to the Portfolio for Performance and Partnerships for responding to the consultation on the Council's behalf following the debate at Full Council.

## REASONS

(a) The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships requested that this matter be referred to Cabinet to provide an opportunity for Cabinet to agree a recommended response to the consultation.

(b) As the district local authority, the Council recognised the importance of educational performance in improving the life opportunities of local children and young people.

(c) As a signatory to the Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA), the Council had agreed to 'have regard' to the LAA targets that relate to education. The Council was also working in partnership with other agencies towards the achievement of more local Life Opportunities targets relating to educational attainment through the Colchester Public Service Partnership. These targets were set out in Appendix 1 of the Head of Life Opportunities report.

(d) The Council was an active member of the Colchester Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Board, the statutory partnership responsible for overseeing outcomes for children and young people in Colchester borough, including those that relate to educational attainment. The Council was represented on this important partnership by the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships and the Head of Life Opportunities.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

Cabinet could have chosen not to agree a recommended response and not to refer the consultation response to Full Council. To do so would have been to miss the opportunity for all Councillors to provide input to a consultation on options that would have a significant impact on the life of the borough.

The Council could have chosen not to respond to the consultation. To do so would have been to miss the opportunity to influence the provision of secondary education in Colchester borough in the future, something that has a material effect on the wellbeing and life opportunities of local children and young people.

## Agenda item 8(ii)

### Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 3 December 2008

#### 42. Visual Arts Facility – “firstsite:newsite”

The Executive Director (Ian Vipond) submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix C to these minutes in the Minute Book.

Bob Russell MP addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). Investment in the Visual Arts Facility (VAF), which was not loved by residents, was not a priority, given the economic climate. Concern was expressed at the level of professional fees, which now stood at £3.8 million. The option proposed was the least worst option open to the Council.

Dorian Kelly addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). He considered that the VAF would bring economic benefits and prestige to Colchester, but there had been clear failings in the management of the project. A project manager and clerk of works should have been appointed. It was suggested that it might be more sensible to pay the loan back over a shorter period. However, even at the revised cost, the VAF was being delivered at a cheap price for an art gallery.

Andy Hamilton addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). He considered that there was overwhelming public opposition to the VAF and expressed concern that the independent investigation into circumstances surrounding the construction of the VAF had not commenced yet. He did not have confidence that firstsite would be able to manage the VAF adequately. He noted that the Arts Council was facing cuts and may not be in a position to provide further funding to the project and the £2 million being sought may prove to be an underestimate of the costs required. In response, Councillor Hunt, Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers, explained that the Council was committed to an independent investigation, but partners did not believe that it was appropriate for this to commence now. However, the project was now subject to rigorous scrutiny. Through the terms of the Agreement with the Arts Council, the Council was obliged to lease the VAF to firstsite, but following recent meetings he was optimistic that they had a robust and viable business plan.

Councillor Harris attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet. He believed that the administration had inherited a badly managed project and was now in a very difficult position. He expressed concern about the impact of the further funding on the delivery of services to residents.

Councillor Naish attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet to express concern about the provision of additional funding to the project, which could be better spent on services to residents.

Councillor Goss attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet to express concern about the management of the project and in particular the decision to agree to unlimited liability for any cost over-runs.

Councillor Hunt, Portfolio Holder for Communication and Customers, and Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business, introduced the report and explained the background to the proposal for a further £2 million of capital be made available to the VAF project. It was emphasised that if this proposal was not agreed the alternative options were either to fund the project itself at a projected cost of £7.6 million, or to abandon the project which would mean that partners grants would need to be returned at costs of between £11.2 million and £15.2 million. The options faced by the Council were as a result of the previous administration's management of the project. Particular concern was expressed about proceeding with the construction of the VAF before a signed contract was in place and the decision in April 2008 to sign an agreement making the Council liable for any cost over-runs, when it was already clear that the project was in difficulties.

Councillor Tim Young, Portfolio Holder for Street Services, and Councillor Tina Dopson, Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships, explained that the Labour Group had consistently opposed the proposal for the VAF on this site and would abstain from voting on this proposal.

*RECOMMENDED* to Council that a provisional sum of £2 million of capital be made available to the Visual Arts Facility (VAF) 'firstsite:newsite' project subject to a number of conditions as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the Executive Director's report and that the capital programme be amended to reflect the forecast additional cost (TWO ABSTAINED from voting).

#### *REASONS*

The project costs had overrun compared to the funding that had been made available from a number of funders. The funders of the project were each being asked to allocate further funding to this project and the Council needed to consider whether an additional sum of capital should be allocated to the project to ensure its completion.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

The proposed recommendation was based on the funders jointly agreeing to find the required finance to finish this project. The Council could fund the completion of the project itself at a projected cost of £7.6m or it could decide that it did not wish to put further funding into the project. This would be likely to have meant that the other funders would seek the return of their original funding, if the intended purpose of their grants was not being achieved, at a

cost of between £11.2m and £15.2m. This would also have left the Council with an unfinished and unusable building.

## Agenda item 8(iii)

### Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 3 December 2008

#### 43. Office Accommodation Strategy: Purchase of Rowan House

The Executive Director (Ann Wain) submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix D to these minutes in the Minute Book.

Andy Hamilton addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(2). He did not believe that the Council had the necessary skills to manage the building and was concerned that the Council was borrowing a large sum to purchase a depreciating asset. In addition, Rowan House was only easily accessible to car drivers.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Business, explained that this was a very prudent deal that would save the Council money and there would also be benefits for the Housing Revenue Account. Councillor Theresa Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Diversity, explained that the Council remained committed to providing a town centre presence for face to face contact with customers.

*RESOLVED* that the Council should buy the freehold of Rowan House.

*RECOMMENDED* to Council that:-

- (a) The capital spend to buy the freehold of Rowan House be included in the capital programme.
- (b) Additional prudential borrowing be authorised to fund the purchase the freehold of Rowan House.

#### *REASONS*

- (a) The purchase of Rowan House made good financial sense as outlined in the financial implications of the Executive Director's report. It was cheaper to buy the building and fund the borrowing than to continue to rent. The Council would also own the asset.
- (b) It would also increase flexibility as the Council would hold the freehold.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

- (a) The alternative option would be continue to lease. However, as shown in the financial implications of the Executive Director's report, it was cheaper to fund the borrowing needed to buy the building than to continue to pay rent.

(b) The Council's overarching accommodation strategy was based on consolidating into a single office building. All options were considered. However as the Council was tied to the lease at Rowan House until at least 2014 and potentially until 2022, the only financially viable option was to remain in Rowan House, whether it was rented or owned.

## Agenda items 8(iv) & (v)

### Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 3 December 2008

#### 44. Borrowing Limits and Prudential Indicators

The Head of Resource Management submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix E to these minutes in the Minute Book.

(a) *RECOMMENDED* to Council that changes to the Council's prudential indicators be approved in respect of borrowing of £8.182 million in respect of the proposed purchase of the freehold of Rowan House;

(b) *RECOMMENDED* to Council that changes to the Council's prudential indicators be approved in respect of borrowing of £2 million in respect of the firstsite:newsite project.

#### *REASONS*

The items at minutes 42 and 43 above set out proposals to make the following changes to the capital programme:

- Inclusion of £8.182 million in respect of the purchase of Rowan House;
- An addition of £2 million funded by the Council in respect of the firstsite:newsite project subject to certain conditions

Both proposals were made on the assumption that the capital cost would be funded through borrowing.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

**Agenda items 8(vi)**

**Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 3 December 2008**

**46. Appointment of Deputy Mayor**

Consideration was given to the appointment of the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2009-10.

Councillor Davidson nominated Councillor Lewis as Deputy Mayor for the 2009-10 Municipal Year. Councillor Hunt and Councillor T. Young both endorsed the nomination of Councillor Lewis

*RECOMMENDED* to Council that Councillor Sonia Lewis be nominated for appointment as Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Colchester 2009-10 Municipal Year.

**Extract from the draft minutes of the  
Local Development Framework Committee's meeting  
held on 2 December 2008**

**Councillor Jowers (in respect of his role as an Essex County Council Cabinet member for Localism and Planning and his membership of the East of England Regional Planning Panel) declared his personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).**

**12. Adoption of the Colchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration together with the binding report of the Planning Inspector following the Independent Examination in June and July this year, and the revised Core Strategy which incorporated all the changes recommended by the Inspector.

The Inspector concluded that, with the amendments recommended, the Colchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the associated regulations; is sound in terms of Section 20(5)(b) of the 2004 Act; and meets the tests of soundness in Planning Policy Statement 12.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations. The Core Strategy had been a significant area of work. It sets out the long term vision and objectives for Colchester over the next 15 years. The Committee have had to take difficult decisions at times but there has always been a consensus view. The Inspector's examination took place in June and July and the main changes that the Inspector made, over and above those suggested by officers, related to two areas:

- the deletion of reference to a Park and Ride site to the east of Colchester, because the evidence base was not sufficient to justify an allocation, but it was not ruled out for the future. She also commented that proposals for a Park and Ride should be considered against policy TA3. This does not prevent a proposal coming forward in the future;
- the deletion of Areas of Landscape Conservation Importance and Green Breaks. The Inspector was mindful of national policy and concluded that there was no need to build in additional protection as there already existed sufficient protection at this stage. More evidence was sought for a Green Breaks policy and a study was under way which would form part of the site allocations document in due course.

The committee report highlighted some particular issues within the Inspectors report – new affordable housing policy for developer contributions and protection of employment land. The Core Strategy provides a robust basis for taking other documents forward.

Councillor Lyn Barton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. She considered the document to be an excellent Core Strategy, providing a vision for the future to 2021 and beyond. She highlighted that all developers would in future be expected to make a contribution towards affordable housing, regardless of the size of the development. Also mentioned were transport measures which would contribute towards congestion busting. These included the new cycle town status and, by working closely with Essex County Council, the A12 junction. There were pressures on Colchester to provide development and the Core Strategy would enable it to be done in a sustainable way. The officers were to be congratulated. She considered it a worthwhile document and asked the Committee to recommend this very sound Core Strategy to Council.

Councillor Gerard Oxford attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. He also congratulated officers on the Core Strategy, but had some concerns, particularly regarding Policy H5, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. He was not opposed to the aims of the policy but drew attention to the need for sites to be identified which were deliverable. He requested that a small group be set up to look at other site allocations and asked that a representative from the Highwoods Independent Group be included. He referred to the Severalls Lane site which, more than two years later was still awaiting proof of ownership of the land before progressing. Reference was made to a request that the Local Development Framework Panel be asked to look at the provision of suitable sites and Karen Syrett agreed to investigate the matter.

Members of the Committee congratulated Karen Syrett and her superb team on the achievement of a sound Core Strategy which had involved a great deal of work over a period of four years. When the process started other Core Strategies had been found unsound and the Committee were delighted that the Colchester Core Strategy had been found sound; they noted that only one other authority in Essex had achieved a sound Core Strategy. The Core Strategy was a thoughtful, logical document and would support Colchester during the next 20+ years and inform developers of what could and could not be built. The document would provide flexibility, would ensure that Colchester expands or not, and would assist in resisting undue pressure.

Members of the Committee particularly welcomed the following elements of the Strategy:-

- the high level of urban design;
- provision for open space;
- sustainability built in;
- an ambitious five regeneration areas;
- the requirement for new developments to provide facilities for recycling and minimising waste.

*RECOMMENDED* (UNANIMOUSLY) to Council that, in accordance with Section 23(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the revised Core Strategy incorporating all the changes recommended by the Inspector be approved and adopted.

*RESOLVED* (UNANIMOUSLY) that, subject to the approval and adoption of the revised Core Strategy, the Spatial Policy Manager be authorised to deal with all the necessary adoption documentation and other consequential matters in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Communication and Customers</b>					
Date	Number	Report Title	Author	Decision	Result

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio – Culture, Tourism and Diversity</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>
26/9/08	CUL-006-08	Business case for development of new studios at Cuckoo Farm Studios	Josie Worner	To agree the business plan for Cuckoo Farm Studios and the business case for development of 11 new workspaces at Cuckoo Farm	Withdrawn. Monitoring Officer agreed
26/11/08	CUL-007-08	Fees and charges for Parks and Recreation Services for 2009	Simon Grady Bob Penny	To approve the fees and charges for Parks and Recreation Services for 2009	Due 4/12/08

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Neighbourhoods</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>
8/9/08	NEI-010-08	Revision of Financial Assistance Policy for Private Sector Housing	Jo Tawell	To approve the revised Financial Assistance Policy for Private Sector Housing effective from 01 September 2008	Agreed 29/9/08

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Performance and Partnerships</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>
24/11/08	PER-005-08	Fees and Charges for Helpline	Sue Warrener	To approve the fees and charges for Helpline 2009/2010	Due 4/12/08

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Planning and Regeneration</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>
6/10/08	PLA-002-08	'Transforming Places, Changing Lives: A Framework for Regeneration', CLG consultation document, July 2008	Mike Crouch	To approve Council's response to a consultation paper published by the Department of Communities and Local Government encouraging greater public sector focus and co-ordination in tackling the challenges of regeneration	Agreed 15/10/08

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio – Resources and Business</b>						
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>	
17/10/08	RES-010-08	Pay Award 2008/2009	Mike Thurston	To determine level of pay award for 2008/2009 for all employees of Colchester Borough Council	Agreed 27/10/08	
16/10/08	RES-011-08/ STS-002-08	Launch of the SOS Bus	Matt Sterling	Launch of the SOS Bus service, and in particular, the transfer of funding for this service to Open Road Ltd	Agreed 30/10/08	
8/10/08	RES-012-08	Corporate Catering Contract	Jo Hughes	To run pilot scheme to assess the impact of operating without the provision of external catering services for Councillors	Agreed 30/10/08	
30/10/08	RES-013-08	Irrecoverable Debts over £5,000	Peter Evans	To approve writing off of debts over £5,000 which have proved irrecoverable	Agreed 11/11/08	
27/11/08	RES-014-08	Fees and Charges for Street Services – Market and Street Services	Dave McManus	To approve the fees and charges for Street Services, Market and Street Trading for 2009/10	Due 4/12/08	
27/11/08	RES-015-08	Fees and Charges for Parking Services	Richard Walker	To approve the fees and charges for Parking Services	Due 4/12/08	

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Strategy</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>
6/11/08	STR-004-08	Consultation on the Strategic Siting Assessment Process and Siting Criteria for New Nuclear Power Stations in the UK	Robert Judd	Response to the consultation paper on Consultation on the Strategic Siting Assessment Process and Siting Criteria for New Nuclear Power Stations in the UK	Can be implemented immediately as decision was pre-scrutinised at Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 4 November 2008 (minute 24). This decision is not subject to the call-in procedure.

**Record of Decisions taken under Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members  
26 September 2008 – 28 November 2008**

<b>Portfolio - Street and Waste Services</b>						
<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Result</b>	
16/10/08	RES-011-08/ STS-002-08	Launch of the SOS Bus	Matt Sterling	The launch of the SOS Bus service, and in particular the transfer of funding for this service to Open Road Ltd	Agreed 30/10/08	
24/11/08	STS-003-08	Fees and charges for Street Services	Dave McManus	To approve the fees and charges for Street Services for 2009/10	Due 4/12/08	



## Council

Item  
**12**

11 December 2008

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Corporate Management</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Amanda Chidgey</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	Not applicable		

This report recommends to the Council the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer, in accordance with the requirements of the Representation of the People Act 1983

### 1. Decision Required

- 1.1 To designate the Electoral Services Manager, Sarah Cheek, as the Council's Deputy Electoral Registration Officer with effect from 12 December 2008.
- 1.2 To confirm the designation of the Chief Executive, Adrian Pritchard, as the Council's Electoral Registration Officer.

### 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 There are a number of "Proper Officer" appointments that the local authority is required to make, giving responsibility for a specific statutory duty to a named officer. The Electoral Registration Officer for the Borough is one such position. Additionally, the appointment of the Electoral Registration Officer and Deputy Electoral Registration Officer constitutes a non-executive function for which the Council is responsible for discharging.
- 2.2 In order to provide for those circumstances where the Electoral Registration Officer may not be available to undertake these duties it is deemed prudent to appoint a Deputy with authority to undertake those responsibilities.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Council could choose not to appoint to a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer but this option is not recommended as the Council could be called upon at any time to exercise the responsibilities of the Electoral Registration Officer.

### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The main duty of the Electoral Registration Officer relates to the preparation and publication of the Council's Register of Electors which is used at times of Local, Parliamentary and European Elections. The Electoral Registration Officer is also the signatory to election notices and is required to comply with any general or specific directions that may be given by the Secretary of State.

- 4.2 Additionally the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and its subsequent regulations have introduced two new procedures:
- An objection can now be made to an entry in the electoral register at any time, as opposed to within 5 days of an application being made;
  - The Electoral Registration Officer may now be required to conduct a review of an entitlement to registration at any time.
- 4.3 As a result of these changes, there is the real probability that an objection and a review may have to be conducted by the Electoral Registration Officer within a statutory timetable and procedure. The review process allows for a hearing at which evidence can be heard orally, by written representations or by representatives in person, with appeals lying to the County Court. A Deputy to an Electoral Registration Officer may conduct these reviews, which are quasi-judicial hearings, but only following appointment by the Council.

## **5. Standard References**

- 5.1 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.



## Cabinet

Item  
**8(i)**

3 December 2008

Report of	Head of Life Opportunities	Author	Gareth Mitchell ☎ 506972
Title	Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester		
Wards affected	All Wards		

**This report concerns the Council's response to Essex County Council's Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree the Cabinet's recommended response to Essex County Council's Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester
- 1.2 To agree to refer the Cabinet's recommended response to the consultation to Full Council to gather the views of all councillors prior to a formal response being submitted to Essex County Council.
- 1.3 To delegate to the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships the responsibility for responding to the consultation on the Council's behalf following the debate at Full Council.

### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships has requested that this matter be referred to Cabinet to provide an opportunity for Cabinet to agree a recommended response to the consultation.
- 2.2 As the district local authority, the Council recognises the importance of educational performance in improving the life opportunities of local children and young people.
- 2.3 As a signatory to the Essex Local Area Agreement (LAA), the Council has agreed to 'have regard' to the LAA targets that relate to education. The Council is also working in partnership with other agencies towards the achievement of more local Life Opportunities targets relating to educational attainment through the Colchester Public Service Partnership. These targets are set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 The Council is an active member of the Colchester Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) Board, the statutory partnership responsible for overseeing outcomes for children and young people in Colchester borough, including those that relate to educational attainment. The Council is represented on this important partnership by the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships and the Head of Life Opportunities.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Cabinet could choose not to agree a recommended response and not to refer the consultation response to Full Council. To do so would be to miss the opportunity for all Councillors to provide input to a consultation on options that will have a significant impact on the life of the borough.
- 3.2 The Council could choose not to respond to the consultation. To do so would be to miss the opportunity to influence the provision of secondary education in Colchester borough in the future, something that has a material effect on the wellbeing and life opportunities of local children and young people.

#### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Policy Review and Development Panel considered the consultation options and provided an opportunity for members of the public and other interested parties to have their say at its meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2008. The minute of the panel meeting and a record of the contributions made by members of the public are at Appendix 2 and Appendix 2A.
- 4.2 The County Council's consultation document (Appendix 3) emphasises the following contextual factors for the proposals:-
- Persistent and ongoing concerns about standards in some schools;
  - Forecasts of pupil numbers in the town and the implications for the viability of some of the schools;
  - The development of potential federative and trust arrangements and academies
- 4.3 The three options for consultation are as follows:-
1. to close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools and offer places to pupils living in their priority admission areas at the five schools that ring those areas and to redevelop Sir Charles Lucas Arts College as an academy.
  2. to progress the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and consider the development of a number of federative and trust arrangements in Colchester without the opening of an academy or academies.
  3. to re-organise all the non-selective and non-denominational secondary schools in Colchester town and re-open them in new or existing premises, in new or existing locations (using BSF funding), in some cases with new names.
- 4.4 Option 1 is Essex County Council's preferred option.
- 4.5 Annex 1 of the consultation document provides an explanation of the different types of school models mentioned in the consultation document.
- 4.6 Annex 2 of the consultation document sets out the other options that were considered for consultation and discounted.
- 4.7 The consultation closes on 19 December 2008.
- 4.8 On the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 the Council was provided with a copy of a proposal and petition from Alderman Blaxill, Stanway and Thomas Lord Audley schools. A copy of the proposal and petition and a Frequently Asked Questions sheet are at Appendix 4 and Appendix 4A.

#### **5. Strategic Plan References**

5.1 Opportunities for Young People in one of the Key Aims in the Council's Strategic Plan.

## **6. Consultation and Publicity Considerations**

6.1 The Council is a statutory consultee in this process. Essex County Council has distributed the consultation document to parents/carers throughout the borough via schools and is holding a number of consultation meetings for anyone with an interest in their proposals. Several of the schools involved have also held consultation meetings.

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

7.1 Access to good quality education is recognised as a key determinant of future life opportunities.

## **8. Standard References**

8.1 There are no particular references to the financial; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

### **Background Papers:**

Appendix 1 – LAA Targets

Appendix 2 – Minutes of Panel Meeting 3 November 2008

Appendix 2A – Appendix to Panel Minutes 3 November 2008

Appendix 3 – ECC Consultation Document

Appendix 4 – Consultation Petition

Appendix 4A – FAQs

## ESSEX LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT AND LIFE OPPORTUNITIES TARGETS

The Council has signed-up to 'have regard' to the following Local Area Agreement targets that relate to education:-

Target No:	Target
72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy.
73	Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (Threshold).
74	Achievement at level 5 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 3 (Threshold)
75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Threshold).
78	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (Floor).
79	Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19.
83	Achievement at level 5 or above in Science at Key Stage 3.
87	Secondary school persistent absence rate.
87A	Primary school persistent absence rate.
92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest.
93	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
94	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
95	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage.
96	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.
97	Progression by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
98	Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
99	Children in care reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2.
100	Children in care reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2.
101	Children in care achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths).

The Council is also working in partnership with other agencies towards the achievement of more local Life Opportunities targets relating to educational attainment through the Colchester Public Service Partnership:-

	Target
1.	Improve the number of schools where less than 65% of pupils achieved KS2 level 4 or above in English by 2 schools by Dec 08
2.	Improve the number of schools where less than 65% of pupils achieved KS2 level 4 or above in Maths by 2 schools by Dec 08
3.	Improve the percentage of half day sessions missed in primary schools from 5.2% to 4.9% and secondary schools from 7.7% to 7.1%.
4.	Reduce the difference between boys' and girls' attainment in reading at KS2 by 2%.

**POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL  
3 NOVEMBER 2008**

*Present:-* Councillor J. Young (Chairman)  
Councillors Barlow, Davies, Hardy and Knight.  
*Substitute Member:-* Councillor Hazell for Councillor Bentley.

**17. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of the Policy Review and Development Panel held on 30 September 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

**Councillors Hazell (in respect of her governorship of Gosbecks Primary School), J. Young, (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council and her governorship of Greenstead St Andrews Nursery and Infants School) and T. Young, (in respect of his spouses' membership of Essex County Council) declared their personal interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).**

**18. Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester**

The Chairman explained the circumstances behind the consideration of the substantive item of business at the meeting in that Councillor Tina Dopson, the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships, had requested that the Panel considered the Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester and provide recommendations to support the Portfolio Holder's response to the consultation on behalf of the Council.

It was explained that the Borough Council was a consultee in the process and therefore did not have any decision making powers

The intention was for the Panel to invite contributions on the consultation from any interested parties, whether they be headteachers, school governors, teachers, parents, students or councillors. It was anticipated that these views would be used to inform the Portfolio Holder in determining her final response to the consultation.

Councillor Dopson attended the meeting and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel. She thanked the Panel for giving the consultation paper sufficient level of priority to allow for the meeting to be dedicated to its consideration and to gather opinions. Councillor Dopson explained that the Council's responsibilities as a District Authority did not extend to the provision of education in Colchester but that it did include the powers of wellbeing of young people. She went on to confirm that the Cabinet would discuss this matter at its meeting on 3 December 2008 and she anticipated that it was likely that the matter would also be referred to the Council meeting on 11 December 2008 prior to a formal response being prepared in the form of a Portfolio Holder report. The portfolio holder took the opportunity to remind and encourage those present to also respond to the consultation on an individual basis if they wished to do so.

Finally Councillor Dopson confirmed to the meeting the three options set out in the consultation document, which were:

- To close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools and offer places to pupils living in their priority admission areas at the five schools that ring those areas and to redevelop Sir Charles Lucas Arts College as an academy;
- To progress the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and consider the development of a number of federative and trust arrangements in Colchester without the opening of an academy or academies;
- To re-organise all the non-selective and non-denominational secondary schools in Colchester town and re-open them in new or existing premises, in new or existing locations (using Building Schools for the Future funding), in some cases with new names.

The first was Essex County Council's stated preferred option.

To assist the Panel in its deliberations, Mr Jonathan Tippett, in his capacity as both an Executive Headteacher of the Thomas Lord Audley School and Language College and Alderman Blaxill School and as Chair of the North East Association of Secondary Heads in Essex and Jude Hanner in her capacity as Headteacher of Sir Charles Lucas Arts College, were invited to make presentations.

Also in attendance, in order to clarify any issues raised, were the following officers from Essex County Council:

- Graham Tombs, Executive Director for schools, Children and Families;
- Graham Ranby, Head of School Access Services and
- Helen Russell, Policy Analyst.

On being invited to address the Panel, Jonathan Tippett made two separate presentations. Firstly, in his capacity as Chair of the North East Association of Secondary Heads in Essex, he set out the following issues and arguments:

- How well the secondary schools and, in particular the Headteachers, in the Borough were currently working together;
- People should not overlook the contributions made by the selective schools and St Benedict's School, in particular in terms of their ability to access central government funding;
- Had the review been undertaken in 2002 it would have been Stanway School which was facing closure as, in November of that year, Stanway School was the only school in the Borough with unused capacity;
- In November 2005 both Sir Charles Lucas and Thomas Lord Audley had been put into special measures by OFSTED but by November 2007 Sir Charles Lucas had emerged from special measures whilst in May 2007 Alderman Blaxill had been put into special measures and it was due to be announced that in October 2008 Thomas Lord Audley had come out of special measures;
- The targets set by the Government in terms of the percentage of pupils achieving five GCSE A – C grades with English and Maths (currently 30%) and the associated goal of ensuring all schools achieve and well exceed this target by 2011 would be easier in circumstances where pupils at lower performing schools are placed in larger and relatively higher performing schools and by placing pupils in an Academy which are not managed by Education Authorities and their performance is therefore not counted towards Government targets.

In his capacity as both an Executive Headteacher of the Thomas Lord Audley School and Language College and Alderman Blaxill School, Jonathan Tippett then set out the following issues and arguments:

- The importance of grasping the potential opportunity, whatever the outcome of the consultation process, to access Building Schools for the Future funding in the order of £100 million earlier than the existing time-frame of 2018 for the benefit of all schools in Colchester;
- The implication of the potential closure of two schools in the Borough is the need for the remaining five schools between them to 'grow' by an estimated 180 pupils;
- It had been intended that the existing 'soft' federation between Thomas Lord Audley and Stanway would, in the future, officially include Alderman Blaxill, however a federation approach with separate governing bodies would not provide a mechanism to aggregate the GCSE A – C grades for the federated schools;
- His had therefore formulated an alternative proposal, the details of which would be published on 4 November 2008, , having taken into account the following factors:
  - Demand for Secondary Education in the catchment areas of the three schools,
  - Need to raise standards,
  - Need to reduce surplus places,
  - Need to secure £100 million investment for all Colchester schools,
  - Local Authority requirement that GCSE results meet national standards,
  - Undesirability of pupils travelling across town,
  - Insufficient space at Stanway to accommodate for more students,
  - Recognition that schools with greater than eight forms of entry are difficult to manage,
  - Need to maximize continuity of pupils' education.
- The alternative proposal would involve the setting up of one single school operating on three sites, the merged school would publish pupil admission numbers corresponding to eight forms of entry at Stanway, six forms of entry at Thomas Lord Audley and two forms of entry at Alderman Blaxill, the catchment areas and admission policies would remain unchanged.

In her capacity as Headteacher of Sir Charles Lucas Arts College, Jude Hanner was invited to make a presentation to the Panel and she set out the following issues and arguments:

- The opportunity, in accordance with option 1 in the consultation, for Sir Charles Lucas Arts College to be redeveloped as an Academy, to strengthen the position of the existing school and enable it to continue to serve the Greenstead community on its existing site;
- She felt redevelopment of the school as an Academy would provide for a continuation of the existing leadership team, including the headteacher and staff which would provide the opportunity to cater for the needs of young people;
- Sir Charles Lucas' performance in terms of GCSE A – C grades had improved by 13% and the Government's floor target of 30% had been achieved, she did not therefore feel that this option meant securing the future of a failing school but of increasing their chances of sustained success and an endorsement of the hard work undertaken by the existing staff;
- She hoped to see a further 7% increase in GCSE performance in the current year but some of Sir Charles Lucas' pupils needed extra vocational opportunities which would require a high degree of input in terms of specialist facilities and buildings;
- She welcomed the opportunity for the school to become an extended facility for the use of the wider community as a whole such as in terms of adult education;
- The exiting Sir Charles Lucas building was not fit for purpose, being expensive to maintain, with accommodation on four floors, no wheelchair access and generally not conducive to a positive learning environment;
- She welcomed having an opportunity to help with the shape and design of a new purpose-built school building;

- One of her main aspirations was that she had high aspirations for all students and she considered this was reflected in the ethos and concept of Academies;
- In terms of location for any new building, there was ample room on the existing site for redevelopment and this would be her preference;
- She was aware of concerns expressed regarding Academies generally, but she had been reassured that the consultation proposals would address these concerns in terms of an academy continuing to serve Greenstead and its existing catchment area, an admission policy not based on academic standards and she welcomed the opportunity to work and form a positive relationship with the sponsor of the Academy.

In response to the three presentations members of the Panel sought clarification on a number of matters including:

- The efficiency of managing one very large school on one site as opposed to two (or more) schools on separate sites;
- The intentions regarding reducing spare capacity and the corresponding opportunities for spare school capacity to be used to allow community groups to access the school facilities;
- The potential impact of the proposals not just on secondary schools but also on local primary schools as these proposals would take at least five years to implement;
- The desirability of strong local involvement, in terms of community and parental representation, on Boards of Governors and the make-up of Governing Bodies of Academies which would be determined by the sponsor;
- The potential benefits of Sir Charles Lucas going into partnership with the University of Essex and Colchester Institute which, it was considered, to be of great benefit in raising pupils' higher education aspirations;
- The ability of an Academy to determine its own salary structure and terms and conditions of employment for staff although staff transferred to an Academy would be protected by statutory TUPE arrangements.

Pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1), the following contributors addressed the Panel, details of their representations being set out in the Appendix to these minutes:

- Miles Bacon, Headteacher, Thurstable School, Tiptree in support of Option 1 and the opportunity for all schools to benefit from Building Schools for the Future funding;
- Mrs Cowans, Headteacher, Philip Morant School Colchester on her concerns about the narrowness and divisiveness of the proposals;
- Mrs Shepherd, resident of Fitzwalter Road, Colchester on the impact of school closures in terms of the effect on pupils attending the remaining schools and associated increased traffic movements;
- Mrs Robb, resident of Straight Road, Colchester on the ability of schools to absorb additional capacity caused by school closures and the implications for current Year 6 pupils;
- Mr Wiggins, Chairman of Thurstable School Governing Body in favour of the consultation process and the proposals and supportive of a traffic management policy to deal with pupil movements;
- George Beeken, resident of Lethe Grove, Colchester in support of local community schools with concern school closures and its impact on transport and family life;
- Essex County Councillor Jeremy Lucas, Drury Division in support of proposals to bring forward Building Schools for the Future funding and the potential for redevelopment;
- Kevin Prince, Headteacher, St Helena School, Colchester in support of the vibrant, social community at St Helena and the opportunities for it to be redeveloped and expand;

- Jean Quinn, National Union of Teachers expressing opposition to the principle of Academies on grounds including teachers' pay and conditions, admission policies and make up of governing bodies;
- Juliette Keay, teacher, Thomas Lord Audley School in support of that school's recent achievements;
- Roger Buston, of Asher, Prior Bates Solicitors in support of Alderman Blaxill, welcoming proposal put forward by Jonathan Tippett and advocating opportunity to improve the education of those pupils whose parents are based at Colchester Garrison ;
- Ian McNaughton, Principal, Colchester Sixth Form College voicing concern about the narrowness of the proposals, the need for consensus, his expectation that Colchester would see an improvement in national terms in its 16 year attainment in the current year and that no absolute assurance could be given in terms of the availability of Building Schools for the Future funding ;
- Tim Oxtan, resident of Colchester on his concerns about the management of schools larger than 1,000 pupils and the traffic implications associated with all three proposals in the consultation;
- Clare Dillen, resident of Mersea Road, Colchester in support of Alderman Blaxill School in terms of its size, its ethos and the support it provides to its pupils;
- Essex County Councillor Richard Bourne against any option advocating the closure of Alderman Blaxill and Thomas Lord Audley, in support of the proposal for a foundation school on three sites;
- Sheena Clover, Headteacher, Parsons Heath Primary School in support of a variety of views being expressed;
- Robert Lunsden, student at Colchester Institute in support of the work already undertaken at Stanway, Alderman Blaxill and Thomas Lord Audley and the need for investment to be made in school building;
- Mrs Hearn, resident of Bricdel Avenue, Dovercourt whose daughter would be attending one of Colchester's Secondary schools in September 2009 and having attended six of the schools open evenings her preference was for Alderman Blaxill and Thomas Lord Audley;
- Reverend Andrew Fordoice of St Margaret's Church, Berechurch, Colchester on his concerns regarding the implications of Option 1 in the consultation and any potential closure of Thomas Lord Audley in terms of the effect on other schools and transport movements;
- Patrick Duggan, resident of Buckingham Drive, Colchester in opposition to all three options in the consultation which he considered to be divisive, expensive and unworkable.

The following Councillors attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel:

Councillor Harris was very concerned at the prospect of the closure of Thomas Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill Schools. He was passionately in favour of the fourth option put forward by Jonathan Tippett and he challenged Essex County officers and Councillors to visit Shrub End and Berechurch to talk to and listen to the views of local residents;

Councillor G. Oxford spoke from the perspective of the impact on Gilbert School. He was already concerned at the likely future growth for the school which would be greater, should the proposals in the consultation document be implemented. He believed that schools should be sited within the communities where their pupils lived and was opposed to students having to travel across town to attend school. He was of the opinion that Jonathan Tippett should be encouraged to continue the work he had already started at Thomas Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools;

Councillor Offen stated his concern regarding the nature of the consultation process, given that a similar exercise had been commenced some months previously when outcomes were

intended to be published in February 2008 but this had not happened. He was opposed to the travelling of students to school across town and believed that the current consultation had omitted to take into account the impact of the forthcoming rise in school leaving age. His view was that greater consideration needed to be given to the students who would be affected by these proposals, in particular he was concerned at the implications for the children whose parents were stationed at the Garrison, who had already experienced difficult circumstances;

Councillor T. Young voiced his confidence in the leadership of Jude Hanner at Sir Charles Lucas school and he was wholeheartedly in support of the redevelopment of the school on the current site which he considered would become a hub and a magnet for excellence in the local community. He had been assured that there were no proposals to build a new school on land owned by the University of Essex. He was of the view that any redeveloped school would need strong local and parental representation on its governing body with potential for the school to also be used for adult education;

Councillor Naish was fully in support of the fourth option proposed by Jonathan Tippett as he believed that schools should form part of their local community with periods of under-capacity being used to increase use by other parts of the community. He was also concerned at the traffic implications for the town as a whole should the closure of schools take place and students are forced to travel further to attend school;

Councillor Hogg considered Sir Charles Lucas to be an excellent school and was in support of its redevelopment so long as this was on the existing site. He was concerned at the impact on the feeder primary schools and felt that any relocation of the school would have a very poor impact on the community. He understood the need to explore the implications in terms of Academy status, particularly in relation to the sponsor but he was hopeful that it would be possible for a consensus to be reached which would be beneficial to all;

Councillor Barton indicated her support for the fourth option proposed by Jonathan Tippett.

Following the representations the Panel sought clarification on a number of issues and the following information was provided by Graham Tombs on behalf of Essex County Council:

- All Primary feeder schools had been provided with copies of the consultation document and meetings were taking place with Primary school Headteachers;
- The tick boxes in the consultation document were in no way meant to prevent other options being put forward for consideration;
- The representations made in relation to children whose parents were stationed at the Garrison had been powerful ones and these issues would not be dismissed;
- The consultation was intended to be an open dialogue and it was feasible for other options which had been discounted to be revisited;
- The County Council welcomed any and all views on what people would like to see for the future;
- There was no assurance available in respect of Building Schools for the Future funding but preliminary discussions had indicated that a bid for additional funds from Essex County Council would be welcomed if a workable proposal could be submitted reasonable promptly;
- The Building Schools for the Future Programme not only offered capital funding but also continued investment particularly in terms of enhanced IT provision and internet access;
- The wider implications of the fourth option proposed by Jonathan Tippett would need to be fully considered, in particular in relation to the status and management of the three schools involved.

*RESOLVED* that all the contributors be thanked for putting forward their views, the main points

emerging from which included:

- Concerns over pupils travelling outside of their local communities and the resulting traffic congestion issues;
- Preference for Sir Charles Lucas to remain on its current site as there was sufficient room for development;
- The consultation proposals were too narrow and not sufficiently developed;
- Concerns regarding the composition of the Governing Bodies, pay and conditions of employment and admissions policies in an Academy model;
- The fourth option for a Federation of one school on three sites, involving Alderman Blaxill, Thomas Lord Audley and Stanway schools with aggregated GCSE results;
- Some schools were already at capacity with little scope for further development;
- The opportunity should be taken for school buildings to be used for the wider community;
- NUT was opposed to the Academy model;
- Thurstable School was in favour of Option 1;
- Concerns that options put forward contradict parental choice;
- Investment in new structural and IT facilities was welcomed;
- Colchester schools perform well compared to other towns when results are taken across the Borough;
- Children whose parents are based at the Garrison need to be shown special circumstances;
- Building Schools for the Future funding was not assured.

*RECOMMENDED* to the Cabinet that the views expressed at this meeting by all the contributors, as set out in these minutes and in the Appendix to the minutes, be considered and used to inform the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships in determining her final response to the consultation.

## **19. Work Programme 2008/09**

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Corporate Management giving details of the work programme for 2008/09 which had been updated to reflect the need to reschedule items deferred from this meeting to accommodate the item on Education and for the Waste and Recycling Options Appraisal to be submitted to the meeting on 19 January 2009.

In terms of Task and Finish Groups, Beverley Jones, the Council's Environmental Services Manager, had been appointed to lead the Night Time Economy Group and it was reported that political group membership of the Groups had yet to be finally determined.

*RESOLVED* that the revised Work Programme for 2008/09 be noted.

**APPENDIX TO MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT MEETING HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2008**

**18. Essex County Council Consultation on Secondary Education in Colchester**

Details of contributions made Pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1):

**Miles Bacon, Headteacher, Thurstable School, Tiptree**

Speaking in support of Option 1, although he was aware that this might not be a popular view.

This was because it resolved, on a long term basis, the problem of children from 'deprived' backgrounds being concentrated in one or more schools which in turn made it virtually impossible for those schools to succeed in those circumstances.

Secondly it put together a coalition at local and national level that made it possible to bring forward Building Schools for the Future funding. He was concerned that, if this opportunity was not grasped now, then it would not happen at all for Colchester.

He had huge sympathy for those schools particularly affected by the proposals. He had previously worked at Chantry School which had experienced very similar circumstances. He now considered that schools within the heart of communities did the people within the community and the young people no favours. The cycle of economic and educational deprivation needed to be broken by balancing the intake and catchment areas of all the schools in the area. He considered Colchester to be fortunate as the geography made that balancing process possible.

**Mrs Cowans, Headteacher, Philip Morant School, Colchester**

She believed the proposals in the document were already too narrow and had been drawn up rather quickly.

She was surprised that primary education was not being given more consideration.

A lot of issues in the town needed to be considered across the whole range of educational provision but she felt scant regard had been given to social issues which, in her opinion, needed huge support. She felt all pupils needed buildings which were fit for their education and although her own school was considered to be performing well currently she felt that this was a miracle at some times, given the quality of the buildings in which the pupils were being educated.

She was also surprised that the document appeared to be divisive in that three schools had been effectively singled out and not included in the debate. Philip Morant was already a large school and was resourced accordingly but both she and the Governing Body questioned whether the size of the school should be increased further.

The government agenda of parental choice did not seem to be taken into account within the proposals in the document. There needed to be an investigation as to the effect of introducing greater parental choice in the town and what it would continue to do.

She was concerned to note from recent reports in the local paper that Education was becoming a political football and she considered this to be extremely damaging to pupils and parents alike.

### **Mrs Shepherd, resident of Fitzwalter Road, Colchester**

Speaking as a parent, she felt people were being asked to pick one of the three options set out in the consultation paper, without sufficient explanation being provided, particularly in terms of the implications for those children already at secondary school. Her son attended Philip Morant, a school which was already oversubscribed and she did not understand how any additional numbers could be accommodated. She had concerns regarding the impact on catchment areas and the transfer of young people in a town which already suffered badly with congestion at peak times.

### **Mrs Robb, resident of Straight Road, Colchester**

A parent with a daughter in Year 6 at Gosbecks Primary School, currently in the process of applying for a place at Secondary School. She was concerned at the timing of the consultation, given the potential impact on the choices that parents were currently making.

She did not consider that parents were being given sufficient access to the document or that the document made it clear as to its purpose.

She felt that the impact on things like catchment areas and capacity of schools to absorb additional pupils was significant.

She felt the work undertaken at Thomas Lord Audley needed to be supported and for it to continue.

### **Mr Wiggins, Chairman of Thurstable School Governing Body**

He interpreted the document as an outline proposal to answer the many questions which needed to be answered.

He felt it was important to consider what would be put in place within communities, should schools be closed but that this was not an education issue.

In terms of education, he considered that any successful proposal needed to benefit not just some but all the pupils in Colchester. He considered that the proposals in the document did this as they provided for the possible access to Building Schools for the Future funding in the order of £100 million. This, in turn, would provide buildings fit to educate all pupils in Colchester in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

He considered a large number of pupils were already transported around Colchester to school, some of whom travelled by school bus, others were driven by parents or had other piecemeal arrangements. He felt a cohesive transport policy, incorporating the transfer of school pupils, may even make the current transport situation better.

His own pupils had attended Thurstable School although they were not in its catchment area prior to his joining the Governing Body. He didn't believe it

was necessary for schools to be within a community for pupils and parents to feel part of a wider community.

He was convinced that the proposals set out in the document were the best for all the people of Colchester.

**George Beeken, resident of Lethe Grove, Colchester**

He believed education was all about the community. He was worried about potential problems when young people missed their bus home, or walked home from school because of detentions. Not all families were multiple car owners with the ability to collect children from locations many miles away from home. Also he was concerned about the potential for pupils choosing not to attend school and the problems for parents and services looking for them. He considered that the proposals would have a detrimental effect on family life and was also concerned about the financial and environmental cost of additional vehicle journeys.

**Essex County Councillor Jeremy Lucas, Drury Division**

He wished to emphasise how much the County Council wanted this exercise to be a full consultation process and alternative ideas were very much welcomed.

He felt it to be vitally important to bring forward, if possible, Building Schools for the Future funding. At the moment, Colchester was at the end of the queue and there were no provisions in the Government's plans to allow any funds to come to Colchester before 2018 at the earliest. He felt to turn away this opportunity would deprive more than a generation of secondary school pupils of satisfactory buildings within which to be educated.

He felt better buildings would help to attract good teachers, make it easier for pupils to learn and to improve the community and education generally.

Competition between schools in terms of results has been going on for some time but the situation needed to change and schools need to be improved.

**Kevin Prince, Headteacher, St Helena School, Colchester**

He wished to alleviate fears in terms of pupils travelling distances to school. At St Helena School, all pupils travelled in as there is no surrounding housing at the school. He considered it to be a vibrant, social community which was not adversely affected by pupils not living close at hand.

St Helena was built in 1938 and he felt it needed redevelopment. The school was, however, oversubscribed with an admission of around 1,000 pupils. GCSE results had improved from 41% to 57% but the school was not fit for purpose with no vocational facilities whatsoever.

The location of the school, adjacent to Colchester Institute, provided a fantastic opportunity to increase school numbers to 1,200 and to link with the Institute to become the hub in terms of vocational education in Colchester.

His preferred option would be relocate to a site owned by the Institute on Hilly Fields but this would require additional investment from Essex County Council.

**Jean Quinn, National Union of Teachers**

She represented the National Union of Teachers for Colchester. Whichever

option was adopted the NUT were vehemently opposed to Academies because the pay and conditions of employment for teachers and other workers was not guaranteed to be the same as in other state schools. Teachers who transferred were protected but new teachers would not have the same level of protection.

Also Academies had higher rates of exclusion than other state schools because the right of appeal mechanism if a child was excluded was different. She was concerned about their admissions policies and the effect of this on numbers of pupils with special needs. She felt that academies could cherry-pick their pupils and were undemocratic as the number of parent governors was often limited in number.

She believed that academic achievements of Academies were no better than comparable state schools.

She wanted to see a good local school for every child, with no school closures in Colchester.

She requested Essex County Council to give their support to small schools which were popular with parents and pupils. She cited Eton as being a small school of 600 which chose not to expand.

She wanted Colchester schools to be given time to improve with more investment.

She was reluctant to support any of the proposals in the consultation but, if pushed, she would favour Option 2.

#### **Juliette Keay, teacher, Thomas Lord Audley School**

She had been at Thomas Lord Audley since 2006 as a school counsellor.

