

Scrutiny Panel

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
20 August 2013 at 6.00pm**

The Scrutiny Panel examine the policies and strategies from a borough-wide perspective and ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the Council's policies and budget. The Panel reviews corporate strategies that form the Council's Strategic Plan, Council partnerships and the Council's budgetary guidelines, and scrutinises Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decisions which have been called in.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

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

Have Your Say!

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

Private Sessions

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

Mobile phones, pagers, cameras, audio recorders

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

Access

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

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Scrutiny Panel – Terms of Reference

1. To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee under section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and in particular (but not limited to):
 - (a) To review corporate strategies;
 - (b) To ensure that actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council;
 - (c) To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, performance reporting and to make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions;
 - (d) To review the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic and Implementation Plans;
 - (e) To review the financial performance of the Council and to make recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to financial outturns, revenue and capital expenditure monitors;
 - (f) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet, the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee (in relation to decisions relating to off-street matters only) and the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
 - (g) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Portfolio Holders and officers taking key decisions which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
 - (h) To monitor the effectiveness and application of the Call-In Procedure, to report on the number and reasons for Call-In and to make recommendations to the Council on any changes required to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the process;
 - (i) To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet;
 - (j) At the request of the Cabinet, to make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet or creating difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business;
2. To fulfil all the functions of the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee ("the Committee") under the Police and Justice Act 2006 and in particular (but not limited to):
 - (a) To review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions;
 - (b) To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of those functions.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY PANEL
20 August 2013 at 6:00pm

Members

Chairman : Councillor Beverly Davies.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Marcus Harrington.
Councillors Dave Harris, Jo Hayes, Gerard Oxford,
Kevin Bentley, Nick Cope, Peter Higgins and Mike Hogg.

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

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

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

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

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

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

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

2. Substitutions

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

3. Urgent Items

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

4. Declarations of Interest

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

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

5. Minutes

1 - 21

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2013.

6. Have Your Say!

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

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

7. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

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

8. Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members

(a) To evaluate requests by members of the Panel for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

(b) To evaluate requests by other members of the Council for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

Members of the panel may use agenda item 'a' (all other members will use agenda item 'b') as the appropriate route for referring a 'local government matter' in the context of the Councillor Call for Action to the panel. Please refer to the panel's terms of reference for further procedural arrangements.

9. Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any decisions taken under the Call in Procedure.

10. Work Programme 22 - 23

See report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

11. 2013/14 Capital Monitor, period April to June 24 - 29

See report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

12. 2013/14 Financial Monitor, period April to June 30 - 43

See report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

13. Exclusion of the public

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the

meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

SCRUTINY PANEL
23 JULY 2013

- Present :-* Councillor Beverly Davies (Chairman)
Councillors Nick Cope, Marcus Harrington, Jo Hayes,
Peter Higgins and Mike Hogg
- Substitute Members :-* Councillor Pauline Hazell for Councillor Kevin Bentley
Councillor Stephen Ford for Councillor Dave Harris
Councillor Philip Oxford for Councillor Gerard Oxford
- Also in Attendance :-* Councillor Annie Feltham
Councillor Anne Turrell
Councillor Will Quince
Councillor Brian Jarvis
Councillor Dennis Willetts
Councillor Sonia Lewis
Councillor Martin Hunt
Councillor Paul Smith
Councillor Lyn Barton

14. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2013 was confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments.

In the Open Discussions within Minute 12, New Housing Arrangements;

The questions asked in paragraphs 3 and 5 of the 'Open Discussions' to be attributed to Councillor P. Higgins.

Between paragraphs 5 and 6 and additional paragraph is added to read;

"In response to Councillor Hazell who asked what help will be given to those in receipt of Housing Benefit so as to ensure they make correct payments to their landlord regarding the welfare reform changes, Ms. Loweman reassured members that it was recognised that over a number of years and given the current economic climate that there is a growing number of vulnerable tenants, affecting finance, health and welfare. Recognising this, a small Advisory Team has been set-up to provide advice on welfare issues and money matters, and to help cope with the increased demand in providing the necessary advice. Colchester Borough Homes are also pro-active in monitoring those residents on the housing list prior to entering into a tenancy agreement."

The question asked in paragraph 9 to be attributed to Councillor Harrington.