She felt Jonathan Tippett had turned the school around. It now had a positive and friendly atmosphere and had benefitted from some refurbishment. The schools' results had recently improved and it had come out of special measures.

She felt pupils preferred the smaller class sizes at Thomas Lord Audley and the way the school was run. Additionally at the recent Open Day twice as many parents attended than in previous years.

She had personally heard compliments from visiting firemen and also bus drivers as to how pleasant and well behaved the pupils were.

#### **Roger Buston, of Asher, Prior Bates Solicitors**

He had represented Shrub End and Colchester Garrison as a Borough Councillor for four years.

He was pleased that this matter was receiving wide publicity.

Alderman Blaxill school, and all the other schools for that matter, served Colchester as a whole and did not operate in a vacuum. He always advocated the best life chances for all pupils whatever their background. He was concerned that the matter was beginning to become a political football and the people of Colchester deserved better.

He had previously and continued to declare his support for Alderman Blaxill's principles and for the raising of educational life chances.

He had been pleased to witness the drive injected by Jonathan Tippett when Alderman Blaxill had been dying on its feet and he felt Mr Tippett was owed a debt of gratitude.

However he believed Colchester's educational needs must be developed and

doing nothing is not an option.

He was also heartened at the prospect of the process providing for a Garrison centric facility. The circumstances of children whose parents were based in a Garrison often made them particularly difficult to cater for and he felt it would be highly appropriate, in a town with a newly developed Garrison, for this process to become a pathfinder as to how to address these particular educational challenges.

### **Ian McNaughton, Principal, Colchester Sixth Form College**

He wished to endorse the point made by Sue Cowan, in terms of the proposals being narrow and having been developed too quickly.

He welcomed the meeting as the Borough Council, with Essex County Council and the local communities, should work together to forge a way forward in terms of a consensus view to suit the majority of interested parties.

His advice was that the matter needed leadership to take it forward.

He was of the view that there had been significant improvement in 16 year old attainment in Colchester. He believed that the 2008 data for Colchester regarding GCSE A – C grades including English and maths when published in January 2009 would come out very well. Far from having an element of failure in terms of 11 to 16 education, he believed the reality was that Colchester had done very well by national standards, particularly so since 2004.

He felt it was important not to jump at solutions on the back of suggestions regarding additional funds which may not actually be made available and bearing in mind the fact that the Building Schools for the Future Programme was due to be reviewed nationally in any event.

### **Tim Oxtan, resident of Colchester**

He was speaking as a local resident, tax payer, local tax payer and grand parent of two children, one in Year 6 and one in Year 9 at the largest secondary school in Colchester.

He considered it a generally known fact that schools which grew beyond the optimum size, suffered a decrease in the quality of education provided. The consensus in terms of optimum size of a school was between 800 and 1,000. He believed the management problems associated with schools over 1,000 pupils contributed to the decline in educational achievement.

The government was said to be offering £100 million, although there was no guarantee. However he doubted whether this would come to fruition, given the fact that the nation's soldiers were claiming to be currently acutely under funded.

The options on offer all involved the increased movement of vehicles at peak hours. Colchester had no policy regarding transport, or indeed public transport, the result of which, he considered would be more congestion, disruption and a lower quality of life for all residents of Colchester.

### **Clare Dillen, resident of Mersea Road, Colchester**

She was speaking as a parent of two children at Alderman Blaxill school who lived outside the catchment area for the school and paid £750 per year for transport in order to attend. They selected the school because they liked it.

The options contained in the consultation paper did not provide for a small

school and therefore she believed that the process was too narrow. She recollected that in the course of the previous consultation process people had been made to feel misguided or stupid if they did not agree with the proposals presented. But in the event these proposals were all rejected. She referred to the Government agenda regarding parental choice but she felt that the three options presented in the consultation did not allow for her parental choice. She did not consider Alderman Blaxill to be a failing school and she wondered whether Lord Hanningfield had visited the school to find out whether it was indeed a failing school. She explained that her eldest daughter had been Head Girl at Alderman Blaxill in 2004 and she was currently studying at Berkeley University, having won a scholarship for the third year of her Honours degree in Dramatic and Performing Arts. She had been supported in this by Alderman Blaxill school and for this reason she wanted it to remain open.

### **Essex County Councillor Richard Bourne**

He was totally against any option which proposed the closure of Alderman Blaxill or Thomas Lord Audley Schools as nothing would convince him that closure would be in the best interests of children within those communities. He was a member of the Interim Executive Board at Alderman Blaxill and he felt that the school was currently performing well such that it was providing a good education to all the pupils who attended the school. The current approach had been in terms of a partnership with other schools and the three schools in the area were working well together. The schools had developed a proposal around having a single school operating over three sites, as a foundation school, still within the local authority family. He believed it was a very well worked out and sustainable proposal which could deliver the necessary improvements in the longer term. In addition, it would not adversely affect any other proposals affecting other schools in the town. He agreed with the need for additional schools infrastructure in the area and he did not believe that this alternative proposal would prejudice the bid for additional funds for other schools. He was of the view that moves should be made quickly as there were some urgent issues that needed to be addressed and this alternative proposal could be implemented in the short timescale required. He felt, however, that it would be extremely unwise and detrimental to the young people in the area for Alderman Blaxill and Thomas Lord Audley to close.

### **Sheena Clover, Headteacher, Parsons Heath Primary School**

She felt it was important to consult with everyone as, what was at stake, was the future of all pupils currently attending primary schools in Colchester. She felt that all primary school headteachers worked well together and she hoped that they would all participate in joint discussions on this issue.

### **Robert Lunsden, student at Colchester Institute**

He was attending as a former pupil of Thomas Lord Audley School and an active campaigner against the closure of that school.

He believed that any changes to educational provision would have massive effects across Colchester. He felt the federation between Stanway, Thomas Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools had been extremely beneficial for Thomas Lord Audley. He explained that he had personally benefitted from this partnership and, with time, these benefits would be far more wide reaching. He felt that the resources already available should be investigated in preference to schools being closed or redeveloped. He currently attended Colchester Institute and had experience of pupils from St Helena school travelling across town in school buses which had been over crowded and had not been able to accommodate all those pupils who wished to travel.

**Mrs Hearn, resident of Briardale Avenue, Dovercourt**

She lived in Dovercourt, had a 10 year daughter moving to secondary school in September 2009 and was intending to move to Colchester next summer. Her daughter had certain medical conditions, including diabetes, which meant that she had attended a number of the schools' open evenings in order to adequately assess the merits of each school, bearing in mind her daughter's requirements.

She had visited four schools in Colchester, the Gilberd, Alderman Blaxill, Thomas Lord Audley and Sir Charles Lucas against which she had allocated a points system based on various criteria, including size of school and number of pupils. Alderman Blaxill had scored highest, with Thomas Lord Audley a close second.

Both schools had demonstrated that they were prepared to give her daughter the close support and medical supervision that she required.

She was concerned that the consultation exercise would mean that the schools affected would not be accepting pupils for the 2009 Year 7 intake and she felt the timing of the consultation was unacceptable given the choices needed to be made for current Year 6 pupils.

**Reverend Andrew Fardoice of St Margaret's Church, Berechurch, Colchester**

He explained that he had five schools in his Parish, including Thomas Lord Audley.

He had grave concerns regarding Option 1.

He considered the closure of Thomas Lord Audley would be sad day for the people of Berechurch. The school had received a good OFSTED report recently but, nevertheless was faced with the threat of closure.

He was concerned at the prospect of a very large school with over 2,000 pupils. He had experience of teaching at a school of this size and personal responsibility for 550 pupils over a two week timetable. He did not consider that this experience was a good one. The standards dropped as the numbers increased. The issue of school transport on this scale would be a real issue for staff and bus drivers.

He proposed the scrapping of Option 1 in order to save Thomas Lord Audley school.

**Patrick Duggan, resident of Buckingham Drive, Colchester**

He was against all of the options set out in the consultation paper. He considered them to be unworkable, expensive and unwanted. He believed them to be Essex County Council's solutions to a problem which it had created over the years.

He was concerned that only three options had been presented and it was difficult to pick any one as a preference. He felt that the options had been deliberately selected to divide the people of Colchester over which schools should close and which schools should stay open.

He felt the people of Colchester should stand together and fight for all of Colchester's schools to remain open on their existing sites but redeveloped using public funds rather than the more expensive public finance initiatives and for them to remain under local control.

He believed that the alleged problems had not happened overnight. If the schools were failing and were in such poor states of repair that they were in that way because of Essex County Council's failure to maintain the schools in a proper and timely fashion over the years.

He was concerned at the remarks reportedly made by Lord Hanningfield, that Colchester was in danger of failing. If this was the case it was because of the interference of Essex County Council in the business of Colchester which was driving Colchester into the ground.

He asked people to support a fourth option advocating the rejection of the proposals in the consultation paper and for Colchester to break away from Essex County Council and take control of its own education system.

# Raising achievement through the transformation of secondary schooling in Colchester

Options for consultation







## Introduction

Essex County Council is committed to delivering world-class learning opportunities for the pupils of Colchester, which is why we are undertaking a major consultation on secondary education in the town.

This consultation will consider three options including the development of federations, trusts and educational improvement partnerships as well as the potential benefits of academies.

During the consultation we conducted last year, which focused specifically on south Colchester, there was significant enthusiasm expressed by a range of stakeholders, including Headteachers, governors and parents, for the council to consider the town as a whole.

Given this level of interest, the council has now taken the sensible step of opening out discussions to consider secondary education throughout the whole of Colchester.

It is important to understand the context in which this consultation is being held, including:

- **persistent and ongoing concerns about standards in some schools;**
- **forecasts of pupil numbers in the town and the implications for the viability of some of the schools;**
- **the development of potential federative and trust arrangements and academies.**

Given these challenges, it is important to make clear that the current situation is not an option. We are determined to deliver an excellent education for pupils in Colchester. However, this can only be achieved with change.

We are sure that everyone in Colchester shares the desire to provide the town's young people with the finest education possible, which is why we want you to be involved with assisting us to make this change.

It is important that as many people as possible contribute to the consultation so that we can come to the right option and ensure the best possible solution for the town's pupils together.

**Lord Hanningfield**  
Leader, Essex County Council



## 1. Overview

- 1.1 Essex County Council has agreed to the development of new options and proposals intended to raise achievement and transform secondary education across Colchester. This is a response to issues raised by parents, schools and stakeholders during the consultation in November 2007 to January 2008 on proposals to close the Alderman Blaxill and the Thomas, Lord Audley Schools and replace them with an 11–16 academy on the site of the latter.
- 1.2 Essex County Council is taking a wider approach than previously in developing these options and proposals. We will consider the implications for the whole town and the broader district, drawing upon lessons learned elsewhere, to avoid developing a solution in one part of the town that creates a problem elsewhere. We will also seek to create a long-term sustainable solution. Essex County Council will draw in various stakeholders including local secondary schools, Colchester Institute, the University of Essex, Colchester Sixth Form College, the Garrison, other interested partners (e.g. the Colchester 14–19 Area Planning Group) and local parents and young people.
- 1.3 This paper sets out a number of options for discussion with stakeholders and partners in Colchester. However, because the school improvement agenda is so important, the County Council wishes to make it very clear that the current situation is not a sustainable option. We are determined to ensure the provision of an excellent education for all learners in Colchester and will work with partners to achieve that. The options put forward address the important need to secure resilience in terms of pupil numbers and standards of education for all the secondary schools in Colchester and the wider community benefits that would accrue as a result of this.
- 1.4 We have developed a number of robust options for public consultation this autumn.



## 2. Background

2.1 This section outlines the background to proposals intended to transform secondary education in Colchester in light of the vision for Essex set out in EssexWorks. This includes the specific priority ‘Increasing educational achievement and skills’ and its associated pledge that in 2008–2009 Essex County Council will introduce radical initiatives to ensure diverse, high quality secondary schools in every area of the County. It sets the scene for the development of options in Colchester in the context of:

- concerns about standards in some of the schools;
- forecasts of pupil numbers in the town and the implications of these for the viability of some of the schools; and
- the potential development of different types of school models such as federative and trust arrangements and academies (see Annex 1 for an explanation of these models).

2.2 The options will be developed in the light of discussions with stakeholders and partners in the town and with officials at the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

### 2.3 School Standards

2.3.1 Essex County Council is concerned about educational standards in Colchester.

2.3.2 **Alderman Blaxill School** was placed in Special Measures<sup>1</sup> following an OfSTED inspection in May 2007.

Essex County Council’s concerns about the situation at Alderman Blaxill School have led to the replacement of the Governing Body with an Interim Executive Board and the appointment of the Headteacher at The Stanway School as the Executive Headteacher with effect from 1 January 2008.

These robust actions, which at the time were not met with universal local approval, resulted in progress being reported in the second OfSTED monitoring inspection of the school on 20 and 21 February 2008. Judgements about the progress made since the first visit took into account what would have been feasible in the time available. Satisfactory progress in improving the school had been made ‘in the last few weeks’, but not enough to counter to the inadequate progress of the previous six months. At the third monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 June 2008 progress since the February visit was satisfactory, but progress overall since being subject to Special Measures was inadequate.



Pupil numbers were lower in September 2008 than in the previous academic year and only 26.1% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSE passes including English and Mathematics in the 2008 examinations.

- 2.3.3 **The Thomas, Lord Audley School** is making progress under the same Executive Headteacher appointed to Alderman Blaxill School and was removed from Special Measures in September 2007 but, because of long term underachievement, was given a Notice to Improve<sup>2</sup> by OfSTED. An OfSTED monitoring inspection of the school took place on 1 May 2008 and the outcome was that ‘the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the standards achieved by students’. The Notice to Improve still applies.

Pupil numbers were lower in September 2008 than in the previous academic year and the numbers admitted to Year 7 were lower than anticipated. The percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A\*- C GCSE passes including English and Mathematics in 2008 was 32.3%.

- 2.3.4 **Sir Charles Lucas Arts College** was placed in Special Measures in November 2005 shortly after the arrival of a new Headteacher who agreed with the issues OfSTED raised. The new Head engaged with Essex County Council and set about driving the necessary changes. The school was removed from Special Measures in November 2007. The report graded the school as satisfactory in each of the 26 inspection judgement areas. The report acknowledged that standards were still not high enough, especially at Key Stage 4. Consequently the school has continued to receive support. Within the community, Essex County Council is concerned to address some of the underlying issues affecting the school’s ability to reach the national floor target for GCSE<sup>3</sup>. The percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A\*-C GCSE passes including English and Mathematics in 2008 was 29.9%.

## 2.4 Pupil numbers

Essex County Council is concerned about the number of surplus places in secondary schools in Colchester and the forecast that this will increase by 2013. The Draft Essex School Organisation Plan 2008–2013 shows a fall in pupil numbers in Colchester with a surplus of 1105 places by 2013. Even allowing for the maximum number of pupils that might be generated by new housing there would still be more than 400 surplus places. Most of the surplus places are forecast to be at the three schools at which there is also concern about educational standards (see Table 1).



**Table 1**

School	Net Capacity	Pupil	Forecast 2013	
	2008 (2013*) if different	Numbers 2008	Pupil Numbers	Surplus Places(*)
Alderman Blaxill	662	457	330	+ 332
Thomas, Lord Audley	1050	712	582	+ 468
Sir Charles Lucas	1226	995	805	+ 421
Gilberd	1350	1273	1351	- 1
Philip Morant	(1625*)	1610	1656	- 31
St Helena	1000	1018	994	+ 6
Stanway	(1120*)	1064	1117	+ 3

(\*) Based on capacity figures in draft School Organisation Plan for 2008 - 2013 using increased capacities for Philip Morant and Stanway.

2.4.2 In line with the above predictions, the actual numbers on roll at Alderman Blaxill, Thomas, Lord Audley and Sir Charles Lucas schools at January and May 2008 showed a fall in total numbers on roll and therefore an increase in surplus places since 2007 (see Table 2). The provisional on roll figures for October 2008 have continued to fall. (see Table 3).

**Table 2**

School	Net Capacity 2007	Pupil Numbers			Surplus (over) Places		
		2007	Jan 2008	May 2008	2007 2008	Jan 2008	May
Alderman Blaxill	662	559	457	451	16%	31%	32%
Thomas, Lord Audley	1050	773	712	717	26%	32%	32%
Sir Charles Lucas	1226	1076	995	987	12%	19%	19%
Gilberd	1350	1264	1273	1272	6%	6%	6%
Philip Morant	1510	1617	1610	1598	(7%)	(7%)	(6%)
St Helena	1000	1002	1018	1013	0%	(2%)	(1%)
Stanway	985	999	1064	1065	(1%)	(8%)	(8%)



**Table 3**

School	Net Capacity	Provisional numbers and capacity	
	2008	Pupil Numbers Oct 2008	Surplus (over) Places Oct 2008
Alderman Blaxill	662	376	43%
Thomas, Lord Audley	1050	666	37%
Sir Charles Lucas	1226	920	25%
Gilberd	1350	1305	3%
Philip Morant	1559	1618	(4%)
St Helena	1000	998	0%
Stanway	1128	1092	3%

2.4.3 It is predicted that, without additional pupils from housing, the surplus places at the three identified schools would increase to 50%, 45% and 34% respectively in 2013. These figures are based on the number of pupils who will be of secondary school age living in the area and historical patterns of admissions to the schools. Surplus places at the schools have arisen mainly as the result of many local parents being successful with preferences for their children to attend other schools.

2.4.4 When the forecast for 2013 is adjusted to take account of housing development, the roll at Alderman Blaxill School could increase by up to 225 pupils. However, much will depend on a number of factors:

- **the timing of the construction and occupation of the new homes;**
- **the number of families moving in during the early stages of the development;**
- **the ages of the children in the families moving in; and**
- **the parents' preferred choice of school.**

The adjusted and unadjusted forecasts are summarised in Table 4



**Table 4**

Forecast 2013	Pupil Numbers without housing	Surplus Places without housing(*)	Pupil Numbers with housing (max)	Surplus Places with housing (min) (*)
Alderman Blaxill	330	+ 332	555	+ 107
Thomas, Lord Audley	582	+ 468	614	+ 436
Sir Charles Lucas	805	+ 421	808	+ 418
Gilberd	1351	- 1	1429	- 79
Philip Morant	1656	- 31	1657	- 32
St Helena	994	+ 6	1212	- 212
Stanway	1117	+ 3	1178	- 58

*(\*) Based on capacity figures in draft School Organisation Plan for 2008-2013 using increased capacities for Philip Morant and Stanway.*

- 2.4.5 Alderman Blaxill School is in Special Measures and this is likely to have a negative effect on admissions to the school with many parents continuing to express preferences for other schools. In January 2008 only approximately 33% of children of secondary age living in the priority admission area of Alderman Blaxill School actually attended the school.
- 2.4.6 The pupil number forecasts for Colchester as whole indicate that over the course of the next 10 years there could be a requirement for a maximum number of 10,275 places. This figure includes those pupils it is anticipated might be generated by the new housing planned for the town. If there are no additional pupils generated from this new housing then the maximum number of places required falls significantly to 9,520. These two figures could therefore be regarded as the upper and lower planning limits for pupil places in the town. In 2008 there are 9,518 pupils on roll at secondary schools in Colchester town. Colchester secondary schools can currently accommodate 10,365. These figures indicate that there are currently circa 847 spare places available in the town.



### 3. A town-wide approach to transforming secondary education in Colchester

- 3.1 In taking a town-wide approach to transforming secondary education in Colchester, we wish to make very clear that the current situation is no longer an option. We are determined to ensure an excellent education for all learners in Colchester and we will work with stakeholders and partners to achieve that. Therefore, we have developed options for the way forward that address:
- **the currently low and forecast falling roll at Alderman Blaxill School and the poor standards at the school;**
  - **the currently low and forecast falling roll at Thomas, Lord Audley School and the need to sustain the satisfactory progress now being made there;**
  - **the forecast falling roll at Sir Charles Lucas Arts College and the concerns about the school's ability to reach the national floor target for GCSE;**
  - **the overall supply and quality of secondary school places in Colchester; and**
  - **the difference in standards between the secondary schools in Colchester especially between Alderman Blaxill, The Thomas, Lord Audley and Sir Charles Lucas schools and the others.**
- 3.2 The options developed for consultation include the provision of an academy or academies in Colchester to replace one or more of the schools. The development of the options considers the potential benefits and disadvantages of academy provision including the implications of academies on other schools in the town<sup>4</sup>. Essex County Council believes securing an academy in Colchester is desirable for improving educational achievement as well as being more likely to help secure funding for other secondary schools in the town<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.3 The options developed also explore the possibilities of federations between schools in Colchester in order to improve standards at weaker schools. They also consider the development of trust arrangements as an overall management model for secondary schools in Colchester or the development of an Education Improvement Partnership (EIP). Annex 1 provides details on academies, trusts, federations and EIPs.
- 3.4 The options also take into account the possibility of securing significant additional funding for new, remodelled and refurbished school buildings whether as part of or separate from any development of an academy or academies.



## 4. Proposals and options for consultation

- 4.1 During the previous consultation there was interest from various stakeholders in developing a Colchester-wide solution. Several Colchester Secondary Headteachers responded to the original consultation that they would welcome, as a group, the opportunity to be part of an ongoing wider consultation regarding the future of secondary education in Colchester which takes into account the views of all stakeholders and the needs of all learners.

Essex County Council has listened to the views expressed and will take the opportunity to discuss with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors, the future of secondary education in Colchester as a whole. This document sets out some options for consultation.

- 4.2 Essex County Council will also continue to involve key organisations and stakeholders who are prepared to both steer and take a direct interest and involvement in the future pattern of education. We value their involvement to date and the commitment to raising aspirations and achievement for the benefit of Colchester as a whole.
- 4.3 The County Council has developed options for consultation based upon a wider approach than previously, drawing in various stakeholders, including the local secondary schools, Colchester Institute, the University of Essex, Colchester Sixth Form College, the Garrison and other interested partners as well as local parents and young people. We will also explore the interests of these stakeholders in models such as federations, trusts and education improvement partnerships as well as looking at the potential benefits and disadvantages of academies. The nature and scale of the proposals requires a full and wide-ranging public consultation with all interested parties. The overall purpose of the proposals is to secure resilience in terms of pupil numbers and to improve standards of education available to all secondary school students in Colchester and the wider community benefits that would grow as a result of this. There will be continuing consultation and liaison between Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council, and the Primary Care trust and voluntary sector to ensure that any complementary projects are co-ordinated as fully as possible. This activity will continue and help to ensure that the different investment schemes are used as effectively as possible, for the benefit of the town and the community.

Essex County Council will seek the agreement of the DCSF to exercise flexibility in the timing and development of Building Schools for the Future (BSF)<sup>6</sup> in Colchester and bring forward its implementation to as soon as possible.

- 4.4 **Option 1 – to close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools and offer places to pupils living in their priority admission areas at the five schools that ring those areas and to redevelop Sir Charles Lucas Arts College as an academy.**



This is a proposal that would create a long-term, sustainable solution for Colchester as a whole and as such is Essex County Council's preferred option. It is to close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools and offers places to pupils living in their priority admission areas at the five schools that ring those areas, i.e. Philip Morant, St Helena, Stanway, The Gilbert and Thurstable. This would require the phased closure of Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill to minimise the effects on existing pupils. It would also require the closure of the schools to new pupils from September 2010 and giving all pupils living in their admissions areas priority for the other schools.

Essex County Council would ensure that their admissions arrangements reflected the need for these children to be given priority to attend one of the five schools. After Looked After Children the admission criteria would therefore need to give high priority to these children followed by siblings and other existing criteria.

The benefits of this option are that pupils are placed in one of five better performing schools with improved chances of success whilst these schools would benefit from very significant investment to provide new buildings and facilities. There are arguments against this option around taking the two schools out of their communities. However, these are the choices that many parents are already making in expressing preferences for their children to attend other schools. It could be concluded that it is the view of these parents that the two schools are not succeeding and this is clear from their falling pupil numbers and the low standards of education being achieved. Furthermore, Essex County Council would be seeking to secure more good school places by seeking an expansion of the better performing schools in the area as well as increasing choices for parents.

Any movement of existing pupils from the closing schools would need to be carefully managed to avoid disrupting the education of those moving and of those in the schools they would be moved to. However, it should be possible to work to lessen these effects and these are the choices some parents are making already for existing pupils. Any closure of schools would require a re-assessment of the travel patterns of pupils but it would be possible to consider and, where necessary, assist with the transport arrangements for pupils and for families with children attending more than one school.

As part of this option Essex County Council would also bring forward plans to propose the development of the Sir Charles Lucas Arts College as an academy. This would strengthen the position of the existing school and enable it to continue to serve the Greenstead community.

It will be necessary to assess whether the other schools have enough space to be expanded to accommodate the additional pupils they would have to take, which the BSF funding would support. Disposal of the Alderman Blaxill and the Thomas, Lord Audley sites



and assets would be an issue but the County Council could press for these to be used for the benefit of the other Colchester schools or retain them in part to provide a community resource in their areas.

**4.5 Option 2 – to progress the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and consider the development of a number of federative and trust arrangements in Colchester without the opening of an academy or academies.**

Essex County Council will facilitate with the schools the hard federation (see Annex 1 for general details of federations) of the Stanway School and Thomas, Lord Audley School to serve south Colchester and proceed with the closure of Alderman Blaxill School. In parallel with these proposals Essex County Council would undertake a complete rebuild/remodelling/refurbishment (subject to survey) of Thomas, Lord Audley School and complete the building work at Stanway School under BSF. Alderman Blaxill School would be closed over a phased period. Appropriate arrangements would be made for children currently attending the school to continue their education supported by the linked Stanway School and Thomas, Lord Audley School. Children due to start at the school in Year 7 in September 2009 would be offered places at Stanway School or Thomas, Lord Audley School. From 2010 the priority admission area for Alderman Blaxill would be included in the priority admission area of Thomas, Lord Audley.

As part of a **Colchester-wide approach** Essex County Council will seek to broker a proposal to federate Gilbert School and Sir Charles Lucas Arts College. As part of the move to federation we would undertake a complete rebuild/remodelling/refurbishment (subject to survey) of both schools. There would be a strong expectation that very serious consideration is given to the relocation of Sir Charles Lucas to accommodate changed priority admissions areas.

We will also seek to broker proposals to federate Philip Morant School and St Helena School. Again it would be part of the proposals to undertake a complete rebuild/remodelling/refurbishment (subject to survey) of both schools.

Within this model none of the schools would become academies. However, as an alternative to federation an individual school's Governing Body might express an interest in exploring this option.



It is also the intention to propose that the three federations comprising of six schools would also operate collaboratively as part of a **Colchester Education trust**. The Colchester Institute, Colchester Sixth Form College, the University of Essex and the Garrison would be invited to be part of the trust in the first instance. If the trust was to **evolve into an Education Improvement Partnership** it might be possible to incorporate other schools and partner organisations into it.

We need to be sensitive to the position of Thurstable School in this proposal and option. The school should, as a minimum, be invited to be part of the trust otherwise it could become isolated. It may also wish to consider joining the federative arrangements described above.

The development of the three federations and a trust (or Education Improvement Partnership) would be the basis of a whole town approach to education issues in Colchester.

As part of discussions with schools and other local stakeholders, we would carry out further work on:

- **transport arrangements, particularly for those pupils living in Shrub End;**
- **the identification of other potential co-sponsors or partners for the schools and the trust;**
- **further discussions with representatives of the Garrison to take forward their desire to support forces children;**
- **the exploration of possible community uses for the Alderman Blaxill School site should it become surplus and subject to a direction by the Secretary of State as to its future use;**
- **and**
- **discussions with all schools in the Colchester area on a wide approach to education and community wellbeing in the town.**

#### **4.6 Option 3 – to re-organise all the non-selective and non-denominational secondary schools in Colchester town and re-open them in new or existing premises, in new or existing locations, (using BSF funding) in some cases with new names.**

All, some or none of the schools could become academies. Revise the admission arrangements and consider fair banding so that the schools serve the needs of the sectors of the town in which they would be located. Operate the schools as a trust (with the other partners previously identified) with overall responsibility for the quality of the education provided in the town and the viability of each individual school.

The model could be to have a small, trust office at the centre and campuses offering educational services in the broadest sense arranged around the town to meet demand



and local needs. Post 16 provision would continue to be provided by the Institute (in new buildings) and the Sixth Form College in the centre of town and also on the campuses as required.

There could be six secondary non-selective and non-denominational secondary schools (with or without sixth forms). Each would serve an approximate 60-degree sector (a Learning Zone) around the central trust office (North East/East/South East/South West/West/North West). Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley schools might not be retained separately because they are so close to each other and could be replaced with one school serving that sector of the town. St Helena could be relocated to serve a sector currently with no school. Sir Charles Lucas could be relocated so that its current catchment area was split between at least two schools to help to address some of the underlying issues affecting its ability to reach all the national floor targets for GCSE.

Mapping the current secondary schools (but their names and locations might change) on to the sectors would give:

- **NE**     **The Gilberd**
- **E**       **Sir Charles Lucas**
- **SE**     **Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley (replaced by one school)**
- **SW**     **Philip Morant**
- **W**       **The Stanway**
- **NW**     **(relocated ‘St Helena’)**

The admissions arrangements and careful definition of the sectors or Learning Zones would ensure that each school enrolled a ‘fair’ cross section of pupils. This would be a particular challenge in the East/South East sectors.

Thurstable School is again outside this model and would continue to serve its existing priority admissions area. It could be a member of the trust and contribute to its development and enjoy the centrally provided support from the trust office and from other partners.

The numbers of sixth form pupils currently attending Philip Morant School would have to be accommodated at the Colchester Sixth Form College and Colchester Institute if it were decided that no school would have a sixth form. The Sixth Form College might have spaces because of the opening of the South West Ipswich South Suffolk (SWISS) Sixth Form Centre and the new sixth form at Notley High School, both of which might impact on student numbers there.



Six secondary schools, each of approximately 1200 pupils, (discounting the Grammar Schools and St Benedict's) would meet currently forecast need in Colchester town in 2012. With 1200 pupils each school would be of a size that could be sensibly expanded if additional pupils were generated by the new housing that might be built in parts of the town.

- 4.7 A number of other options were considered as part of this consultation but were discounted. For details and reasons why they were discounted please see Annex 2.

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## Notes

- 1 Special measures is the term used by Ofsted following an inspection when a school is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.
- 2 Notice to Improve is the term used by Ofsted when schools are “requiring significant improvement because they are performing significantly less well than they might be expected to considering the school’s circumstances. A school which is currently failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, but has the capacity to improve, will also be in this category.”
- 3 The national floor target is for at least 30% of pupils to achieve 5+ A\* – C GCSEs including English and Mathematics.
- 4 It should be recognised that for both the main political parties academies are considered a key plank of education policy and instrumental in driving up standards.
- 5 Through brought-forward Building Schools for the Future (BSF) funding.
- 6 The Department for Children, Schools and Families describes Building Schools for the Future (BSF) as “the biggest ever schools buildings investment programme. The aim is to rebuild or renew nearly every secondary school in England.”



## 5. Proposed schedule

<b>17 June 2008</b>	Cabinet meeting to agree the paper ‘Raising achievement through the transformation of secondary schooling in Colchester’ – The Cabinet was requested to comment on the intention to consult on proposals and options to deliver this initiative		
<b>July 2008 – October 2008</b>	Informal discussions with stakeholders and potential partners to develop proposals and options for consultation		
<b>17 October 2008</b>	Leader and officers to meet with Headteachers and Governors of the following schools:		
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>The Stanway</b></p> <p><b>Alderman Blaxill</b></p> <p><b>St Helena</b></p> <p><b>Philip Morant</b></p> <p><b>St Benedict’s</b></p> <p><b>Colchester County High</b></p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Thomas Lord Audley</b></p> <p><b>Sir Charles Lucas</b></p> <p><b>Gilberd</b></p> <p><b>Thurstable</b></p> <p><b>Colchester Royal Grammar</b></p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>The Stanway</b></p> <p><b>Alderman Blaxill</b></p> <p><b>St Helena</b></p> <p><b>Philip Morant</b></p> <p><b>St Benedict’s</b></p> <p><b>Colchester County High</b></p>	<p><b>Thomas Lord Audley</b></p> <p><b>Sir Charles Lucas</b></p> <p><b>Gilberd</b></p> <p><b>Thurstable</b></p> <p><b>Colchester Royal Grammar</b></p>
<p><b>The Stanway</b></p> <p><b>Alderman Blaxill</b></p> <p><b>St Helena</b></p> <p><b>Philip Morant</b></p> <p><b>St Benedict’s</b></p> <p><b>Colchester County High</b></p>	<p><b>Thomas Lord Audley</b></p> <p><b>Sir Charles Lucas</b></p> <p><b>Gilberd</b></p> <p><b>Thurstable</b></p> <p><b>Colchester Royal Grammar</b></p>		
<b>November 2008</b>	Public meetings and meetings with stakeholders to consult on the options		
<b>December 2008</b>	Appraisal of the options in light of the responses to the consultation and preparation of a Cabinet paper		
<b>January 2009</b>	Cabinet takes a decision on a single option to take forward for formal consultation		
<b>February 2009</b>	Formal consultation on the single selected option		
<b>March 2009</b>	Appraisal of the option in light of the responses to the consultation and preparation of a final Cabinet paper for decisions on the proposals		



## 6. How you can make your views known

The consultation period will end on 19 December 2008. Consultation meetings have been arranged for:

**Monday 17 November at 7.00 p.m. at Alderman Blaxill**

**Wednesday 19 November at 7.00 p.m. at Thomas Lord Audley**

**Tuesday 25 November at 7.00 p.m. at Sir Charles Lucas**

**Tuesday 9 December at 7.30 p.m. at Colchester Community Stadium**

Anyone with an interest in the proposals is invited to attend one of these meetings.

In addition you may wish to write to us with your comments. This will assist the County Council in reaching a clear understanding of the views held. You may use the form attached, or write separately to the address provided on the form, or email to [admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk](mailto:admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk).

The information contained in this leaflet can be made available in alternative formats on request: large print, Braille, audio tape or disk. We can also translate this document into other languages and provide clarification on any information contained in this document.

The County Council will consider all views submitted by the end of 19 December 2008.

Essex County Council handles information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your answers to this consultation will only be used to assess the community's view of the proposals for secondary education in Colchester and not for any other purpose. We will not give information about you to anyone outside Essex County Council.

## Response form

### Raising achievement through the transformation of secondary schooling in Colchester

Please indicate by a ✓ your view on the options.

- I support Option 1** – to close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill schools and offer places to pupils living in their priority admission areas at the five schools that ring those areas and to redevelop Sir Charles Lucas Arts College as an academy.
- I support Option 2** – to progress the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and consider the development of a number of federative and trust arrangements in Colchester without the opening of an academy or academies.
- I support Option 3** – to re-organise all the non-selective and non-denominational secondary schools in Colchester town and re-open them in new or existing premises, in new or existing locations (using BSF funding), in some cases with new names.

Please provide any supporting information as to why you support/do not support the options.



Please use the reverse of this sheet as necessary.



Name:

Address:

Interest Group:

(eg parent, teacher, member of the local community etc)

**Please return this form by 19 December 2008 to:**

School Organisation and Planning  
Essex County Council  
Schools, Children and Families Directorate  
PO Box 4261  
County Hall  
Chelmsford CM1 1GS

or use the FREEPOST envelope provided.

Alternatively, email [admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk](mailto:admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk) to make your views known.

Thank you for your response.



## Annex 1

**Academies** – these are publicly funded independent schools catering for pupils of all abilities. A wide range of sponsors, including educational foundations, universities, colleges, business, private school trusts and faith communities, establishes them. Generally, they replace existing poorly performing schools, although some are wholly new schools in areas that have experienced low education achievement. All academies have specialisms. The Government has indicated its commitment to establishing 400 academies, with at least 200 open or in the pipeline by 2010.

**Federations** – the (then) DfES guidance on federations (2003) refers to the fact that the concept of federations has been around for some time – i.e. groups of schools working together to share ideas, best practice and combine management structures. The 2002 Education Act defines a federation as two or more schools with a joint governing body. The DfES guidance defines a federation as “a group of schools with a formal agreement to work together to raise standards”. Schools may federate either:

- **by using the new governance arrangements under the Act; or**
- **by having a formal contract between them with identifiable targets.**

In a **‘soft’ federation** two or more schools work collaboratively together for their mutual benefit, sharing good practice, ideas and perhaps staff. Both schools retain their separate governing bodies, Headteachers, budgets, etc. In a **‘hard’ federation** all the above would happen but the schools move to having one federated governing body and one (usually Executive) Headteacher.

**Trusts** – trust Schools are maintained Foundation Schools supported by a charitable trust. They:

- **are part of the maintained family of schools with funding on the same basis as other maintained schools and subject to the same accountability regime;**
- **are similar to Voluntary Aided and existing Foundation Schools with Foundations – the trust holds the school’s land and buildings, the governing body employs staff and sets admissions arrangements (in accordance with the law and the Admissions Code);**
- **must adhere to the National Curriculum and the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions document; and**
- **must establish Parent Councils if the trust appoints the majority of the governing body.**

There are now 42 trust schools up and running and many more on the trust schools programme that sees schools harness the energy and experience of external partners to raise standards. Schools create long term partnerships with universities, businesses, charities and other schools to improve local education. Partners from all sectors have confirmed their involvement in the trust



programme. These are as diverse as The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Barnardo's, Microsoft, the Co-operative Group, and Unilever. The DCSF believes all schools should be looking to the world of business, charities, higher and further education to improve standards and strengthen leadership. The number of schools currently working towards trust status is more than 390.

Following the Budget the Government announced its ambition that all schools should have at least 30% of students achieving five good GCSEs (A\*-C grade), including English and Maths by 2011 and that trust schools would be very helpful in meeting that challenge. Trust applications focusing on school improvement would therefore be given highest priority in the June 2008 round.

Two examples of recently announced trusts demonstrate the approaches that are being taken to address issues similar to those encountered in Colchester.

Heritage Park Community School, Sheffield, has formed a trust with Barnardo's, Sheffield College, Sheffield Youth Offending and Connexions. Barnardo's will provide expertise in supporting the most vulnerable pupils, and developing links with support agencies both on and off site. Sheffield College will provide opportunities for the staff to support the 14-19 curriculum, and also projects for post 16 courses. Sheffield Youth Offending will bring expertise in managing the most vulnerable pupils, offering alternative provision, as well as knowledge of the legal system. Connexions will support the most vulnerable students in the NEET (not in education, employment or training) category in transition into work or college.

Danum School Technology College in Doncaster, is partnering the Armthorpe School and Doncaster College. The trust will be a distinctive focal point for the borough with respect to raising aspirations. The raising of standards for all students, though particularly socially disadvantaged pupils, will be key. Collaboration between the schools and college will be developed further through the formality of trust arrangements, utilising each school's current areas of specialism (The Arts and Sport, Technology) and developing others to deliver an effective and tailored 14-19 curriculum. Disadvantaged communities in the town centre will benefit from the services and expertise of the public sector partners in the trust.

**Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs)** – these take on specified functions and appropriate funding to enable them to carry out those functions delegated from the Local Authority. Schools and other organisations in the EIP are collectively accountable for delivering particular services and meeting defined targets. These arrangements do not detract from the continued responsibility of local authorities to secure the quality of school education in their areas. Local authorities retain their duty to support and challenge schools causing concern and retain their powers of intervention, for example when a school is placed in special measures, even when an EIP is supporting the school. However, if arrangements are clearly expressed, there is scope for groups of schools to take on significantly enhanced roles and funding from the local authority.



## Annex 2

### Options considered for consultation and discounted

1. To develop a federation and/or trust arrangement of the three schools in south Colchester

The detailed response to the original consultation of the federation of Stanway and Thomas, Lord Audley Schools Joint Strategy Committee raised a number of overarching policy, development related and people and management related issues. It stated specifically that it had not formed a view on the proposal to close Alderman Blaxill School as it had never considered its characteristics or performance. It confirmed that the Thomas, Lord Audley School Governors are very positive about their federation with Stanway School and will be continuing to strive for improvements to the existing school.

The formal response was ‘that in light of the information available at this stage we are unable to support the proposal to close Alderman Blaxill and Thomas, Lord Audley Schools and to establish an academy on the Thomas, Lord Audley site’. It added they would welcome being involved in a more detailed and costed Colchester-wide proposal, taking on board all the issues raised within their response to enable them to form a well-reasoned and argued response which they could recommend to their parents, pupils and staff.

Building on the views of the Joint Strategy Committee an option would be to consider the merits of a federation of the three schools in south Colchester led by the Executive Headteacher and supported by a trust. It would be necessary to assess whether there would be sufficient capacity in such a federation and from the trust to address:

- **the more recent satisfactory progress, but the overall inadequate progress at Alderman Blaxill School since it was made subject to Special Measures;**
- **the need to continue to secure recent improvements at Thomas, Lord Audley School; and,**
- **the need to maintain and improve the performance of the Stanway School.**

It would also be necessary to assess the actual and projected pupil numbers in the area that would be served by such a federation to consider its overall viability and that of the individual schools within it. Essex County Council and the federation could develop trust arrangements with the range of relevant and interested partners identified in option 2 above.

It is anticipated that this option would enjoy some public support but Essex County Council would need to be assured that it addressed the issues of **pupil numbers** and **standards of education**. This option would only work with certain very strong caveats, milestones and targets built into its development. The current federation’s Joint Strategy Committee would also have to be persuaded



of the case for incorporating Alderman Blaxill School into the existing federative arrangements.

Whilst this option can be seen as having some merits in providing a possible solution to the issues in south Colchester it would not address the town-wide issues of pupil numbers and standards of education and has therefore been discounted.

**2. To develop a federation and/or trust arrangement for two schools in south Colchester and associate the third school with it**

The hard federation between Stanway School and Thomas, Lord Audley School is already established. This does not include Alderman Blaxill School, which sits between them geographically, and does not resolve the problem of decreasing pupil numbers and the pupil number forecasts at Thomas, Lord Audley School. It is a possible option for the existing federation to continue and for the schools to continue to support Alderman Blaxill School without federating with it. However, this is unlikely to secure long term resilience in terms of **pupil numbers** and **standards of education** for the schools.

This option has been discounted because it is too much like the current situation and therefore unlikely to bring about the required improvements.

**3. To progress the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and Thomas, Lord Audley School and consider their replacement with a new school with or without the opening of an academy**

**Option A** – Essex County Council could take forward similar proposals for secondary education in south Colchester as those set out in the original consultation and decide to approve the closure of Alderman Blaxill School and the Thomas, Lord Audley School on 31 August 2009. This would be followed by the preparation and submission to the DCSF of an Expression of Interest to establish an academy on the site of the Thomas, Lord Audley School on 1 September 2009 or elsewhere in south Colchester.

It is known from the responses to the original consultation that this option does not enjoy broad public support and the opening of an academy on the Thomas, Lord Audley site was not considered appropriate by the DCSF in the circumstances at the time. However, the Secretary of State has recently decided to secure the closure or a ‘structural’ solution (academy, trust or federation) for any school judged unlikely to achieve the 30% floor target for 5+ A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths by 2011. The Government’s expectation is that by 2011 all schools will be above the floor target, with any stuck below it being closed or replaced by an academy or National Challenge trust. This has resulted in the need to consider this option again.



Any option that involves the closure of Alderman Blaxill is contentious. This option containing an academy proposal is additionally contentious because of some anti-academy feeling and the original proposal to open an academy on a site in a neighbouring community. The option might be less contentious if a way could be found of keeping some provision on the Alderman Blaxill School site to serve the family of schools in south Colchester or Colchester as a whole.

This option has been discounted because it is the same as the original proposal and received only limited support during the previous public consultation.

**Option B** – close Thomas, Lord Audley and Alderman Blaxill and using BSF funding replace them with a single new school (not an academy) on a new site that would enable it to serve those communities currently in the priority admissions areas of the predecessor schools. Members believe a site might be made available on the Garrison redevelopment.

This option has been discounted because it is similar to the original proposal to replace both schools with an academy. This met some opposition because pupils from Shrub End would need to travel to Monkwick. If a new school were built on the Garrison redevelopment the reverse would be true.

**4. To develop plans to rearrange the governance and organisation of all non-selective secondary schools in Colchester to be organised under the leadership of a Colchester Education trust but without the simultaneous development of federation arrangements proposed in Option 2**

The trust could also include Colchester Institute and Colchester Sixth Form College. The Sixth Form College is designated as ‘outstanding’ by OfSTED. The University of Essex, together with the Garrison, and other relevant and interested parties could join the trust.

The first task of the trust would be to address standards of education and pupil numbers in secondary schools in Colchester, in particular at Alderman Blaxill, Thomas, Lord Audley and Sir Charles Lucas schools. The trust would need to decide what approach to take with the three schools, on their existing or new sites, with or without the development of an academy or academies.

This option has been discounted because even if a trust of this type could be established it would need significant additional capacity and expertise drawn from all partners to do what was needed. It would be expected to succeed in an area where Essex County Council has so far been unable to secure majority agreement to its proposals for action.



## 5. To develop other Colchester-wide solutions

Several respondents to the original consultation raised the possibility of considering alternative proposals in Colchester around the possible federation of schools. One suggestion was that Alderman Blaxill School might be federated with the Philip Morant School; but the response from that school did not mention this possibility. The Alderman Blaxill School Parent and Community Forum suggested the federation of Alderman Blaxill School with another school, but felt it would be for the County Council to determine which school this should be. Essex County Council is of the view that it is unlikely to be able to identify any other Colchester secondary school with sufficient capacity to bring about the significant improvements required at Alderman Blaxill School, willing to do so through federation. However, it would be an option to consider with Headteachers and Governors, if any other school was willing to enter into such a federation with Alderman Blaxill School.

This option has been discounted because initial soundings have suggested that no other school would be willing to enter into federation with Alderman Blaxill School.



**The information contained in this leaflet is published by Essex County Council.**

You can contact us in the following ways:

**By post:**

School Organisation and Planning  
Essex County Council  
Schools, Children and Families Directorate  
PO Box 4261  
County Hall  
Chelmsford CM1 1GS

**By telephone:**

01245 436 726

**By email:**

[admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk](mailto:admin.strategy@essex.gov.uk)

**Visit our website:**

[www.essex.gov.uk/colchesterschools](http://www.essex.gov.uk/colchesterschools)

The information contained in this leaflet can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

Published October 2008



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



**Alderman Blaxill, Stanway, Thomas Lord Audley**  
**“Our response to Essex County Council consultation – Do you agree?”**

Dear Parent, Guardian, Resident,

You will have seen the consultation document circulated by Essex County Council in which the preferred option for the future of secondary education in Colchester enforces the closure of both Alderman Blaxill and Thomas Lord Audley schools. The governing bodies of these two schools, together with Stanway, with which Thomas Lord Audley is federated, are preparing a formal response to the consultation. It will be available on the schools’ web sites shortly and will be updated if necessary as the consultation progresses.

We have taken into account the following factors;

- Demand for secondary education in the three catchment areas
- Need to raise standards
- Need to reduce surplus places in Colchester as a whole
- Need to secure £100 million of ‘Building Schools for the Future’ investment in Colchester secondary schools
- Local Authority requirement that results reported at GCSE meet National Standards
- Undesirability of pupils travelling across town in the rush hour.
- Need to maximise continuity of our pupils’ education
- Insufficient space at Stanway to accommodate more pupils and recognition that schools larger than eight forms of entry can struggle to maintain standards.

We therefore propose to create a single school operating on three sites. The merged school will publish pupil admission numbers corresponding to 8 forms of entry at Stanway, 6 at Thomas Lord Audley and 2 forms at Alderman Blaxill. Catchment areas will be maintained and there will be no change to admission policies for each site. Stanway is expected to remain fully subscribed from its catchment area.

Jonathan Tippet will remain as Head Teacher supported by the existing senior teams.

We believe that it is the quality of teaching that has the greatest impact on pupil achievement. Modern buildings, good management and governance are important but less so. A significant benefit resulting from the Federation of Stanway and Thomas Lord Audley has been the ability to recruit and deploy high quality teaching staff. Alderman Blaxill is already benefiting too from the secondment of staff from Stanway. Secondments are recognised as good professional development and career enhancing opportunities. They result in enhanced teaching for all the pupils. The enlarged school can offer opportunities for career progression internally enhancing the stability of the senior management teams, pupil discipline, reputation and ethos.

The enlarged school will be able to provide better opportunities in sports and other extra-curricular activities such as public speaking. It will inherit the ‘Humanities’ specialism, and a second specialism, currently at the application stage, from Stanway.

**Alderman Blaxill, Stanway, Thomas Lord Audley**  
**“Our response to Essex County Council consultation – Do you agree?”**

Alderman Blaxill will be structured as an annex to control costs per pupil. A full curriculum will be provided through the flexible use of teaching staff. Pupils at the three sites will see little change but there will be quality and efficiency gains from the flexible use of staff, which gains already accrue significantly within the Federation, and result in additional resources for the pupils at Stanway and Thomas Lord Audley. Pupils will not be asked to move between sites.

Results at Key Stage 4, GCSE, will be reported in aggregate. They will be at or above the national average and exceed the Local Authority’s requirements. The reduced Pupil Admission Number will be a significant contribution to the removal of surplus places in the Borough.

Our proposal is independent of changes that may be made elsewhere in the Borough. It eliminates the need for pupils to cross town to go to school.

The Local Authority’s preferred option requires Stanway to expand to at least nine forms of entry. Governors at Stanway believe that any increase beyond eight forms of entry will disadvantage pupils. Whilst there are economies of scale there is no evidence that results improve as schools get too big and possibly quite the contrary. Acreage available at the Stanway site is just sufficient for the current roll. Additional land is not available. Closure of two neighbouring schools would necessitate rearrangement of catchment areas. Parts of the current Stanway catchment area could be allocated to other schools. Even at nine forms of entry places could not be guaranteed for all pupils resident and attending primary schools in the enlarged catchment area. It would not be permissible to prioritise residents in the current catchment.

We will provide secondary education on the Alderman Blaxill site for as long as there is a demand from the catchment area. A full curriculum will be provided by specialist teachers from the other two sites as required. The timetable will be organised to avoid any teacher teaching at more than one site any morning or afternoon session. Surplus capacity at Alderman Blaxill will be made available for education and sports and leisure uses. Only if there is a danger that the site becomes a financial burden will we request Secretary of State’s permission for disposal.

We will be holding open meeting at each school to answer questions;

Stanway	7pm November 11
Thomas Lord Audley	7pm November 12
Alderman Blaxill	7pm November 13

Our proposal can only be successful if it receives strong local support. We are asking that you sign and return the petition below rather than respond in the format enclosed in the Local Authority consultation paper.

**Alderman Blaxill, Stanway, Thomas Lord Audley  
“Our response to Essex County Council consultation – Do you agree?”**

Please return the petition for collation to;

Jayne Castle at Alderman Blaxill, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, CO2 9DQ  
Sharon Burns, Stanway School, Winstree Road, Colchester, CO3 0QA  
or  
Lindsey Wright, Thomas Lord Audley, Monkwick Avenue Colchester, CO2 8NJ

Or go to the schools web sites for an electronic response

Additional copies are available from the above.

**Petition**

I support the above proposal for secondary education in the three catchment areas of Alderman Blaxill, Stanway Schools and Thomas Lord Audley, as a contribution to the issues raised in the Essex County Council consultation paper.

**Name**

**Address**

**Interest**

(e.g. parent, resident etc,)

**Comment**

FAQs

Q. How do you know that you can raise standards across the three schools?

A. We have evidence from results and independent professionals from both OFTED and School Improvement Partners not only that standards of achievement have been improving but also that we have the capacity for further improvement.

Q. Will places at Stanway be on offer to pupils from the other two catchment areas?

A. Only if there are surplus places at Stanway after the current priorities have been met (pupils resident in or attending primary schools in the Stanway catchment area). We expect Stanway to be fully subscribed from its catchment area.

Q. Will places at TLA be made available to pupils from the AB catchment area?

A. Yes

Q. Will pupils from the AB catchment area be encouraged to apply to TLA?

A. We will provide secondary education at the AB site whilst a demand remains. There will be parental choice subject to availability. We expect TLA to be modestly undersubscribed for the next few years after a reduction in the Published Number to Admit.

Q. How will you manage as Pupil numbers increase in the medium term?

A. Rebuilding plans for TLA will be designed so that facilities to accommodate further forms of entry can be added if required. The major building plan for Colchester schools will take several years to design and construct by which time forecasts of pupil numbers may need significant revision.

Q. Can you afford to run three sites within available budgets and still provide quality education?

A. Yes. We have calculated the cost associated with three site operation. Salaries account for more than 70% of all costs for secondary schools. The AB site will be much larger than required but we will seek to raise revenue by leasing the excess facilities for educational and sports and leisure uses. For instance the Colchester Teacher Training Consortium, currently located at Stanway will be invited to relocate to AB.

Q. Where will the new buildings for TLA be located?

A. The Local Authority will have the final decision on the extent and location of new building at TLA. We may need to break new ground in order to minimise disruption to pupils during the construction phase. However at Stanway we were able to rebuild within the existing footprint without unmanageable disruption.

Q. Will the new TLA buildings be up to the standard of those at Stanway where you were not limited by bureaucratic guidelines?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you be making improvements to AB buildings?

A. No. £200,000 has just been spent to upgrade the facilities. There will now only be funding at AB to maintain buildings necessary to support the reduced numbers on roll.

Q. Do you recommend Federation as a way forward for other schools?

A. Yes but the benefits available would depend on individual circumstances.

Q. Do you consider a revision of catchment areas or school structures driven by a need to meet target results to be in the best interests of pupils?

A. We believe our proposal is in the best interests of pupils in the three catchment areas. It results in new facilities at TLA and completion of the building programme at Stanway. It provides secondary education in the AB catchment at reasonable cost while a demand exists. We are confident that we can raise the standards of achievements at all three sites to achieve and then exceed the national average in aggregate.

Q. Will Jonathan Tippett remain as executive head teacher?

A. Yes.

Q. Will TLA become a foundation school?

A. We will create a single Foundation School operating on three sites.

Q. Why are you proposing to maintain a small uneconomic establishment at AB when there will be surplus places at TLA?

A. Because there is a demand from the AB catchment area and we can structure the operation there to provide secondary education at a reasonable cost.

Q. Will pupils be bussed between sites for any reason?

A. Pupils will not be asked to move between sites for classes but will be offered extra curricula activities such as summer schools and sports competitions at other sites outside the normal school day.

Q. Will you sell the AB site for residential development?

A. If the site becomes a financial burden we will need to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for education for disposal. The Secretary of State is unlikely to approve disposal of playing fields for development and can mandate part or all the sale proceeds to the Local Authority for educational purposes.

Q. Will there be staff redundancies?

A. We can not make promises but we are confident that teaching staff numbers are already appropriate to current pupil numbers and that we can manage any changes as pupil numbers fluctuate without recourse to redundancy. We will need to re-organise non teaching staff as we reduce the scale of the operation at AB over time and will make every effort to avoid redundancies as we do so.



## Cabinet

3 December 2008

Item  
**9(i)**

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Ian Vipond</b> ☎ 282717
<b>Title</b>	<b>Visual Arts Facility – ‘firstsite:newsite’</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	Not applicable		

**The report covers the need to put in place provisional additional capital arrangements for the Visual Art Facility project – ‘firstsite:newsite’**

### **1. Decision required**

- 1.1 That Cabinet recommend to full Council to make a provisional sum of £2 million of capital available to the Visual Arts Facility (VAF) ‘firstsite:newsite’ project subject to a number of conditions as set out in paragraph 5.3 and that the capital programme be amended to reflect the forecast additional cost.

### **2. Reason for decision**

- 2.1 The project costs have overrun compared to the funding that has been made available from a number of funders. The funders of the project are each being asked to allocate further funding to this project and the Council needs to consider whether an additional sum of capital should be allocated to the project to ensure its completion.

### **3. Alternative Options**

- 3.1 The proposed recommendation is based on the funders jointly agreeing to find the required finance to finish this project. The Council could fund the completion of the project itself at a projected cost of £7.6m or it could decide that it did not wish to put further funding into the project. This would be likely to mean that the other funders would seek the return of their original funding, if the intended purpose of their grants was not being achieved, at a cost of between £11.2m and £15.2m. This would also leave the Council with an unfinished and unusable building.

#### 4. Background information

4.1 The VAF 'firstsite:newsite' has been designed as a flexible and multi functional building to deliver space for high quality exhibitions, retail, learning, conference and as an accessible visitor experience which can adapt to future customer requirements. The cultural, social, economic and regenerative impact both locally in St Botolph's and the Town but also to the region was why a range of local and regional funders chose to invest in this project. The funding partners remain committed to the original vision and therefore to seeing the project completed.

4.2 A capital budget of £16.5 million was set for the project in 2003. The funding partners are:

Arts Council England East  
East of England Development Agency  
Essex County Council  
Colchester Borough Council  
University of Essex (Donation)  
Firstsite (capital fund raising through Trusts, Foundations and private sponsors)

4.3 The £16.5 m was to cover:

Construction Costs	£13.32m
Professional Fees	£2.52m
Equipment	£0.66m

4.4 In September 2007 a case was agreed to increase funding to £17.8m. This was because of a number of factors including canopy deflection and inflation above original estimates (the development industry was at its peak)

The £17.8m was to cover:

Construction Costs	£14.17m
Professional Fees	£2.76m
Equipment	£0.66m
Servicing Cash Flow	£0.20m (this is the cost where CBC advance funds prior to funders' contributions).

The Borough Council's Capital commitment under this funding arrangement is for £1,755,000 but importantly the funding agreements by which the other funders put in the substantial part of the £17.8m place the responsibility for funding any increase in costs with CBC as the 'client'.

#### **4.5 Original Contractual relationship with Banner Holding Ltd**

4.6 The original contractual relationship between The Council and Banner Holdings (Banners) is set by a purchase order issued by CBC which imposes an obligation to work on the contract pursuant to the 'GC/Works/1 terms' and to a ceiling of £12.736m (The Cap). CBC therefore did and does have a contractual relationship with Banner Holding Ltd, but the actual contract remained unsigned and so importantly it was not a contract which had either an enforceable fixed price for completion or a fixed date for delivery. What was 'indisputable' is that the parties were committed to valuation of the work, as the way to determine what should actually be paid. This is important as until as late as February 2008 the cost report indicates a forecast out-turn of £17.34m which includes a risk provision of £377.5k i.e. within budget, although the same month's risk report had risks costed at £2.44m.

4.7 In February 2008, the total works completed under this contract was valued by Turner and Townsend Cost Management at £10.026m. CBC was paying 95% of the valued works in order to maintain 5% retention. Banner argued that in terms of sub contractual commitments that they had been instructed to enter into commitments beyond 'The Cap'. This is why work effectively ceased on site (in the majority, only minor and remedial work was taking place).

#### **4.8 Project Costs**

4.9 An exercise was undertaken in July to estimate the actual costs of completing the project (target cost verification). The estimate considered what had already been committed within The Cap, what was instructed or committed but deemed to be outside The Cap and what was still left to be procured and to pay for. This exercise gave a very different picture to the monthly cost reports.

4.10 The report provided by Turner and Townsend in July suggested that if all the estimated construction costs are realised then the potential construction costs are in the order of £5m above the current funded allowance of £14.17m for construction works. This rise in construction costs is a result of an estimated extra £2m for increased costs on glazing and roofing contracts, with the remainder largely down to the delays and prolongation of the build programme and a resulting inflationary allowance.

4.11 Furthermore the work undertaken also assessed the likely time for completion which in July was estimated to be June 2009. Additional professional fees would be payable during this period. Turner and Townsend our project management consultants estimated an increase of over £1m taking the total professional fees to an estimated £3.8m for the project. Clearly if the period of the project prolongs further then the fees potentially increase accordingly. There is no projected increase in

equipment costs (which will be directly funded by Firstsite) and the report is silent on servicing cash flow which was an anticipated cost.

- 4.12 Since a supplemental agreement to the GC Works contract was agreed with Banner (see below), further work has been undertaken by quantity surveyor representatives across the partnership to assess the likely costs to complete taking into account what is now fixed by the contractual arrangements and including consideration of the likely tender process for completing the project.
- 4.13 The review has identified several areas of risk that the Council will seek to manage to improve the outturn cost on the completion stage of the project. (These risks include factors affecting the professional team's fee settlements and other commercial arrangements and were reported to the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel) Taking these factors into account, the projected estimates on additional construction costs, professional fees and the inclusion of an allowance for contingency would bring the total project costs to around £25.5m against funding of £17.8m so the current projected shortfall is in the order of £7.6 m.
- 4.14 Discussions have continued with the other funders and despite this Council's legal obligation to cover any further increase in costs above the £17.8m the funders have indicated that collectively they will seek to assist the Council where possible to meet the funding shortfall.
- 4.15 **Current Contractual Position**
- 4.16 On 16 September 2008 the Council signed a supplementary contract with Banner Holdings for £14,220,000 to complete the external fabric of the building to a standard of permanent weather tightness (air and water tight). A bond for 10% of the value of the work that Banner has to complete (£1.4million) was also put in place. The contract completion date is 22 May 2009.
- 4.17 The scope of Banner's contract is to complete the roof and side cladding to provide a weather and air tight building envelope; complete glazing, external doors and louvers; and any other works that are required for the building to pass the Part L2 air test. There is no contract for Banner to finish internal works beyond this scope under the current contract. Therefore no more work will take place on partially completed internal packages or those not yet ordered until a new contract is tendered and entered into for those works. The Council and other Funders will obviously not know the actual price for those works until tenders for that work are received.
- 4.18 The Council is currently reviewing the scope of works to complete the building and the forecast outturn costs through a series of meetings with quantity surveyor representatives from Arts Council England East, East of England Development Agency and Essex County Council and Turner and Townsend. The fit out or completion scope of works

includes completion of: mechanical and electrical works and providing for the necessary commissioning process and warranties; partitions and ceilings package; architectural metalwork and plant room metal work; carpentry and joinery; secondary steelwork; plant room F louvers; and the internal finishes (timber panelling, kitchen fit out, toilet fit out, ceramic and stone tiling, hardwood flooring, signage, decoration, fitted furniture, retail fittings and external and landscaping works). The earliest this work could be completed would be autumn 2009. Firstsite have then to do their own fit out of equipment such as computers etc.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are clearly significant financial implications for the Council. At present it would appear that the Council has a potential additional capital liability in the order of £7.6 to find from its capital budget. Clearly the Council is working to reduce this potential liability both by seeking to raise additional contributions from funders and also to reduce the costs contained in the current projected costs. However this sum, even at this level, is substantially smaller than returning the contributions of the other funders to date and that option would still leave the Council with an unfinished building.
- 5.2 It also needs to be stated that there remains a number of risks around these cost figures. Particularly that a significant proportion of the current increase in costs is down to the prolongation of the build programme. The longer the programme to complete is then the costs increase.
- 5.3 In the context of the current negotiations with the other main funders it is proposed that a provisional capital allocation of £2m be sought from full Council and that the capital programme be amended to reflect the forecast additional cost. The allocation would only be used on the condition that the other funders were prepared to commit the remaining sum to complete the project. In addition the Contract to complete the building should not be authorised until such time that the Council is satisfied that the best price for the remaining work has been obtained and that all possible endeavours have been used to minimise risk and achieve cost certainty going forward.
- 5.4 If the whole of the suggested provisional allocation was used this would bring the Councils capital investment in the project to £3.755m which would represent 14.7% of the projected final cost. The Council would have title of the final building for that investment limited by the conditions imposed by the other funders.
- 5.5 The options available to the Council of funding an additional £2m of capital expenditure are to either borrow the required sum or identify existing capital schemes to that value that could be stopped.

- 5.6 Currently, all resources within the Council's Capital Programme are fully allocated. There would clearly be significant implications if the decision was made to remove or defer capital schemes, and there are further issues within the capital programme resulting from changes to capital receipts in light of economic conditions (e.g. declining council house sales, reduced value of land sales etc). Any changes to the capital programme of this level would require approval by Full Council.
- 5.7 The Council has the ability to borrow money in accordance with the CIPFA Prudential Code, which allows an authority to determine its own borrowing limits provided that the debt is affordable, prudent and sustainable. Borrowing is controlled by Council agreeing a number of 'prudential indicators' including upper limits on borrowing. These were last agreed at the budget meeting in February 2008. Borrowing in respect of the VAF firstsite:newsite project was not considered when the prudential indicators were set, so a decision to proceed with borrowing any significant amount would therefore require a Full Council decision to change the prudential indicators.
- 5.8 The revenue cost of borrowing £2m would include interest, a provision to repay the debt (MRP), and impact on recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as well as cashflow implications:
- The annual interest cost is estimated to be in the region of £88k pa, however as the £2m will be spent during the year the interest costs will be lower at circa £52k. This is based on a 50 year loan 4.5%. In later years interest costs will reduce as the Council's provides for the repayment of debt as explained below.
  - The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is a provision that the Council is required to make to repay debt. This is calculated to be in the region of £40k per annum, based on an estimated life of the asset of 50 years. This charge would not be incurred until the financial year after when the asset becomes fully operational.
  - There is a statutory charge made between the General Fund and the HRA to reflect borrowing in respect of the housing stock. This charge is based on the average rate of the Council's debt and the notional housing borrowing requirement (CFR). Borrowing in respect of VAF firstsite:newsite will reduce the average rate of debt, as rates are currently cheaper. As the HRA CFR is unaffected by this project the charge to the HRA would be reduced resulting in a cost pressure to the General Fund. The full year impact is estimated to be in the region of £20k, however, during the year of spend it is reasonable to expect a lower impact of, say £12k, depending on the timing of any borrowing.
  - The potential impact on the Council's cashflow also needs to be considered. This could be positive or negative depending on the timing of borrowing, the schedule of payments to contractors, and the draw down of funding from partners.

- 5.9 Taking all of the above into account, the full year revenue impact of borrowing in 2009/10 will be in the region of £64k. The cost in 2010/11 will be circa £148k. This could be expressed as £2.54 per Band D property or an increase of 1.5%. The Council would need to identify *recurring* savings to cover the additional borrowing costs within existing budget levels. This decision will also need to be agreed by Full Council as part of the annual budget report.

## **6. Strategic Plan references**

- 6.1 The project is identified as a key project contributing to the objectives of the current strategic plan. The Plan is currently being reviewed and public consultation is to be carried out on the Councils new priorities going forward.

## **7. Risk Management implications**

- 7.1 At present CBC and the other funders of the project are considering the mitigation measures necessary to reduce the risks associated with the project. Some of these measures associated with the costs of the project are outlined within this report. Attention has also been paid to the governance of the project and the client team capacity going forward. CBC has agreed to appoint a client Clerk of Works to be based on site and the funders have agreed to fund a client Project Director (Completion Co-ordinator) for the remainder of the project.

## **8. Other Standard References**

- 8.1 Having considered equality, diversity and human rights, health and safety and community safety implications, there are none which are significant to the matters in this report.

## Cabinet

Item  
**10(i)**



3 December 2008

Executive Director

Author **Ann Wain**  
☎ 282212

**Office accommodation strategy – Purchase of Rowan House**

**Wards  
affected**

Castle

**This report concerns our office accommodation strategy and the opportunity to purchase Rowan House**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree that the Council should buy Rowan House.
- 1.2 To recommend to full Council that the capital spend required is included in the capital programme.
- 1.3 To recommend that full Council authorise additional prudential borrowing to fund the purchase.

### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The purchase of Rowan House makes good financial sense as outlined in the financial implications section of this paper. It is cheaper to buy the building and fund the borrowing than to continue to rent. We would also own the asset.
- 2.2 It will offer increased flexibility as we will hold the freehold.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative option is to continue to lease, however as shown in the financial implications, it is cheaper to fund the borrowing needed to buy the building than to continue to pay rent.
- 3.2 Our overarching accommodation strategy is based on consolidating into a single office building. All options were considered, however as we are tied to the lease at Rowan House until at least 2014 and potentially until 2022, the only financially viable options is to remain in Rowan House, whether it is rented or owned.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources made the decision in September 2008 that we should negotiate the purchase of Rowan House having looked at initial figures.
- 4.2 It is worth noting that the other key decision in that report, to market Angel Court is not linked the decision to purchase Rowan House. The background to that decision is linked to the move to flexible working that will result from the implementation of the ICT strategy. The ICT strategy agreed in July 2007 aims to improve our IT so that we can work more flexibly as an organisation. This will deliver benefits to both our customers and staff by making services more accessible and enabling staff to work in ways that meet the needs of the customer. It will also allow many of our staff to work in ways that facilitate a better work life balance. By implementing flexible working the amount of office space needed reduces. We looked at all the options for reducing office space and the conclusion was that the most practical and financially sensible move would be to consolidate in Rowan House. This frees up Angel Court for sale and the decision to market Angel Court is being taken forward. It also meets our ambition to have the majority of our office staff based in one location. A commitment has been made to retain a Town Centre location for face to face customer contact.
- 4.3 The opportunity to buy Rowan House has been pursued so that we still own office accommodation, but does not impact on the other decisions around the accommodation strategy. It will not change any of the other decision made, nor will it materially impact on how our staff work.
- 4.4 The situation with Rowan House is not straightforward. The building is owned by Scottish Widows and leased to Anglian Water. We sub-let from Anglian Water.
- 4.5 Negotiations were initially undertaken with both Scottish Widows and Anglian Water. The intention was to negotiate the purchase of the freehold with Scottish Widows but also to see if Anglian Water wanted to buy themselves out of their lease. Scottish Widows indicated that they were interested in selling. Anglian Water indicated they did not wish to negotiate at a level that we considered to be realistic.
- 4.6 The outcome is that if this decision is agreed, we will buy the freehold from Scottish Widows and Anglian Water will continue to hold their lease. The implications of this are explained later in the paper and reflected in the financial implications.
- 4.7 In April 2008 Atisreal were commissioned to look at Rowan House to help us consider if it was a sensible approach to try and buy the building.
- 4.8 They have outlined the advantages and disadvantages of buying the building:
- 4.8.1 Advantages
- Secure income for a further 14 years with the lease guaranteed by Anglian water.
  - Provides complete flexibility to determine our occupational requirements.
  - Flexibility to determine whether to remain in occupation beyond 2022 or to vacate earlier – we have a break clause in November 2014 and should we terminate our liability will pass to Anglian Water who will have a further 8 years remaining on their lease.
  - The property provides a significant development opportunity at the edge of the town centre, appropriate for a range of uses complementary to this location and dependent on market conditions at the time.

- Our ability to secure finance against this property, fixed at an advantageous rate, amortised over the remaining period of the lease held by Anglian Water allows us to acquire the property in a way which allows for its financing to be very substantially amortised by the Anglian Water rent.

#### Disadvantages

- The building is now over 25 years old and likely to be at or close to the end of its economic life when the head lease expires in 2022 prompting either major refurbishment or redevelopment.
- The building represents a significant amount of space in a town where existing office stock adequately meets demand with recent trends for new buildings to be located at the edge of town.
- Historically poor rental performance with income unlikely to change before the lease expires.
- Profile of value will decline in real terms as the years pass and value will become more influenced by the prospect of vacant possession on lease expiry in 2022.

4.9 Atisreal have also advised on value in light of these factors. They have said:  
 “Having regard to all of the above and particularly taking account of your position as a special purchaser and the tactical position over Anglian Water now introduced by securing the freehold, we had no hesitation in recommending Colchester Borough Council to proceed with the purchase at £7,800,000.”

4.10 A full survey has been carried out by Norfolk Property Services, to match the survey work undertaken on our other buildings. This survey has highlighted a number of issues which while Anglian Water hold the Head Lease that the responsibility for maintenance issues highlighted in the survey will remain with them. This is explained in more detail in the legal implications at section 9 below.

## 5. Proposals

5.1.1 The proposal is that the Council buys Rowan House for a purchase price of £7,800,000. This represents good value for money as demonstrated in the financial implications.

5.1.2 That the purchase be funded through borrowing

## 6. Strategic Plan References

6.1 One of the key priorities of the Council is to shift resources to deliver front line services. Buying Rowan House is cheaper than leasing and will free up resources and secure an asset for the longer term.

## 7. Consultation

7.1 Not applicable as the purchase will not affect the way in which we operate for our customers or staff.

## 8. Publicity Considerations

8.1 A press release has been sent as it is likely that there will be public interest in this decision.

## **9. Legal Implications**

9.1 The Council's purchase of the freehold of Rowan House from Scottish Widows Unit Funds Limited will be subject to 3 occupational leases:

(a) Lease of whole of Rowan House from Scottish Widows Unit Funds Limited to Anglian Water Services Limited.

(b) Lease of car parking spaces at Rowan House from Scottish Widows Unit Funds Limited to Anglian Water Services Limited.

(c) Lease of substation site at Rowan House from Anglian Water Authority to Eastern Electricity Board.

9.2 Once the Council has acquired the freehold it will step into the shoes of Scottish Widows and become the head landlord for the lease mentioned at (a) and the landlord for the lease mentioned at (b) above. There will be no change in relation to lease (c).

9.3 The Council currently occupies part of Rowan House under the terms of an underlease from Anglian Water Services Limited. This arrangement will continue following completion of the acquisition of the freehold. Accordingly Anglian Water Services Limited will continue to be the Council's landlord for its lease of part of Rowan House whilst the Council will become Anglian Water Services Limited's landlord under the headlease. Anglian Water is currently negotiating with Family Mosaic Housing for an underlease of that part of the first floor of Rowan House which is currently vacant. Scottish Widows have given their approval to this however the underlease has not yet been completed.

9.4 From the date of completion of the acquisition of the freehold by the Council the legal relationship and responsibilities for Rowan House can be summarised as follows:

9.4.1 Headlease dated 19 December 1997 to Anglian Water Services Limited.

- The Council will become Anglian Water Services Limited's landlord.
- Property: whole of Rowan House.
- Term: lease will expire 18 December 2022 – Anglian Water Services Limited has security of tenure and will be entitled to require new tenancy (broadly under the same terms and conditions) under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.
- Rent: currently £623,000 per annum plus VAT (the Council will receive this). Rent reviews due in 2012, 2017 & 18 December 2022.
- Anglian Water Services Limited as the tenant are responsible for all the usual outgoings etc as the lease is a full repairing and insuring lease.
- Insurance: the Council as landlord will become responsible for insurance and will pass the premium cost onto Anglian Water by way of further rent.

9.4.2 Lease dated 19 December 1997 to Anglian Water Services Limited.

- The Council will become Anglian Water Services Limited's landlord.
- Property: Car park spaces (situated near the entrance to Rowan House Car Park).
- Term: lease expires 18 December 2037
- Rent: One peppercorn

9.4.3 Lease dated 27 January 1987 from Anglian Water Authority to Eastern Electricity Board.

- There will be no change in landlord
- Property: Sub Station next to the Pump House owned by Anglian Water
- Term: Lease expires 1 December 2085
- Rent: One peppercorn

9.4.4 Underlease dated 15 November 2004 from Anglian Water Services Limited to the Council.

- Anglian Water Services Limited will remain the Council's landlord
- Property: part of Rowan House.
- Term: Lease expires 15 December 2022. The Council has security of tenure and will be entitled to require new tenancy (broadly under the same terms and conditions) under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.
- Rent: currently £308,852 plus VAT together with Service Charge of £115,000 plus VAT per annum ( the Council will still be required to pay this to Anglian Water).
- The Council will still be required to observe the conditions contained in the underlease and will still be required to seek Anglian Water's consent to any proposed changes to the premises etc.

9.4.5 Leasehold easement dated 19 December 1997 to Anglian Water Services Limited

- The Council will become Anglian Water Services Limited's landlord.
- Property: vehicular right of way for access to Anglian Water's property known as the Pump House over Rowan House car park.
- Term: lease expires 18 December 2077.
- Rent: one peppercorn.

9.5 Accordingly once the freehold is acquired from a practical point of view there will be no change in the responsibilities under the Council's underlease of part of Rowan House. Acquisition of the freehold will not give the Council a free hand to do what it likes with Rowan House. Anglian Water will remain entitled to quiet enjoyment of the premises without interference from the landlord. However, where there is a requirement for Anglian Water to seek its landlords consent to a proposed letting or alteration to the premises it will, in future have to consult the Council.

9.6 The other major implication will be the increased revenue from the rental payments from Anglian Water under the headlease. However, any increases in rental that the Council may seek to impose under the rent review provisions would no doubt be reflected in rent reviews in the underlease to the Council.

## 10. Financial Implications

10.1 There are four financial issues arising from the proposed purchase of Rowan House:-

- Inclusion in the capital programme of the cost of purchase
- Impact on the Council's borrowing limits
- Impact on the revenue budget
- Overall assessment of proposal

### Capital Programme implications

10.2 The Council capital programme does not include any provision for the cost of purchasing Rowan House. The estimated costs of purchase, including associated costs is £8.18m as set out below:-

	£'000
Agreed purchase price	7,800
Stamp duty @ 4%	312
Professional fees	70
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>8,182</b>

10.3 Based on current forecasts for capital receipts there is likely to be little scope to include new projects in the capital programme unless existing schemes can be removed. No such proposals have been made, therefore the cost of purchase would need to be funded through borrowing.

#### **Impact on Council's borrowing limits**

10.4 The Prudential Code regulations allow an individual authority to determine its own borrowing limit. This means local improvements can be funded from borrowing without Government consent - provided the debt can be afforded. The detailed assessment and impact on the Council's prudential borrowing limits is set out within the separate report on this agenda. In summary, the proposal is to increase the Council's borrowing limits by £8.2m. It should be added that the level and terms of any new borrowing will be considered as part of the overall treasury management strategy.

#### **Impact on revenue budget**

10.5 There are two revenue budget impacts to consider:-

- Net rental income position
- Financing costs of borrowing

#### **Net rental income**

10.6 As set out in this report under the proposed purchase the Council will receive a rental from Anglian Water who leases the whole building. This will be offset by the Council's contribution for those parts of the building leased. The net income from this is currently estimated to be £301k pa.

#### **Capital Financing Costs**

10.7 The proposed capital cost is £8.182m. There are 3 elements to the financing costs for this scheme: interest, provision to repay debt and a technical impact on capital financing costs charged to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

#### **Interest**

10.8 Based on current long term rates available from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) the estimated cost of any borrowing is 4.5%. This equates to an initial annual cost of £360k. In later years this figure will reduce as the Council's provides for the repayment of debt as explained below.

#### **Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)**

10.9 The Council is required to provide for the repayment of debt. This is known as the MRP. This used to be a statutory charge fixed charge of 4%. However, new guidance allows authorities to determine their own MRP policy which allows greater flexibility over how much is set aside for debt repayment and suggests different methods to make this assessment.

10.10 The intention is that the MRP policy will be based on providing for the repayment of debt over an estimated life of the asset. In this case it is reasonable to assume that a reasonable "life" for Rowan House or a similar building is 50 years. The estimated MRP payment which would start in 09/10 is therefore £164k pa.

## Impact on HRA recharges

- 10.11 There is a statutory charge made between the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (“HRA”) in respect of borrowing. This is to reflect the fact that a proportion of borrowing costs are in respect of the housing stock. The charge to the HRA is based on the average rate of the council’s debt and the notional housing borrowing requirement (HRA Capital Financing Requirement – “HRA CFR”). Carrying out borrowing in respect of the Rowan House will reduce the average rate of our debt, because current rates are cheaper than our current average rate of debt. As the HRA CFR is unaffected by the Rowan House scheme it means that the charge to the HRA is reduced resulting in a cost pressure to the General Fund. This impact is estimated to up to £72k. The actual impact depends on the actual level and timing of borrowing for this scheme and also other decisions relating to the Council’s overall treasury management activities.

## Summary Revenue Position

- 10.12 The following table sets out the summarised revenue position for the remainder of 08/09 and 09/10 to 11/12 based on the incremental impact of borrowing

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Interest	108	353	345	338
MRP	0	164	164	164
Item 8 impact	10	72	72	72
<b>Total Financing cost</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>574</b>
Net income	-91	-301	-301	-301
<b>Net cost</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>273</b>
Budget	97*	322	322	322
<b>Net saving</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>

\*Part year budget only

## Summary Assessment

- 10.13 As illustrated the revenue impact of the proposal should deliver a one off saving in 08/09 and ongoing annual saving of at least £34k which will grow annually as provision for debt repayment is made. In addition to the proposal to purchase Rowan House protects the Council from future increases in rental costs as any increases should be matched by a similar increase in rental increases from Anglian Water. The Council’s borrowing costs are likely to be fixed and this provides greater certainty over costs.
- 10.14 An exercise has been undertaken to calculate the Net Present Value (NPV) over the next 15 years of renting the building or the cost involved in purchasing. The NPV is a way of expressing the cost over a period taking into account the value of money over a time period through using discounting. This shows, based on the full financial implications set out in this section that purchasing is the cheaper than renting option is to buy by circa £0.3m at today’s prices. If it was assumed that the current rental prices would have increased then the savings would be higher.
- 10.15 As outlined earlier the Council’s liability for repair costs remains the same as Anglian Waters liability stays the same.

10.16 The Prudential Code was introduced to enable local authorities to make decisions such as whether to rent or buy based on criteria such as affordability, prudence and sustainability as opposed to be restricted on whether there are revenue or capital resources. The budgetary implications of purchasing Rowan House show that there is a financial case for this proposal.

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

11.1 Rowan House is fully accessible.

## **12. Community Safety Implications**

12.1 Not applicable.

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

13.1 Health and safety considerations need to be taken into account to ensure our staff have a safe working environment. These were considered when we moved into the building. There are no changes planned connected to the purchase of the building that impact on this.

## **14. Risk Management Implications**

14.1 The financial situation depends on Anglian Water continuing to pay their rent until the end of their lease. If Anglian Water were to go into administration then this would be at risk. Given the nature of Anglian Water this is considered to be a very low risk. A rental guarantee is in place and transfers to the Landlord's successors, which mitigates this risk to an extent.

14.2 As Anglian Water has decided, at this point, not to buy themselves out of the lease, there are some risks to us, particularly around the flexibility of the building. Again, these are considered to be low level risks.

## **Background Papers**

Portfolio Holder report September 2008 – Office Accommodation Strategy

Atisreal report – 21 November 2008 (Confidential)



## Cabinet

3 December 2008

Item  
10(ii)

Report of	Head of Resource Management	Author	Sean Plummer ☎ 282389
Title	Borrowing Limits and Prudential Indicators		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

**This report proposes changes to the Council borrowing limits and other prudential indicators in respect of proposed changes to the capital programme**

### 1. Decisions Required

- 1.1. Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council changes to the Council's prudential indicators in respect of:-
- (i) borrowing of £8.182m in respect of the proposed purchase of Rowan House
  - (ii) borrowing of £2m in respect of the firstsite:newsite project

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Two separate reports on this agenda set out proposals to make the following changes to the capital programme:-
- Inclusion of £8.182m in respect of the purchase of Rowan House
  - An addition of £2m funded by CBC in respect of the firstsite:newsite project subject to certain conditions.
- 2.2. Both proposals are made on the assumption that the capital cost will be funded through borrowing.

### 3. Prudential Framework

- 3.1. The Prudential Code regulations allow an individual authority to determine its own borrowing limit. This means local improvements can be funded from borrowing without Government consent - provided the debt can be afforded.
- 3.2. In considering its programme for capital investment, the Council is required within the Code to have regard to three overarching principles of:
- affordability, e.g. implications for Council Tax
  - prudence and sustainability, e.g. implications for external borrowing
- 3.3. In addition the Prudential Code places a greater emphasis on sound and robust treasury management arrangements and:-
- value for money
  - stewardship of assets,
  - service objectives,

- practicality,

3.4 The Code requires the Council to agree a number of prudential indicators which set out the limits to which the Council may borrow and the implications of borrowing. Prudential indicators may be revised during the year.

3.5 Appendix A sets out the revised prudential indicators based on the financial proposals set in respect of the two schemes. Changes have only been made for these proposals and no attempt has been made to make any further updates. The Council will next consider the prudential indicators as part of the budget report in February 2009.

3.6 The following explains the key issues relevant to the revised prudential indicators

### **Affordability**

The key factors affecting affordability are:-

<b>Area</b>	<b>Comment re Rowan House</b>	<b>Comment re FS:NS</b>	<b>Combined impact</b>
Increase in level of capital expenditure	The capital programme will be increased by £8.182m.	The capital programme will be increased by £7.6m, although it is assumed of this £2m will be financed through borrowing.	The capital programme will be increased by £15.782m.
Financing Costs	The prudential indicator reflects the increase in financing costs (interest and MRP). The level of financing costs as a % of the budget increases, however the net rental income shown in the report has been identified to offset the increase in financing charges.	The level of financing costs as a % of the budget increases due to the additional borrowing costs.	In total financing costs will increase. However, in respect of Rowan House there is an increase in income.
Net Borrowing Requirement	The Council's borrowing requirement will increase by up to £8.182m	The Council's borrowing requirement will increase by up to £2m	The combined borrowing requirement would increase by £10.182m
Capital Financing Requirement	This reflects the level of the capital programme that has not already been financed through capital receipts, capital grants or other contributions. Similar comments are applicable as those in respect of the increasing level of capital programme.		

Incremental impact of decisions	The prudential indicator sets out the impact on Council Tax based on the revenue implications in the report on Rowan House. <b>As such where it shows an impact on Council Tax of a saving of £1.19 in 2008/09 08 and an ongoing saving £0.58 in 2009/10. This does not mean that Council Tax will change by these amounts but is a way of expressing the revenue impact in terms of Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>This shows an impact on Council Tax of a cost of £1.09 in 2009/10. The impact will be higher in 2010/11 due to the on-going interest cost and costs of MRP. Again this does not mean that Council Tax will change by these amounts.</b>	Combined impact in 08/09 of a saving of £1.19 and a net cost of £0.51 in 09/10.
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### Prudence and Sustainability

The key factors affecting prudence are:-

Area	Comment re Rowan House	Comment re FS:NS	Combined impact
Authorised limit of debt and operational boundary *	Increase in limits of £9m ( <i>this includes the standard 10% contingency. This is not a budgetary contingency</i> )	Increase in limits of £2.2m ( <i>this includes the standard 10% contingency. This is not a budgetary contingency</i> )	Total increase in limits of £11.2m ( <i>this includes the standard 10% contingency. This is not a budgetary contingency</i> )

*\* The limits are based on agreed levels of borrowing and the borrowing exposure set out in the report. The authorised limit does not mean that this will be the level of debt but reflects a level which could be afforded although may not be sustainable. All borrowing is carried out as part of the agreed treasury management policy, strategy and procedures.*

#### 4. Financial implications

4.1 The separate reports on both projects fully set out the financial implications. This report sets out the impact on prudential borrowing indicators for each and summarises the combined impact should both be agreed.

#### 5. Risk Management Implications

5.1 Individual risks of the proposed projects are set out within the reports. The information shown in this report on the impact of borrowing on the Council's

prudential indicators is designed to set out the relationship between the Council's borrowing plans and budgets.

## **6. Other Standard References**

- 6.1 Having considered publicity, equality, diversity and human rights, community safety and health and safety implications, there are none that are significant to the matters in this report.

### Prudential Indicators 2008/09 to 2010/11

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.

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.

**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	Rowan House 2008/09	2009/10	Rowan House 2009/10	FS:NS 2009/10	Combined 2009/10
	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Revised Estimate	Revised Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Capital expenditure</b>						
Non-HRA	25,792	33,974	626	626	8,226	8,852
HRA	4,380	4,380	4,380	4,380	4,380	4,380
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,172</b>	<b>38,354</b>	<b>5,006</b>	<b>5,006</b>	<b>12,606</b>	<b>13,232</b>
<b>Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream</b>						
Non-HRA	-2.84%	-2.33%	-2.13%	-0.5%	-1.85%	-0.23%
HRA	13.00%	12.96%	12.32%	12.03%	12.27%	11.98%
<b>Net borrowing requirement</b>						
B/fwd 1 April	32,500	32,500	32,500	40,682	32,500	40,682
C/fwd 31 March	32,500	40,682	32,500	40,682	34,500	42,682
In year borrowing requirement	<b>0</b>	<b>8,182</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March</b>						
Non-HRA	16,103	24,285	15,619	23,637	18,103	25,637
HRA	50,883	50,883	50,883	50,883	50,883	50,883
<b>Total</b>	<b>66,986</b>	<b>75,168</b>	<b>66,502</b>	<b>74,520</b>	<b>68,986</b>	<b>76,520</b>
<b>Incremental impact of capital investment decisions (see note 1)</b>						
Council Tax (Band D)		(£1.19)		(£0.58)	£1.09	£0.51
Housing Rents						

**Note 1:** The impact is an indicative figure and does not reflect actual Council Tax increases / decreases.

The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) reflects 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.

**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 Estimate £'000	Rowan House 2008/09 Revised Estimate £'000	2009/10 Estimate £'000	Rowan House 2009/10 Revised Estimate £'000	FS:NS 2009/10 Revised Estimate £'000	Combined 2009/10 Revised Estimate £'000
<b>Authorised limit for external debt</b>						
Borrowing	72,750	81,750	72,750	81,750	74,950	83,950
Other long term liabilities	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,750</b>	<b>86,750</b>	<b>77,750</b>	<b>86,750</b>	<b>79,950</b>	<b>88,950</b>
<b>Operational boundary for external debt</b>						
Borrowing	66,500	75,500	66,500	75,500	68,700	77,700
Other long term liabilities	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,500</b>	<b>78,500</b>	<b>69,500</b>	<b>78,500</b>	<b>71,700</b>	<b>80,700</b>

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
- The Operational Boundary

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'.

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.

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. It should be demonstrated that capital projects have the necessary funding to proceed. Where capital receipts are not available, the Council should clearly show how much it intends to borrow, and that this is within the authorised limits for the year.



## Local Development Framework Committee

Item  
**7**

2 December 2008

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Karen Syrett 01206 282473</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Adoption of Core Strategy</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>		

**The Local Development Framework Committee is asked to recommend to Council the adoption of the Core Strategy.**

### **1. Decision(s) Required**

- 1.1 To recommend to Full Council that it adopts the Core Strategy at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008 as recommended by the Inspector in accordance with Section 23 (3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
- 1.2 The Spatial Policy Manager be authorised to deal with all the necessary adoption documentation and other consequential matters in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

### **2. Reasons for Decision(s)**

- 2.1 To enable Colchester to move forward with the process of production of the Local Development Framework directing future development in Colchester.
- 2.2 The binding report of the Planning Inspector, following the Independent Examination in the summer, was received on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008. This report finds that the Core Strategy Development Plan Document is 'Sound' and recommends that it be adopted in accordance with the legislative requirements.

### **3. Alternative Options**

- 3.1 The Planning Inspectors Report on the Core Strategy is binding on the Council. The adoption of a Development Plan Document is governed by Section 23(2) – (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 In 2004, Colchester Borough Council started work on the production of their Local Development Framework (LDF). The overarching Core Strategy Development Plan Document was the first document to be produced, in line with Government guidance on the priorities for the LDF.
- 4.2 The Core Strategy is the most important element of the Council's LDF as it provides the long term vision and objectives for steering and shaping development growth in the Borough up to 2021 and beyond. The document was subject to four stages of public consultation the results of which helped inform the submission Core Strategy. An Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State, conducted an Examination in the summer to consider the 'soundness' of the document. The Inspector has subsequently produced a report with recommendations that are binding upon the Council.
- 4.3 The Inspector concludes that the Core Strategy is 'Sound' and recommends its adoption subject to changes. In her report, the Inspector endorses the Borough Council's approach regarding the preparation, consultation and formulation of the plan. A full copy of the Inspector's binding report is set out in Appendix 1. The appendices to the report are available as background papers. The revised Core Strategy which incorporates all the changes is contained in Appendix 2.
- 4.4 The principal changes required by the Inspector are summarised below, many of which were suggested by the Council:
- Add Appendix E (list of the saved policies from the adopted Local Plan that are to be superseded by policies in the Core Strategy.)
  - Amend policy SD1 and associated text to make clear that dwelling numbers are minima not ceilings.
  - Amend the text of Table H1a and elsewhere to remove references to specific sites, to allow for the two main areas of greenfield land to be brought forward before 2016 if necessary and for them to accord with national standards at the time regarding reduced or zero carbon development.
  - Replace references to the South West distributor road with the term 'Stanway road improvements'.
  - Delete reference to the east park and ride site from the text and Key Diagram 2 (KD2).
  - Add the Coastal Protection Belt to policy NE1 (renamed ENV1) and Key Diagram 1 (KD1).
  - Delete the Areas of Landscape Conservation Importance and Green Breaks from policy NE1, KD1, KD2 and related text and provide a criteria based policy to deal with landscape protection.
  - Amend Table CE1 and add to the text to clarify the role of the Town Centre, its fringe and the Urban Gateways in terms of the sequential approach in PPS6.
  - Replace Table 6d with information from the infrastructure trajectory to show clearly who will implement each policy and project.

- Amend Appendix C to include monitoring targets as well as indicators.
- Various minor amendments, including editorial changes, updating, clarification and correction to the text of the Core Strategy, in the interests of clarity, accuracy and consistency.

4.5 There are several important issues within the Inspectors report and the Core Strategy that are worth highlighting;

- The new affordable housing policy introduces a higher percentage (35%) and lower thresholds, i.e. all new proposals for residential development will be expected to contribute to affordable housing either on site or by way of financial contribution.
- The Council undertook the Sustainability Appraisal in house and an important principle is established. The Inspector supported this approach and stated 'National guidance makes it clear that this is an acceptable, even desirable, arrangement and I find no merit in the criticism that CBC should not have carried out this work in-house.'
- Policy SD2 establishes the principal of standard charges for developer contributions.
- Policy CE1 protects employment land and states that proposals which would result in the loss of employment capacity will not normally be supported.
- All housing developments will be expected to provide new residents with access to private and/or communal open space. At least 25 square metres per dwelling will be sought for flats, whilst houses should provide larger private gardens.
- New developments will be expected to provide facilities and employ technology to optimise opportunities for recycling and minimising waste.
- The transport strategy, including park and ride, is considered most appropriate but more work needs to be undertaken to demonstrate the need for a park and ride site to the east.

4.6 As soon as practicable after the Council adopts the Core Strategy it must comply with Regulations 35 and 36 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended by the 2008 Regulations). These relate to the deposit of documents and publication arrangements including the Adopted Core Strategy, Sustainability Appraisal, public notice and adoption statements.

4.7 A Sustainability Appraisal adoption statement must be prepared as part of the adoption documentation. This will detail how the Core Strategy has been produced in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The statement will summarise how sustainability issues have been integrated into the Core Strategy how the sustainability appraisal and consultation has been taken into account, and the reasons for choosing the document as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives.

- 4.8 Any person aggrieved by the Core Strategy may make an application to the High Court under section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, on the grounds that the document is not within the appropriate power or that a procedural requirement has not been complied with. Any applications must be made not later than the end of the period of six weeks starting on the day on which the Core Strategy is adopted by the Borough Council.
- 4.9 Once adopted, the Core Strategy becomes part of the statutory development plan for the Borough and is used in the determination of planning applications. An appendix to the Core Strategy sets out those saved policies in the Adopted Borough Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Structure Plan which will be superseded by the Core Strategy.
- 4.10 The Colchester LDF will now comprise the following documents:
- Adopted Statement of Community Involvement;
  - Approved Local Development Scheme;
  - Approved Annual Monitoring Report;
  - The adopted Core Strategy;
  - Supplementary Planning Documents on the Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation; Sustainable Construction; Extending Your House; Magdalen Street Development Brief and Colne Harbour Masterplan.
- 4.11 The Council is making very good progress implementing the new planning system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004. Further documents will be added in line with the Approved Local Development Scheme.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD.

## **6.0 Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The LDF helps facilitate the delivery of Colchester's regeneration programme and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **7.0 Consultation**

- 7.1 Full consultation has taken place at various stages in the preparation of the Core Strategy. Those who made representations were also able to attend and take part in the examination hearing sessions which were held in the summer.

## **8.0 Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 The regulations require us to publish details of the adoption process and give notice by way of a local advertisement that the Core Strategy will be adopted.

## **9.0 Financial implications**

- 9.1 Hard copies of the final document will be kept to a minimum. Printing costs have been included in existing budgets.

## **10.0 Human Rights Implications**

- 10.1 The document was produced using a range of methods in order to enable as many people as possible to respond regardless of gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and race/ethnicity.
- 10.2 This document will work to increase individual human rights by increasing involvement in the planning process.

## **11.0 Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 None

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

- 12.1 None.

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 The Core Strategy is intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate development. It will provide consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

## **Background Papers**

Planning Inspectors Report and Appendices.



# **Report to Colchester Borough Council**

**by Jean Jones MA DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State  
for Communities and Local Government**

The Planning Inspectorate  
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Date 09 October 2008

## **PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 SECTION 20 REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE COLCHESTER CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT**

Document submitted for examination on 19 November 2007

Examination hearings held between 24 June and 10 July 2008

File Ref: A1530/429/3

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AA	Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive/Regulations
ALCI	Area of Landscape Character Importance
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
APO	Core Strategy Amendment to Preferred Option stage
App	Appendix
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CCA	Countryside Conservation Area
CD	Core Document
CIF	Community Infrastructure Fund
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CPB	Coastal Protection Belt
CS	Core Strategy
CSPO	Core Strategy Preferred Option stage
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
ECC	Essex County Council
EEP	East of England Plan – the Regional Spatial Strategy
EH	English Heritage
GA	Growth Area
GO-East	Government Office for the East of England
HA	Highways Agency
ha	hectares
HGGIS	Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Study
KD1	Key Diagram 1
KD2	Key Diagram 2
LDF	Local Development Framework
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LP	2004 Local Plan
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LTP	Local Transport Plan
NE	Natural England
para	paragraph
PAS	Planning Advisory Service
PDL	Previously developed land (brownfield land)
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SCS	Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy 2007
SEZ	Strategic Employment Zone
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SOCG	Statement Of Common Ground
SP	Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan 2001
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSA	Soundness Self Assessment

## Introduction

i. Under the terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the purpose of the independent examination of a Development Plan Document (DPD) is to determine:

- (a) whether it satisfies the requirements of s19 and s24(1) of the 2004 Act, the regulations under s17(7), and any regulations under s36 relating to the preparation of the document; and
- (b) whether it is sound.

ii. This report contains my assessment of the Colchester Core Strategy DPD in terms of the above matters, along with my recommendations and the reasons for them, as required by s20(7) of the 2004 Act. A schedule of changes is attached to the report (Annexe 1 and 1a-d) and references to changes are shown thus **(C)**. References to core documents are shown thus *[CBC]*.

iii. Under regulation 13(5) a DPD must identify any policies that it is to supersede. The submission CS did not contain this information but to overcome this omission Colchester Borough Council (CBC) suggests including a new Appendix E to the CS to show which of the relevant 'saved' policies of the 2004 Local Plan (LP) it would supersede. This change would ensure that this soundness test has been met.

**iii.i In order for the Core Strategy to be sound, it should include a new Appendix E to list the saved policies from the adopted Local Plan that are to be superseded by policies in the Core Strategy, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report (C1).**

iv I am satisfied that the Core Strategy (CS) meets the requirements of the Act and Regulations. My main role is to consider its soundness against each of the tests of soundness set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12). Although the recently revised PPS12 *Local Spatial Planning* is a material consideration, the Colchester CS will be considered against the nine tests of para 4.24 of the 2004 PPS12 *Local Development Frameworks* because it was submitted prior to the revision.

v. In line with national policy, the starting point for the examination is the assumption that the local authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The changes I have specified in this binding report are made only where there is a clear need to amend the document in the light of the soundness tests in PPS12. None of these changes should materially alter the substance and overall strategy of the submitted DPD, nor undermine the sustainability appraisal and participatory processes already undertaken.

vi. My report firstly considers the Core Strategy against the procedural tests and then deals with the key planning issues considered during the examination in terms of the tests of conformity, coherence, consistency and effectiveness. My report does not address individual representations, although relevant issues were included in the main Matters and Issues

identified for examination. My overall conclusion is that the Core Strategy is sound, provided it is changed in the ways specified. This report refers to all the changes that are needed to make the Core Strategy sound and the detailed wording is set out in Annexe 1 to my report.

vii. In summary, the main changes required to make the CS sound are:

- *Add Appendix E to list the saved policies from the adopted Local Plan that are to be superseded by policies in the Core Strategy.*
- *Amend policy SD1 and associated text to make clear that dwelling numbers are minima not ceilings.*
- *Amend the text of Table H1a and elsewhere to remove references to specific sites, to allow for the two main areas of greenfield land to be brought forward before 2016 if necessary and for them to accord with national standards at the time regarding reduced or zero carbon development.*
- *Replace references to the South West distributor road with the term 'Stanway road improvements'.*
- *Delete reference to the east park and ride site from the text and Key Diagram 2 (KD2).*
- *Add the Coastal Protection Belt to policy NE1 (renamed ENV1) and Key Diagram 1 (KD1).*
- *Delete the Areas of Landscape Conservation Importance and Green Breaks from policy NE1, KD1, KD2 and related text and provide a criteria based policy to deal with landscape protection.*
- *Amend Table CE1 and add to the text to clarify the role of the Town Centre, its fringe and the Urban Gateways in terms of the sequential approach in PPS6.*
- *Replace Table 6d with information from the infrastructure trajectory to show clearly who will implement each policy and project.*
- *Amend Appendix C to include monitoring targets as well as indicators.*
- *Various minor amendments, including editorial changes, updating, clarification and correction to the text of the Core Strategy, in the interests of clarity, accuracy and consistency.*

## **Procedural tests**

### **1: Consistency with the Local Development Scheme**

1.1 The Colchester Core Strategy DPD is contained within the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), the updated version being approved on 5 November 2007 [CBC/SUB/012]. There, the CS is shown as having a submission date of November 2007. The CS follows the profile in the LDS and soundness test 1 of PPS12 is therefore met.

## **2: Compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement and associated Regulations**

2.1 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) [CBC/SUB/009] has been found sound by the Secretary of State and was formally adopted by the Council before the examination hearings took place. It is evident from the documents submitted by the Council, including the Regulation 28 and 31 Statements and its Soundness Self Assessment (SSA), that it has met the requirements of soundness test 2.

## **3: Sustainability Appraisal**

3.1 The CS was subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) at all stages during its preparation and the SA documents properly identify the process carried out [CBC/SUB/002, CBC/EB/017, 019, 021 & 022]. The development of sustainability objectives, derived from national, regional and local indicators and sources of information, has been a clear process.

3.2 Criticisms of the adequacy of the SA are more appropriately dealt with in considering the coherence, consistency and effectiveness tests. The fact that outcomes might vary with different objectives or weighting is not surprising but does not lead me to find fault with the SA that underpins the CS. In the initial stages the SA was carried out by Essex County Council but the Borough Council took over for the Amendment to Preferred Option (APO) stage on the advice of GO-East, to ensure the SA was integrated with the plan-making process. National guidance [CBC/NAT/057] makes it clear that this is an acceptable, even desirable, arrangement and I find no merit in the criticism that CBC should not have carried out this work in-house. Consultants and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) provided independent verification that the SA at submission stage satisfied the relevant standards and guidance.

3.3 The Borough contains a number of areas with European designations including the Essex Estuaries Marine Special Area of Conservation, several Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites which together may be termed Natura 2000 sites. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is included in the evidence base [CBC/SUB/011] and fed into the SA. In accordance with the Habitats Directive, I am satisfied that an AA has been undertaken and that there would be no significant harm to the conservation of any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the policies and proposals within this DPD. A Statement Of Common Ground (SOCG) [CBC/EB/090] indicates that Natural England is fully supportive of the AA and it has suggested minor changes to the CS introduction to clarify its role.

3.4 In summary, I find that soundness test 3 has been met.

## **Conformity, Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness tests**

### **4: A Spatial Plan**

4.1 The CS provides a locally distinctive vision of the Borough's future and its position in the wider area. The spatial quality of the CS is evident

from its focus on particular parts of the Borough and the way in which their development would be integrated. Colchester is in the Haven Gateway sub-region which was identified as a 'New Growth Point' in October 2006. There are well established arrangements for joint working at varying levels, including the Regional Cities East partnership, and a number of reports demonstrate this [CBC/EB/001-4, 067, 080 and 110].

4.2 Table 6a lists the partners who will help to deliver the policies and projects in the CS and Table 6d, as revised, indicates the varied range of organisations involved including health trusts, Network Rail, the education authority and power suppliers. I shall deal with proposed changes to Table 6d later in my report. Essex County Council works closely with CBC on the Local Transport Plan (LTP) [CBC/EB/006]. Sport England is closely involved in arrangements for hosting facilities related to the 2012 Olympics. Discussions with stakeholders ensure their future plans are taken into consideration. I find the Core Strategy conforms with the descriptions of spatial planning contained in PPS1 and PPS12 and meets this part of Test 4.

### **Consistency with national planning policy**

4.3 Appendix D of the CS refers to national guidance in terms of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and PPS which have been taken into account in its preparation. The evidence base contains studies such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) [CBC/EB/041] which relates to PPS25 and the Open Space Study [CBC/EB/040] based on PPG17.

4.4 Specific matters related to national policies such as housing land supply (PPS3), the sequential approach to town centre developments (PPS6) and local landscape designations (PPS7) are more appropriately considered under the separate issues below. GO-East has been involved throughout the preparation of the CS and has not identified any lack of consistency with national policy except for querying the designated countryside and coastal areas in KD1 and policy NE1. This will be considered later in my report.

### **General conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy**

4.5 The approved Regional Spatial Strategy, the East of England Plan (EEP) [CBC/REG/014a] was published in May 2008. However, it is to be the subject of an immediate review under policy IMP3 to increase housing provision in line with more recent national requirements. It is expected that this will be submitted late in 2009, examined in 2010 and published in 2011. The CS may need to be reviewed then although CBC and Essex County Council (ECC) believe it has the flexibility to accommodate some further growth.

4.6 The EEP provides an up to date framework for the CS which I consider follows its direction very closely. The East of England Regional Assembly has indicated [CBC/SUB/015a] that the CS is in general conformity with the EEP. There has been a legal challenge to the EEP relating to land

in Hertfordshire but for the purposes of this examination I have assumed that the relevant policies will continue in their current form.

## **5: The Community Strategy**

5.1 There are two relevant community strategies: *Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy October 2007 [CBC/SUB/014]* for the Borough (SCS) and *Shaping the Future of Essex 2004-2024 [CBC/REG/021]* for the County of Essex. The Council has a close working relationship at both officer and member level with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and a joint public consultation exercise was undertaken in May 2007. The PAS diagnostic report indicated that there are strong working relationships. Table 1 of the CS demonstrates how the priorities of the SCS translate into the CS policies. Some minor changes are proposed to the key issues for Colchester in para 2.4 and elsewhere to emphasise the role of tourism, culture and leisure and the role of the University of Essex to support the role of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre, which is a prime element of the SCS and the EEP. The CS has also had regard to Essex County Council's Community Strategy and I am satisfied that test 5 is met.

## **6: Coherence and consistency within and between DPDs**

6.1 The CS is the first of Colchester's DPDs and consistency is therefore an aspect that will be tested in the future when other DPDs come forward. CBC is in advance of adjoining districts in Essex and Suffolk in terms of submitting a CS but the SSA states that they have been consulted at each stage of the process. Joint working in the Haven Gateway Partnership provides a consistent policy approach. Some of the evidence base has been prepared jointly with other authorities such as the North Essex Retail Study [CBC/EB/026] and the SFRA [CBC/EB/041].

6.2 Only two items raise cross boundary issues – these are the impact of traffic from Tiptree on the environment of Kelvedon and Feering parishes (Braintree District Council) and the omission of the Coastal Protection Belt (Essex County Council). I shall deal with these later in my report under the relevant issues and conclude that the CS satisfies test 6.

## **7: Appropriate strategies and policies, robust and credible evidence base**

7.1 Most of the key planning issues concerning the soundness of the CS are considered under this heading. These include the main Matters and Issues identified for examination covering the spatial strategy, the amount and distribution of housing and employment, and the provisions for transport and the environment. They cover soundness tests 4 and 6-9.

### ***Issue 1: Have the relevant alternatives been adequately considered?***

7.2 In the EEP Colchester is identified as a key centre for development and change and as a regional transport node. The distribution of housing and employment is a fundamental driver of the overall strategy because of

the growth point status. The CS translates this into a strategy of concentrating future employment and housing growth into Colchester town's existing Regeneration Areas and five future Growth Areas (GA), carrying forward, but significantly developing, the approach of the LP [CBC/EB/011]. Transit corridors would provide greatly improved public transport and the two broad areas for greenfield growth later in the plan period (in the North GA and Stanway GA) would be in sustainable locations, well served by facilities. The choice of Stanway for the smaller greenfield area emerged from consideration of alternatives and the SA. The inclusion of a new Regeneration Area at North Station also emerged through the process after consultation with the LSP.

7.3 The twelve principal objectives at Issues and Options stage were derived from issues identified in national and regional policy, public consultation and the evidence base. Eight alternative strategies were initially considered for distributing housing, providing a wide range of scenarios from developing in selected small towns and larger villages to developing a new settlement at Marks Tey. A range of three transport options was considered from a radical approach to one with limited investment in transportation.

7.4 The Core Strategy Preferred Option (CSPO) stage refined and extended the principal objectives into key issues, vision and objectives. It assessed the housing and transport options against the findings of the SA and public consultation and explained the preferred strategic direction, integrating transport with development to achieve a sustainable strategy focussed on Colchester town. While it then took on broadly the format of a draft CS, the topics contained policy alternatives which were assessed. The APO stage considered a limited range of alternatives for distributing new housing and employment and making investment in transport, leading on to the submission CS.

7.5 Over this process, the need for greenfield land was assessed to be only about 3,000 dwellings because of the good housing land supply from existing commitments. There was also a strong direction from national and emerging regional policy that Previously Developed Land (PDL) or brownfield land should be used first and that was strongly supported by public consultation. The alternative of allocating a proportion of the greenfield growth to a 'halo' of smaller sites around the urban fringe rather than using two larger urban extensions does not appear to have been promoted by others at the time as a discrete strategy. Bearing in mind the policy context and the feedback from the SA, the Council's approach seems to me to be valid and there is no requirement to consider alternatives that were not appropriate or relevant.

7.6 The LP proposals map is not to be altered by the CS and it does not at present show boundaries for Colchester or the three rural District Centres. These will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD which will also review the existing LP village envelopes. In my opinion, the CS lacks analysis of the rural District Centres and villages compared with what is suggested in EEP policy SS4 and it does not seem to look beyond carrying forward existing permissions and allocations. Allowing for a very limited

amount of further growth in certain of the rural District Centres or villages might be possible without undermining the overall strategy. *However, it would need to be supported by robust and credible evidence relating to the CS objectives.* That could allow for some 'fine tuning' and, while the CS is the place for tough decisions to be made, I do not consider it inappropriate for this level of detail to be left to the site allocations DPD.

7.7 A radical alternative, which has been fully considered in the emerging CS, would be to create a new settlement at Marks Tey where there is a mainline railway station. This was not supported by the EEP panel because of concerns that it would detract from regeneration in Colchester. I consider this alternative would fundamentally undermine the CS, fail to comply with EEP policy SS2 regarding prioritising the re-use of PDL within and around urban areas to the fullest extent possible and would be more appropriately considered in the next phase of plan-making. Even if limited to a first phase only, that would still involve fundamental changes to the overall strategy and would not demonstrably provide the critical mass needed for local facilities and good public transport.

7.8 I have considered the various alternatives put forward but do not consider the CS to be unsound in terms of this issue.

***Issue 2: Is the focussing of significant growth into the Growth and Regeneration Areas the most appropriate strategy for the Borough, having regard to national and regional policies, and do these areas have the environmental capacity to absorb the planned amounts of growth?***

7.9 The five GAs are intended as sustainable locations where growth of employment and housing will be focussed to make the best use of existing and new infrastructure and to improve public transport potential. They are not indicated on KD2 and it is necessary in the interests of clarity for them to be included there, along with the broad areas for new housing. The separate diagram on page 24 duplicates this and should be deleted. The detailed GA boundaries, together with others on KD2, will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD, masterplans or development briefs in line with the schedule in Hearing Document 6.

#### *Town Centre Growth Area*

7.10 Colchester is England's oldest recorded town and has important historic and archaeological remains. Nevertheless, the town centre contains substantial residential development and over the CS period it will gain some 2,000 dwellings, including 1,500 that have already been built or permitted.

7.11 The CS addresses the need for regeneration in two parts of the Town centre GA. St Botolphs Regeneration Area will involve retail and cultural developments and a new bus station. North Station Regeneration Area will be the focus for high density mixed use schemes including 40,000 sq m of office space. In the CS the historic town centre is a focus for cultural and public realm improvements that will help to deliver the EEP

and SCS visions of Colchester being a prestigious regional centre. The proposals for the Town Centre GA are an important part of the overall strategy in carrying forward the CS vision and objectives.

#### *South Growth Area*

7.12 This coincides closely with the Garrison Regeneration Area where development is well under way to provide a modern garrison on a reduced site and a master planned urban village of some 2,600–3,000 dwellings with associated facilities. This area is close to the town centre and in a sustainable location for new development.

#### *North Growth Area*

7.13 This will accommodate the greatest amount of housing growth - 6200 dwellings, of which 1,500 would be in the Severalls Hospital development (North Regeneration Area) and 2,200 in a greenfield urban extension. It is generally well located for employment opportunities. Because of the availability of large brownfield sites, the Mile End area has already experienced considerable redevelopment and strong concern has been expressed by the parish council and residents about the loss of established facilities and open space plus the lack of new infrastructure.

7.14 The broad area for the greenfield urban extension contains public open space and there are larger privately owned green areas shown as proposed open space on the LP proposals map. Although only used informally, these are valued by those living in the area. While recent development has contributed to the extension of Highwoods country park, that is not so easily accessible to Mile End. Part of the evidence base is the recently completed PPG17 report [CBC/EB/040] which assesses the Borough's open space, sport and recreation facilities in terms of demand/supply as well as providing qualitative and quantitative standards for the future, which improve on current standards.

7.15 I am confident that, even though the CS will result in the development of greenfield land in the North GA, policy PR1, underpinned by the PPG17 study, will provide for an overall reassessment of the area's needs for open space and sport/recreation facilities, seen in the wider context. CS table 6d also indicates new schools, community facilities and open space, sport, recreation and youth facilities for this area in association with new development. A community facilities audit is under way and this will identify wards with problems of multiple deprivation and poor access to services so as to improve the situation across the Borough, not only in the GAs. This will feed into the Annual Monitoring Report.

7.16 Impact on the landscape, ecology and archaeology are other matters that must be taken into consideration by any greenfield development to the west of Mile End Road. However, an *Environmental Audit* [CBC/EB/038] and the study *Landscape Capacity of Settlement Fringes in Colchester Borough* [CBC/EB/036] found the landscape to be of moderate quality and that it had the capacity to accept development, albeit with accompanying mitigation and enhancement measures.

7.17 Traffic congestion is seen by some as a drawback to developing the North GA because the railway forms a barrier which funnels traffic into the A134 in the North Station area. I am not persuaded that free flowing conditions need be provided for motorists at peak periods and congestion may be one of the 'sticks' which encourages the transfer to public transport. However, it can also delay buses and this problem needs to be addressed if there is to be a modal shift away from the car, which is a fundamental part of the overall strategy. Nevertheless, the North GA already has a higher level of travel to work by non-car modes than other parts of Colchester and accessibility is potentially very good. During the course of the examination it became apparent that the Council and ECC understand the problems and have improvements in the LTP to tackle them. These include a rolling programme of work to increase highway capacity at a series of roundabouts on the A133 and the allocation of road space to bus priority including Quality Bus Partnerships.

7.18 In the medium and longer term, the CS aims to make significant improvements to public transport through the final phase of the Northern Approaches Road, associated segregated bus route, new A12 junction and park and ride site. Potential problems associated with the delivery of this major infrastructure will be considered later in my report.

7.19 Considerable analysis has been undertaken of the impact of the proposed growth on transport conditions in the North GA [CBC/EB/073]. This indicates that there are no fundamental highway issues which would be an impediment to delivery and this is an agreed position with both the Highways Agency and Essex County Council. The Highways Agency regarded the CS as unsound on submission because of the lack of information about the detailed impact of development growth on the A12. However, as a result of discussions and further work, it has agreed a SOCG [CBC/EB/100] and confirmed that it no longer considers the CS unsound.

#### *Stanway Growth Area*

7.20 This will provide some 1,800 dwellings and development of a Strategic Employment Zone (SEZ). While further from the town centre than the other GAs, it has good accessibility to employment and local facilities. Some 800 dwellings would be on a broad area of greenfield land on the south western fringe, generally where landscape quality is low and avoiding important archaeological areas.

7.21 CBC has confirmed that the South West distributor road shown in KD2 is in fact a series of junction and width improvements. There is no evidence to justify a new road and I consider the CS would be unsound if it were retained. It should be deleted from KD2 and the Diagram of Future Accessibility and Transport and replaced in the text by reference to Stanway road improvements. The Western Bypass mentioned in the LTP is a partly built road linking the A12 approach and the Stanway SEZ. It will be completed through to Warren Lane in conjunction with the adjoining housing development.

### East Growth Area

7.22 This contains the East Colchester Regeneration Area and is the site of the former port. There has already been considerable development and the CS provides for a total of some 2,600 dwellings here. The GA includes land with planning permission for a research park between the Regeneration Area and the University of Essex and this is one of the three SEZs. The university is included as a partner in the East GA because of local linkages and the research park but the Council indicated that the university campus itself is considered to be outside the GA. Local traffic and flooding are constraints that require mitigation but although there are some risks to delivery of growth because of the difficult nature of many of the sites, East Colchester has strong potential for regeneration which carries forward an important element of the EEP.

### Summary of issue 2

7.23 In summary, I find that the strategy of focussing new development on the Regeneration and Growth Areas of Colchester meets national and regional policy and is the most appropriate in all the circumstances. There is evidence that the Growth Areas have the capacity to accommodate the proposed levels of development and in this respect the CS satisfies soundness test 7.

**7.24 In order for the CS to be sound, the following changes should be made, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report:**

- 1) amend KD2 to show the Growth Areas and the broad areas for new housing and delete the diagram on page 24 (C23 & 43);**
- 2) delete the South West distributor road from KD2 and the Diagram of Future Accessibility and Transport and replace it in the text by reference to Stanway road improvements (C2, 29, 32, 34, 40, 43, 83, 85, 99 & 120).**

***Issue 3: Does the CS provide an appropriate strategy to take forward the vision and objectives for the rural parts of the Borough, helping to sustain thriving rural communities in line with national and regional policies?***

7.25 Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the three settlements that are separately identified in table CE1a as rural District Centres. They have housing allocations for the CS period in table H1a although some of this is already built or permitted. Their role is to provide for a small amount of new housing and to continue to provide services for the surrounding areas. Some new retail provision and additional facilities are planned for all three. It seems to me that they serve the function of 'key service centres' as described in EEP policy SS4.

7.26 A small area of greenfield land for 140 dwellings is identified at Tiptree in table H1a. However, this is not a strategic allocation and, in order to make the CS sound, it should be subsumed within the overall allocation for Tiptree. This is the largest of the three rural District Centres and the only one with a secondary school. There are good local facilities although employment and public transport are limited. It has had recent housing growth and there is concern about additional traffic from further housing passing through Kelvedon and Feering parishes in Braintree District. Nevertheless, having visited the area at peak traffic times and heard and read the evidence I do not find that the level of new housing proposed for Tiptree would make the CS unsound.

7.27 Policy NE2 supports appropriate development of infill sites and PDL within the boundaries of villages which are tightly drawn on the existing proposals map. Some consider that the CS places a virtual embargo on new housing in rural areas as most of the 705 dwellings shown for villages in table H1a are already built or permitted. The settlement hierarchy in Appendix B does not include a tier of principal villages as did the previous LP. I note, however, that the principal villages in the LP were not distinguished by any separate policy and did not feature in the LP housing allocations except for Great Horkelesley. Their function in the Borough has thus not been materially altered by the omission of such a tier in the CS.

7.28 I have already indicated that there has been a lack of analysis of the rural District Centres and villages compared with what is suggested in EEP policy SS4. On the other hand, no rural parish councils consider the CS to be unsound on the basis of the limited opportunities it provides for new housing in villages and only three have indicated their wish to accommodate further housing. The CS evidence base includes the Countryside Agency publication *Are Villages Sustainable?* [CBC/NAT/049]. This concludes that the widespread approach of directing new development to a tier of larger villages in order to sustain services may be over-simplistic, failing to reflect the complexity of the dynamics of contemporary rural settlements, and in some cases promoting unsustainable outcomes. No evidence was provided to the examination to demonstrate the contrary.

7.29 The CS instead supports through policies H4 and NE2 the provision of relevant community needs such as local affordable housing on land outside but contiguous with village boundaries. Several such developments have come forward in the Borough already and it may be that limiting opportunities for market housing in villages will stimulate further such schemes and be the most effective way of addressing the lack of affordable housing in rural areas. The CS also encourages the production of parish plans (18 out of 32 are under way) and village design statements as inputs to the future development of villages. A forthcoming audit of community facilities will establish a baseline of needs.

7.30 Policy NE1 (to be renamed ENV1) makes a general presumption against development on unallocated greenfield land but proposed changes clarify that it is greenfield land *outside settlement boundaries* that would be protected. Proposed changes to NE2 (to be renamed ENV2) state that the Site Allocations DPD will provide an opportunity to review the extent of

village envelopes previously set through the LP process. I consider that these changes are needed to make the CS sound in terms of flexibility.

7.31 Policy NE2 allows for small scale employment development in the countryside where there are low travel needs and low impacts. The definition of 'small scale' is a matter that can more properly be dealt with in the forthcoming Development Policies DPD. Proposed changes to NE2 (to be renamed ENV2) and CE3 clarify the role of Local Employment Zones and add support for rural employment and tourism. I consider that without these the CS would not be sound in terms of test 4 because it would not conform with PPS7 in respect of rural business needs. Separate monitoring targets for rural employment and affordable housing will assist in highlighting the progress of the policies relating to rural communities and these are included in the Council's proposed changes to Appendix C dealt with later in my report.

7.32 Subject to these changes, I find that the CS conforms with national policy and the EEP and meets soundness tests 4 and 7 by providing an appropriate strategy that takes forward the vision and objectives for the rural areas.

**7.33 In order for the CS to be sound, the following changes should be made, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report:**

- 1) amend policies NE1 and NE2 (to become ENV1 and ENV2) to clarify that greenfield land outside settlement boundaries would be protected and that the LP village envelopes would be reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD, (C104 & 105);**
- 2) amalgamate the housing numbers for Tiptree in table H1 and amend the text to remove reference to 140 zero carbon homes (C69);**
- 3) amend policies NE2 and CE3 and the related text to encourage rural employment and tourism (C36, 66, 107, 108 & 110);**
- 4) amend the revised Appendix C to provide separate monitoring of rural affordable housing and employment (C123).**

***Issue 4: Is the CS housing land supply consistent with national and regional policy and supported by robust and credible evidence?***

*Quantity of housing required*

7.34 The EEP was published shortly before the hearings began and gives a minimum requirement of 17,100 dwellings for the Borough from 2001-2021. This equates to an annual average of 855 but, because of higher completions up to 2006, the average is 830 from that year. The CS provides for at least 19,000 new homes between 2001 and 2023, two years beyond the EEP period.

7.35 In order to meet the full requirements of paras 53-57 of PPS3, that a 15 year supply of housing land should be identified from the date of adoption, I assessed supply until 31 March 2024 under the framework of a discussion note [IHD1] which was agreed at the hearing. This extended the requirement from 2021-2024 on the basis advised in the EEP and meets the guidance of revised PPS12 that the CS should cover a 15 year period. I have taken account of the CLG advice in 'Demonstrating a 5 Year Supply of Deliverable Sites'. My calculations give a minimum requirement of 19,665 dwellings from 2001-2024. I do not find it necessary to amend the CS to add the extra year 2023/2024 so long as the evidence base demonstrates that the necessary supply to that date could be provided. However, in order for the CS to be sound in terms of conformity with PPS3 and the EEP (test 4), changes are needed to policy SD1, table H1a and related text to make clear that the 19,000 dwellings is a minimum not a ceiling and that at least 1,710 additional homes, rather than 1,660, would be required between 2021 and 2023.

7.36 The CS states that in 2006 there was planning permission for over 8,000 homes and 95% of these were on PDL, reflecting the strong emphasis on the Regeneration Areas and well above the EEP target of 60%. However, PPS3 makes it clear that reliance should not be placed on existing planning permissions unless their deliverability has been demonstrated.

7.37 In CBC/EB/083 & 106 CBC updated its housing completions to 31 March 2008 and revised the housing trajectory from the Topic Paper [CBC/EB/106]. It shows a minimum of 22,914 new dwellings by 31 March 2024 compared with the 19,665 required. The high rate of completions over the last two years leaves a minimum requirement for each of the future 5 year periods of 3920. Even without taking recent completions into account, the delivery tables show that the 830 per annum average from the EEP, (4150 dwellings for each 5 year period) could be achieved. Although it could be argued that this minimum requirement should be more generously exceeded, it is my view that such an approach is not desirable because it could fetter the outcome of the forthcoming EEP review.

7.38 An estimate of 100 dwellings per year is included in the trajectory from 2008/9 onwards for identified small sites that could not be included without making the document unwieldy. A list of small sites with planning permission shows over 300 sites with permission for 695 dwellings, indicating that there is a realistic supply of this type and past completions on small sites are over 100 a year. However, there is no evidence of assessment against deliverability criteria and, if this element were omitted, the minimum housing target would still be comfortably exceeded, demonstrating robustness in the housing land supply.

#### *Housing supply and the evidence base*

7.39 There have been criticisms of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) [CBC/EB/031] which was produced by building on the work of the previous Urban Capacity Study. It does not entirely follow the

national practice guidance in *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments [CBC/NAT/043]*, for example it does not show the boundaries of each site on a map and does not contain detailed information about discussions with stakeholders, site constraints and action to mitigate such problems. Furthermore it does not take the detailed work beyond Colchester, Stanway and the three rural District Centres although it does look at areas for future potential.

7.40 Nevertheless, it became clear in the course of the examination that the assessment of site constraints and the level of discussion with developers to date is greater than reported in the SHLAA itself. Clarification of the methodology and fieldwork was provided at the hearing by the consultant who prepared the SHLAA. Thus, while some criticisms are valid and should be remedied when the document is reviewed, I find that does not detract from the underlying evidence. The updated housing trajectory provides the necessary link between individual sites and the timescales involved. The SHLAA has taken a conservative view that does not assume increasing densities and makes a discount for non-delivery and is therefore robust.

7.41 I have considered in some detail the deliverability of the larger sites in the first five years' supply in order to test the credibility of the evidence base. One of the most important of these is the former Severalls Hospital at the core of the northern Regeneration Area. This has outline planning permission for 1,500 dwellings with a S106 agreement that would bring forward, amongst other things, the completion of the Northern Approaches Road and a new junction with the A12. These would then allow for a transit corridor, including a segregated bus route, and also for a park and ride site. This site is fundamental to the overall strategy but deliverability has been in doubt recently since the preferred developer withdrew.

7.42 However, the site is in public ownership (NHS trust and English Partnerships) and the outline planning permission was given an extended life. Discussions at the hearing indicated that the owners are taking steps to bring the development forward. It is not surprising that financial outcomes need to be reassessed in the current difficult circumstances but I am satisfied that there is a realistic prospect of the site starting to contribute within the first 5 years with the remainder within the CS period.

7.43 Another area where supporting evidence was examined was the East Colchester Regeneration Area where sites are at risk of coastal and fluvial flooding, although a coastal barrier provides protection. There has been close working between CBC and the Environment Agency (EA) during the preparation of the SFRA [CBC/EB/041] including government confirmation about how PPS25 should be applied in this area [CBC/EB/089]. This allows for development that assists the high priority of regeneration and many of the East Colchester sites in the housing trajectory already have planning permission. Flooding is therefore a factor that has been acknowledged in assessment of the delivery of sites in this area.

7.44 A common criticism of the housing strategy is that it relies too much on PDL which may have constraints and expenses such as contamination

and the need for major infrastructure. However, in recent years CBC has delivered housing well in excess of targets, mainly on PDL in the Regeneration Areas. The Garrison site, for example, is part way through a programme of delivery in phases, coordinated by a master plan. The continuation of a regeneration-led approach appears effective, although it is possible that the current economic circumstances and lack of demand for smaller higher density dwellings may make such sites less attractive in the immediate future. These sites may also bring forward less affordable housing or other benefits because of their higher costs. However, I consider that the regional priority given to regeneration justifies this strategy as a wider availability of greenfield land might deflect efforts away from more difficult sites. Monitoring will reveal whether action needs to be taken to bring forward areas of greenfield land in the event of delivery lagging, including that of affordable housing.

7.45 In table H1a and elsewhere the two larger areas of greenfield land in the North GA and Stanway GA are reserved for after 2016. However, this would be inflexible if PDL were slow to come forward or failed to deliver affordable housing or other benefits. Within these areas are some discrete sites that do not depend on major infrastructure and could come forward relatively quickly if needed. In order for the CS to be sound in terms of tests 7 and 9, I consider that it should be amended to remove references to greenfield land coming forward after 2016 and to remove mention of the specific location of 'land to the west of Maldon Road'. It is not necessary to change the CS to introduce alternative greenfield sites on the periphery of Colchester as sites within the GAs could provide the necessary flexibility in supply. It has been suggested that the greenfield land in the Northern GA might bring forward more dwellings than the 2,200 sought but that is not relied on to meet minimum housing targets and indicates robustness and flexibility in the CS.

7.46 Evidence about housing land supply and delivery has been subject to thorough examination with the outcome that I am satisfied that CBC is able to support its housing trajectory by a robust and credible evidence base. In my judgement it has identified a fifteen year supply of housing land as required by PPS3 with a sufficient degree of flexibility in delivery. I do not find it necessary to make changes suggested by those promoting alternative sources of supply such as at Marks Tey, as the CS is sound in this respect, meeting tests 4, 6 and 7 on this issue.

**7.47 In order for the CS to be sound, the following changes should be made, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report:**

- 1) amend policy SD1, table H1a and associated text to make clear that a minimum of 19,000 dwellings will be provided and that at least 1,710, rather than 1,660, additional homes would be required between 2021 and 2023, (C3, 8, 44, 70 & 71);**
- 2) amend the text to allow greenfield land to come forward before 2016 if needed, and to omit mention of specific sites (C24, 31, 73, 116, 117 & 119).**

**Issue 5: Does the CS provide for affordable housing and a range of housing densities and types that are appropriate for Colchester Borough and conform with national and regional policies?**

7.48 Policy H4 seeks 35% of new dwellings as affordable housing, normally on site, with an equivalent financial contribution sought for developments below the thresholds. Policy H2 of the EEP suggests that DPDs should set appropriate targets and its supporting text indicates that more than the overall 35% sought by the EEP may be justified in the more pressured areas. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) [CBC/EB/024] indicates the annual need for affordable homes is high at some 1,104 a year, greater than the total annual housing target of 830. Delivery of affordable housing has been very modest in the past, for example only 9.8% of housing completions between 2005-6 were affordable at the time when the 2004 LP target was 25%. This may reflect the number of sites below the 25 unit threshold, that some sites were granted permission before the LP and that others had viability problems leading to a lower percentage being agreed.

7.49 A Viability Assessment [CBC/EB/113/114] was prepared in line with the current PPS3 and from the Executive Summary it appears to provide a sound basis for assessing this aspect. It considered a range of affordable housing targets from 0% to 40% on a variety of sites. It assumed zero Social Housing Grant and a split between social rented and intermediate housing in line with the SHMA.

7.50 It found that a target of 40% would make a significant proportion of sites non viable although it could be achieved on greenfield sites and some in rural locations. Even 35% was not always viable on sites that were heavily constrained and/or possessed a high alternative land value but this assumed quite a high level of developer contributions to other infrastructure. When these were reduced then viability improved so that only three sites were clearly unviable at 35% with high density flats having particular problems. Policy H4 refers to exceptional circumstances where high development costs undermine the viability of housing delivery on brownfield sites. The explanation states that the viability of housing delivery needs to be maintained, particularly in regeneration areas, so this would not preclude viability being taken into account on all sites. Policy H4 is worded in terms of 'seeking to secure' 35% rather than being prescriptive about individual sites and this provides the necessary flexibility. I conclude that the policy is an appropriate balance between the demonstrable need for affordable housing and concerns about viability so that it satisfies PPS3.

7.51 The thresholds for providing affordable housing in the CS are 10 or more dwellings in Colchester, Stanway, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea but 3 or more in other villages. The national indicative minimum site size threshold in PPS3 is 15 dwellings but it advises that lower minimum thresholds can be set, where viable and practical, including in rural areas. The CS threshold of 10 is based on the high need for affordable housing demonstrated by the SHMA and expressed through

strong public concern during the consultation process. The Viability Assessment included an urban site with twelve dwellings and a rural one with six and found that the size of site did not unduly affect viability. Indeed, the higher prices for dwellings outside Colchester could make it financially easier to provide an affordable element on rural sites.

7.52 Very few large sites come forward in villages, for example, from 2003-7 there were 198 permissions for 324 dwellings in villages, with only two schemes of more than 15 units. Without a very low threshold therefore, it is unlikely that any affordable housing would come forward on the back of market housing in the rural areas. The practicalities of a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) managing single houses scattered between small sites were said from the Council's experience not to be an insuperable problem. Having regard to all the evidence provided, including the work carried out as part of the SA [CBC/SUB/002], I find that the thresholds of 10 and 3 strike a reasonable balance between the need for affordable housing and the desirability of encouraging sites to be developed. Affordable housing on exception sites in rural areas has already been discussed above.

7.53 Policies H2 and H3 cover housing density and type. Their associated tables are indicative of the densities and mix that would be appropriate for various types of location in the Borough and conform with national policy. Policy H5 states that sites will be identified to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. A suitable site is already being provided and additional sites will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD as required, to meet future needs. Criteria included in the policy guide the location of future sites without being prescriptive and meet the guidance of Circular 01/06 and EEP policy H3. Overall, soundness tests 4 and 7 are met on this issue.

***Issue 6: Does the CS provide an appropriate strategy for employment growth and is the Centres and Employment hierarchy clear, effective and supported by robust and credible evidence?***

7.54 The CS carries forward the EEP target of planning for the delivery of at least 20,000 jobs in Colchester & Tendring between 2001 and 2021. There is a good evidence base underpinning the strategy, including the 2007 Employment Land Study [CBC/EB/030], the 2005 Haven Gateway Employment Land Study [CBC/EB/001], the 2006 North Essex Authorities Retail Study [CBC/EB/026/027] and a 2007 Hotel Market Demand Appraisal [CBC/EB/028/029]. The required jobs are to be provided in a diverse range of sectors with varied locational requirements.

7.55 The CS aims to accommodate 67,400 sq m of net internal retail floorspace, a small amount of which will go to the Rural District Centres. Most, however, will go to Colchester Town Centre, of which some 35,000 sq m already has planning permission in the Vineyard Gate Shopping Centre proposal. Some 106,000 sq m of gross office floorspace is sought, together with 45,000 sq m of other business floorspace. Outline planning permissions for the University Research Park, Cuckoo Farm and at Stanway will bring forward some 110,500 sq m of this. High quality employment

sites, close to the A12 and with good road access, are under way in the SEZs at Stanway and in North Colchester. Economic diversity to provide for small and medium enterprises will be encouraged in new developments under policy CE1.

7.56 The Town Centre, Town Centre Fringe and the Urban Gateways containing the three railway stations are sustainable locations for mixed use developments under policies CE2 and CE2a. Redevelopment of surplus and poor quality employment land or premises will in some cases bring forward mixed developments creating more jobs. While policy CE1 seeks to protect and enhance employment, the use of the word 'normally' in para 4 allows the necessary flexibility to consider other uses where justified. Local Employment Zones will provide for smaller scale developments, including in rural areas. I consider that this variety of approaches, coupled with the impetus of the Haven Gateway Partnership, offers good opportunities for achieving the ambitious employment targets.

7.57 However, the Centres and Employment Hierarchy in table CE1 is unclear and its application could have unintended adverse effects. Proposed changes would make it a classification, not just a hierarchy, with centres separated from employment sites. Proposed changes to policy CE2 would also clarify the role of the Town Centre, the Town Centre Fringe and the Urban Gateways with regard to the sequential approach of PPS6. These changes are necessary to make the CS sound in terms of conformity with national policies. The inclusion of the five Urban District Centres in table CE1a is appropriate in my view. Although four of these are typical out of centre supermarkets or retail parks, policy CE2b seeks a more diverse range of uses with improvements to the built character and public realm and limits new retail development. I consider this is a sound approach that does not conflict with national or regional policies.

7.58 Tourism is an important component of the Borough's economy which has been growing rapidly in recent years and which CBC seeks to develop further. I have considered whether a separate policy is required for tourism/leisure in the light of EEP policy E6, the advice of PPS7 and the good practice guide on planning for tourism [CBC/NAT/038]. I have concluded that, with the proposed minor changes to emphasise the importance of tourism, there is no need for a separate policy. Minor changes to Table CE1c are necessary to provide flexibility in references to hotels but this table is only an indication of employment delivery and should not be seen as covering all the circumstances in which hotels may come forward. I am satisfied that policy NE2, as amended, can provide a framework for tourism developments in rural areas that will satisfactorily feed into the Development Policies DPD.

7.59 Subject to the changes below, I conclude that the CS will provide an appropriate strategy for employment growth, supported by robust and credible evidence, meeting soundness tests 4 and 7.

**7.60 In order for the CS to be sound, Policies CE1 and CE2 and Table CE1a should be amended for clarity. Policy CE2a and table CE1c should be revised to meet the sequential approach of PPS6 with regard to the role of the Town Centre, the Town Centre Fringe and the Urban Gateways, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report (C51-55, 58, 60 & 61).**

***Issue 7: Is the transport strategy, including park and ride, the most appropriate and is it supported by robust and credible evidence?***

7.61 The overall transport strategy of the CS carries forward the thrust of national and regional policies that seek to address concerns about climate change by reducing the need to travel. The locations for housing and employment growth have been selected on the basis of good accessibility by public transport. Problems of transport and accessibility in the rural areas will be addressed by actively developing demand-responsive services and bidding for greener items such as ferries. The need to encourage a shift away from travelling by car is addressed by TA policies 1-3 and 5, including a range of 'stick and carrot' methods such as Quality Bus Partnerships, improving pedestrian routes and reducing town centre car parking. Working with ECC and local partners, Colchester has recently been awarded 'Cycle Town' status and matched funding, with an ambitious target of increasing the overall base level of cycle trips by 75% in the next three years.

7.62 The north and east transit corridors with rapid public transport services underpin the overall growth strategy. Park and ride facilities are included in the LTP as a general solution to congestion in Colchester. The north park and ride site at Cuckoo Farm has been the subject of a feasibility study and demand modelling [CBC/EB/050 & 051]. I consider that it is supported by evidence and complements the overall transport strategy. A west park and ride site is shown in the LTP and this was also included in the CS up until the APO stage after which it was omitted on the basis that demand studies had shown it would not be viable.

7.63 An east park and ride was specifically referenced in the CSPO (November 2006), having been identified in the 2003 document *Transport for Colchester* [CBC/EB/076]. However, there is at present no evidence to support it and it is a long term aspiration for beyond 2016. A study of the east transit corridor is not yet complete. Any park and ride site could have a 'knock on effect' and decisions could only be made on specific schemes following analysis of the context at the time. There is a large inflow of commuters from Tendring District to the east and the LTP includes measures to improve stations and signalling on that railway line. It is not known whether an east park and ride scheme would undermine rail travel. I consider that the CS is unsound because it includes that site when it is not founded on a robust and credible evidence base. The east park and ride cannot be supported purely as a means of adding local distinctiveness

to the CS and in order to make the CS sound it should be deleted from KD2 and other references in the text.

7.64 Nevertheless, some form of park and ride service would address congestion problems in Colchester and the SCS seeks the earliest introduction of the first park and ride system and a programme for its expansion. I am strongly of the opinion that CBC and ECC should continue to pursue the provision of park and ride facilities sooner rather than later; either temporarily or permanently; by bus, rail or both. However, any choice needs to be subject to the necessary detailed evidence, including viability, and that is not a matter for the CS in my opinion. In the meantime, policy TA3 as worded would not rule out any solutions.

7.65 Subject to these changes, I find that the transport strategy is the most appropriate and is supported by robust and credible evidence, meeting soundness tests 4 and 7.

**7.66 In order for the CS to be sound, the east park and ride site should be deleted from the Diagram of Future Accessibility and Transport, from KD2 and from Tables UR1, TA3 and 6d, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report (C41, 43, 81, 97 & 120).**

***Issue 8: Will policy NE1 effectively protect the environmental assets of the Borough?***

7.67 Policy NE1, to be renamed ENV1, has been the subject of proposed minor changes to incorporate representations from Natural England and English Heritage. These clarify that the policy covers all environmental assets including the historic heritage, strengthen sections on biodiversity and climate change and clarify the position regarding the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including its notation on KD1. I consider these changes are necessary for the CS to be sound in terms of conformity with PPS7 and with EEP policies ENV1 and ENV3.

7.68 Strategic Green Links, which are referred to in policy NE1 and shown in KD1, are not local landscape designations but physical links with a defined footpath width and green border; their boundaries would be defined in the Site Allocations DPD. They would provide attractive pedestrian routes to support the transport strategy and physical corridors for movement of wildlife to support the biodiversity strategy. These matters are coordinated in the Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Study (HGGIS) [CBC/EBE/067] which carries forward EEP policy ENV1. Green infrastructure is an important factor in alleviating pressure on Natura 2000 sites. I therefore consider that the inclusion of Strategic Green Links in the CS is justified. Subject to these changes, policy NE1 will effectively protect the environmental assets of the Borough in line with tests 4 and 7.

**7.69 In order for the Core Strategy to be sound, policy NE1 should be amended to include the historic and cultural environment and deal clearly with the AONB, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report (C5, 19, 21, 22 & 37).**

**Issue 9: Are the local landscape designations in policy NE1 supported by robust and credible evidence and do they conform with national and regional policy?**

7.70 Policy NE1 and KD1 and KD2 contain a number of local landscape designations:

*Areas of Landscape Conservation Importance (ALCI)*

7.71 These are included in policy NE1 and shown on KD1. Their extent is said to be justified by a review [CBC/EB/037], based on the 2005 Landscape Character Assessment [CBC/EB/035], where they are the areas of highest or high landscape value. However, the review did not ask the fundamental question of whether there should be any local landscape designation at all. It merely re-examined the boundaries of the previous Countryside Conservation Area (CCA) designation in the LP and produced a generally less extensive coverage of proposed ALCIs. I find that it has not been clearly shown that criteria based policies cannot provide the necessary protection as required by para 25 of PPS7. The EEP in policy ENV2 also seeks criteria based policies, informed by Landscape Character Assessments, and does not refer to local landscape designations.

7.72 Supporters of the ALCI designation consider it would identify and protect the higher quality assemblages of natural and cultural landscape items and provide certainty in decision making. However, I am firmly of the opinion that a criteria based policy should be used, in order to prevent rigid designations stifling development that ought to be allowed and in order to conform to national and regional policy. The Landscape Character Assessment covers historic as well as natural features and is the basis for more detailed application of some of the criteria.

7.73 As a result of my changes to the policy, KD1 should be amended to delete the ALCIs and to remove the notation for areas of low and moderate landscape importance. The notation and key require amendment to show the AONB separately from the Natura 2000 sites. The Tiptree Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) should be deleted from KD1 for clarity and consistency as there are many other SSSIs in the Borough that are not shown. The diagram of settlements and rural areas on page 29 of the CS should be deleted as it is entirely duplicated by KD1. Reference to ALCIs in the monitoring indicators at Appendix 6C should be deleted. Without these changes the CS would be unsound in terms of test 4.

*Green Breaks*

7.74 These are included in policy NE1 and shown in KD1 and KD2 and are intended to prevent coalescence between the built up edge of Colchester and the surrounding villages. However, greenfield land outside settlement boundaries is already protected by policy NE1 and it is not clear what extra protection is needed. The same principles apply as in the case of ALCIs and in my view these concerns should be addressed by a criteria based policy in line with PPS7 and the EEP. The criteria should include one of

maintaining settlement separation which would adequately cover this matter in conjunction with the Landscape Character Assessment. In order to make the CS sound in respect of test 4 it is necessary to remove Green Breaks from policy NE1 and both KDs.

*The Coastal Protection Belt (CPB)*

7.75 This designation is in the LP but not in the CS. It originated in the 1984 Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan and is covered by saved policy CC1 of the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan (SP) and LP policy CE1. It protects an area of open and undeveloped coast, containing a number of Natura 2000 sites, where extra protection is needed as minor development that would normally be permitted in the countryside might have adverse impacts on the sensitive environment. The designation crosses a number of other districts and is included in the recently adopted Chelmsford CS. The detailed boundary of the CPB will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD. I agree that it is necessary to include it in policy NE1 and to show it on KD1, in the interests of consistency (test 6) and to protect important and locally distinctive environmental assets.

7.76 Subject to these changes, the CS will be consistent with the plans of neighbouring authorities and will meet soundness tests 4, 6 and 7.

**7.77 In order for the CS to be sound, the following changes should be made, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report:**

- 1) reword policy NE1 and its explanation to insert the Coastal Protection Belt but replace the ALCIs and Green Breaks with a criteria based policy, (C38, 105 & 106);**
- 2) amend KD1 to add the Coastal Protection Belt and to clarify the notation and key in respect of the AONB and Natura 2000 sites but to omit the SSSI, ALCIs, Green Breaks and Areas of Low and Moderate Landscape Value (C42);**
- 3) amend KD2 to delete Green Breaks (C43);**
- 4) delete the Diagram of Settlements and Rural Areas on page 29 (C39).**

***Issue 10: Does the CS make adequate provision for the expansion of the University of Essex?***

7.78 The University of Essex has been involved in preparation of the CS as a partner in the LSP. Minor changes already considered above recognise its important role in the CS objective of making Colchester a prestigious regional centre. The research park between the university and the East GA provides a physical link to the East Colchester Regeneration Area. I do not consider it necessary to remove mention of the university from the East GA and Regeneration Area sections of the CS as this indicates potential involvement rather than physical location.

7.79 Changes to the proposals map will not be considered until the Site Allocations DPD and the CS is not the place to be considering a detailed scheme for university expansion. There is strong local opposition to any development of the land between the university and Wivenhoe which is at present within the CPB. This land has moderate landscape value (Review of Countryside Conservation Areas) [CBC/EB/037] and would not therefore have been included in the proposed ALCI. My decision to delete the Green Breaks leaves proposals for future development there to be assessed in relation to the CPB and the relevant criteria in policy ENV1.

7.80 The Site Allocations DPD will alter the proposals map to define boundaries for Colchester and Wivenhoe as well as for the CPB. That process should include consideration of whether some development could be accommodated in this locality, having regard to the impact on matters including landscape character and settlement separation. In my view it is appropriate for these more detailed aspects to be dealt with in the Site Allocations DPD and soundness test 7 is met.

***Issue 11: Is CS policy ER1 relating to energy, resources, waste and recycling in line with national and regional policy so as to support climate change objectives?***

7.81 Since the CS was submitted, the Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study [CBC/EB/110] has been published and, because this is an important factor in the sustainability of the growth point proposals, I consider it necessary for reference to be made to it in the policy and explanation and at other relevant points in order to ensure soundness in terms of a credible evidence base as required by test 7.

7.82 I have considered whether a separate policy is required to cover climate change but it is clear that the whole of the CS addresses this problem through its sustainability objectives. Minor changes to the explanation for policy NE1 meet the concerns of Natural England about the impact of climate change on biodiversity.

7.83 Policy ER1 encourages the provision of over 15% of energy demand of new developments through local renewables and low carbon energy sources. This is in line with EEP policy ENG2 which has the aim of providing 10% by 2010 and 17% by 2020. I consider the wording of this policy is flexible and does not place an undue burden on developers. While the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM ratings are covered by other legislation, mention of these does not make the CS unsound.

7.84 Minor changes to the fourth para of policy ER1 will make clear that the sustainable urban extensions to the north and south west of Colchester may come forward before 2016 and will provide reduced carbon or zero carbon homes in line with national requirements at the time. This is to provide consistency with the changes already discussed regarding the timing of greenfield development to provide the necessary flexibility. Policy ER1 seeks to minimise waste and improve reuse and recycling rates and this is linked to targets in the revised Appendix C. Subject to these

changes I consider that the CS conforms with PPS22 and meets tests 4 and 7 in terms of this issue.

**7.85 In order for the CS to be sound, policy ER1 and associated text should be amended to include Water, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report (C7, 111, 112 & 114).**

#### Summary of section 7

7.86 Consideration of the main issues leads me to the conclusion that, subject to the changes specified, the strategy and policies of the CS represent the most appropriate in all the circumstances, having considered the relevant alternatives, and that they are founded on a robust and credible evidence base.

### **8: Monitoring and implementation**

8.1 I consider that the CS as submitted is unsound because it does not include sufficient information about how policies and projects would be delivered and does not provide targets for monitoring. However, the Council has prepared an infrastructure trajectory [CBC/EB/085] and, while this is too detailed to be included in the CS itself, relevant information from it has been included in a proposed change to table 6d. A further change would amend Appendix C to provide monitoring targets as well as indicators. The targets are linked to the Annual Monitoring Report and LTP where relevant so as to provide clear mechanisms for monitoring.

8.2 Colchester Borough's position in the Haven Gateway growth point gives it considerable benefits in terms of implementation and monitoring. Although non statutory, the plans and reports produced on behalf of the sub region provide an effective framework for achieving sustainable growth and there is clearly a wide degree of partnership working which appears to be the norm rather than the exception. The very recent draft Haven Gateway Integrated Development Programme [CBC/EB/080] includes spatial packages for North Colchester, East Colchester and the Town Centre, as well as thematic packages for transport and green infrastructure. These include critical paths and an estimate of the risks involved. This work reflects regional priorities and is related to the Regional Economic Strategy so that it leads me to have a high degree of confidence that the projects in the CS will be capably implemented. The CS and evidence base, as amended, make it clear how and by whom the policies/projects will be delivered.

8.3 A major item which is needed for the north park and ride site and for much of the north GA development is the new junction with the A12 and the final phase of the Northern Approaches road from it to provide a segregated bus route. These works are to be funded by development of the Severalls Hospital site and CBC has shown considerable success in the past in delivering infrastructure through S106 agreements with developers. Despite the current difficult financial situation, I consider there are reasonable prospects of starting to deliver this site within the first five

years of the CS but there is the possibility that the extent of contributions currently required would deter a developer.

8.4 Contingency action has already been taken to accelerate the highway works through an application to the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) which has progressed through the initial stages and the outcome will be known by early 2009 [CBC/EB/081]. The new A12 junction is a project included in the EEP, the LTP and the draft Haven Gateway Integrated Development Programme. It has been given very high priority and I am impressed by the evidence of close working between CBC, the HA and ECC with experience of success in obtaining funding from this source. The works already have planning permission, there are no significant practical or ownership problems and the landowners and local authorities are taking the necessary steps to make the orders and submit them to the HA so that construction can proceed rapidly to ensure the grant is secured. While there are risks to implementation, they are not such as to lead me to find the CS unsound.

8.5 Issues connected with housing land supply have already been dealt with above and I am satisfied that the CS is sound in terms of national and regional policies regarding the deliverability of housing land and affordable housing. A proposed change to Section 6 will confirm that, in the event that monitoring shows housing delivery falling significantly short of the EEP's minimum requirements, the Council will act to release identified greenfield land within the Growth Areas and if necessary revise the LDF accordingly. I consider this change is necessary to make the CS sound.

8.6 Policy SD2 indicates that new development will be expected to provide facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs arising from the development. I do not find the CS unsound because this policy refers to possible requirements to contribute to strategic projects and standard charges. These are matters that will be dealt with through future national policy and the reference to consideration of viability in policy SD2 is appropriate.

8.7 Subject to these changes, the CS will provide for effective monitoring and implementation and will satisfy soundness test 8.

**8.8 In order for the CS to be sound, the following changes should be made, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report:**

- 1) amend table 6d to include more detailed information about implementation (C120);**
- 2) clarify section 6 as to the mechanism for ensuring housing delivery (C116, 117 & 119);**
- 3) Amend Appendix C to include monitoring targets as well as indicators (C123).**

## **9: Flexibility**

9.1 I have already indicated that there is inherent flexibility in the housing element of the CS because parts of the greenfield urban extensions can be brought forward if necessary to speed up overall delivery or affordable housing. SOCGs between the Council and developers in the GAs demonstrate how this could be achieved [CBC/EB/92-94 & 97-99a]. It is not known whether the CS would need to be reviewed following the EEP review as that would depend on the housing numbers required and whether there was a change in strategy direction. However, it is possible that the CS will have enough flexibility to bring forward higher numbers of new dwellings as estimates from the SHLAA are based on conservative assumptions.

9.2 The CS appears to have considerable flexibility in terms of achieving its ambitious programme for job growth. This is because it provides for a diverse range of locations, from strategic sites with good connections to the A12 to the Town Centre itself and extensive Mixed Use Centres. Rural employment has shown good increases in recent years and this is also provided for in the CS. With this variety the CS is well positioned to achieve its objectives.

9.3 The transport strategy has some inflexibility in respect of North Colchester because it depends on the completion of the Northern Approaches road and A12 junction. This is not the case for the east transit corridor where the pattern of progress will be one of incremental improvements. Opportunities for providing park and ride services remain flexible, however.

9.4 The CS will be subject to regular monitoring through the AMR to ensure that its strategy and policies are successfully being delivered, and that it is reviewed if required. It therefore provides a sound, yet reasonably flexible, framework with which to plan for the future and meets soundness test 9.

## **10: Other policies and issues**

10.1 I consider that there are no outstanding issues about the soundness of the remaining policies in the CS. Some representations raise issues that are outside the context and purpose of the CS, for example because they relate to detailed elements of policies or site specific matters. Some do not relate to the tests of soundness or are not central to my conclusions on the overall soundness of this DPD. In some cases they suggest changes to improve the text, which is not part of the examination process.

10.2 The Council has suggested some minor changes to the submitted CS to reflect relevant suggestions and points made in the written and oral representations. Other changes are suggested to clarify or update various parts of the text and to correct errors. Although these changes do not address key aspects of soundness, I endorse them on a general basis in the interests of clarity, consistency, accuracy and general soundness. These changes are shown in Annexe 1.

10.3 I have considered all the other points made in the representations and during the examination, including at the hearing sessions and in written representations, but I find no justification for making any further changes to the CS in terms of the various soundness tests.

**10.4 In order for the Core Strategy to be sound, I endorse the remaining minor changes to the content of the policies, text and appendices suggested by the Council, as set out in Annexe 1 to my report, in the interests of clarity, consistency and accuracy.**

### **Overall Conclusions**

10.5 I conclude that, with the amendments I recommend, the Colchester Core Strategy DPD satisfies the requirements of s20(5) of the 2004 Act and the associated Regulations, is sound in terms of s20(5)(b) of the 2004 Act, and meets the tests of soundness in PPS12.

*Jean Jones*

INSPECTOR

Annexe 1 – Schedule of changes including Annexes 1a-1d

# **Local Development Framework**

## **Core Strategy**

**Colchester Borough Council**

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# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction**

Colchester is a diverse and growing Borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next 15 years the Borough will face many challenges, such as housing growth, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable transportation.

The Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to establish a long-term strategy to manage development, provide services, deliver infrastructure and create sustainable communities. The Core Strategy will be the overarching document in the LDF that sets the strategic context for all the other development plan documents.

## **Stages of the Core Strategy**

The adopted Core Strategy is the result of a 3 stage consultative process. The Core Strategy Issues and Options document (Stage 1) was published in March 2006. This was followed by the Core Strategy Preferred Options document (Stage 2) in November 2006, and an amendment to the preferred options in July 2007. At each of these stages the document has been consulted upon for a 6-7 week period and improvements have been made to the Core Strategy in response to submissions, sustainability appraisal, new evidence and changes to national policy. The submission Core Strategy (Stage 3) was published for consultation in November 2007 with any representations received being considered by the Planning Inspector during Examination in Public. The hearing sessions for Examination in Public were held during June and July 2008, and the Inspector's binding report received in October 2008. The Core Strategy was adopted by full Council on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

## **Vision and Objectives**

The Spatial Vision sets out where we want to be in 2021 and articulates ambitious aspirations for Colchester to become a sustainable and prestigious regional centre, surrounded by thriving villages and countryside. The Spatial Vision is informed by the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the objectives provide more specific direction for the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies.

## **Spatial Strategy**

The Spatial Strategy provides an overview or summary of the Core Strategy and establishes the context for the Core Policies. The spatial elements of the Strategy are also illustrated in the Key Diagrams.

The Spatial Strategy emphasises the importance of the Town Centre and regeneration. The Strategy directs development towards the most accessible and sustainable locations, and plans for the provision of transport, employment and community facilities to support the following growth areas.

The Town Centre will be the focus of regeneration activity to deliver 2000 new homes, 67,000sqm of retail floorspace and 40,000sqm of office floorspace.

The regeneration of St Botolphs and the North Station area will also deliver key outcomes, including the Firstsite Building, Cultural Quarter and North Station gateway.

The North Growth Area will accommodate 6200 homes, including a sustainable urban extension and the regeneration of the former Severalls Hospital. This growth area will also deliver the Community Stadium, North Transit Corridor, A12 junction, and Park and Ride.

The East Growth Area will regenerate the former harbour to accommodate 2600 new homes, as well as delivering the East Transit Corridor, Hythe Station improvements, the University Research Park, and expansion of the University itself.

The South Growth Area will deliver a new Army Garrison and regenerate the former garrison to accommodate 3000 homes within an urban village with good links to the Town Centre.

The Stanway Growth Area will also be subject to significant development during the life of the plan, including 1800 homes, employment development, and road improvements.

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the main district settlements outside of Colchester Town. These settlements will accommodate about 1600 homes and provide shops and services to their surrounding rural hinterland. The distinct local character of other villages will be protected and local housing and employment development will be supported to meet community needs.

### **Core Policies**

The policies in the Core Strategy provide the overarching policy direction for the Local Development Framework, and for the delivery of development, infrastructure, facilities and services in Colchester to 2021.

#### Sustainable Development

The Strategy establishes a Settlement Hierarchy to guide development towards the most sustainable locations. These development locations will be coordinated with transport infrastructure and the provision of community facilities, shopping, employment and open space to create sustainable communities.

The Core Strategy seeks to provide excellent health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community. Major community facilities (including the University of Essex and the Colchester General Hospital) will form key components of the growth areas and will be better connected by Transit Corridors. The Strategy also seeks to deliver new community facilities, including the Firstsite Building and Community Stadium.

#### Centres and Employment

Achieving a prestigious regional centre and sustainable communities requires the enhancement of our Town Centre as well as other local centres. The Core

Strategy establishes a hierarchy that secures the important role of the Town Centre and encourages the regeneration of Urban Gateways to Colchester (e.g. North Station). The Core Strategy also promotes the enhancement of District and Local Centres to support communities with local employment, shops and services.

Strategic Employment Zones have also been identified to accommodate business development at locations to the north, east and west of Colchester Town that are well supported with infrastructure.

### Housing

Colchester Borough needs to accommodate a minimum of 17,100 new homes between 2001 and 2021, and at least an additional 1,710 homes by 2023. Over two-thirds of this housing is already accounted for through existing allocations, permissions and completions. In broad terms, the majority of housing development in the Borough will be accommodated at the following locations:

- Town Centre (2000)
- North Growth Area (6200, including 2200 greenfield allocations)
- East Growth Area (2600)
- South Growth Area (3000)
- Stanway Growth Area (1800, including 800 greenfield allocations)

Housing developments will need to provide 35% affordable housing and provide a mixed of housing to meet the diverse needs of the community.

### Urban Renaissance

The Core Strategy seeks to maximise the potential of the existing regeneration areas and stimulate a broader urban renaissance throughout the Town Centre. To help deliver this urban renaissance tourism will be supported and promoted. The Core Strategy also seeks to protect the historic character of the Borough whilst securing high standards of urban design in new developments.

### Public Realm

Creating a high quality public realm, including parks, squares and streets, is integral to the success of sustainable communities, and is therefore a key element of the Core Strategy.

The Strategy seeks to improve the street environment and calm traffic in urban areas to attract residents to local shops, schools, parks and bus stops. Existing parkland and green links will be enhanced, and new open space will be acquired at appropriate locations, to meet the recreational needs of Colchester's growing community.

### Transport and Accessibility

The key aims of the transport strategy and policies are to improve accessibility and promote sustainable travel behaviour. Improved access to shops, employment and services can be achieved through a long-term strategy of coordinating land use and transport. The Strategy seeks to

coordinate the following elements in order to improve accessibility and create sustainable communities:

- Support development at accessible locations to reduce the need to travel.
- Create people-friendly streets and encourage walking and cycling.
- Improve the public transport network with Transit Corridors, Park and Ride, and quality gateways/interchanges.
- Improve the strategic road network and manage car traffic and parking in urban areas.
- Support rural communities with demand responsive transport services.
- Travel planning and improved public information

#### Environment and Rural Communities

The natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved to protect the Borough's diverse history, archaeology, geology, and biodiversity. Development will be directed away from sites of landscape and conservation importance and land at risk from flooding. The unique character of Colchester villages will be protected, with only limited development supported to meet identified needs for local employment, affordable housing and community facilities. Tourism that is appropriate to the local environment and context will be supported and promoted.

#### Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

Establishing sustainable communities in Colchester requires careful management of our energy, resources and waste. The Strategy will promote environmentally sustainable developments that are designed to:

- Utilise renewable energy sources.
- Reduce household energy and water consumption.
- Encourage the recycling of waste.

#### **Implementation and Monitoring**

The Spatial Strategy and the Spatial Policies will be implemented through the further development of the Local Development Framework, by Council working with its partners, and through the planned investment of private and public resources.

Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the new planning system. The Borough Council will undertake annual monitoring of the implementation of the Core Strategy, and of other parts of the LDF as they are developed, and will amend documents as required.

# 1. Introduction

Colchester is a diverse and growing Borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next 15 years the Borough will face many challenges, such as housing growth, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable transportation. To address these challenges, Colchester Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

## 1.1 The Local Development Framework

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will plan, monitor and manage future growth and change in Colchester Borough up to 2021. While the previous Local Plan system focused on development control, the LDF will cover a broader range of spatial issues that contribute towards sustainable communities, including issues such as transport, employment and recycling.

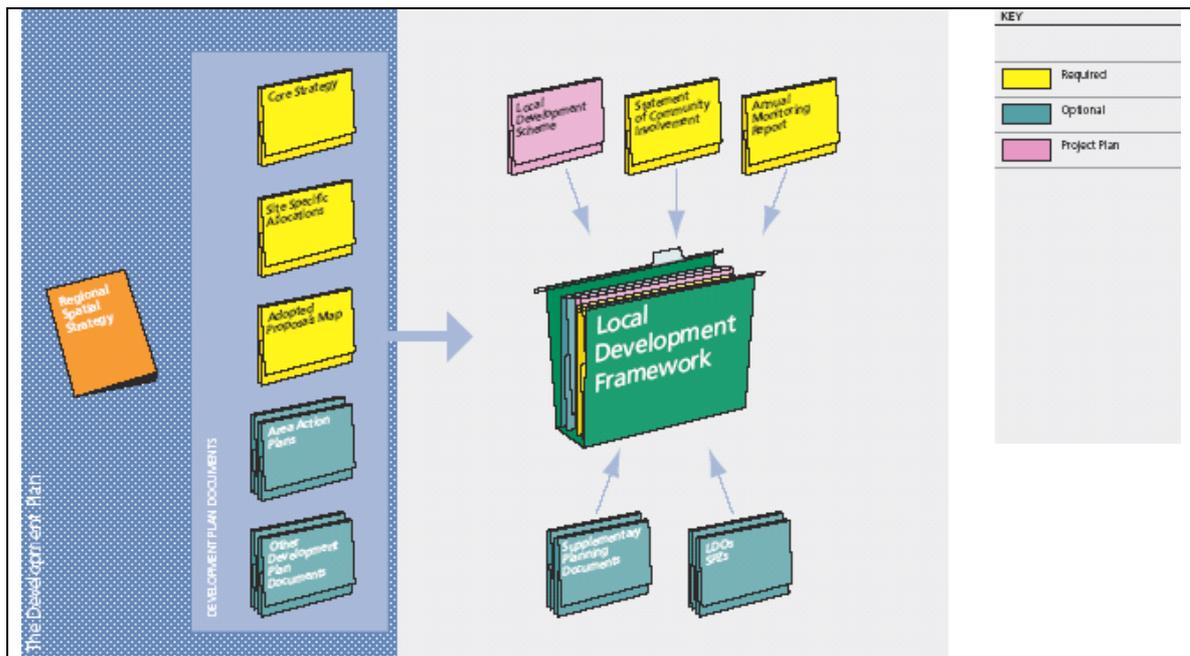
The Colchester LDF will comprise a range of Local Development Documents (see Figure 1), including the following:

- Local Development Scheme
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - Core Strategy
  - Development Policies
  - Site Allocations
  - Area Action Plans.
- } LDF Process
- } Strategy and Policy

The Core Strategy is the central document of the Local Development Framework, and provides the broad policy directions to guide the other documents in the LDF. The Core Strategy will establish a long-term strategy to manage development, provide services, deliver infrastructure and create sustainable communities. It comprises the spatial vision and objectives, a spatial strategy, core policies and a section setting out how we will implement and monitor the strategy. Its effectiveness will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report and it will be reviewed when necessary.

The Council has undertaken a Sustainability Appraisal and an Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy to evaluate the sustainability of the proposed strategy, policies and options.

**Figure 1. Local Development Framework**



## **1.2 Conformity with Other Policies and Strategies**

The new planning system requires the Core Strategy and the LDF to be consistent with national planning policy, the draft East of England Plan and the Community Strategy. All subsequent Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents in the LDF will also need to be in conformity with the Core Strategy. Accordingly, the Core Strategy has been prepared in conformity with the following policies and strategies.

### **National Planning Policy**

National planning policy is primarily set forth in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) which is progressively being updated and issued as Planning Policy Statements (PPS). PPS 1 summarises six key principles of sustainable planning which this Core Strategy seeks to follow:

- Sustainable communities – Development plans should ensure that economic, social, and environmental objectives are achieved together over time
- Development plans should ensure that they contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change
- Development plans need to take a spatial approach. This means that they need to integrate traditional land use planning policies with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function;
- Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design;
- Development plans should contain clear, comprehensive, and inclusive access policies

- Community involvement is an essential element of the planning process

### **Regional Planning**

The East of England Plan (EEP) (published May 2008) is the Regional Spatial Strategy for Colchester Borough and the LDF needs to be in general conformity with it. The EEP outlines a range of policies and targets relevant to spatial planning in Colchester. The most notable of these include:

- Identification of Colchester as a Key Centre of Development and Change. (Policy SS3)
- Identification of Colchester as a priority area for regeneration. (Policy SS5)
- The need to facilitate the provision of 20,000 new jobs in the Essex Haven Gateway including approximately 14,200 new jobs in Colchester as specified in earlier drafts of the East of England plan. (Policy E1 and HG2)
- The need to identify Strategic Employment Sites in Colchester. (Policy E3)
- Identification of Colchester's Town Centre as a Regional Centre for retail and other town centre purposes. (Policy E5)
- The need to provide a minimum of 17,100 new homes between 2001 and 2021, and at least 1710 additional homes by 2023. (Policy H1 and HG1)
- Identification of Colchester as a Regional Transport Node. (Policy T5)

The Core Strategy is consistent with the East of England Plan and seeks to implement the policies and targets as they relate to Colchester Borough. Colchester also has many unique spatial issues that are not identified in the draft East of England Plan that will be addressed by the Core Strategy.

Colchester Borough forms part of the Haven Gateway sub region, which has been recognised as a 'New Growth Point'. This special status will help deliver critical funding for vital infrastructure and development projects through a long-term partnership between Colchester Borough, the Haven Gateway Partnership and Communities and Local Government (CLG).

The Core Strategy is also consistent and supportive of the Regional Cities East (RCE) partnership. The RCE objectives for housing, prosperity, jobs and the environment can all be advanced through the Core Strategy and the LDF.

### **Community Strategy**

The LDF provides the primary means of delivering the spatial elements of Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Community Strategy was prepared by the public, private and community partners forming the Colchester Local Strategic Partnership to set a long-term vision for the community of Colchester. The Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework share a commitment to the development of objectives through community consultation and stakeholder involvement.

Accordingly, the Core Strategy builds on the Strategy's Vision for Colchester in 2020:

*Colchester, excelling as a prestigious regional centre that is:*

- *an iconic destination for culture and learning nationally and internationally*
  - *renowned for sustainable economic growth*
- ...and therefore a place where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.*

Reaching across all these goals is a commitment in the Sustainable Community Strategy to carbon reduction. For the Borough Council, this means ensuring that all its strategies, plans and budgets, including the Local Development Framework, are designed with the goal of reducing the Borough's carbon footprint.

More specifically, the Core Strategy will assist in the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities (Table 1) which support the above vision.

**Table 1 – Delivery of the Community Strategy**

<b>Community Strategy Priorities</b>	<b>Core Strategy Policy</b>
Transport	Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour (TA1) Walking and Cycling (TA2) Public Transport (TA3) Roads and Traffic (TA4) Parking (TA5)
Heritage & Culture	Regeneration (UR1) Built Design and Character (UR2) Community Facilities (SD3) Environment (ENV1)
London 2012	Community Facilities (SD3) Open Space (PR1)
Business & Employment	Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy(CE1) Mixed Use Centres (CE2) Employment Zones (CE3)
Life Opportunities	Community Facilities (SD3) Housing Diversity (H3) Affordable Housing (H4)

## **2. Spatial Portrait**

### **2.1 Spatial Portrait**

#### **Location and External Linkages**

The Borough of Colchester lies in a key gateway location between the UK and mainland Europe, with access to the rest of Europe via the nearby Ports of Harwich and Felixstowe to the east and Stansted Airport to the west. The far reaching effect of London as a world city extends to Colchester, 70 miles distant, with some businesses and commuters locating in Colchester due to its access to the jobs and services of London. Colchester's prime identity, however, is as a major regional centre with significant employment activity, cultural facilities, educational institutions, retail outlets and visitor attractions. The main town of Colchester serves as a centre not only for the Borough but for a much wider area of North East Essex, with residents of Braintree, Maldon and Tendring districts travelling into the town to work, shop and use its community facilities. The Borough's identity is also shaped by its extensive valued countryside areas and urban green spaces as well as its historic smaller settlements including Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea, Wivenhoe, Dedham, and Rowhedge. Colchester has joined with neighbouring Essex and Suffolk authorities in the Haven Gateway partnership to make the most of its locational advantages through targeted programmes of infrastructure provision, new sustainable development, business development and training for local people.

#### **Population**

All People 2001 Census	155,800
All People mid-2006	170,800
- 0-14 years	28,900
- 15-64 years	117,200
- 65 years +	24,800

Mid-2006 Population Estimates, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

#### **Ethnic Groups**

% of resident population in ethnic groups, 2001:	
- White	96.2
- Mixed	1.2
- Asian or Asian British	1.2
- Black or Black British	0.5
- Chinese or other	1.0

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

#### **Population and Households**

Colchester's growing population reflects the overall upward trend in the South East region which has been fuelled by economic growth. In the last five years, the population has increased rapidly by 15,000 as detailed above. The largest growth is expected to be the older age groups (60+), while growth levels are expected to decline in the younger ages groups (19 and under), with consequent effects on the economy and social provision in the Borough. House building rates have recently been high to keep pace with the growing

population pressure, but there remains a gap in delivering sufficient quantities of affordable housing. Designation of the Haven Gateway as a new Growth Point in 2006 reflects the fact that meeting agreed targets is a challenge meriting additional support to ensure sustainable growth is matched with adequate infrastructure provision.

### Housing & Households

Number of households in 2001	63,706
% of households in 2001:	
- Owner occupied	72.34
- Social rented housing	15.28
- Privately rented or living rent free	12.38
Average household size, 2001	2.37

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

Average number of homes built per annum (between 2001 and 2005)	824
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CBC Housing Trajectory, 2005.

### Heritage and Habitat

Colchester, Britain's 'Oldest Recorded Town', recorded by Pliny the Elder in AD 77, has a rich and diverse history dating back to the Iron Age. The town's present character reflects this heritage, including its period as the Roman capital of Britain, its importance as a wool and cloth centre in medieval and Tudor times, and its focus as a hub for Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century industry. The numerous archaeological sites, historic buildings, and conservation areas in the Borough are a focus for preservation and enhancement. Landmarks that give Colchester its unique character include the remnants of the Town Wall encircling the historic core, the Castle and Castle Park in the heart of the Town Centre, and 'Jumbo', the Victorian water tower. The town is also defined by its hilltop setting and the green corridor through the Town provided by the River Colne.

Surrounding the town of Colchester is an ecologically rich rural and coastal environment. Many sites are recognised for their value by international and national designations, including the coastal and estuary areas in the south east and the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the north of the Borough. The surrounding villages also have a rich historical heritage, including the seafaring communities of Mersea and Wivenhoe, the former wool town of Dedham and the jam-making centre of Tiptree.

### Heritage & Habitat

Number of conservation areas	22
Number of listed buildings	1,600
Number of scheduled monuments	40

CBC Annual Monitoring Report, 2006.

### Economic Activity and Prosperity

In recent years there has been a change in the structure and type of employment within Colchester, in common with many other UK towns, with a move away from manufacturing and agriculture towards the service industry. In rural areas and small towns and villages, economic activity has shifted

away from agriculture towards a more diverse range of small enterprises and tourist related business.

The Garrison and the University of Essex are two noteworthy major employers that will continue to play a major role in the Borough throughout the plan period and beyond. The University of Essex is also promoting a major Research and Science park adjacent to the campus which, when developed in the near future, will be a significant contributor to the borough and sub-regional economy.

While unemployment levels in the Borough as a whole are lower than national averages, there are wide variations in prosperity and there are pockets of deprivation in parts of both the towns and rural areas. Parts of St Anne's, St Andrew's and Harbour wards are classified as 'seriously deprived' because they are amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.

### **Economic Activity & Prosperity**

All people aged 16 to 74 years, 2001	113,771
Number of 16 to 74 year olds working in the service industry, 2001	59,288
% of 16 to 74 year olds who are:	
- Employed	63.5
- Unemployed	2.3
- students	8.4
- Retired	12.6
- Others	18.7

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

### **Community**

The community has access to a wide range of publicly run services and facilities which will need to be enhanced in line with future development. Colchester General Hospital is expanding and consolidating to better serve the needs of the growing population, and its services are complemented by a range of primary care facilities throughout the Borough. The Borough's educational facilities comprise a range of primary and secondary schools, while higher education provision consists of two further education colleges (Colchester Sixth Form College and the Colchester Institute) and the University of Essex. Recreational facilities include a range of parks, a leisure centre, and four multi-activity centres. Regeneration plans include a new football stadium to be built in the North Colchester area and a new Firstsite (Visual Arts Facility) which will provide a focal point for the redevelopment of the St. Botolph's quarter.

### **Education**

Number of maintained schools	79
- Primaries	64
- Secondary	11
- Special	4

Essex County Council, 2005.

% of population with a degree or other form of higher education, 2001	19%
% of the population with no qualifications, 2001	25%

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

## Health

Life Expectancy:	
- Males	78 years
- Females	82 years
% of people describing their health as 'not good'	7.2
% of people with a limiting long-term illness	16.0
% of people providing unpaid care	9.3

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

## Transportation

Colchester has been designated as a Regional Transport Node in the East of England Plan, which acknowledges the importance of its transport links including those to London, Stansted Airport, and the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe. One of the biggest challenges for Colchester is road traffic growth and the dominance of the car as the main mode of travel. Significant congestion can occur during peak times within Colchester on the limited number of radial routes in and out of the town centre, the A12 and on several of the minor roads to the south of the Borough. Future growth in Colchester hinges on the expansion of alternatives to the car, including improved pedestrian and cycle links, the development of Park and Ride facilities, the implementation of travel management schemes, and enhancement of public transport services in both urban and rural areas.

## Transport

Journey to work by Colchester residents:	
- Car	62.5%
- Bus	6.1%
- Train	7.1%
- Cycle	4.3%
- Walk	10.2%
- Work from home	9.2%

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

## 2.2 Community Consultation

Thorough and on-going community consultation is a key feature of the new planning system. In line with Government regulations on consultation, the Council approved a Statement of Community Involvement in June 2006 which outlines community consultation activities for each component and stage of the LDF.

Community consultation on the Core Strategy to date has included 4 consultation stages. In summer 2005, the Council surveyed community views to frontload the preparation of the Core Strategy, and 470 completed surveys were returned. A community consultation exercise was next carried out in spring 2006 on the Issues and Options Report which involved a survey distributed to stakeholders and every household in the borough; facilitated workshops; and work with a secondary school. A total of 2,024 surveys and submissions were returned.

In November 2006, the Preferred Options report was published, surveys were circulated to every household, and a series of public meetings and workshops were undertaken to gather feedback on the potential options for the Core Strategy. A total of 344 surveys and submissions were received. The Council then published an amendment to the Preferred Options in June 2007 in response to submissions, sustainability appraisal, new evidence and changes to national policy. Another series of public meetings, workshops and questionnaire were arranged to facilitate further feedback on the Preferred Options, and an additional 84 submission were received.

A statement of consultation will be prepared for the Core Strategy submission document outlining the consultation program for each stage of the Core Strategy, the issues raised and how these issues have been addressed in the plan making process.

## **2.3 Evidence Base**

The Evidence Base is a key feature of the LDF as it seeks to ensure that proposals and policies are based on sound information. The Evidence Base contains documents from local, county and regional levels. National guidance is not listed to avoid repetition, given that the Core Strategy has been produced in accordance with national planning policy.

The evidence gathered from the documents below has been employed in the formulation of the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies:

Documents making up the primary Evidence Base include:

- **Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy (2007)** – produced by the Local Strategic Partnership based on local people's views, local needs and Colchester's unique opportunities.
- **Colchester Housing Land Availability Assessment (2007)** – the study provided evidence on housing capacity and land availability in Colchester Borough.
- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2007)** – an update to the Housing Land Availability Assessment to reflect the latest Government Guidance. This demonstrates housing land supply over the next 15 years.
- **Colchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007)** – The SHMA provides Council with a thorough analysis of the housing markets, housing need and affordable housing.
- **District Valuers Report (2007)** - Housing Stock Information for the borough.
- **Landscape Character Assessment (2005)** – provides a complete picture of the Borough's landscape features and is supplemented by reports on the capacity of settlement fringes and a review of countryside conservation areas.

- **Townscape Character Assessment (2006)** – provides a review of the character of various built environments in the Borough to help inform regeneration and the preparation of the LDF.
- **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007)** - the study identifies the highest areas of flood risk where development should not be located.
- **The North Essex Authorities Retail Study (2006)** – Provides an analysis of existing town centre performance, future retail demand projections and guidance for the future scale of retail development and hierarchy of Town Centres in Colchester Borough.
- **The Colchester Employment Land Study (2007)** – Provides evidence on the capacity and quality of existing employment land provision and sets out strategies and guidance for accommodating future employment development in Colchester.
- **The Colchester Hotel Study (2007)** - The study provides an independent hotel market assessment to identify possible gaps in the market and to inform potential hotel investors of development opportunities. The study also provides a sequential site assessment of potential sites for development.
- **Open Space Study (2007)** - a local needs assessment and audit of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the borough in accordance with the requirements of PPG Note 17 and its Companion Guide.
- **North Colchester Studies** – A collection of studies have been prepared to investigate development potential in north Colchester, including an environmental audit and transport study.
- **ECC Transport Model** – Essex County Council have compiled emerging travel data to inform the LDF.
- **Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure (2007)** - a study that identifies green spaces over 2 hectares, areas where there are deficiencies and potential new allocations.
- **Haven Gateway Framework for Growth (2007)** - a non-statutory sub-regional strategy to provide measures needed to deliver growth in a sustainable way and inform the preparation of LDDs, other strategies including coastal issues, and co-ordinated implementation.
- **Haven Gateway Employment Land Study (2005)** - an Employment Land Study to review the supply of, and demand for, employment land and premises across the Haven Gateway sub-region.
- **Haven Gateway Regeneration Study (2005)** - provides the Haven Gateway Partnership with a clear assessment of the strategic fit of the various regeneration proposals being put forward within the sub-region, the potential impact of these proposals on the emerging East of England Plan and their impact on the aspirations of the Regional Economic Strategy.
- **Haven Gateway Strategic Residential and Infrastructure Study (2005)** - provides guidance on the strategic direction, scale and phasing of residential development and associated infrastructure requirements for the Haven Gateway sub-region to 2021.
- **Adopted Review Colchester Borough Local Plan (March 2004)** Most of the policies contained within the plan have been ‘saved.’

- **SEA Baseline Study & Environment Report (2004)** – provides a sound evidence base on the main social, environmental and cultural factors influencing the LDF.
- **Local Transport Plan (2006)** – produced by Essex County Council. The Plan identifies wide-reaching schemes to improve the transport network for the whole of the county, puts forward proposals and requests for funding.
- **Vehicle Parking Standards (2001)** – produced by Essex Planning Officers Association.
- **Looking Back, Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)** – Salford University for Essex Planning Officers Association
- **Appropriate Assessment (2007)** – The Core Strategy has been subjected to a Habitats Regulations Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Regulations, to ensure that it will not lead to any adverse effect upon the integrity of any of the important European sites within and close to Colchester Borough. Any future plan developed as part of the Colchester LDF or development arising from this Core Strategy will similarly be assessed in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. Compliance with the Habitats Regulations at this Core Strategy stage of the Colchester LDF is no guarantee that further plans or projects derived from the LDF will be similarly compliant.
- **Essex Biodiversity Action Plan**
- **Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan (1984)** – this outlines the Coastal Protection Belt which will be shown on the proposals map.
- **The Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study** – Phase 1 of this emerging document was completed in March 2008 and Phase 2 is expected Autumn 2008.
- **North East Essex Primary Care Trust Estates Strategy 2008-2011**

## **2.4 Key Issues for Colchester**

The unique characteristics of Colchester create specific issues, opportunities and problems for the future, which need to be addressed by the Core Strategy and LDF. The issues outlined below have been identified through public consultation, the evidence base, national planning policy, the East of England Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy. These issues provide the basis and context for the development of the Vision and Objectives, the Spatial Strategy and the Core Policies.

### **Sustainability**

Current problems:

- Increasing impact of climate change on the environment, particularly flooding and the Borough's coastline, and need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- New development does not consistently achieve best practice in sustainable construction and design.

- Legacy of previous dispersed growth patterns has resulted in high levels of car dependency for travel.
- Construction of office and retail development in unsustainable out-of-centre locations.

#### Future Challenges:

- Development of sustainable land use patterns that maximises accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
- Developing renewable sources of energy and energy efficient buildings.
- Addressing the long-term impact of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the consumption of scarce natural resources and minimising pollution.

### **Becoming a Prestigious Regional Centre**

#### Current problems:

- Providing appropriate business premises to the continually evolving local economy, with growth in service and knowledge based employment sectors and decline in industrial / manufacturing sectors.
- Rundown buildings and areas in need of renewal, which detract from the character of the townscape and Borough.
- Low quality public spaces in key gateways, such as the main train stations, and primary access points to the town centre.
- Lack of visibility and consistent access to key historic and natural features such as the River Colne and the Town Wall.
- Key facilities dislocated from the Town Centre and transport nodes, such as Essex University and Colchester General Hospital.
- Concern about the real and perceived safety of public areas, particularly in relation to evening entertainment uses.

#### Future Challenges:

- Ensuring increasing prosperity benefits all.
- Development of a high quality built environment that enhances the existing historic context, with new regionally significant facilities such as the Community Stadium and the Firstsite (Visual Arts Facility) which can inspire wider regeneration.
- Provision of high quality, accessible and flexible business premises compatible with the changing profile of Colchester businesses and workforce.
- Retention of University Graduates and skilled workers in local employment.
- Expansion of facilities to provide further and higher education at the Colchester Institute and University of Essex to meet the needs of a growing population and developments in the delivery of education regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Expansion of health care facilities to provide additional hospital services and expanded local health centres to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly aged population and changes in how healthcare is delivered.
- Promoting and supporting tourism.

## **Managing Growth Pressures**

Current problems:

- Colchester is part of the high demand south-east housing market, which places development pressure on the Borough including upon greenfield land.
- Expense involved in regenerating previously developed land, such as the Hythe and St Botolphs.
- Lack of affordable housing and limits on the diversity of housing in terms of tenure, dwelling type and size.
- The provision of infrastructure and facilities is struggling to keep pace with new development.
- Limited capacity within Colchester's historic Town Centre to accommodate new development.

Future Challenges:

- Balance ambitious housing and employment growth targets with the need to conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment.
- Need to ensure that future development incorporates high quality sustainable design and construction appropriate to its context as a legacy for future generations.
- Matching jobs growth with population growth.
- Managing the impact of the increase in smaller and older households and consequent effect on services and housing.
- Meeting the demand for affordable housing, including allocation of sites for gypsies and travellers.
- Preservation of countryside areas and strategic green gaps between settlements.
- Conserving open space and biodiversity in urban areas
- Provision of adequate transport, utilities and social infrastructure to meet existing deficits and to support growth.
- Mitigation of flood risk and contaminated land

## **Improving Accessibility**

Current problems:

- Traffic congestion on key roads and junctions, particularly in the Town Centre.
- Some roads are designed to suit cars at the expense of pedestrians and quality development.
- Buses are obstructed by traffic congestion and thus provide slower and less frequent services.
- Lack of access and connectivity between different parts of the Borough, particularly to and within the Town Centre.
- Shortage of local shops and community facilities at walkable neighbourhood locations.
- Loss of shops and services in villages and lack of frequent public transport services.

Future Challenges:

- Development of an integrated, affordable public transport network.
- Providing fast and frequent bus services.
- Reducing the need to travel and managing the demand for road space.
- Eliminating barriers to access by improving pedestrian and cycle provision and interconnectivity between different transport modes (e.g. bus-rail interchange).
- Improving access in rural areas to jobs and services.

## **3. Vision and Objectives**

The following Vision sets out where we want to be in 2021. The Vision distils feedback from consultation into ambitious aspirations for Colchester to become a sustainable and prestigious regional centre. The objectives that follow address to the issues, opportunities and problems faced by the Borough.

### **3.1 Spatial Vision**

By 2021, Colchester will be a prestigious regional centre. The historic Town Centre will be the cultural and economic heart of the borough, surrounded by thriving suburbs, villages and countryside. New cultural, retail, office and mixed use developments will be delivered through regeneration of the Town Centre and its fringe. Urban Gateways to the Town Centre will be regenerated to present attractive entry points to Colchester and stimulate sustainable development. Key community facilities will be delivered and expanded, including the University of Essex, Visual Arts Facilities, General Hospital, Colchester Institute, and Community Stadium.

The focus of new development will be on Colchester Town and Stanway. Sustainable and inclusive communities will be created through regeneration in the north, east and south, and sustainable urban extensions to the north and south-west of town. These developments will deliver affordable housing, employment, open space, and community facilities and will achieve a high standard of sustainable design and construction. New and existing communities will be supported by a network of district and local centres which will provide local residents with easy access to shopping, employment and services. Public transport, walking and cycling links will be improved to better connect residents with local and regional destinations.

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea will be key district settlements that provide essential services and facilities to their rural hinterland. The historic character and distinctiveness of these settlements and other villages will be protected and enhanced.

The natural environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved and enhanced and strategic green spaces will be secured to meet the recreational and health needs of Colchester. Sustainable development will also help protect the biodiversity, cultural and amenity value of the countryside and coast and will minimise use of scarce natural resources.

## **3.2 Objectives**

### **Sustainable Development**

- Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.
- Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.
- Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.
- Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.
- Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.

### **Centres and Employment**

- Create a prestigious regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.
- Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the need to travel outside the Borough for employment.
- Support and promote the growth of tourism.

### **Housing**

- Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community.
- Provide a range of different types of new housing to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.

### **Urban Renaissance**

- Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.
- Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology.

### **Public Realm**

- Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.

### **Accessibility and Transportation**

- Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel.
- Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region.
- Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs.
- Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.

### **Environment and Rural Communities**

- Protect and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline.
- Support appropriate local employment and housing development in villages and rural communities.

### **Energy, Resources, Recycling and Waste**

- Encourage renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

## **4. Spatial Strategy**

### **4.1 A Strategy for Sustainable Communities in Colchester**

The Spatial Strategy sets out the overall approach for the provision of new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities over the plan period. It sets the context for the Core Policies and outlines how the Vision and Objectives will be achieved.

The Spatial Strategy directs development towards the most sustainable locations, as illustrated by the Key Diagrams, and plans for supporting facilities and infrastructure to create sustainable local communities. The Strategy emphasises the importance of the Town Centre and regeneration to help Colchester to fulfil its potential as a prestigious regional centre for the Haven Gateway sub-region and wider Eastern region, with key links to London and Europe.

#### **Colchester Town**

The Council will focus the majority of future development on the following growth areas, and will work with partners to deliver the infrastructure and facilities needed to support this growth:

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

Focusing development at these locations will support regeneration, promote sustainable lifestyles and preclude large amounts of greenfield development. However, it is essential that development is well designed and supported with transport and utilities infrastructure, open space and community facilities.

#### **Town Centre**

Colchester's historic Town Centre is the cultural and economic heart of the Borough. The Town Centre will be enhanced through regeneration, public realm improvements, and a balanced mix of uses that sustain activity throughout the day and evening. However, the capacity of the historic core is limited and the extent of the functional Town Centre needs to be expanded. Other areas around the Town Centre, including the train station gateways, are highly accessible and currently perform important town centre functions. The Core Strategy seeks to expand our concept of the Town Centre to include these fringe areas and gateways.

Over the plan period it is projected that approximately 2000 new homes will be delivered in the Town Centre, including over 1,500 homes that have already been completed or permitted. In addition, Colchester's Town Centre

needs to accommodate more business, tourism and retail developments, including 67,000sqm of net retail floorspace and 40,000sqm of gross office floorspace between 2006 and 2021. The Town Centre will also be the primary location for the delivery of 270-490 hotel bedrooms between 2006 and 2011, and additional hotel developments beyond this period. These targets reflect the findings of current studies assessing Colchester's retail, business, and hotel requirements. This development will be primarily focused on the Town Centre, and other highly accessible locations, to create a sustainable and prestigious regional centre.

The Council therefore needs to actively promote and facilitate urban renaissance in the Town Centre and the regeneration of the St Botolphs and North Station areas. The regeneration of St Botolphs will deliver the following key projects:

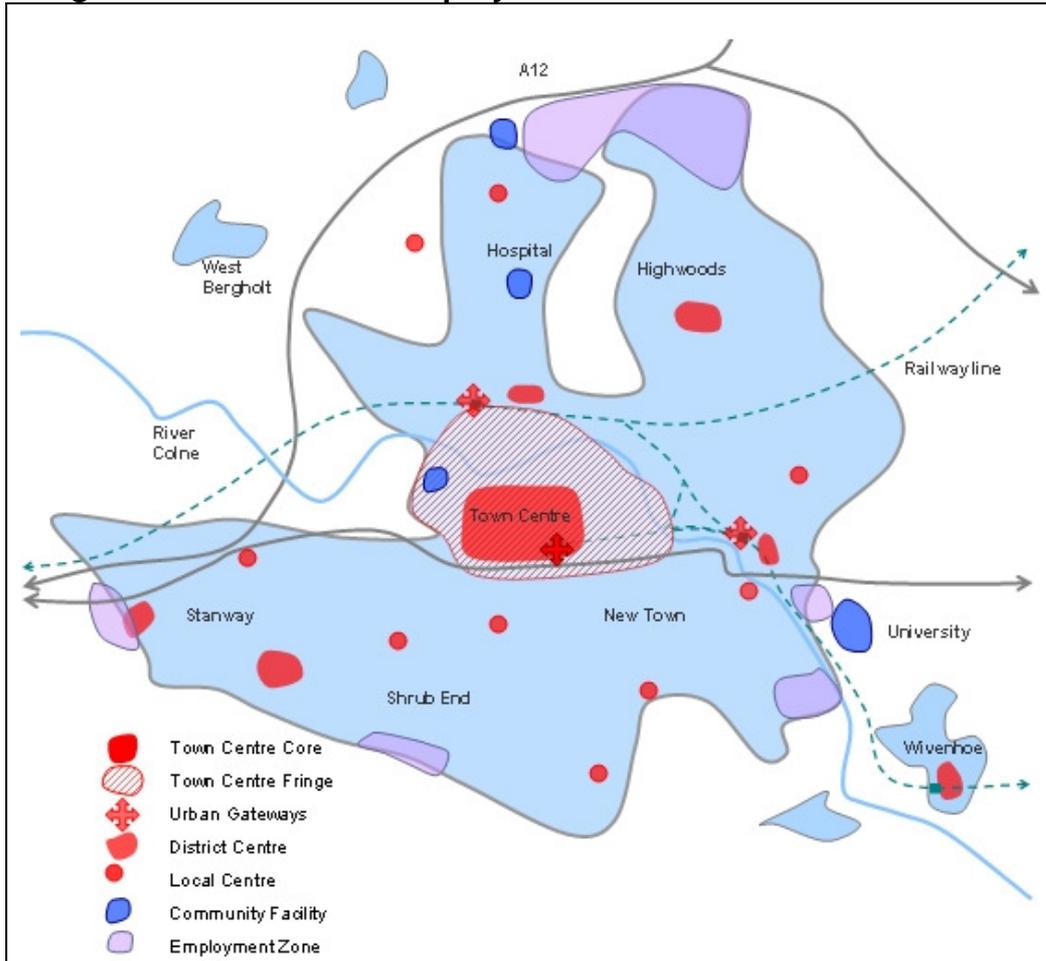
- Firstsite Building (Community arts facility)
- Cultural Quarter
- New bus station
- Town Station improvements
- Magistrates court
- Vineyard Gate (approx 35,000sqm of net retail floor space)
- Pedestrian/cycle bridge
- New open spaces

The regeneration of the North Station area will deliver the following:

- Regenerate the North Station gateway
- North Transit Corridor
- Improved bus-rail interchange
- North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)
- High density, mixed use developments, including 40,000sqm of gross new office floor space
- Green links between Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park
- Improvements to A133 central corridor

Transport improvements will also be made to the Town Centre's historic core to improve access and manage congestion. The Council seeks to enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street, and facilitate better bus access and circulation in the historic core.

## Diagram of Centres and Employment Zones



### North Growth Area

Mile End is a suburban area that has experienced rapid residential growth in the recent past. The area provides good access to the Town Centre, North Station, the A12 (upon completion of a new A12 junction), open space and Colchester General Hospital.

Between 2001 and 2021, approximately 4000 new homes will be delivered in the established urban areas. The majority of this housing (approx 3,500) has already been constructed or permitted. The Core Strategy also identifies additional greenfield land to the west of Mile End Road with capacity for 2,200 homes. It is intended that this land will come forward between 2016 and 2023, although the timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time.

North Colchester is also identified as a Strategic Employment Zone. Cuckoo Farm offers approximately 19.8ha of employment land that will provide good access to the A12.

The Core Strategy will coordinate this housing and employment development with the delivery of transport infrastructure, community facilities and open space. Key projects to be delivered within the North Growth Area include:

- Community Stadium
- A12 junction and Northern Approaches
- North Park & Ride
- North Transit Corridor
- North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)
- Expansion of Colchester General Hospital
- A sustainable urban extension
- Strategic employment site
- Two new primary schools and additional secondary school places are planned.
- Extra pre-school, primary and secondary school places to serve the urban extension (2,200 new homes) through new schools and expansion of existing provision.
- Community hall improvements and new community centre
- Strategic public open space
- Sport, recreation and youth facilities
- Allotments and green links

### East Growth Area

The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. Together with the University of Essex and New Town, this eastern area of Colchester has entered a period of significant growth. The area provides good access to Hythe Station, University of Essex and the Town Centre, but is constrained by limited transport infrastructure and flooding issues.

East Colchester is an established Regeneration Area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed use neighbourhoods oriented towards the River Colne and which respect the historic character of the area as the location of the early port. Over the plan period the East Growth Area provides capacity to accommodate at least 2,600 new homes, including over 1,500 homes that have already been completed or permitted. Once local traffic and flooding issues are resolved, then additional development will be encouraged at this highly accessible location. The regeneration of this area therefore needs to be supported by improvements to transport infrastructure, flood mitigation and open space.

Key projects to be delivered within the East Growth Area include:

- Colne Harbour regeneration
- Improvements to Hythe Station
- East Transit Corridor and potential Park & Ride
- University research park (approx 36,000sqm of office/business floorspace)
- Colne River pedestrian/cycle bridge
- University of Essex expansion
- High density, mixed use developments, including over 2,600 homes

- New health centre
- New public open space
- Green links

### South Growth Area

The Garrison area in the south of Colchester is an established regeneration area that provides significant potential for redevelopment within close proximity to the Town Centre. The new Garrison is currently under construction and will provide approximately 5000 direct jobs. A master planned urban village has been approved on the old Army Garrison site to accommodate 2,600 homes. Recently, the progress of development and detailed planning permission indicates that housing delivery is likely to exceed 3000 during the plan period. This additional housing delivery needs to be supported through improvements to transport infrastructure and community facilities.

Key projects to be delivered within the South Growth Area include:

- New Army Garrison
- Master planned urban village (approx 3000 homes)
- New health centre
- New primary school
- Public open space
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Colchester Town Station Improvements
- Pedestrian / cycle links to Town Centre

### Stanway Growth Area

The western and south-western fringes of Stanway will also be subject to significant development during the life of the plan. Existing allocations for both employment and housing will continue to be developed during the plan period. Stanway is identified as a Strategic Employment Zone and provides approximately 16ha of employment land that will provide good access to the strategic road network (A12). Existing housing allocations will deliver approximately 1000 homes by 2021. Furthermore, urban extensions to the west and south west are intended to deliver 800 homes. It is intended that this land will come forward between 2016 and 2023, although the timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time. This development will provide protection for sites of archaeological significance as well as facilitate delivery of strategic public open space and road improvements which will improve the highway network to the south and west of the town.

Key projects to be delivered within the Stanway Growth Area include:

- Sustainable urban extensions
- Strategic public open space
- Stanway road improvements
- Improved bus links

- Expanded secondary school provision
- New primary school
- Youth and recreation facilities
- Village hall improvements
- Allotments

### **District Settlements**

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the main district settlements outside of Colchester Town. These settlements provide an important range of shopping, services and facilities to their surrounding rural hinterland.

Tiptree had a population of 8,305 in 2001 and is the largest settlement in the Borough outside of Colchester Town. Over the plan period it is projected that approximately 680 new homes will be developed in Tiptree, including 500 homes (approx) that had already been completed or permitted in 2006. This may also include the reallocation of surplus employment land. An additional 245sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought in the district centre. All this development will help regenerate Church Road and deliver open space and community facilities. Key facilities to be delivered in Tiptree include a new health centre, expansion of the primary school, new sports pitches and allotments.

Wivenhoe had a population of 7,221 in 2001 and has good connections to the University of Essex, Colchester Town, and regional train services. Over the plan period, approximately 635 homes will be developed in Wivenhoe and across the water in Rowhedge, including recent developments in Wivenhoe the regeneration of Rowhedge Port. An additional 126sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought in Wivenhoe's district centre. Key facilities to be delivered in Wivenhoe include a new health centre, youth facilities and community hall improvements.

West Mersea, with a population of 6,925 in 2001, is a relatively self-contained coastal community offering quality tourism and recreation opportunities. The West Mersea waterfront will be conserved for its historic maritime character and distinctive maritime-related local businesses. There are some limited development opportunities in West Mersea and approximately 280 new homes will be developed during the plan period, including over 200 homes that have already been approved or completed. An additional 173sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought to service the residents of Mersea Island. Key facilities to be delivered in West Mersea include allotments and a new health centre.

### **Rural Communities**

The villages in the borough are unlikely to experience significant development during the plan period. Overall, about 705 homes are likely to be developed in rural communities throughout the borough. Approximate 650 of these homes had been completed or approved in 2006, including 150 new homes in Great Horkesley. The priorities in these villages will be protecting the distinct local

character and supporting the provision of affordable housing, open space, rural employment, key services and community facilities.

Separation will be maintained between Colchester and adjoining settlements in order to protect village identity and landscape character.

### **Environment**

The natural environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved and enhanced to protect the Borough's biodiversity, landscape, geology, history and archaeology. Development will be directed away from sites of international, national, regional and local importance, areas of landscape conservation importance and land at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding. Where new development requires a rural location, it will need to enhance the locally distinct character of the landscape, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected from inappropriate development. The open and undeveloped coast within the Coastal Protection Belt will be protected from development that would harm its open and rural character. Management will focus on balancing the rural land uses that have shaped the landscape with opportunities to enhance and promote tourism and recreation.

The River Colne provides a valuable green corridor, for both wildlife and people, from Colchester Town to the countryside and coastline. Subject to flood risk assessment, the regeneration of previously developed land will be supported at appropriate locations along the river to enhance its recreation and nature conservation values. Strategic open spaces and green links, such as the river corridor, will be maintained and enhanced to support movement, recreation and biodiversity.

The Abberton Reservoir will be expanded to help meet increasing water demands in the region. This expansion will include improved visitor access and a new visitor centre to provide for recreation and education.

### **Transport Strategy**

Accessibility and transport are key elements of the Core Strategy and the Council will prepare Transport Strategy as part of the Local Development Framework to reflect Colchester's role as a Regional Transport Node. This Transport Strategy will accord with the Regional Transport Strategy and the Local Transport Plan, and will aim to achieve the following through partnership working:

- Improve accessibility to services
- Reduce the need to travel and manage congestion
- Achieve more sustainable travel behaviour
- Create safe and sustainable communities
- Minimise impact on the environment

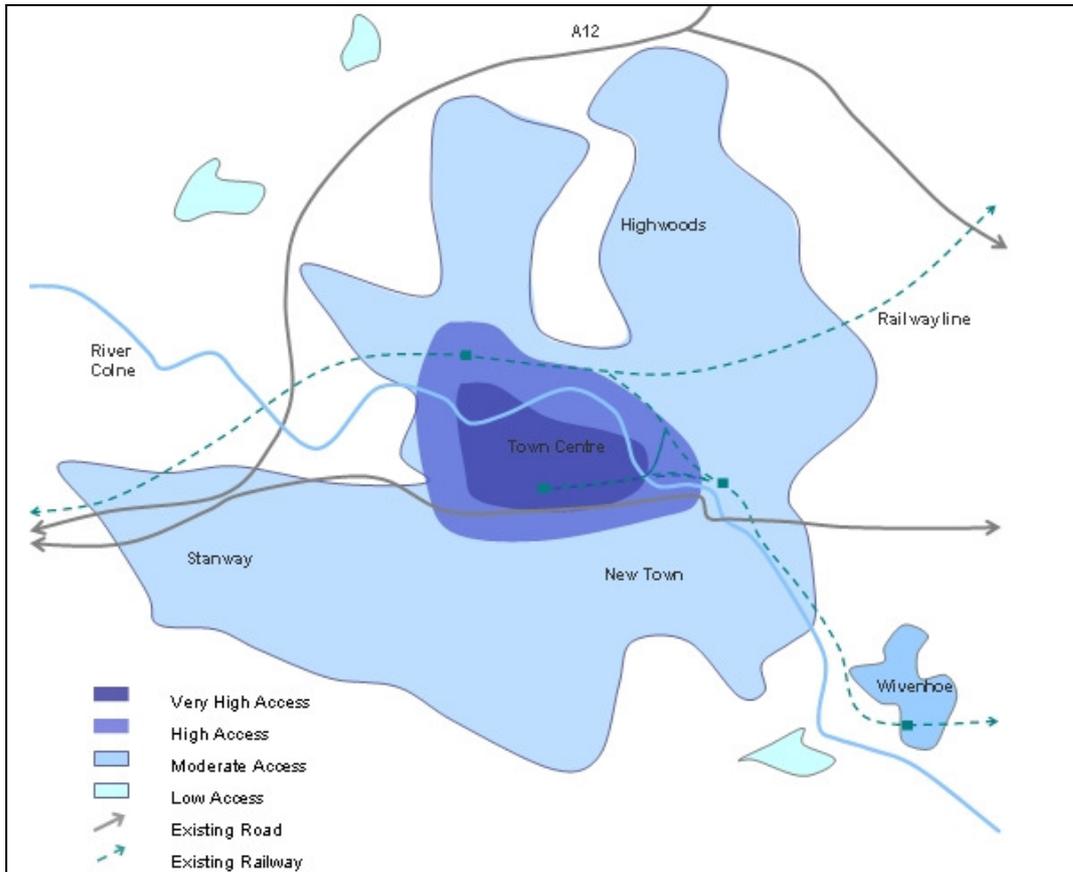
In practice, the achievement of these aims requires a long-term strategy coordinating development and transport to support sustainable lifestyles and address climate change. Accordingly, the Spatial Strategy and Transport Strategy seek to coordinate the following through partnership working:

- Support housing and mixed use development at accessible locations, and therefore reduce the need to travel.
- Create people-friendly streets that encourage walking, cycling and public transport.
- A safe, direct and integrated network of walk/cycle paths and facilities to connect people with key destinations, particularly the Town Centre.
- Promote the use of public transport by providing a fast, frequent, reliable and high quality public transport network.
- Create transit corridors to facilitate high quality public transport services that can bypass traffic congestion.
- Deliver Park and Ride facilities that offer visitors with a high quality connection to Colchester Town.
- Improve the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street and facilitate better bus access and circulation in the Town Centre.
- Manage car parking to support the economy and facilitate attractive streetscapes.
- Manage car traffic in urban areas using alternatives and technology to minimise adverse impacts on the streetscape and local environment.
- Improve the strategic road network to support economic growth, sustainable development and reduce pressure on local roads.
- Use of demand management measures to optimise the use of the existing transport networks
- Support rural communities with demand responsive transport services

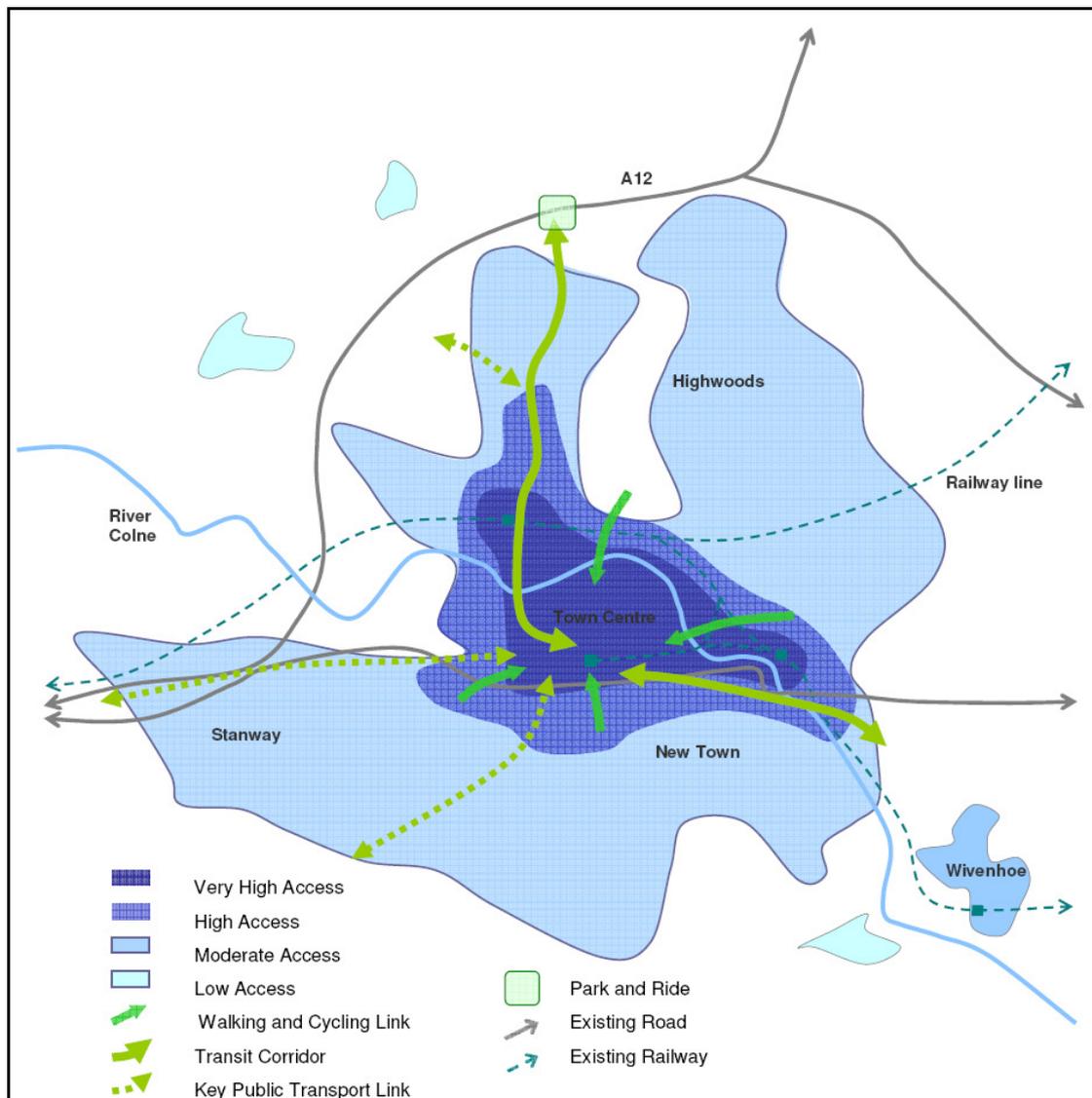
The Transport Strategy will also seek to create attractive and high quality gateways to Colchester to create a prestigious regional centre and promote sustainable travel behaviour. The main public transport interchanges, including North Station, Hythe Station and Town Station, will be regenerated to provide attractive 'urban gateways' to the Town Centre. The new A12 junction, including Park and Ride, will also provide a quality gateway for vehicular access to Colchester Town.

The key transport measures outlined above will substantially improve people's access to jobs, shops, services and facilities in the Borough. The following diagrams below provide a conceptual illustration of the accessibility improvements to be achieved through investment in transport infrastructure and services

## Diagram of Present Accessibility and Transport



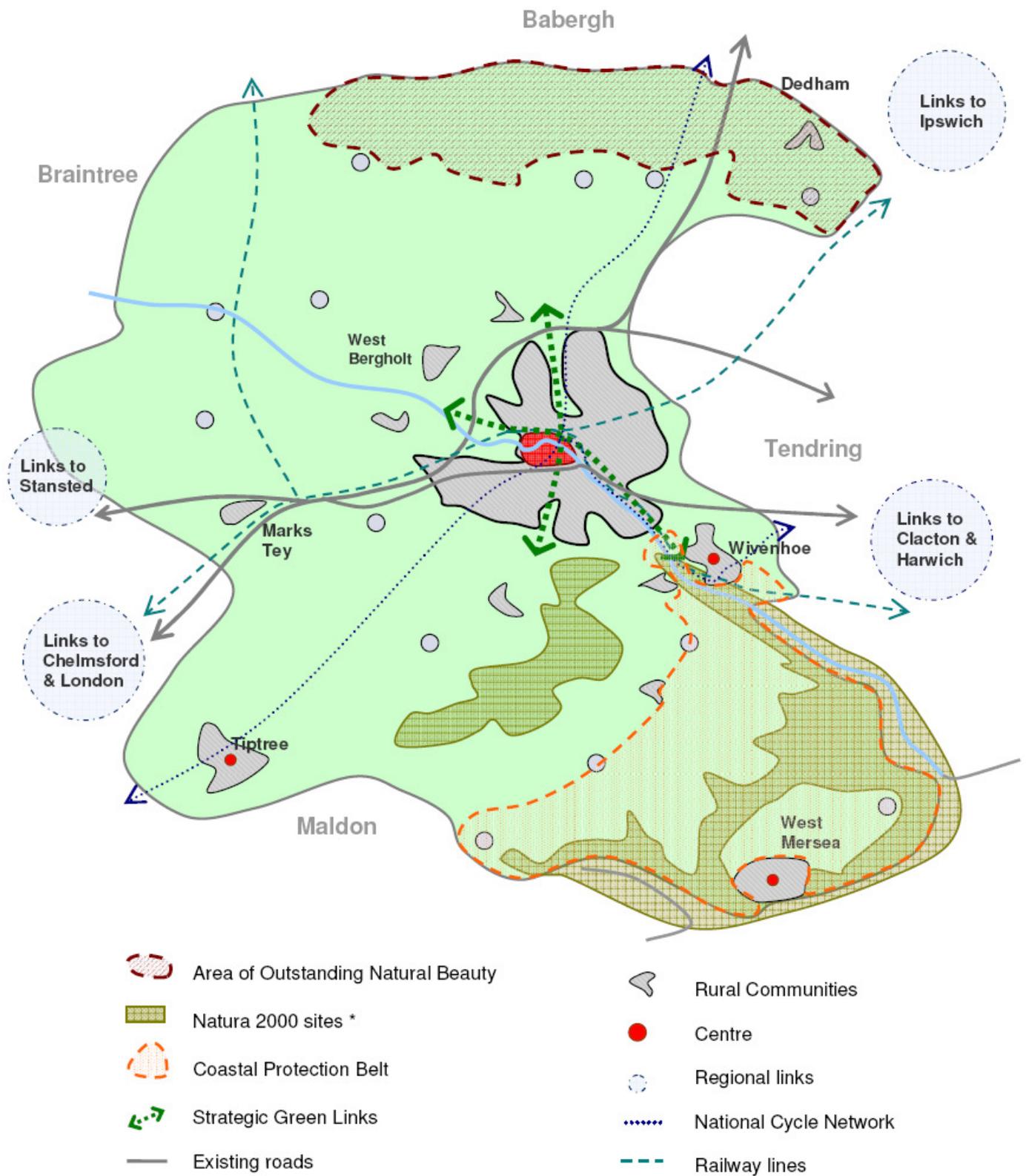
## Diagram of Future Accessibility and Transport



## 4.2 Key Diagrams

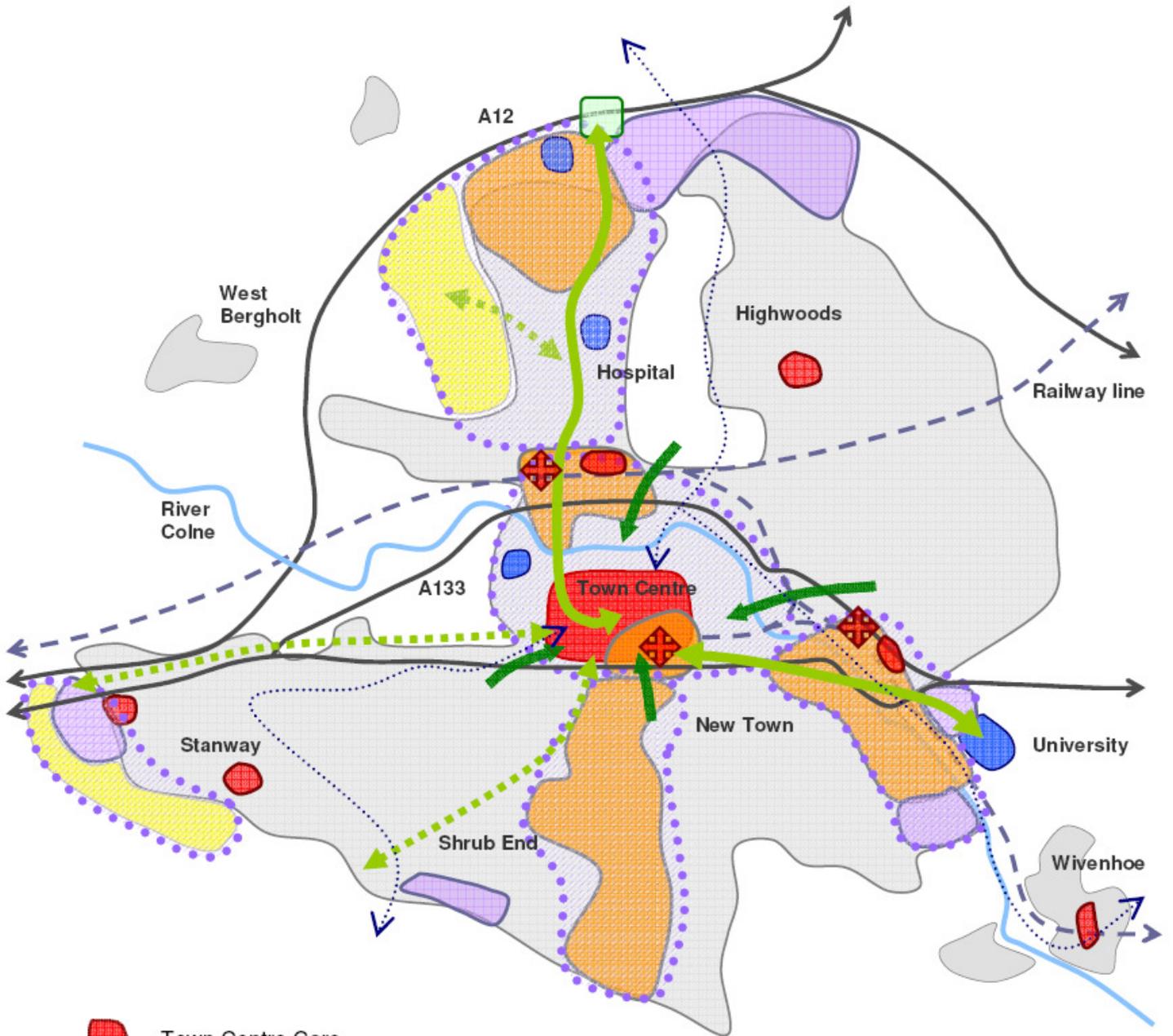
The Key Diagrams provide conceptual illustrations of the Core Strategy. The first Key Diagram illustrates the Strategy at a Borough-wide scale, whilst the second Key Diagram focuses on the complexities of Colchester Town. These Diagrams present the spatial principles of the Strategy and identify broad locations that relate to Core Policies, but are not intended to be detailed or site specific.

# KD1: Colchester Borough



\* Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites.

## KD2: Colchester Town



- |  |                             |  |                            |
|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
|  | Town Centre Core            |  | Transit Corridors          |
|  | Urban Gateways              |  | Key Public Transport Links |
|  | District Centres            |  | Key Walk and Cycle Links   |
|  | Key Community Facility      |  | Park and Ride              |
|  | Regeneration Area           |  | Railway Line               |
|  | Employment Zone             |  | Existing Road              |
|  | Broad Areas for New Housing |  | National Cycle Network     |
|  | Established Housing         |  |                            |
|  | Growth Areas                |  |                            |

## 5. Core Policies

The policies in the Core Strategy provide the strategic direction for the Local Development Framework, and for the delivery of development, infrastructure, facilities and services in Colchester to 2021. These policies seek to achieve the Vision and Objectives and should be interpreted within the context of the Spatial Strategy.

### 5.1 Sustainable Development

#### **SD1 – Sustainable Development Locations**

Colchester Borough Council will promote sustainable development and regeneration to deliver at least 14,200 jobs between 2001 and 2021 and at least 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023.

Throughout the borough, growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy below and the Key Diagrams. Development proposals will be expected to make efficient use of land and take a sequential approach that gives priority to accessible locations and previously developed land (PDL). Proposals should seek to promote sustainability by minimising and/or mitigating pressure on the natural, built and historic environment, utilities and infrastructure, and areas at risk of flooding.

In support of Colchester’s aim to be a prestigious regional centre, the Borough Council will promote high quality design and will focus on enhancing the character and quality of the Town Centre, the Regeneration Areas and key Gateways to Colchester. Development in Colchester Town will be primarily focused on the following broad locations (see Key Diagrams):

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

The Council will also seek to sustain the character and vitality of small towns, villages and the countryside, and development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design, sustainability and compatibility with local character.

**Table SD1 – Settlement Hierarchy**

Hierarchy	Settlements
Regional Centre	Colchester Town and Stanway
District Settlements	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe
Rural Communities	The other villages in the Borough (see Appendix B)

## **Explanation**

The Community Strategy's vision for Colchester is for it to develop as a prestigious regional centre. This can be achieved through regenerating our town centre and regional gateways, whilst protecting and enhancing the character of the countryside and rural communities.

Colchester is a growing borough and needs to provide quality housing and employment opportunities, as well as improving the environment and our quality of life. New development needs to be carefully managed, well-designed and directed towards locations that will stimulate regeneration and support sustainable communities. Development also helps fund improvements to community facilities, transport infrastructure, open space and affordable housing.

The Council is focusing development on areas that are in need of regeneration and are accessible by a range of transport modes. This approach will protect our countryside by minimising the amount of development occurring on greenfield land. It will also help improve accessibility and reduce the need to travel, by ensuring that homes, employment and facilities are well located.

The broad locations for development in Colchester are outlined in the Spatial Strategy and illustrated in the Key Diagrams. These development locations have been coordinated with transport and utilities infrastructure and the provision of community facilities, shopping, employment and open space to create sustainable communities.

## **SD2 – Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure**

The Borough Council will work with partners to ensure that facilities and infrastructure are provided to support sustainable communities in Colchester. New facilities and infrastructure must be located and designed so that they are accessible and compatible with the character and needs of the local community.

New development will be required to provide the necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposal. Development will also be expected to contribute, as appropriate, to strategic projects that support sustainable development and the wider community.

The Council will seek to employ standard charges where appropriate to ensure that new development makes a reasonable contribution to the provision of related facilities and infrastructure. The tariff approach will be based on a comprehensive review of the need, timing and scale of investment and how this relates to the key growth areas set out in the Core Strategy. The viability of developments will also be considered when determining the

extent and priority of development contributions.

### **Explanation**

Supporting development with the necessary community facilities and transport infrastructure is essential to creating sustainable communities. The Borough Council does not have the resources or the necessary powers itself to provide all the facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, the Council will need to work with partners and collect contributions from development, ensuring that the financial contributions requested are fair, proportionate, and tied in to clear priorities for the overall sustainable development of the Borough.

Developments will be required to deliver and contribute towards the following where necessary (not exclusive):

- Affordable housing
- Transport infrastructure and services
- Open space, sport and recreation
- Community facilities
- Primary and secondary schools
- Public realm improvements
- Renewable energy and sustainable construction
- Flood mitigation measures
- Employment and training schemes

The Council will prepare further guidance regarding standard charges and development contributions towards facilities and infrastructure. Additional information on the delivery of infrastructure and facilities is also provided in the following Core Policies:

- SD3 - Community Facilities
- H4 – Affordable Housing
- PR2 – Open Space
- TA3 – Public Transport
- TA4 – Roads and Traffic

### **SD3 – Community Facilities**

The Borough Council will work with partners to deliver key community facilities (see Table SD3) to support the Sustainable Community Strategy and to develop Colchester as a prestigious regional centre.

The Council will also provide facilities for the local communities, based upon an analysis of needs, with particular regard to disadvantaged groups. New development will be required to contribute towards the provision of community facilities to meet the needs of new communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. Safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services will be established to serve existing and new pre-school, primary, and secondary school sites.

Community facilities should be located in centres or other accessible locations to maximise community access and build a sense of local community identity. The Council supports the retention and enhancement of existing community facilities and encourages multi-purpose community facilities that can provide a range of services and facilities to the community at one accessible location. Where existing facilities can be enhanced to serve new development, the Council will work with developers and local partners to audit existing facilities and assess the requirement for additional facilities to deliver comprehensive provision of services to serve these extended communities. The Council will work with local partners, such as Parish Councils or Community Associations, to plan and manage community facilities.

**Table SD3: Delivery of Key Community Facilities**

Growth Areas	Project
Town Centre	Firstsite (Community arts facility)
	Cultural Quarter
	Magistrates' Court
North Growth Area	Community stadium and regional conference centre
	Colchester General Hospital expansion
	4 new primary schools (ie., at Turner Village, Severalls, and two in the urban extension)
	Early years and childcare facilities
	Either new secondary school site (on a precautionary basis); and/or expansion of existing secondary school provision at nearby schools
East Growth Area	University of Essex expansion
General	Facilities to support 2012 Olympics
	7 new health centres
	6 forms of secondary school capacity
	6 new primary schools
	New and improved community halls
	Extra pre-school, primary, and secondary school provision (including new schools where appropriate).

\*refer to policy TA3 & TA4 for transport infrastructure and policy PR2 for open space.

### Explanation

Community facilities are an essential element of sustainable communities providing for education, child care, health, culture, recreation, religion and policing (see Glossary). Policy PR2 also makes provision for open space and recreation facilities.

The Council needs to deliver a comprehensive range of high quality and accessible community facilities to meet the needs of new and existing communities in Colchester. Community projects, such as the Community Stadium and Firstsite (Community arts facility), have regional and national significance and are identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy. Local facilities such as schools and health centres also need to be delivered to support new and existing communities. Table SD3 sets out key community facilities to be delivered in Colchester during the plan period, additional facilities will also be delivered as part of new developments and to meet existing deficiencies.

The Borough Council will safeguard existing facilities and will work with partners including the local community to bring together funding from a variety of public and private sources to deliver new community facilities. Development proposals will be required to review community needs (e.g. Health Impact Assessment) and provide community facilities to meet the needs of the new population and mitigate impacts on existing communities.

## **5.2 Centres and Employment Policies**

### **CE1 – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy**

The Borough Council will encourage economic development and will plan for the delivery of at least 14,200 jobs in Colchester between 2001 and 2021. The Council will promote employment generating developments through the regeneration and intensification of previously developed land, and through the allocation of land necessary to support employment growth at sustainable locations.

The Council will promote and maintain a Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy (Tables CE1a & CE1b) to coordinate the use and scale of developments with the accessibility and role of the various mixed use Centres and Employment Zones in Colchester. Mixed-use centres will support a wide range of compatible uses, whilst Employment Zones will accommodate other business developments as identified in Table CE1b. Development scales will need to be consistent with the Hierarchy and larger scale development should be focused on the Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Strategic Employment Sites.

Employment developments that conflict with the Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy will not normally be supported. Small scale developments may be acceptable in residential or countryside locations if they have low travel needs and low impacts, such as:

- Small shops and facilities providing for the daily needs of a local residential catchment,
- Rural businesses, recreation and tourist developments to meet local needs and support rural economies.

The Council will seek to protect and enhance employment throughout the borough. Development that will increase employment capacity will be encouraged, whilst development that will result in a loss of employment capacity will not normally be supported.

The Council will also encourage economic diversity and business development to facilitate small and medium enterprises. A mix of business types and premises will be sought in employment developments to provide opportunities for all businesses and create diverse and successful economic environments.

**Table CE1a – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy**

**Centres Classification and Hierarchy**

	Centre Type		Indicative Location*
	Hierarchy	Classification	
Mixed Use Centres (Policy CE2)	Town Centre	Town Centre core	Colchester's historic Town Centre
	Edge of Centre Locations	Urban Gateways	North Station Colchester Town Station Hythe Station
		Town Centre fringe	Land surrounding the Town Centre core.
	District Centres	Rural District Centres	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe
		Urban District Centres	Highwoods Tollgate Peartree Road Greenstead Road Turner Rise
Local Centres	Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops	Specific sites to be identified in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD) or through master planning within identified growth areas	

\*Boundaries to be defined in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

**Employment Classification**

	Employment Zone Type	Indicative Location*
Employment Zones (Policy CE3)	Strategic Employment Zones	North Colchester Stanway University Research Park
	Local Employment Zones	Specific sites to be identified in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

\*Boundaries to be defined in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

In accordance with PPS6 the historic town centre core will be the primary location for retail, office, leisure and entertainment uses. The sequential approach will be applied and retail uses will then be directed to the sites in the town centre fringe (within 300 metres of the town centre core). Sites within 500 metres or those well connected with good pedestrian access to the Urban Gateways will also be considered suitable for office and mixed use development.

**Table CE1b – Appropriate Land Uses**

	Mixed Use Centres (Policy CE2)	Employment Zones (Policy CE3)
Primary Land Uses	A1 – Shops A2 – Financial and Professional Services A3 – Restaurants and Cafes A4 – Drinking Establishments	B1b – Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, Hi-tech B1c – Light Industry B2 – General Industry

	A5 – Hot Food Take-Away B1a – Offices B1b – Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, Hi-tech C1 – Hotels D1 – Non-residential Institutions D2 – Assembly and Leisure	B8 – Storage and Distribution
Secondary Land Uses	C2 – Residential Institutions C3 – Dwelling House B1c – Light Industry Sui Generis	B1a – Offices C1 - Hotels D2 – Assembly and Leisure Sui Generis

**Table CE1c – Indicative Employment Delivery 2006 to 2021**

		Retail (2006-2021)	Hotels (2006-2015)	B1: Offices etc (2004-2021)	Industry & Warehousing (2004-2021)
Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Town Centre Fringe		67,000sqm (net)	270-390 rooms (2006-2015)	40,000sqm (gross)	
Strategic Employment Zones	University of Essex			36,000sqm (gross)	
	North Colchester			38,000sqm (gross)	45,100sqm (gross)
	Stanway			36,500sqm (gross)	

### Explanation

Providing jobs for Colchester's growing community is a central objective of the Core Strategy. The East of England Plan set a target of approximately 14,200 jobs, although many jobs have already been created since 2001. The Council cannot deliver the additional employment directly, but it can protect existing employment, stimulate new employment developments, and accommodate new developments at the most suitable locations.

The Council commissioned studies of projected growth in retail, business and employment, and used this evidence to plan and facilitate future economic development and employment delivery in Colchester. During the 2006 to 2021 period, Colchester will need to accommodate the following development:

- 67,000sqm (net) of retail floorspace, predominantly in the Town Centre (Retail Study 2007)
- 106,000sqm (gross) of office floorspace (Use Class B1), predominantly in the Town Centre and the Strategic Employment Zones. (Employment Land Study 2007)
- 45,000sqm (gross) of business floorspace (excluding B1), predominantly in the Strategic Employment Zones (Employment Land Study 2007)

Development of Colchester as a regional centre includes the enhancement of its visitor facilities, which also serve as a source of local employment. A study of hotel provision in Colchester found demand for 270-390 hotel bed rooms

between 2006 and 2015 to serve the leisure and business travel market in Colchester.

Promoting regeneration, higher densities and mixed use developments in existing Centres will build additional capacity to accommodate employment and economic growth at sustainable locations. Strategic Employment Zones will also be enhanced to improve access to strategic roads, capacity for new development and the quality of the built environment.

The Hierarchy for mixed use Centres and Employment Zones complements the Settlement Hierarchy to help guide both housing and employment development. The Centres and Employment Hierarchy directs employment development towards the most sustainable location within the Borough and within Colchester Town.

Centres provide highly accessible locations that can support a wide mix of land uses. The Town Centre and Urban Gateways are well connected by public transport to the rest of the Borough and the Region. Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops are easily accessible within local neighbourhoods. Land uses that are suited to accessible and mixed use locations, such as shops, services and offices, should be located within Centres.

Employment Zones are located at the fringe of urban areas and are supported by strategic road infrastructure. Employment Zones will accommodate business developments that are less compatible with mixed use areas, such as warehousing and industry.

Table CE1b outlines the land uses that are suited to Centres and Employment Zones. Primary land uses are generally encouraged, whilst secondary land uses may be supported depending on the circumstances.

## **CE2 – Mixed Use Centres**

The Borough Council will promote a mix of development types and scales in accordance with the Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy (Table CE1a & CE1b) and the role of each Centre, as outlined below.

New development in Centres should make efficient use of land, optimise employment delivery and be sympathetic to local character. Centre developments should also present active human-scale frontages and provide adaptable spaces to ensure they can accommodate different uses over time.

The Borough Council will seek to enhance the public realm and sustainable transport in Centres and minimise the impact of traffic and parking.

### **CE2a – Town Centre**

To promote Colchester as a prestigious Regional Centre, the Borough Council will encourage economic development and regeneration in the Town Centre. Main Town Centre uses, including retail, offices, leisure and cultural facilities, should take a sequential approach that gives priority to the regeneration of the Town Centre, followed by the Urban Gateways and the Town Centre Fringe. Accordingly, the Council will seek to deliver over 67,000sqm of net retail floor space and 40,000sqm of gross office floor space in the Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Town Centre Fringe from 2006 to 2021.

To support Colchester's role as a prestigious regional centre the Council will seek to deliver more attractive public spaces and streetscapes in the Town Centre.

The Town Centre Core contains important historic character which must be protected and enhanced by all development. Retail and cultural developments will be focused on the Town Centre Core. The Council will also encourage developments that create safe and attractive public spaces and a more balanced night time economy.

The Urban Gateways in Colchester (North Station, Hythe Station and Town Station) will provide a focal point for developments that will enhance the role of the Town Centre. High density, mixed-use developments will be encouraged to promote regeneration within walking distance of the railway stations.

The Town Centre Fringe will accommodate the growth of the Town Centre beyond the historic core. The Council will encourage a mix of developments that revitalise and make efficient use of land within walking distance to the Town Centre.

## **CE2b – District Centres**

Rural District Centres will be protected and enhanced to provide shops, services, community facilities and employment to meet the needs of local communities. Additional retail development will be supported in Rural District Centres to provide for the needs of the local catchment. The Council seeks to deliver improved retail provision in the Rural District Centre between 2006 and 2021, as follows:

- Tiptree – 245sqm (net)
- West Mersea – 173sqm (net)
- Wivenhoe – 126sqm (net)

Urban District Centres should provide an improved public realm, urban character and a more diverse mix of uses. New retail proposals (including change of use to retail) will not be supported, unless they meet identified local needs and do not compete with the Town Centre. Expansion of the Urban District Centres will not be supported, but intensification within the Centre will

be supported where the quality of the public realm and the built character is improved. Development within the Centres should deliver a more diverse range of uses, including community facilities, services, offices and housing. Development should be oriented towards pedestrians and present active frontages to the street. Development will be encouraged to make more efficient use of land including alternatives to surface car parking.

## **CE2c – Local Centres**

Neighbourhood Centres will be protected and enhanced to provide small scale shops, services and community facilities for local residents. New housing developments should provide for the enhancement of existing Centres or create new Neighbourhood Centres where appropriate to provide for the needs of existing and new communities. New developments within Neighbourhood Centres should be designed to meet the needs of the local catchment and encourage sustainable travel behaviour.

The provision of local shops and services throughout the Borough will be safeguarded to provide for the needs of local residents.

### **Explanation**

Colchester's Town Centre incorporates the Town Centre core within the historic wall, as well as surrounding fringe areas and the key rail station gateways. These areas can be accessed from the Borough and the Region by a range of transport modes and can support a wide range of uses. Other Centres, such as Tiptree Town Centre and Highwoods, are moderately accessible and serve a district catchment. Smaller centres provide predominantly for the local community.

Centres provide the surrounding community with shops, community facilities, employment, recreation and urban living opportunities. Mixed use development in Centres can increase the capacity for housing in accessible locations, which can also improve the viability of delivering new employment floor space. It is important to manage the right mix of uses over time to maintain a vibrant and successful Centre.

The Council will need to promote and facilitate new retailing and office development in the Town Centre to provide for the economic growth of Colchester at the most sustainable and accessible location. The regeneration of key locations, such as St Botolphs and North Station, will help deliver new retail and employment floorspace and reduce the pressure for out-of-centre development at less sustainable locations. The Retail Study carried out for north-east Essex identifies the important role Colchester plays as a Sub-regional retail centre whose catchment area includes adjacent districts. Further retail expansion will be required in the Town Centre for it to maintain its competitiveness.

Increasing the mix of compatible uses in Colchester's historic core will also provide a more robust economic environment and will stimulate a greater diversity of evening activities. The Town Centre core will therefore attract people of various ages and interests at different times of the day and night, and when combined with effective Town Centre management policies, will improve safety and inclusiveness.

There are a number of large format retail centres around the Town Centre and Colchester Town, including Tollgate and Turner Rise. These centres comprise large supermarkets, bulky goods retail, and large surface parking areas that could provide space for intensification. Expanding the retail components significantly could undermine the viability of the Town Centre, however it is important to increase the mix of uses and improve the public realm in these centres. These Urban District Centres need to improve the provision of community facilities, office floorspace or housing, as well as enhancing the quality of the public realm and the townscape.

Rural District Centres provide a mix of uses to serve the local residents and the surrounding countryside. The Council is seeking to enhance this important role to protect local businesses and provide services to the community.

Local Centres also play an important role in meeting the needs of local residents in a sustainable way. Accordingly the Council will seek to enhance the viability of Local Centres and protect them from inappropriate development.

### **CE3 – Employment Zones**

Employment Zones will accommodate business developments that are not suited to Mixed Use Centres, including industry and warehousing (see Table CE1b).

Strategic Employment Zones (SEZ) are identified at North Colchester, Stanway and the University of Essex, which provide ample capacity to accommodate projected business growth during the plan period. The Borough Council will seek to focus business development at these Strategic Employment Zones, and will improve the supporting transport infrastructure.

The Council will seek to deliver approximately 45,100sqm (gross) of industry and warehousing floor space, primarily within the North Colchester and Stanway Strategic Employment Zones. The Council will also support the delivery of existing office commitments in all the Strategic Employment Zones, however further office development will be directed towards the Town Centre in accordance with the sequential approach set out in policy CE2a.

The Council will encourage the provision of incubator units and grow-on space to support the development of small and medium enterprises. Local Employment Zones will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD based on

existing and proposed concentrations of rural and local employment in order to support and promote rural enterprise and local employment.

Retail developments will not normally be supported in Employment Zones, except for small scale developments that provide for the needs of the local workforce or are ancillary to an industrial use.

### **Explanation**

The Employment Zones provide good locations for industry, warehousing and businesses because they are well located in relation to transport infrastructure and minimise impacts on other land uses. Colchester Borough has sufficient employment land to accommodate future business growth, including over 35ha of land available in the Strategic Employment Zones at North Colchester and Stanway.

Employment studies have identified a need to improve the quality of available premises and land in Colchester to meet the needs of modern businesses. The Council is therefore seeking to upgrade the quality of the Strategic Employment Zones by improving the transport infrastructure and services as follows:

- The North Colchester SEZ will be enhanced by the new A12 junction and North Transit Corridor.
- The Stanway SEZ will be improved through the delivery of the Western Bypass.
- The University Research Park will be supported through the East Transit Corridor and improvements to Hythe Station.

New industry, warehousing and businesses will therefore be encouraged to locate at the Strategic Employment Zones, which offer the best road infrastructure and capacity for development. Local Employment Zones will also be maintained to support small to medium scale enterprises, rural businesses and local employment delivery.

Offices and retail developments are less suited to Employment Zones and should be directed towards Mixed Use Centres that provide employees and customers with sustainable transport links and easy access to a range of services. The Borough Council has already supported outline proposals for over 110,000sqm of B1 floor space within the Strategic Employment Zones. The realisation of these existing commitments is supported; however future office development proposals should be directed towards the Town Centre and Urban Gateways in accordance with the sequential approach (see Policy CE2 and PPS6).

## **5.3 Housing Policies**

### **H1 – Housing Delivery**

The Borough Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 19,000 new homes in Colchester Borough between 2001 and 2023. This housing development will be focused on the following key areas:

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

The majority of housing development will be located within regeneration areas in Colchester Town, but broad greenfield locations to the north and south-west of Colchester Town have also been identified for additional housing provision. The overall distribution of new housing, as shown in Table H1a, will be guided by the Settlement Hierarchy and the Key Diagrams.

Colchester will seek to provide over 80% of housing on previously developed land during the plan period. Accordingly housing development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development that gives priority to new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than the private car and previously developed land (PDL).

The Council will also ensure that a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land is available to deliver over 830 new homes each year.

**Table H1a - Colchester's Housing Provision**

<b>Settlements and Key Development Areas</b>		<b>LDF Housing Provision (2001 – 2021)</b>	<b>Additional Greenfield Land (2016 – 2023)*</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Colchester Town	Town Centre and fringe	2000		16,700
	North Growth Area	4000	2200	
	East Growth Area	2600		
	South Growth Area	3000		
	Stanway Growth Area	1000	800	
	Other areas	1100		
Tiptree			680	2,300
West Mersea		280		19,000
Wivenhoe/Rowhedge		635		
Marks Tey		70		
West Bergholt		50		
Great Horkesley		150		
Other Villages		435		
<b>Approx Total</b>		<b>15,860</b>	<b>3,140</b>	

\* LDF will provide housing with capacity beyond 2021 to ensure a 15 year supply in accordance with PPS3. The figures shown are intended as minimum numbers. The dates shown are subject to change should monitoring prove this is necessary.

**Table H1b – Estimated Housing Delivery and PDL Trajectories**

Area	2001-2006	2006-2011	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021 - 2023
Housing Delivery	4630	4370	4200	4200	1600
PDL%	84%	90%	85%	70%	65%

### Explanation

Colchester needs to make a minimum provision of 17,100 homes between 2001 and 2021 in accordance with the East of England Plan. Overall, this involves a minimum provision of 830 dwellings per year between 2006 and 2021. National Planning Policy also requires the Borough Council to plan for at least 1,710 additional homes between 2021 and 2023.

The majority of this housing is already accounted for by previous Local Plan allocations, housing completions and planning permissions. Colchester has already delivered 4630 new homes between 2001 and 2006 at an average rate of 930 dwellings per year. In 2006, there were outstanding permissions for over 8000 additional homes. Colchester’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also identified additional capacity within developed areas to accommodate most of the required housing.

National planning policy requires the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework to ensure that the minimum housing requirement can be delivered with confidence. It is therefore necessary to identify broad locations for new housing to supplement the existing completions, permission and allocations.

The majority of housing will be located on previously developed land, to stimulate regeneration, improve accessibility and protect the countryside. It is projected that over 80% of this housing delivery will occur on previously developed land. In 2006 there was planning permission for over 8,000 homes and 95% of these were on previously developed land. Therefore, housing delivery on PDL is expected to be quite high in the earlier parts of the plan period. As brownfield sites are redeveloped, the proportion of greenfield development will increase towards the end of the plan period.

Broad locations for greenfield land releases have been identified to the north and south-west of Colchester Town, based on the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal. The timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time. Development at these greenfield locations will be guided by the Site Allocations DPD and supported by Area Action Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents or through master planning. The appropriate method to be determined by the Council and coordinated with the delivery of key transport connections. Overall, the

Sustainability Appraisal determined that these locations were considered to be more sustainable than alternate locations for the following reasons:

- They provide good access to the Town Centre and community facilities.
- They provide good access to public transport interchanges and the strategic road network.
- They are not designated as environmental conservation areas or identified as areas of landscape importance.
- They provide sufficient capacity to establish new sustainable communities.
- They will help deliver infrastructure and facilities that will support nearby regeneration areas.

## H2 – Housing Density

The Borough Council will seek housing densities that make efficient use of land and relate to the context. New developments must enhance local character and optimise the capacity of accessible locations.

Locations with good access to centres, particularly the Town Centre and the Urban Gateways, are more suited to higher density development, although a flexible approach will be important to ensure that densities are compatible with the surrounding townscape. Other locations with lesser access to centres and public transport should involve more moderate densities. The density of developments also needs to be informed by the provision of open space and parking, the character of the area, and the mix of housing.

Table H2a provides indicative guidance on appropriate densities that relate to the accessibility of a location. A context appraisal will be required to identify the accessibility and local character of a location and therefore inform an appropriate density.

**Table H2a – Indicative Housing Densities**

Accessibility	Indicative Locations	Indicative Housing Densities
Very High	Town Centre and within 400m of Urban Gateways	Over 75 du/ha*
High	Within 800m of the Town Centre, and Urban Gateways	Over 50 du/ha
Moderate	Colchester Town and District Settlements (Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe)	Over 40 du/ha
Low	The Borough's villages	30 to 40 du/ha

\*du/ha – dwelling units per hectare

### Explanation

The density of housing development can have significant implications for sustainability, local character, travel behaviour, development land take, and residential amenity.

Housing development will be focused on the most accessible locations to reduce the need to travel, promote regeneration and protect greenfield land. Higher density developments can accommodate more people at locations with good access to employment, shops and education, and allow residents to easily access their needs by walking, cycling and public transport. This in turn supports the provision of local business, services and infrastructure. However, high density development that is poorly located or poorly designed can have adverse impacts on the local community, built character, traffic and sustainability. High density developments need to have regard to biodiversity and open spaces provided within urban areas and on brownfield sites.

Densities therefore need to be moderated at less accessible locations and to reflect local character. The provision of open space, parking and a mix of housing will also have moderating affect on densities. Areas with lesser access to centres and public transport, such as villages and outer-suburbs are suited to lower densities. Lower density developments can provide more open space and large family housing, but developments below 30du/ha are considered to be too inefficient and inconsistent with national planning policy as set forth in PPS3.

### H3 – Housing Diversity

Colchester Borough Council intends to secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities. Housing developments should provide a mix of housing types to suit a range of different households, whilst also realising the opportunities presented by accessible locations. The mix of housing types should therefore be guided by Table H3a and informed by an appraisal of community context and housing need.

Housing developments will also need to contribute to the provision of affordable housing and homes that are suitable to the needs of older persons, persons with disabilities and those with special needs.

**Table H3a - Indicative Mix of Housing Types**

Accessibility	Houses			Flats and Maisonettes		
	1-2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed	1 Bed	2 Bed	3+ Bed
Very High	-	-	-	++	++	+
High	+	+	+	+	++	+
Moderate	++	++	+	+	+	+
Low	++	++	+	-	-	-

++ Important

+ Appropriate

- Unnecessary, but may be suitable

## Explanation

All housing developments in Colchester should be inclusive and accommodate a diverse range of households and housing need to create mixed communities. Housing developments must provide a range of housing types that can accommodate a range of different households, including families, single persons, older persons and low income households.

Table H3a illustrates the important relationship between housing diversity, density and the accessibility of the location. Town Centre locations, for example, are highly accessible and can support high density flats, but they also need to accommodate a range of household sizes. Suburban locations have moderate access and should accommodate a range of housing types and household sizes. Rural locations have low accessibility and will suit low density development, but should still provide for small and low income households.

In 2001, the average household size was 2.37 persons. Approximately 28% were single person households, roughly 35% were 2 person households, and another 29% of households had dependent children. In 2021, the average household size is projected to shrink to around 2.24 persons, and single person households are likely to grow to about 35% of the total.

In 2001, flats and maisonettes represented about 15% of total housing stock and probably occupied less than 5% of housing land. Between 2000 and 2006, about 31% of new dwellings constructed were flats and maisonettes, whilst 69% were houses or bungalows. In 2006, flats and maisonettes represented about 17% of total housing stock. Although more flats and maisonettes have been constructed in recent years the overall proportion is still relatively low.

## Housing Delivery

	Houses			Flats		
	1-2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed +	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed +
2000-2006	12%	30%	27%	7%	22%	2%

During the same period, houses with 3 or more bedrooms represented 57% of total completions, whilst 2 bedroom houses represented only 12%. Given that the average price for a 4 bed house was over £300,000 in 2006, there is concern that the mix of housing is not reflecting community need.

All housing developments therefore need to provide a more balanced range of housing types to reflect identified community need. The mix of housing should reflect the housing needs of the community, and therefore higher density developments in the urbanised areas still need to provide accommodation suitable to families and larger households, and low density developments in villages still need to provide housing for small and low income households.

## H4 – Affordable Housing

The Borough Council is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester. The Council will be seeking to secure 35% of new dwellings (including conversions) to be provided as affordable housing (normally on site), as follows:

- In Colchester Town and Stanway, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 10 or more dwellings.
- In the other villages, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 3 or more dwellings.
- An equivalent financial contribution will also be sought for developments below these thresholds.

In exceptional circumstances, where high development costs undermine the viability of housing delivery on brownfield sites, developers will be expected to demonstrate an alternative affordable housing provision.

Affordable housing development in the villages of rural Colchester Borough will be supported on rural exception sites contiguous with village settlement boundaries, provided a local need is demonstrated by the Parish Council on behalf of their residents.

The Council will require developments to integrate affordable housing and market housing, with a consistent standard of quality design and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities.

### **Explanation**

The need for affordable housing is high in Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region. The East of England Plan has set a policy target of 35% affordable housing for planning permissions in the region.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 (SHMA) identified that the average house price in Colchester was approximately £200,000 in 2006, whilst the gross (median) household income was only £23,874. The SHMA observes that few households aspiring to home ownership have access to enough money to purchase a home in Colchester. The SHMA identified a need for 1,104 affordable homes per year, which is very high given the total housing provision in the EEP is only 830 per year. The SHMA suggests this high need would justify an Affordable Housing target over 35% if the developments were viable.

Affordable housing requirements must be balanced with other requirements for transport infrastructure, community facilities, open space and sustainable construction. The viability of housing delivery also needs to be maintained, particularly in regeneration areas. The Housing Viability Report identified that a significant portion of developments would not be viable with an affordable housing requirements of 40%. Even at lower levels of affordable housing, viability was a problem, particularly on previously developed land.

It is considered that a 35% target maintains a balance between housing need and viability, whilst maintaining consistency with the regional target. A target of 35% will optimise affordable housing delivery on greenfield land whilst facilitating the regeneration of rundown areas.

## **H5 – Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople**

The Council will identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the Borough. A suitable site for gypsies and travellers is being provided in Severalls Lane, Colchester; and additional sites will be identified (in the Site Allocations DPD) as required to meet future need. Although no need for sites for travelling showpeople has been identified, the matter will be kept under review.

The Council will seek to locate sites within reasonable proximity to existing settlements, and with access to shops, schools and other community facilities. Sites should also provide adequate space for vehicles and appropriate highway access. Any identified need for 'transit' (temporary) sites for gypsies and travellers will be met in appropriate locations related to the current working patterns of the travelling community.

### **Explanation**

At present there is a shortage of sites to accommodate the established needs of gypsies and travellers in the Borough and the wider region. To date, however, there is no identified demand for sites for travelling showpeople in the Borough. A single issue review of the East of England Plan is being undertaken to address these issues and its proposals for pitch provision in the Borough will be used to inform the Site Allocations DPD. The Borough Council will seek to provide appropriate sites to meet the needs of the gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the Borough. These sites need to provide gypsy and traveller communities with good access to community facilities, employment and shopping. Additional sites will be identified as necessary in the Site Allocations DPD.

## **5.4 Urban Renaissance Policies**

### **UR1 – Regeneration Areas**

To enhance Colchester as a prestigious regional centre, the Borough Council is committed to regeneration in rundown areas, deprived communities and key centres, with the purpose of building successful and sustainable communities. Regeneration will also enhance Colchester's attractiveness as a visitor destination. The Council and its public and private partners will focus on five main areas of regeneration activity in Colchester Borough during the life of the plan:

- North Station
- St Botolphs
- East Colchester
- North Colchester
- The Garrison

The Council will also pursue a broader urban renaissance agenda to revitalise communities throughout the Borough, with a particular emphasis on Centres and Gateways. This urban renaissance will be advanced through redevelopments that promote sustainable urban living, enhance the public realm, improve accessibility, and address social deprivation.

New developments in Regeneration Areas will be encouraged within walking distance of Centres and Transit Corridors. The design and scale of development will need to be sympathetic to the character of the area and enhance historic buildings and features. Developments also need to address local constraints, including flooding and contaminated land. Regeneration developments should contribute toward improvements of the local public realm, infrastructure and community facilities, although the Council will consider the viability of developments in determining these contributions.

**Table UR1: Regeneration Areas**

<b>Regeneration Area</b>	<b>Key Projects</b>
St. Botolphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstsite Building (community arts facility)</li> <li>• Cultural Quarter</li> <li>• Magistrates court</li> <li>• New bus station</li> <li>• Vineyard Gate (35,000sqm of net retail floor space)</li> <li>• New pedestrian/cycle bridge</li> </ul>
North Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regenerate the North Station Gateway</li> <li>• New bus interchange</li> <li>• Deliver 40,000sqm of new office development</li> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)</li> </ul>
East Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regenerate the former commercial port into a mixed use community (over 2,600 homes)</li> <li>• University Research Park (36,000sqm of office floorspace)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Essex expansion</li> <li>• East Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Improvements to Hythe Station</li> <li>• New pedestrian/cycle bridge</li> </ul>
North Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community stadium</li> <li>• Development of strategic employment zone.</li> <li>• Regenerate the former Severalls Hospital</li> <li>• New schools and expansion of existing school provision.</li> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Park and Ride</li> <li>• New A12 junction</li> </ul>
Garrison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Garrison to secure the future of the Army and 5,000 jobs in Colchester</li> <li>• Regeneration of former garrison into urban village (3000 homes)</li> <li>• Improved access to the Town Centre</li> </ul>

### Explanation

The Council has identified five regeneration areas in Colchester on the basis of their redevelopment potential, economic and social need, proximity to the Town Centre and sustainable transport links. North Station is identified as a new regeneration area, in addition to the other four areas that are already being developed. Regeneration of these areas is a key element of the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre; attractive to new investment, visitors, and its own residents. The regeneration of these areas is important to revitalise rundown areas and create quality new communities at sustainable locations. However, these areas also involve challenges that need to be addressed, including flooding, contaminated land, traffic congestion and open space. Each of the five areas presents unique challenges and opportunities (see Table UR1), which will be addressed through area specific master plans and development briefs.

The four established regeneration areas have progressed successfully to date, however a lot of work still needs to be done during the plan period. The major regeneration projects already envisaged for these regeneration areas, including Firstsite and the Community Stadium, have been significantly advanced and should be completed by the end of the plan period. The Core Strategy also seeks to improve interconnectivity between the regeneration areas and the Town Centre. The North and East Transit Corridors will support the North Colchester and East Colchester Regeneration Areas respectively. Improvements to public transport interchanges/gateways and road improvements in the Stanway area also support the regeneration areas.

The North Station / Cowdray Avenue area is a major gateway to Colchester and is highly accessible by a range of transport modes. The train station offers links to the borough, region and London, whilst the North Transit Corridor will provide easy access to the Town Centre, North Colchester and Park and Ride. Private car access will also be accommodated, via the new A12 junction and the Northern Approaches. This area also contains a range of sites with significant redevelopment potential (e.g. North Station and Cowdray Centre). The Council will manage the regeneration of the North Station Area to deliver:

- An attractive gateway to business, tourists, commuters and residents

- New office and mixed use development at central locations
- Key transport connections between Town Centre and North Colchester.

## **UR 2 – Built Design and Character**

The Borough Council will promote and secure high quality and inclusive design in all developments to make better places for both residents and visitors. The design of development should be informed by context appraisals and should create places that are locally distinctive, people-friendly, provide natural surveillance to design out crime, and which enhance the built character and public realm of the area. High-quality design should also create well-integrated places that are usable, accessible, durable and adaptable. Creative design will be encouraged to inject fresh visual interest into the public realm and to showcase innovative sustainable construction methods. Developments that are discordant with their context and fail to enhance the character, quality and function of an area will not be supported.

The Council is committed to enhancing Colchester's unique historic character which is highly valued by residents and an important tourist attraction. Buildings, Conservation Areas, archaeological sites, parklands, views, the river and other features that contribute positively to the character of the built environment shall be protected from demolition or inappropriate development. Archaeological assessments will be required on development sites that possess known archaeological deposits, or where it is considered that there is good reason for such remains to exist. Important archaeological sites and their settings will be preserved in situ.

### **Explanation**

Good quality design ensures attractive and functional places, which can have substantial benefits for the development itself, the residents, the environment and the surrounding community.

Poorly designed developments create unattractive buildings and places. They can reduce the perception of safety, discourage recycling, increase energy consumption and promote unsustainable travel. Developments with low quality design will not be accepted in Colchester.

Quality design will create attractive places for the people of Colchester to live, work and play. Development briefs for sites where significant development is proposed should be informed by national guidance in PPGs 15 and 16 as well as by the Townscape Character Assessment and Historic Environment Characterisation Study work. A well designed development should provide features such as (not exclusive):

- Active and attractive street frontages
- Building design that optimises sunlight
- Passive surveillance of public spaces
- Architecture that is both innovative and sympathetic to local character

- Adaptable commercial spaces
- Green spaces for active recreation
- Convenient storage for waste and recycling

Colchester's historic buildings and features are one of its most valuable assets. The protection and enhancement of these assets is an essential element in the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre. The quality of Colchester's townscape relates to the pattern of streets, spaces and buildings and how these relate to land form. New development can help enhance these important assets, by redeveloping unattractive buildings, introducing appropriate contemporary design elements, and funding improvements to the local public realm.

## **5.5 Public Realm Policies**

### **PR1 – Open Space**

The Borough Council aims to provide a network of open spaces, sports facilities and recreational opportunities that meet local community needs and facilitate active lifestyles by providing leisure spaces within walking distance of people's home, school and work. The Council will also aim to provide a network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces within Colchester Town. The Council will protect and enhance the existing network of green links, open spaces, and sports facilities and secure additional areas where deficiencies are identified.

The provision of public open space in developments should be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need, with a particular regard to the impact of site development on biodiversity. New development must provide for the recreational needs of new communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. This open space provision also needs to alleviate recreational pressure on sites of high nature conservation value (e.g. Natura 2000) from the growing population.

The Borough Council will expect all new homes to provide easy access to private/communal open space. The area of open space should be informed by the needs of residents and the accessibility of the location. Private/communal open space must be designed to optimise its use and meet the recreational needs of residents.

**Table PR1 – Open Space and Recreation Facilities**

<b>Growth Areas</b>	<b>New Facilities</b>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic core / High St improvements</li> <li>• Berryfield Park</li> <li>• Vineyard Gate Square</li> <li>• St Botolphs Square</li> </ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Stadium</li> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport, recreation and youth facilities</li> <li>• Allotments</li> </ul>
East Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport and recreation facilities (Essex University)</li> </ul>
South Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport and recreation facilities</li> </ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Youth recreation facilities</li> <li>• Allotments</li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination Facilities to support 2012 Olympics</li> <li>• Green links</li> <li>• Sports pitches (Tiptree)</li> <li>• Youth facilities (Wivenhoe)</li> <li>• Allotments (West Mersea &amp; Tiptree)</li> <li>• Cemetery expansion (Berechurch)</li> <li>• New public open spaces (St John's Wood)</li> </ul>

## **Explanation**

Existing open spaces, sports facilities and green link networks provide the people of Colchester with opportunities for passive and active recreation and encourage healthy and active lifestyles. It is important that all residents have access to open space within walking distance of their home.

Strategic green links provide valuable corridors for the movement of people. The green spaces along the Colne River, for example, connect the town centre, suburbs, countryside, villages and the coast. These corridors provide alternative means for people making journeys into and across Colchester. The Council will therefore seek to protect and enhance these important links. The boundaries of strategic green links will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD.

The Council has undertaken an Open Space Study in accordance with PPG17 to identify areas with deficiencies of open space and recreational facilities. Development will be required to make contributions towards meeting these deficiencies in accordance with Council's adopted SPD for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. This guidance document sets specific targets to guide the provision of different types of open space / recreation facilities across the borough. The Appropriate Assessment also identified the need for this open space provision to alleviate the growing recreational pressures on Natura 2000 sites. Impacts on these sites will also need to be monitored and further site management measures will be employed by the Council as necessary.

All housing developments, including higher density development, should provide new residents with access to private and/or communal open space, in addition to public open space requirements. At least 25sqm per dwelling of private/communal open space will be sought for flats and maisonettes, whilst houses should provide larger private garden. Higher density schemes will be encouraged to utilise innovative design solutions to provide open space on difficult sites.

## **PR2 - People-friendly Streets**

The Borough Council will promote and secure attractive, safe and people-friendly streets which will encourage more walking, cycling, recreation and local shopping.

Streets are important public spaces that should be designed to suit people of all ages and degrees of mobility. The street environment can be improved with a combination of the following (not exclusive):

- Quality pavements and well-coordinated street furniture
- Improvements to footpaths and cycle routes
- Street trees and well-maintained landscaping
- Clear and minimal signage

- Traffic management schemes
- Shared spaces and home zones
- Cycle paths
- Crime deterrence and safety measures, including lighting and CCTV
- Public art

Centres will be the focus for streetscape improvements to provide attractive environments for people to live, work, shop and relax. In some cases traffic will need to be calmed to provide a safe and attractive street environment. The Town Centre and Urban Gateways will be priority areas for streetscape improvements and traffic management to support the development of a prestigious regional centre.

New developments will be required to contribute towards public realm improvements. They should also provide active street frontages to create attractive and safe street environments. New roads, both public and private, should be designed to meet Manual for Streets specifications and local design guidance.

### **Explanation**

Streets are much more than traffic arteries and have a wide range of functions as key features of the public realm. Street environments need to be managed as 'shared spaces', so that excessive traffic does not suppress other important street activities such as shopping, walking, playing, relaxing and gathering.

Best practice, as reflected in the Government's Manual for Streets, is increasingly moving away from strictly demarcated spaces for pedestrians and vehicles to design solutions that involve sharing public spaces. The removal of barriers and fences, combined with traffic calming measures has the effect of improving the attractiveness of the overall urban environment as well as managing speed and safety.

Guidance from CABI recommends that development plans include specific strategies to improve and maintain streetscapes. The Urban Place Supplement and Towards Better Street Design provide detailed guidance on the integration of streets, green spaces and the built environment to create attractive, inviting and well-maintained environments. This includes the use of context appraisal to establish levels of provision, the character of the area, an analysis of movement patterns and the potential to create new routes and improve existing conditions. Consistent standards of design for both public and private streets are required to avoid problems with parking and access for emergency, refuse and other large vehicles.

## **5.6 Transport and Accessibility Policies**

### **TA1 - Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour**

The Council will work with partners to improve accessibility and change travel behaviour as part of a comprehensive transport strategy for Colchester.

The Council will improve accessibility by enhancing sustainable transport links and encouraging development that reduces the need to travel. Sustainable transport will be improved to provide better connections between the community and their needs. In congested areas, the Council will seek to prioritise the movement of sustainable transport. Innovative solutions will also be implemented to overcome severance that is currently inflicted by busy roads.

Future development in the Borough will be focused on highly accessible locations, such as centres, to reduce the need to travel. Developments that are car-dependent or promote unsustainable travel behaviour will not be supported.

Travel behaviour change towards sustainable modes will be encouraged through travel plans, improvements to gateways, and by managing travel demand. Major developments, employers and institutions should develop travel plans to promote sustainable travel behaviour. The quality of gateways will be enhanced, whilst traffic and car parking will be carefully managed, to encourage sustainable travel within Colchester.

#### **Explanation**

The Council will in partnership with ECC prepare a comprehensive transport strategy for Colchester to supplement the Core Strategy. This transport strategy will accord with the Regional Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan and seek to implement the core transport policies for transport (TA1 – TA5) in order to improve accessibility and sustainable travel behaviour.

Good accessibility means that the community can access their needs (e.g. shopping, schools, employment) easily and without always needing a car. Accessibility can be improved by locating development at accessible locations and improving public transport, walking and cycling facilities and services. Providing good accessibility can change travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes, however travel planning, education and demand management are essential elements of the overall transport strategy. It is a priority for the Local Strategic Partnership to change travel behaviour through Travel Planning.

Improving accessibility and reducing car dependence helps to improve equality, reduce congestion, and respond to the challenges of climate change

and environmental sustainability. It also helps to promote an active and healthy population in accordance with the aims of Policy PR1.

## **TA2 – Walking and Cycling**

The Council will work with partners to promote walking and cycling as an integral and highly sustainable means of transport. Regional and rural links, including national cycle routes, will be improved and better connected with local destinations. The design and construction of facilities and infrastructure will be improved to make walking and cycling more attractive, direct and safe. Quality and convenient pedestrian crossings will be promoted to facilitate safe and direct movement across busy roads.

Walking and cycling improvements will be focused on centres, schools, workplaces, and public transport interchanges. In particular, the Council will seek to provide excellent walking and cycling connections into and through the Town Centre. Development shall contribute towards these connections and quality cycle parking where appropriate.

### **Explanation**

Walking and cycling are essential and highly sustainable means of transport which also support a healthy lifestyle. Census data shows that 65% of people who live within Colchester town work within the town. The majority of Colchester residents live within 5 kilometres of the Town Centre and therefore walking and cycling has great potential in a town of this size. At present, only 14% of people walk or cycle to work in Colchester. Unfortunately, walking or cycling to the Town Centre is not attractive, because major roads (e.g. Southway) and roundabouts act as barriers to pedestrians and cyclists.

Walking is part of almost every trip, and people are less likely to walk to a local shop or bus stop if the pedestrian environment is poor or appears threatening. Unfortunately some roads and junctions have been designed to place walking and cycling as subordinate to the free flow of traffic. The subways to the town centre, for example, are often indirect, unattractive, and perceived to be unsafe.

Improvements to walking and cycling will be targeted on the Town Centre, (see table TA3), the river corridor and regeneration areas. All new developments will need to provide quality walking and cycling facilities and will need to contribute towards improvements in the surrounding community as appropriate.

Walking and cycling are particularly important in Centres, where there are many people shopping, working, living and playing in close proximity. Centres can accommodate very large numbers of walkers and cyclists, without the congestion, noise and pollution problems that can be created by a relatively small number of motor vehicles.

The Core Strategy therefore seeks to make significant improvements to walking and cycling in the Town Centre, including a bridge across Southway and improvements to the High Street. The Council seeks to enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street. The river corridor also provides a good opportunity for improved walking and cycling between the Town Centre, the suburbs and the countryside.

### TA3 – Public Transport

The Council will work with partners to further improve public transport and increase modal shift towards sustainable modes. Colchester’s role as a Regional Transport Node will be promoted by optimising connections with the regional network and improving the frequency, speed, reliability and promotion of public transport services. Demand responsive services will also be promoted to help rural communities access their needs.

Gateways to Colchester will be enhanced to provide attractive entry points, a sense of place, and excellent onward connections. The Urban Gateways at Colchester North Rail Station, Hythe Rail Station and Colchester Town Rail and Bus Stations at St Botolphs will be improved to facilitate regeneration in the surrounding areas. Improvements to rail stations and bus interchanges will be sought to assist interchange between modes and promote sustainable travel behaviour.

Within Colchester Town, a comprehensive public transport network, including Quality Bus Partnerships will connect communities with growth areas, centres, employment and community facilities. The Council will work with partners to deliver the North and East Transit Corridors to facilitate rapid public transport services and avoid congestion. Park and Ride facilities will also provide visitors with sustainable access to the Town Centre and other major destinations.

**Table TA3 – Key Sustainable Transport Projects - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport Projects**

<b>Growth Areas</b>	<b>New Transport Infrastructure</b>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Town Centre Improvements</li> <li>• New Bus station</li> <li>• Southway Pedestrian cycle bridge</li> <li>• Colchester North Rail Station improvements</li> <li>• Colchester Town Rail Station Improvements</li> </ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• North Park and Ride</li> </ul>
East Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hythe Rail Station improvements</li> <li>• East Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Colne River Pedestrian Cycle Bridge</li> </ul>
South Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved walk / cycle links to Town Centre</li> </ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved bus links</li> </ul>

General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colchester to Clacton resignalling</li> <li>• Quality Bus Partnerships and Public Transport Improvements</li> <li>• Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements</li> </ul>
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NB Transport schemes are listed in the area they are located, but will provide benefit to other areas

**Explanation**

At present, 13% of residents travel to work by public transport. Providing a quality public transport network that offers a genuinely attractive alternative to the car is vital for the sustainability of Colchester. Accordingly, the Council is seeking to deliver a range of key improvements to public transport infrastructure and services in the borough. Transit corridors that prioritise public transport over general traffic will attract people towards more sustainable travel, and keep Colchester moving. Park and Ride facilities that offer easy access to Town via Transit corridors will also help reduce congestion.

The Council is also seeking to deliver improvements to transport interchanges and gateways as part of making Colchester a prestigious regional centre. At present there are over 4 million passenger movements at Colchester’s railway stations each year. The new bus station and improvements to Hythe Station, North Station and Town Station will encourage sustainable travel behaviour and stimulate regeneration of the surrounding areas. Improvements to the Historic Town Centre (including the High Street) will improve bus journey time reliability and circulation in the town centre. Enhancing transport interchanges will also present more attractive gateways to business, tourists, commuters and local residents.

**TA4 – Roads and Traffic**

<p>The Borough Council will work with partners to accommodate necessary car travel making the best use of the existing network and manage demand for road traffic. Facilities for road/rail freight interchanges and servicing will be accommodated.</p> <p>The Council will support improvements to the strategic road network (see Table TA4) to facilitate regional travel needs, particularly freight movements in the Haven Gateway, whilst minimising the impacts of traffic on the rural area network. In urban areas, the Council seeks to manage demand for car travel and make the best use of the existing network. Improvements will be made to the urban road network to support sustainable development and to reduce the negative impacts of congestion.</p> <p>The demand for car travel will be managed to prevent adverse impacts on sustainable transportation, air quality, local amenity and built character. Streets and junctions should be designed to provide people-friendly street environments and to give priority to sustainable transport. Within the Town</p>
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Centre, through-traffic will be reduced to encourage trips to be undertaken via more sustainable modes, and servicing will be facilitated in a manner that is sensitive to the streetscape.

Development will need to contribute towards transport infrastructure improvements to support the development itself, and to enhance the broader network to mitigate impacts on existing communities.

**Table TA4: Road Network Improvements**

Growth Areas	New Transport Infrastructure
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Town Centre improvements</li> <li>• A133 Central Corridor (Stage 1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• North-South Capacity Improvements (A133/A134)</li> </ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New A12 junction 28</li> <li>• Northern Approaches phase 3</li> </ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stanway road improvements</li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A120 Braintree to A12</li> <li>• A12 Junction and Capacity improvements</li> <li>• A12 Route Management Strategy projects</li> </ul>

NB Transport schemes are listed in the area they are located, but will provide benefit to other areas

### Explanation

The private motor car will continue to be a major mode of transportation throughout the plan period. At present 63% of trips to work are made by car and overall traffic is forecast to grow significantly over the next 15 years. This growth needs to be managed to promote a high quality of life, economic growth, a sustainable environment and the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre. Accordingly, necessary car trips will be facilitated to dispersed destinations and along strategic roads, however car travel demand needs to be more carefully managed in urban areas through the use of alternatives and new technologies.

At present deficiencies in the road network inhibit necessary car travel and public transport. In particular access to strategic roads from Colchester Town is limited, resulting in unnecessary trips and exacerbating congestion. The A12 junction, for example, will reduce traffic and freight impacts in urban areas and will also facilitate Park and Ride, keeping the 'right vehicles on the right roads'.

Development provides opportunities to make significant improvements to the road network. Developments must therefore provide for the travel needs of new residents and businesses, as well as facilitating improvements to the broader network.

New developments and roads need to be designed carefully to balance the needs of motorists with, pedestrians, cyclists, bus users, local residents, businesses and the environment. Within urban areas, particularly busy centres, the growing levels of car use and congestion are having a negative impact on all. Historically, some roads and junctions in Colchester have been

designed for cars, yet discourage sustainable travel. Combining demand management of car traffic with improvements to sustainable alternatives and improved street design can greatly benefit the local community, businesses and the environment.

Road freight and servicing will be facilitated where appropriate to promote economic and employment growth. Support will be given for improvements to strategic (road and rail) routes to accommodate growth of freight from the Haven Gateway Container Ports at Felixstowe and Bathside Bay.

## **TA5 – Parking**

The Council will work with partners to ensure that car parking is managed to support the economy and sustainable communities. Facilities for freight and servicing will be accommodated.

Within the Town Centre, long stay car parking will be reduced to discourage car trips that could easily be made by more sustainable modes. Short stay parking will be provided where necessary to facilitate the economic and social wellbeing of the Town Centre. Park and Ride will be provided to offer a more sustainable alternative to town centre car parking. Disabled, cycle and motorcycle parking will continue to be provided where appropriate.

Development should manage parking to accord with the accessibility of the location and to ensure people-friendly street environments. Within Centres and other accessible locations, car parking should be minimised and located underground, under deck and behind buildings. Redevelopment of existing surface car parking will also be encouraged to make efficient use of land and improve the townscape.

Business parking for staff, visitors and operational uses will be managed as part of company Travel Plans. Car free and low car development will be encouraged in the Town Centre. Residents parking schemes will be supported in areas where there is a high demand for on-street parking. In areas where there is limited parking supply and good access to alternative transport, the introduction of a 'Car club' will be encouraged.

### **Explanation**

At present there are 3400 short stay and 700 long stay public car parking spaces in the Town Centre, plus a greater number of private non-residential parking spaces. Managing and limiting car traffic and parking in centres can have significant benefits for sustainable transport, the local community and the environment. Managing the supply of car parking is an important tool for managing traffic congestion. Reducing long stay car parking in the Town Centre would reduce traffic congestion in Colchester and encourage commuters to utilise sustainable alternatives, including Park & Ride. Currently there is one Lorry Park in Colchester Town Centre. Provision of freight

servicing facilities in the right place can help keep the “right vehicles on the right roads”.

There are some large areas of surface car parking in Colchester that are unattractive, exacerbate traffic, and make inefficient use of land. Redeveloping surface car parking to provide more shopping, employment, housing, and community facilities at these accessible locations can regenerate important parts of Colchester. The necessary parking can still be accommodated under ground, under deck and behind building frontages.

The Council has influence over the provision of public car parking through the management and pricing structure of its car parks and through working with the operator of alternative car parks. However there are also a large number of private non-residential parking spaces in the town centre. The provision of these spaces encourages traffic to enter the Town Centre, where perhaps the journey could be made by alternative modes. Users of these car parks could benefit from company travel plans where all aspects of staff and visitor travel is explored.

Car parking should be minimised in accessible locations where high quality alternatives are available. Car free and low car development will be supported in the Town Centre, in coordination with public transport improvements. Car clubs provide another alternative that can help reduce car parking. Members of the Car club will have access to a car for their journeys where alternatives are not an option. Cars supplied to members of the scheme would have priority parking spaces to help make the scheme attractive.

## **5.7 Environment and Rural Communities Policies**

### **ENV1 – Environment**

The Borough Council will conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Council will safeguard the Borough's biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance. In particular, developments that have an adverse impact on Natura 2000 sites or the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will not be supported.

Within the Coastal Protection Belt development will not be permitted that would adversely affect the open and rural character of the undeveloped coastline, and its historic features, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife habitats.

The network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces and areas of accessible open space that contribute to the green infrastructure across the Borough will be protected and enhanced.

Development will be supported at appropriate locations to improve public access, visual amenity and rehabilitate the natural environment. Development will need to minimise and mitigate adverse impacts on river, coastal and ground water quality.

The Council will seek to direct development away from land at risk of fluvial or coastal flooding in accordance with PPS25, including areas where the risk of flooding is likely to increase as a result of climate change.

Unallocated greenfield land outside of settlement boundaries (to be defined/reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD) will be protected and where possible enhanced, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. Within such areas development will be strictly controlled to conserve the environmental assets and open character of the Borough. Where new development needs, or is compatible with, a rural location, it should demonstrably:

- i. be in accord with national, regional and local policies for development within rural areas, including those for European and nationally designated areas; and
- ii. be appropriate in terms of its scale, siting, and design; and
- iii. protect, conserve or enhance landscape and townscape character, including maintaining settlement separation; and
- iv. protect, conserve or enhance the interests of natural and historic assets; and
- v. apply a sequential approach to land at risk of fluvial or coastal flooding in line with the guidance of PPS25; and

- vi. protect habitats and species and conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Borough; and
- vii. provide for any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures.

### **Explanation**

Colchester's countryside and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural environment, biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The countryside provides the attractive landscape setting that defines and characterises the villages and rural communities of Colchester Borough. The countryside and coastal areas also provide important agricultural, tourism and recreational opportunities that support local economies and communities. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the northern part of the Borough and has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

This policy reflects Government Guidance (for example PPS7: *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*, PPG15: *Planning and the Historic Environment*, PPG16: *Archaeology and Planning* and PPS25: *Development and Flood Risk*).

The Council has statutory obligations under the Habitats Directive to protect important habitats and species designated as Natura 2000 sites. This policy aims to protect the undeveloped areas of the Colne Estuary and coast and support regeneration that enhances the river's recreation and nature conservation values.

The Coastal Protection Belt is a county-wide designation that protects the sensitive character of the undeveloped coastline which could be harmed by development that might otherwise be acceptable in a countryside area.

The green infrastructure network of open spaces and links is important in providing alternative areas of accessible natural green space to alleviate pressure on Natura 2000 sites as well as contributing to the landscape character of Colchester Borough. The LDF will make a major contribution towards achieving the objectives of the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

A major threat to these low lying coastal and estuary areas is rising sea levels as a result of climate change. This will be addressed through increasing the network of green corridors and sites to aid the dispersal of species that will need to move as climate change renders their existing habitat unsuitable. Climate change will also be addressed by accommodating future flood waters without harm to the built environment.

The risk from flooding to property and people will be minimised by applying the sequential test in accordance with PPS25. New developments will be directed away from areas at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding, as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Where development occurs

in areas with a known flood risk, practical and safe mitigation measures will need to be adopted to alleviate risk to people and property.

The policy aims to control development outside settlement boundaries to protect open stretches of countryside around and between existing settlements to prevent coalescence and retain settlement identity. The Landscape Character Assessment will inform the detailed application of the relevant policy criteria.

The historic environment will be protected across the Borough with reference to studies including the Townscape Character Assessment, the Urban Archaeological Database and the emerging Historic Environment Characterisation Study.

Detailed policies concerning the control of development, encouragement towards enhancement and design matters will be contained in the Development Policies DPD. The boundaries of specific areas, such as the Coastal Protection Belt will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD and shown on the Proposals Map.

## **ENV2 – Rural Communities**

The Borough Council will enhance the vitality of rural communities by supporting appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land (PDL) within the settlement development boundaries of villages. The design and construction of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality. Development should also contribute to the local community through the provision of relevant community needs such as affordable housing, open space, local employment, and community facilities.

Outside village boundaries, the Council will favourably consider small-scale rural business, leisure and tourism schemes that are appropriate to local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment. Development outside but contiguous to village settlement boundaries may be supported where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs.

Towns and villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing Parish Plans and Village Design Statements for adoption as guidance.

### **Explanation**

Rural communities in Colchester comprise the villages identified in the Settlement Hierarchy (SD1 Appendix B).

National evidence indicates that villages in the catchment area of larger towns struggle to retain facilities, even when more housing is built. The East of England Plan noted that “the growth of villages has been unable to halt the closure of village services and commuting has increased dramatically”. Colchester Town is the main provider of shopping, services, employment, and community facilities for the Borough as a whole. Elsewhere in the Borough, only Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea provide a sufficient level of shops, services and employment to maintain a reasonable level of self containment. In general, rural communities do not provide sufficient shops, services and facilities to support significant growth.

Within rural communities, small scale development will be supported on PDL and infill sites within the village boundaries. The Site Allocations DPD will provide an opportunity to review the extent of village envelopes previously set through the Local Plan process. This development will need to optimise the sustainability of villages by contributing towards community facilities, open space and local employment. Affordable housing will also be supported on rural exception sites where supported by community need. The Council is also seeking to sustain and enhance local employment and rural enterprises.

## **5.8 Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling**

### **ER1 Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling**

The Council's commitment to carbon reduction includes the promotion of efficient use of energy and resources, alongside waste minimisation and recycling.

The Council will encourage the delivery of renewable energy projects, including micro-generation, in the Borough to reduce Colchester's carbon footprint. New developments will be encouraged to provide over 15% of energy demand through local renewable and low carbon technology (LCT) sources.

Sustainable construction techniques will also need to be employed in tandem with high quality design and materials to reduce energy demand, waste and the use of natural resources, including the sustainable management of the Borough's water resources. Residential dwellings will be encouraged to achieve a minimum 3 star rating in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes. Non-residential developments will be encouraged to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'.

The Council will support housing developments that reduce carbon emissions by 25% from 2010, 44% from 2013 and zero carbon homes from 2016 in accordance with national building regulations.

The Council is seeking to minimise waste and improve reuse and recycling rates through better recycling services and public awareness programs. To assist this aim, new developments will be expected to provide facilities and employ best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimising waste.

#### **Explanation**

Sustainable Development is at the heart of the Local Development Framework, and the Council is seeking to create communities that use natural resources sustainably, and minimise waste. Developments that are sustainably designed and constructed can (not exclusive):

- provide local renewable energy sources
- use less energy
- minimise heat loss
- use less water
- optimise natural light
- facilitate better recycling
- provide sustainable urban drainage systems
- use recycled construction materials

New developments need to help address the challenges of climate change and sustainability, and therefore contribute positively towards the future of Colchester. National policy seeks to achieve zero carbon homes by 2016 with a progressive tightening of the energy efficiency building regulations in 2010 (25%), 2013 (44%) and 2016 (zero carbon). The delivery of zero carbon homes from 2016 will reduce Colchester's greenhouse gas emissions and help stimulate a sustainable economy. The initial targets of a 3 star Code rating and a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating are cost effective and achievable. As the development costs of sustainable homes and buildings are reduced by economies of scale, improved knowledge and technology, the cost of delivering higher standards will also become achievable.

The Water Cycle Study assesses the impact of planned Haven Gateway growth on the area's water resources to ensure its sustainable management. In recognition of the increasing demand for water the Council will encourage developments that incorporate water saving measures, in line with the Code for Sustainable Homes, to help conserve the Borough's water resource.

As part of the Council's Community Strategy commitment to reduce its carbon footprint, the Council will promote the delivery of renewable energy and low carbon technology in the Borough, including micro-generation. Developments will be encouraged to incorporate on-site or local renewable/LCT energy to supply part of their energy demand. Stand alone renewable energy projects that are sympathetic to landscape character and local amenity will also be supported.

The Sustainable Construction SPD provides developers and the broader community with guidance on renewable energy technology and sustainable construction issues to support the implementation of this policy.

The Council also seeks to achieve its aspirational target of 60% recycling of household waste by 2021. At present approximately 31% of household waste is being recycled. The Council will be improving services and information to increase our recycling over the plan period. Development will support this by providing better recycling facilities.

## **6. Implementation and Monitoring**

The Spatial Strategy and the Spatial Policies will be implemented through the further development of the Local Development Framework, by Council working with its partners, and through the planned investment of private and public resources.

### **Local Development Framework**

The Core Strategy sets out the broad direction for the Local Development Framework. The Borough Council will subsequently prepare a range of other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents to take the Strategy forward.

The Core Strategy will be implemented through the following elements of the Local Development Framework:

- Development Policies DPD
- Site Allocations DPD and Adopted Proposal Maps
- Area Action Plans
- Supplementary Planning Documents

### **Working in Partnership**

The Borough Council needs the help of public and private partners to deliver all the housing, facilities and infrastructure required to create sustainable communities. The Local Development Framework will provide a logical and considered plan for development, investment, services and infrastructure for the Borough of Colchester up to 2021. The Borough Council will work with a number of partners, including the following, to implement the Core Strategy and LDF (not exclusive):

**Table 6a – Partners**

<b>Partners</b>		
<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Strategic Partnership</li> <li>• Parish Councils</li> <li>• University of Essex</li> <li>• Colchester Primary Care Trust</li> <li>• Colchester Police</li> <li>• Colchester's Residents Associations</li> <li>• The Garrison</li> <li>• Colchester Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Private developers</li> <li>• Local bus operators</li> <li>• Mercury Theatre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haven Gateway Partnership</li> <li>• Regional Cities East Partnership</li> <li>• Essex County Council</li> <li>• Government Office for the East of England</li> <li>• East of England Regional Assembly</li> <li>• Regional Development Agency</li> <li>• Essex Strategic Health Authority</li> <li>• Essex Rivers Health Care Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment Agency</li> <li>• English Heritage</li> <li>• Natural England</li> <li>• Highways Agency</li> <li>• Strategic Rail Authority</li> <li>• Network Rail</li> </ul>

## Housing Delivery

Core Policy H1: Housing Delivery sets out the minimum housing provision in order to comply with the East of England Plan (EEP). The EEP states that the Borough should aim to exceed the minimum requirement (830 per year) if housing can be delivered without breaching environmental limits and infrastructure constraints. The Council will therefore plan, monitor and manage housing delivery to ensure it exceeds the minimum provision. Since 2001, Colchester has successfully delivered housing well above the rate required by the EEP, as shown in the table below.

**Table 6b – Housing Completions 2001 - 2008**

Year	House Completions
2001 – 2002	568
2002 – 2003	984
2003 – 2004	916
2004 – 2005	1281
2005 – 2006	901
2006 – 2007	1250
2007 – 2008	1243

PPS3: Housing requires the Local Planning Authority to set out a housing implementation strategy to manage the delivery of housing. The Core Strategy provides the broad context for managing housing delivery in accordance with PPS3. A range of scenarios and options have been considered as part of the Sustainability Appraisal and sufficient land has been identified to comfortably deliver the minimum housing provision.

The Housing Land Availability Assessment identified capacity within established urban areas and previously developed land to accommodate 17,940 to 19,460 homes during the 2001 to 2021 period. Recent planning permissions and development trends indicate this is quite a conservative estimate. In light of the revisions to the East of England Plan and PPS3, the Council considered it necessary to make a more conservative interpretation of the HLAA, which resulted in a capacity for 15,314 new homes in Colchester between 2001 and 2021 (see Housing Topic Paper).

The Core Strategy and LDF therefore seek to identify additional provision of around 3,500 homes to ensure that over 18,760 homes can be confidently delivered between 2001 and 2023. The Core Strategy identifies broad areas of greenfield land with ample capacity for 3000 additional homes, and also identifies broad areas of previously developed land to accommodate further development (e.g. North Station Regeneration Area). It is possible that the housing provision up to 2023 could be delivered without the broad areas of greenfield land, however this land provides both flexibility to housing delivery and an opportunity to deliver sustainable new neighbourhoods that will contribute towards strategic facilities, infrastructure and zero carbon homes. The focus of delivery will remain on the regeneration of brownfield sites. The timing of the release for development of broad areas of greenfield land will be managed through monitoring of housing delivery and it will be released for development before 2016 if required to support housing delivery. Where necessary, the Council will seek to manage the release of land within the

Growth Area Urban Extensions through planning obligations or conditions applied to any grant of planning permission.

PPS 3 requires local planning authorities to provide a 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites, a 6-10 year supply of specific developable sites, and broad locations for an 11-15 years supply of land. At present there are extant planning permissions for over 8000 homes, and existing allocations with capacity for over 1200 new homes. This indicates that there is a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable sites in Colchester already to accommodate a 10 year supply of housing (see Housing Topic Paper). Emerging figures from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, which has taken into account the Core Strategy housing provision and recent development trends, estimates that projected housing delivery between 2001 and 2023 is likely to be approximately 21,500. The Council is therefore confident that housing delivery in the Borough will exceed the minimum housing provision outlined in Policy H1, in accordance with the East of England Plan.

The Site Allocations DPD (to be adopted in 2010) will allocate the additional land required to deliver the housing provision in accordance with the Core Strategy, including greenfield land with capacity for approximately 3000 new homes. In addition to the Site Allocations DPD, the delivery of housing in regeneration areas and growth areas will be facilitated through Area Action Plans, SPDs, masterplans and development briefs, the appropriate method being determined by the Council. The Council monitors annual housing delivery, and in the unlikely event that housing delivery falls significantly short of the EEP's minimum requirements, the Council will act to release identified greenfield land within the Growth Areas and if necessary revise the LDF accordingly.

### **Employment Delivery**

Providing jobs for Colchester's growing community is a central objective of the Core Strategy. The East of England Plan set a target of approximately 14,200 jobs, although many jobs have already been created since 2001. The Haven Gateway Employment Study considered that 14,200 jobs could be provided in Colchester in the following employment sectors:

**Table 6c – Projected Employment Change 2006 - 2021**

<b>Employment Sector</b>	<b>Employment change needed to achieve EEP target</b>
Agriculture	- 500
Manufacturing	- 1500
Electricity gas and water	- 200
Construction	+ 500
Distribution	+ 500
Retail	+ 2400
Hotels and catering	+ 2300
Transport and communication	+ 500
Banking, finance and other business services	+ 3500

The Council cannot deliver this employment directly, but it can protect existing employment, stimulate new employment developments, and accommodate new developments at the most suitable locations.

The Council commissioned studies of projected growth in retail, business and employment, and used this evidence to plan and facilitate future economic development and employment delivery in Colchester. During the 2006 to 2021 period, Colchester will need to accommodate the following development:

- 67,000sqm (net) of retail floor space
- 106,000sqm (gross) of office floor space (Use Class B1)
- 45,000sqm (gross) of other business floor space (excluding B1)
- 270-490 hotel bed spaces by 2011

Promoting regeneration, higher densities and mixed use developments in existing Centres will build additional capacity to accommodate employment and economic growth at sustainable locations. This process will be facilitated through the preparation of Area Action Plans, SPDs and development briefs. The regeneration of St Botolphs is expected to deliver over 35,000sqm of net retail floor space, and an SPD is being prepared for the North Station Regeneration Area to facilitate the delivery of 40,000sqm of office and business floor space.

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of the main Town Centre land uses, including retail, offices, cultural and entertainment uses and amend the LDF as necessary to ensure that the majority of this development is delivered in the Town Centre and other accessible locations. If the Council determines that the necessary retail and office development cannot be delivered in the Town Centre during the plan period, than this development can be accommodated in District Centres or Strategic Employment Zones, in accordance with the sequential approach (see Policy CE2 & PPS6).

The Strategic Employment Zones offer an ample supply of deliverable land for employment developments, particularly warehousing and industry. The Borough Council has already supported outline proposals for over 110,000sqm of B1 floor space within the Strategic Employment Zones. In addition to these B1 commitments, over 35ha of land is currently available for industry (B2) and warehousing (B8) developments, as follows:

- Cuckoo Farm, North Colchester - 19.8ha
- Tollgate, Stanway – 11.37ha
- London Road, Stanway – 4.75ha

To improve the quality of these SEZ sites, improvements will be made to transport infrastructure to enhance access to the strategic road network and the Town Centre.

### **Delivering Infrastructure and Facilities**

Successful implementation of the Core Strategy and the LDF relies on effective co-ordination between public and private partners to enable the provision of infrastructure and facilities. New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure and facilities, and to mitigate the effect of development on the surrounding area. Financial contributions will be sought

from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure.

The Council will seek to employ standard charges where appropriate to ensure that new development makes a reasonable contribution to the provision of facilities and infrastructure. The Council will prepare further guidance regarding standard charges and development contributions to support the implementation of the LDF.

Key infrastructure and facilities have been identified in Table 6d as important elements of the spatial strategy for Colchester.

**Table 6d – Key Facilities and Infrastructure**

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Necessary" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
East Growth Area	East Transit Corridor	To be secured	ECC
	Medical Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
North Growth Area	4 new primary schools	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ CBC
	A12 junction improvements – Cuckoo Farm (Junction 28)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	Expand secondary school capacity	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ECC
	North Transit Corridor	To be secured through the release of the Severalls Hospital Development	Developer
	North/South Capacity Improvements (A133/A134)	To be secured	ECC
	Northern Approaches (phase 3) and new A12 Junction (junction 28)	Secured through Section 106 Agreement Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	Developer / Highways Agency
	North Park and Ride (permanent) <sup>1</sup>	Project identified in Regional Funding Allocation as a Priority 1b scheme	ECC
South Growth Area	Medical Centre	Secured	PCT

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Necessary" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
Stanway Growth Area	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
	Western Bypass - Northern and Southern sections	Secured through Section 106 agreement	Developer
	Stanway Road Improvements Warren Lane	To be secured	Developer
Town Centre Growth Area	A133 Central Corridor Improvements (Stage 1 short term measures) <sup>2</sup>	Essex County Council (ECC) Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds allocated, Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	ECC
Supports all growth areas	A12 junction improvements - Crown Interchange (Junction 29)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Eight Ash Green (Junction 26)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Marks Tey (junction 25)	To be secured	Developer / Highways Agency
	A133 Central Corridor (Stage 2 long term measures)	To be secured	ECC

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Local and wider benefit" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
East Growth Area	Colne River Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Developer
	Hythe Rail Station improvements	GAF allocated	Network Rail/ ECC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	University of Essex expansion	To be secured	University
	University Research Park (Access improvements)	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Developer
North Growth Area	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community Hall improvements and new Community Centre	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community stadium	Secured	CBC
	Electricity Sub Station	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Electricity Provider
	Sport, recreation and youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
South Growth Area	Gym Facilities Garrison	Secured	Developer/ CBC
Stanway Growth Area	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Expand secondary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Local and wider benefit" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
	Improved Bus Links	To be secured	ECC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Village Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Youth recreation facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Town Centre Growth Area	Cultural Quarter (Public Realm)	Development team selected, Growth Point Funding Secured	CBC/ Developer
	Firstsite New site (Community Arts Facility)	Secured	CBC
	Historic Town Centre Improvements	Growth Area Funding (GAF) allocated	ECC/CBC
	Magistrates' court	Dept for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) PFI funding decision imminent	DCA
	New Bus Station	To be secured through development	Developer
	Colchester North Rail Station Improvements <sup>3</sup>	To be secured	Network Rail/ECC/CBC
	Colchester Town Rail Station Improvements <sup>4</sup>	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Network Rail/ ECC
	Southway Pedestrian/cycle bridge <sup>5</sup>	To be secured through development	Developer
Tiptree	Expand primary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC
	Sports pitches and allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Local and wider benefit" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
	Tiptree Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
West Mersea	West Mersea Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
Wivenhoe	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Wivenhoe Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
	Youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Supports all growth areas	A120 Braintree to A12	Partial allocation in Regional Funding Allocation	HA
	Cemetery expansion - Berechurch	To be secured	CBC
	Colchester-Clacton branch line re-signalling	Secured	Network Rail
	Essex Police facilities	To be secured	Essex Police
	Facilities to support 2012 Olympics	To be secured	Developer/ CBC
	Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements	Funding secured	ECC/CBC
	New public open space - St John's	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Quality Bus Partnerships and Public Transport Improvements	Secured through LTP allocation	ECC

Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	Village Hall improvements - Rowhedge	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
<sup>1</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the Town Centre Growth Area <sup>2</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area <sup>3</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area <sup>4</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area <sup>5</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area			

### Monitoring

Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the new planning system. It is important to check that the plan is being implemented correctly, ensure that outcomes match objectives, and to change the plan if they are not. The new planning system provides for separation of components of the LDF to allow each part to be reviewed and amended individually which enables a more rapid and responsive system. The Borough Council will undertake annual monitoring of the implementation of the Core Strategy, and of other parts of the LDF as they are developed, and will amend documents as required.

Appendix C identifies indicators that will be used to monitor the implementation of the Core Policies by the responsible authorities. The indicators provide a means of measuring how well the Borough Council and its partners have performed in achieving the objectives of the Core Strategy. These indicators are also consistent with those employed in the Sustainability Appraisal and the Annual Monitoring Report.

## Appendix A – Glossary

**Affordable Housing (or sub-market housing)** - This breaks down into 2 subcategories: social housing where rent levels are set in line with the Governments rent influencing regime. And intermediate housing: a mix of low cost home ownership products (e.g. shared ownership) and other reduced cost rental products primarily in the form of key worker housing.

**Area Action Plan (AAP)** - These are Development Plan Documents that will be used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. They can be used in many ways to help deliver planned growth areas, stimulate regeneration, protect areas that are sensitive to change, resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures and/or focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiative. They will also focus on the implementation of policies and proposals and will provide an important way of ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change and conservation in the Borough.

**Brownfield Site (also known as Previously Developed Land)** - Previously developed land that is unused or may be available for development. It includes both vacant and derelict land and land currently in use with known potential for redevelopment. It excludes land that was previously developed where the remains have blended into the landscape over time.

**Community Facilities** - Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following:

- Schools, Universities and other educational facilities
- Libraries and community centres
- Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals
- Museums and art galleries
- Child care centres
- Sport and recreational facilities
- Youth clubs
- Playgrounds
- Places of worship
- Emergency services

Some community activities can also be provided via privately run facilities (eg pubs and village shops).

**Community Strategy** - All local planning authorities have a duty to prepare community strategies under the Local Government Act 2000 in conjunction with other public, private and community sector organisations. Community Strategies should promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The intention is that Local Development Frameworks will provide the spatial expression to those elements of the Community Strategy that relate to the use

and development of land. Copies of the Colchester Community Strategy can be viewed at [www.colchester2020.com](http://www.colchester2020.com)

**Core Strategy** - The Core Strategy will set out the long-term vision for Colchester and the strategic policies required to deliver that vision. Its main aim is to promote sustainable development. It will also seek to protect and enhance the environment, as well as defining the general locations for delivering strategic development including housing, employment, retail, leisure, community and transport.

**Countryside Stewardship Schemes** - A UK Government grant scheme offering payments to farmers and other land managers in England to carry out management that enhances and conserves landscapes, habitats and wildlife, and (where appropriate) to improve access to them. It aims to make conservation part of farming and land management practice.

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** - Development Plan Documents that the council are required to prepare include the core strategy, site specific allocations of land and area action plans. There will also be a proposals map, which will illustrate the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all development plan documents. All Development Plan Documents must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report.

**Development Policies** – A document that the council have produced to guide future development of the Borough. The Policies contained within this DPD will eventually replace the Local Plan Policies and be used to determine planning applications in the future. The Development Policies DPD is currently at Issues and Options Stage.

**East of England Plan (also known as Regional Spatial Strategy/RSS)** - A strategy formerly known as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), for how a region should look in 15-20 years time and possibly longer. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal.

**Green Links** – Areas of land which are a vital part of the public realm. Green links provide attractive, safe and accessible spaces which contribute to positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving public health, well-being and quality of life. Green links also provide the opportunity for sustainable travel between areas and are also rich in biodiversity. Strategic green links provide a buffer between urban areas and ensure these areas do not become one. Strategic green links are shown on the Core Strategy Key Diagrams.

**Greenfield Site** - Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

**Growth Area** – An area broadly identified for future housing and employment growth. A growth area may include both regeneration areas with potential for brownfield land redevelopment or the use of greenfield sites as indicated on the key diagram (KD2 Colchester Town).

**Industrial Sites** – Sites within the Borough that are considered appropriate for uses which fall within the B1, B2 and B8 Class.

**Life Time Homes** - Lifetime Homes make life as easy as possible, for as long as possible because they are thoughtfully designed. They are homes for everyone and bring benefits to anyone who lives in them because of the individual choices that they make possible. The flexibility and adaptability of Lifetime Homes accommodate life events quickly, cost-effectively and without upheaval. ([www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk)).

**Local Development Framework (LDF)** - This is the term given to the portfolio of Local Development Documents (see above), which will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - This is the project plan for a three year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Local Development Framework. It identifies each Local Development Document stating which are to be Development Plan Documents (see above) and which are to be Supplementary Planning Documents, and establishes a timetable for preparing each.

**Mixed Use Development** - A well integrated mix of land uses (retail, employment, leisure and other service uses) with decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.

**Natura 2000 network** - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, Ramsar).

**Neighbourhood Centre** - Centres are mixed use places where we shop, work, learn, relax and live. A Neighbourhood Centre is a collection of local shops, services and community facilities at the centre of both villages and urban neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Centres could range from a small parade of shops through to larger commercial areas providing a variety of services and facilities.

**Planning Gain** – the principle of a developer agreeing to provide additional benefits or safeguards, often for the benefit of the community, usually in the form of related development supplied at the developer's expense.

**Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)** – Guidance notes issued by Government setting out planning policy and main land uses. They provide guidance and advice on the application of national policy.

**Planning Policy Statements (PPS)** - Statements issued by Government setting out planning policy and the main land uses. They are supported by a range of good practice and other documents providing guidance and advice on the application of policy. Planning Policy Statements are the replacements for the Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL) (also known as Brown field land)** - Previously developed land that is unused or may be available for development. It includes both vacant and derelict land and land currently in use with known potential for redevelopment. It excludes land that was previously developed where the remains have blended into the landscape over time.

**Ramsar Site** – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

**Regeneration Areas** – An area in the Borough identified on the basis of potential for brownfield land redevelopment, economic and social need and proximity to the Town Centre. The Regeneration Areas are key element in the aim of Colchester becoming a prestigious regional centre. Five Regeneration Areas have been identified across the Borough – St Botolphs, North Station, East Colchester, North Colchester and Garrison.

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (also known as East of England Plan)** - A strategy formerly known as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG), for how a region should look in 15-20 years time and possibly longer. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal.

**Retail Frontages** – A term given to areas within the Town Centre where shopping is the primary function. The front of the shopping facing the street is used to calculate the retail frontages within the Development Policies DPD.

**Rural Diversification (also known as Farm Diversification)** – The alternative use of land or buildings which were once used for farming purposes or rural activity such as grain store, stables or poultry shed. The Local Plan definition is “alternative use of land or buildings that remains within the farming unit in the ownership of the farmer and run from the existing house.

**Site Specific Allocations** - Land allocated for specific uses will be identified in specific Development Plan Documents. Specific policies that relate to these designations will be set out in a Development Plan Document and will cover principles such as design or specific requirements for implementation. Policies relating to the delivery of the Site Specific Allocations, such as any critical access requirements, any broad design principles or any planning obligations, which may be sought, must be set out in a development plan document.

**Spatial Planning** – “Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.” (PPS 1 ODPM, 2004, pp3).

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** - A site of European Community importance designated by the member states, where necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at favourable conservation status, of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated.

**Special Protection Area (SPA)** - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the member states where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - This will set out the standards that the council intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the local planning authority intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a Development Plan Document (see above) but will be subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A document produced by the Council to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as Sustainable Construction or Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development.

**Sustainable Communities** are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

**Sustainable Construction** – is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO2 emissions and

carbon foot print of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems. Full details can be found in the Council's Sustainable Construction SPD.

**Sustainable Development** - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Sustainable Transport** - Sustainable Transport refers to walking, cycling and public transport, including train and bus. Sustainable Transport is transport that makes efficient use of natural resources and minimises pollution. In particular, Sustainable Transport seeks to minimise the emissions of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas associated with climate change – as well as nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, carbon monoxide and particulates, all of which affect local air quality.

**Town Centre** - The Town Centre is cultural and commercial heart of the Borough. Colchester's Town Centre includes the historic core of Colchester, as well as the surrounding fringe areas that are characterised by a mix of retail, residential, office, community facilities and other uses often found in other Centres. North Station and Hythe Station will be major gateways to Colchester and are therefore considered to be another important element of the Town Centre.

**Transit Corridor** - A rapid transit corridor provides a corridor for the fast and frequent movement of high quality public transport. Colchester's rapid transport corridors will provide unimpeded travel for express buses to bypass traffic congestion and link key facilities, centres, transport nodes and neighbourhoods. These corridors will also provide quality walking and cycling paths.

**Urban Renaissance** - Urban Renaissance is about renewing towns and cities in a sustainable way. It aims to make towns and cities vibrant and successful and, in doing so, protect the countryside from development pressure. It is about offering a high quality of life to people by:

- enabling them to shape the future of their community;
- providing attractive places to live that use space and buildings well;
- encouraging good design and planning to support a more environmentally sustainable way of life; and
- meeting people's needs with good quality services.

## Appendix B – Settlement Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Settlements																																										
Regional Centre	Colchester Town and Stanway																																										
District Settlements	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe																																										
Villages	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Aberton – Langenhoe</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Great Horkesley (including Horkesley Heath)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Aldham</td> <td style="border: none;">Great Tey</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Aldham – Ford Street</td> <td style="border: none;">Great Wigborough</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Birch</td> <td style="border: none;">Langham – St Margaret’s Cross</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Birch – Hardy’s Green</td> <td style="border: none;">Langham – Langham Moor</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Boxted Cross</td> <td style="border: none;">Layer de la Haye (including Malting Green)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Boxted – Workhouse Hill</td> <td style="border: none;">Layer Breton</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Chappel and Wakes Colne</td> <td style="border: none;">Layer Marney – Smythes Green,</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Chappel – Swan Street</td> <td style="border: none;">Little Horkesley</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Copford – London Road</td> <td style="border: none;">Little Tey</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Copford Green</td> <td style="border: none;">Marks Tey (including Coggeshall Road and London Road)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dedham</td> <td style="border: none;">Messing</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dedham Heath</td> <td style="border: none;">Mount Bures</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dedham – Lamb Corner</td> <td style="border: none;">Peldon</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dedham – Bargate Lane/Long Road</td> <td style="border: none;">Rowhedge</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">East Mersea</td> <td style="border: none;">Salcott and Virley</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Easthorpe</td> <td style="border: none;">A/B Wakes Colne/ Middle Green</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Eight Ash Green (including Choats Corner and Fordham Heath)</td> <td style="border: none;">West Bergholt</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Fingringhoe – Abberton Rd</td> <td style="border: none;">Wormingford</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Fingringhoe – High Park Corner</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Fordham</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Aberton – Langenhoe	Great Horkesley (including Horkesley Heath)	Aldham	Great Tey	Aldham – Ford Street	Great Wigborough	Birch	Langham – St Margaret’s Cross	Birch – Hardy’s Green	Langham – Langham Moor	Boxted Cross	Layer de la Haye (including Malting Green)	Boxted – Workhouse Hill	Layer Breton	Chappel and Wakes Colne	Layer Marney – Smythes Green,	Chappel – Swan Street	Little Horkesley	Copford – London Road	Little Tey	Copford Green	Marks Tey (including Coggeshall Road and London Road)	Dedham	Messing	Dedham Heath	Mount Bures	Dedham – Lamb Corner	Peldon	Dedham – Bargate Lane/Long Road	Rowhedge	East Mersea	Salcott and Virley	Easthorpe	A/B Wakes Colne/ Middle Green	Eight Ash Green (including Choats Corner and Fordham Heath)	West Bergholt	Fingringhoe – Abberton Rd	Wormingford	Fingringhoe – High Park Corner		Fordham	
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Eight Ash Green (including Choats Corner and Fordham Heath)	West Bergholt																																										
Fingringhoe – Abberton Rd	Wormingford																																										
Fingringhoe – High Park Corner																																											
Fordham																																											

## Appendix C – Monitoring Targets and Indicators

CS Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators
<p><b>SD</b></p> <p>Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, provide sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.</p> <p>Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.</p> <p>Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.</p> <p>Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.</p> <p>Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>National target 60% of new development on Previously Developed Land (<i>Policies SD1, CE1, H1 and UR1</i>)</p> <p>100% of new permitted developments to comply with SPD on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities (<i>Policies SD2 and PR1</i>)</p> <p>100% of major new development to be accessible to health, education and employment facilities (<i>Policies SD1 and SD2</i>)</p> <p>0% of applications to result in the overall loss of community facilities (<i>Policy SD2</i>)</p> <p>Delivery of infrastructure schemes identified in the LDF (<i>Policy SD2, Table UR1, Table PR1, Table TA3, Table TA4, Table 6d</i>)</p> <p>General contribution of new development to national targets on educational attainment by improving job opportunities and life chances (<i>Policy SD1</i>)</p>	<p>Number of new homes completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator) - Amount of new employment development on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>New AMR Local Indicator to be developed based on Community Facilities Audit and regular updates.</p> <p>% of new development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of health, education and employment facilities (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of applications resulting in the loss of community facilities (AMR Local Indicator)</p> <p>Key infrastructure projects delivered (AMR Infrastructure Trajectory)</p> <p>Percentage of population of working age qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)</p> <p>Percentage of adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)</p>
<p><b>CE</b></p> <p>Create a prestigious regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.</p> <p>Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the</p>	<p>Contribute to East of England Plan Haven Gateway target of 20,000 jobs to 2021 (<i>Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3</i>)</p>	<p>Amount of floorspace development for employment and leisure by type (AMR Core Indicator)-Number of jobs (AMR Contextual Indicator)</p> <p>Amount of employment development delivered in Growth or Regeneration areas (AMR Core Indicator)</p>

	need to travel outside the Borough for employment.			Number of new businesses setting up in the Borough- VAT registrations (AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
<b>H</b>	Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community  Provide a range of housing options to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.		Contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses to 2021 ( <i>Policies H1 and SD1</i> )	Housing completions per annum (net) - Housing Trajectory (AMR Core Indicator) Number of new and converted dwellings completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)
			Homelessness - Monitored by Strategic Housing Team – precise target inappropriate for this cross-cutting issue ( <i>Policies H1, H3, H4 and SD1</i> )	Number of households accepted as full homeless (AMR Contextual Indicator)
			East of England Plan and Core Strategy target of 35% of new dwellings to be affordable ( <i>Policy H4</i> )	Affordable housing completions (AMR Core Indicator).
			Ensure that new residential development makes efficient use of land ( <i>Policies H2, H1, UR1, and SD1</i> )	Percentages of new dwellings completed at the following density bands – less than 30 dwelling per hectare, between 30-50 dph and above 50 dph
<b>UR</b>	Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.  Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology		Meet Core Strategy housing and employment housing targets for Growth/Regeneration areas to contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses and 20,000 new jobs to be created in the Haven Gateway to 2021 ( <i>Policy UR1</i> )	Number of new homes and employment development completed at ward level within Growth/Regeneration Areas (New AMR indicator)
			0% of new developments to result in loss of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk. Year on year reduction in number of buildings on Buildings at Risk register. Monitored through the planning applications process ( <i>Policy UR2</i> )	Buildings of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk (AMR Local Indicator)

<b>PR</b>	Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.	New development to contribute to open space, green links and streetscape improvements (Policies PR1, PR2, and SD2)	Increase in areas of public open space ( AMR Local Indicator to be developed)
			Contributions secured towards streetscape improvements ( AMR Local Outputs Indicator to be developed)
			Number of homes with provision of private/communal open space. (New AMR Local Indicator).
			All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum ( AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
		100% of all new permitted developments to deliver adequate areas of private/communal space in accordance with the standards set out in the Essex Design Guide and Urban Place Supplement. (Policy PR1)	Number of Domestic Burglaries per 1000 Households ( AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
		Reduce crime rates across the Borough. Delivered in partnership with Essex Police. These targets will be monitored through the Colchester Community Safety Crime and Disorder Reduction (Policies PR2 and UR2)	

<b>TA</b>	Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel. Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs. Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region. Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.	Cycling – increase by 75% in urban area by 2010/11 (Policies TA2, TA1 and PR2)  Motor Vehicles – to control peak period traffic entering the Colchester urban area to 33,400 vehicles by 2010/11 (Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA5)  To reduce the percentage of pupils aged 5-16 travelling by car ** (Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and PR2)	Annualised Indicator of Cycling Trips linked to LTP* Performance Indicator 10 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed) – Increased to reflect Colchester’s cycle town status
			Motor Vehicles entering Colchester on the main radial corridors – LTP* Performance Indicator 12a (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)
			Mode Share of Journeys to School linked to LTP* Performance indicator 13 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)

		<p>Increase use the of public transport on selected routes in Colchester (Policies TA3 and TA1)</p> <p>To obtain an agreed travel plan for all major commercial/community developments (Policy TA1)</p> <p>Reduce the proportion of long stay in comparison with short stay parking (Policy TA5)</p> <p>Percentage of completed non-residential development (within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF (Policies TA5 and TA1)</p> <p>**Targets related to LTP indicators are generally reported at County level and therefore data and targets will need to be developed.</p>	<p>Number of bus passenger journeys on selected routes linked to LTP* Performance indicator 17 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)</p> <p>Encourage modal shift through Travel Plan and planning application processes (AMR Local Indicator)</p> <p>Comparison of long and short stay car parking demand and duration in public car parks in the Town Centre (local indicator)</p> <p>Percentage of completed non-residential development (within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>*LTP indicators are only set to 2010/11 and therefore indicators and targets related to LTP will be reviewed as the LTP is updated</p>
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<p><b>ENV</b></p> <p>Protect and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. Support appropriate local employment and housing development in villages and rural communities.</p>	<p>40% or less new houses to be built on greenfield land (AMR Core Indicator) (Policies ENV1, ENV2, SD1, CE1, H1, and UR1)</p> <p>Minimise impact of new development in areas designated due to their environmental importance (Policy ENV1)</p> <p>95% of nationally designated SSSI's are to be in favourable condition or recovering by 2010. (Policy ENV1)</p> <p>Manage visitor numbers at European Sites at levels that do not cause damage or affect site integrity. (Policy ENV1)</p> <p>No increase in number of Air Quality Management Districts (AQMDs) (Policies ENV1, TA1, UR2)</p>	<p>Number of homes completed on greenfield land (AMR Local Indicator)</p> <p>Amount of development in designated areas.</p> <p>Condition of internationally and nationally important wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC &amp; RAMSAR) (Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)</p> <p>Number of visitors to Natura 2000 sites ( new AMR indicator)</p> <p>Number of AQMDs (New AMR Contextual Indicator)</p>
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		<p>All developments to incorporate water management schemes including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) (<i>Policies ENV1 and ER1</i>)</p> <p>0% net loss of Local Sites (formerly Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) &amp; Local Nature Reserves (LNR) (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0% loss of ancient woodland (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0% net loss of priority habitats and species (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0 applications to be approved contrary to EA advice (<i>Policies ENV1 and SD1</i>)</p> <p>Assist villages in the preparation of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements and achieve 100% adoption rate. (<i>Policy ENV2</i>)</p> <p>Provide 35% of all housing in rural areas as affordable housing (<i>Policies ENV2 and H4</i>)</p> <p>Ensure rural areas contribute their proportionate share to the overall jobs target (<i>Policy ENV2</i>)</p>	<p>Number of schemes incorporating water management schemes (New AMR Local Indicator)</p> <p>Number and area of SINCs and LNR's within the Borough (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Area of ancient woodland within the Borough (New AMR indicator)</p> <p>Change in priority habitats and species (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on flood risk/flood defence grounds (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements adopted as guidance. (New Local AMR Indicator)</p> <p>Percentage of affordable housing units provided in rural wards</p> <p>Number of jobs in rural areas (New Local AMR Indicator)</p>
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<b>ER</b>	<p>Encouraging renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.</p> <p>Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.</p>	<p>Contribute to national target of 100% zero carbon by 2016. Data for this will be more readily available from 2010 onwards in line with interim targets for a 25% carbon reduction by 2010, 44% by 2013 &amp; zero carbon by 2016 as defined in Building Regulations (Part L). (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p>	<p>Number of zero-carbon homes completed (National target). AMR Indicator to be developed in line with evolving national targets and policies</p>
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		<p>Contribute to Regional targets in the East of England Plan set out below to increase energy production from renewables sources : 10% by 2010, 17% by 2020 -excluding offshore wind energy, 14% by 2010, 44% by 2020 – including offshore wind energy (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p> <p>Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste recycling targets set out below: 21% by 2008/09, 22% by 2009/10 &amp; 26% recycled by 2010/11 (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p> <p>Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste composting targets as set out below: 13% by 2008/09, 13% by 2009/10 &amp; 14 % recycled by 2010/11. (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p> <p>Contribute to national targets for reduced water consumption/person between 120 litres/person (level 1) and 80 litres/person (level 6) as defined in The Code for Sustainable Homes (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p>	<p>Renewable energy capacity installed by type (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Percentage of domestic waste recycled ( AMR Contextual Indicator)</p> <p>Percentage of domestic waste composted ( AMR Contextual Indicator)</p> <p>Per capita consumption of water (AMR Contextual Indicator)</p>
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# Appendix D – References

## National Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Guidance and Statements:

- 1 – *Sustainable Development* (February 2005)
- 3 – *Housing* (November 2006)
- 4 – *Industrial, commercial development and small firms* (November 1992)
- 6 – *Town centres* (March 2005)
- 7 – *Sustainable development in rural areas* (August 2004)
- 9 – *Biodiversity* August 2005
- 12 – *Local Development Frameworks* (September 2004)
- 13 – *Transport* (March 2001)
- 15 – *Planning and the historic environment* (September 1994)
- 16 – *Archaeology and planning* (November 1990)
- 17 – *Planning for open space, sport and recreation* (July 2002)
- 20 – *Coastal planning* (September 1992)
- 23 – *Planning and pollution control* (November 2004)
- 24 – *Planning and noise* (September 1994)
- 25 – *Development and flood risk* (July 2001)

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- CABE, *Transforming our Streets*, 2006
- Countryside Agency, *Are Villages Sustainable? A review of the literature*, December 2002
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- Department for Transport, *Manual for Streets* (March 2007)
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- Halcrow Group Limited, *East of England Capacity delivery Strategy Study: Phase One Final Report*, December 2006
- NHS East of England, *Looking to the Future: Development of hospital services in the East of England*, December 2006
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### **Colchester Policy Documents**

Colchester 2020, *Community Strategy*, December 2003

*Adopted Local Plan*, March 2004

Supplementary Planning Documents –

*Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities* (July 2006)

Supplementary Planning Guidance

*Affordable Housing* – March 2004

*Community Facilities* – March 2004

*Essex Design Guide* – 1997

*Vehicle Parking Standards* – 2001

*Core Strategy Issues and Options*, March 2006

*Core Strategy Preferred Options*, November 2006

*Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Options*, November 2006

*Draft Parks and Green Spaces Strategy*, 2007

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Chris Blandford Associates, *Landscape Character Assessment*, November 2005

Chris Blandford Associates, *Townscape Character Assessment*, June 2006

Fordham Associates, *Strategic Housing Market Assessment Topic Papers*, September 2007

GVA Grimley, *North Essex Retail Study, Stage Two Report, Colchester Borough*, February 2007

Humberts Leisure, *Hotel Market Demand Appraisal and Sequential Site Assessment*, April 2007

Lambert Smith Hampton, *Employment Land Study*, May 2007

PMP Consultants, *Colchester Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study*, November 2007

Roger Tym and Partners, *Housing Land Availability Study*, March 2007

Royal Haskoning, *Colchester Appropriate Assessment*, November 2007

Scott Wilson, *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment*, November 2007

## Appendix E – Saved Local Plan policies superseded by the Core Strategy

Local Plan Policy		Core Strategy Policy
CE1	The Open and Undeveloped Coastline	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy ENV1 (Environment)
CO1	Countryside – general policy	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies ENV1 and ENV2 (Environment)
CF1	Infrastructure and Community Facilities Provision	Replaced by Policy SD2 (Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure)
CF7	Schools	Replaced by Policy SD2 (Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure)
L12	Woodland, trees and hedgerows	Replaced by Policy PR1 (Open Space) which requires open space provision in developments to be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need giving particular regard to biodiversity.
L17	Colchester United	Replaced by Policy UR1 (Regeneration Areas) sets out the key projects to be delivered in the regeneration areas
T1&2	Pedestrian networks and cycle parking requirements	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies TA1 (Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour) and TA2 (Walking and Cycling)
T4	Non car housing	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy TA5 (Parking)
H1	Housing allocations	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H1 (Housing Delivery) and table H1a set out the overall distribution of new housing to deliver at least 19,000 new homes in the Colchester Borough between 2001 and 2023. The Local Plan only covers the period to 2011.
H2	Meeting different needs	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H3 (Housing Diversity)
H4	Affordable housing	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) sets new targets and thresholds for affordable housing sites.
H13	Density	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H2 (Housing Density)
EMP1	Employment land provision	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
EMP2	Development outside employment zones	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1 and CE2(b) (Centres and Employment)
TCS1	Town centre vitality	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS2	New comparison shopping	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy CE2a (Centres and Employment)
TCS3	Food shopping	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS11	Bulky goods	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, 2 and 3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS12	Local shopping centres	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE2b (District Centres) and CE2c (Local Centres)