15. Pre-scrutinise the Cabinet decision 'To Close the Abbots Activity Centre'

Councillor Davies (in respect of being a trustee of C CVS) and Councillor Hogg (in respect of being the Chairman and Trustee of the St Annes Community Hall Association) both declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5);
The Panel was invited to review the proposal of draft Cabinet report relating to the Closure of the Abbots Activity Centre. The comments of the Panel will be considered by the Cabinet at the meeting on 4 September 2013.

Have Your Say – Members of the Public

Mrs. Jo Crowshaw (Councillor Harrington spoke on behalf of Mrs. Crowshaw)

Mrs. Crowshaw, who lives in Eight Ash Green, said she was sorry she could not speak for herself, but she had been unable to do so since her stroke in 2006.

Mrs. Crowshaw said she visited the Abbots Activity Centre once a week. She is driven there by a C CVS volunteer, who helps her into the Centre. She said once inside, her Stroke Group volunteer Tom helps her. During her session, Mrs. Crowshaw is helped to learn to communicate again.

Mrs. Crowshaw said the Centre is a life line to her, giving her hope and companionship. She found the proposal of its possible closure very upsetting and the uncertainty of what might happen in the future very worrying.

She added that she would be willing to pay more for her sessions.

She asked the Cabinet not to judge Abbots on financial costs alone, but urged them to consider its value which is immeasurable.

Mrs. Crowshaw concluded by requesting the Panel to ask Councillor Feltham to keep Abbots Activity Centre open.

Mrs Elaine Rogers

Mrs Rogers addressed the Panel.

The first point she raised was that she assured members that stroke survivor members of Abbots are prepared to pay increased membership fees, and also the Stroke Association is expecting an increase in venue charges.

Mrs. Rogers asked whether anyone had asked the Abbots Centre Manager, Ms. Debbie Young, whether she could reduce running costs, save money and increase income.

Mrs Rogers said that at the June Connect+ACT Conference, an event to tackle loneliness, Norman Lamb stated, 'It is important to end loneliness', and added 'the impact of loneliness on health both physical and mental is profound'. The conference highlighted many points including the need to listen to older people, involve older people and promote dignity and respect. It agreed that more community and public transport and more transport for the mobility impaired is needed.

Mrs. Rogers said public transport to and from Abbots was not a problem and the nearest bus stop was a three minute walk. Parking for motorists was close by and a drop off bay was provided. In addition, CCVS transport for the disabled was available from 9 until 4, in line with the opening hours of centre.

Mrs. Rogers said the Council should congratulate itself because the Abbots Centre is DDA compliant and totally inclusive. The service is excellent thanks to the work of the Centre Manager, Ms. Debbie Young, so be proud to lead the way, continue to set a good example to the young as you are ahead of new thinking. She asked why destroy it. She wondered why Lion Walk members are against paying more, and said the uncertainty about the future of Abbots has prevented expansion for the stroke group and without expansion it will have to turn clients away!

Regarding the solutions within the report, Mrs Rogers said; i) Evenings are out, ii) CCVS provide no transport then or indeed late enough in the afternoon for many activities, iii) Evening bus services leave the elderly vulnerable, iv) Village bus services leave the elderly waiting either side of activity time, v) There is no room for all; 'The Evergreens' for example have just 6 luncheon spaces free, vi) Home help from Age UK is no substitute and vii) The benefits were of no use to disabled or those unable, not permitted, or discouraged from accessing the premises. The proposal therefore discriminates against the elderly and disabled.

Mrs. Rogers concluded by urging the Cabinet not to make a decision to close Abbots, but to go back to the drawing board, consider carefully everything presented and consult with the Centre Manager. She said the outcome could benefit many, no longer discriminate and avoid hidden costs.

Mrs. Paula Webb

Mrs. Webb addressed the Panel saying she believed that closure of Abbots Activity Centre will be in breach of the Equality Act. She said there are significant difficulties in disabled and mobility impaired users accessing Lion Walk which discriminates against these users. These difficulties have been well documented in the press and letters from members. She added that the closure of Abbots will discriminate against the disabled and mobility impaired users given the difficulties that these members would have in evacuating from Lion Walk.

Mrs. Webb, a qualified Health and Safety Expert with over ten years experience reviewing risk assessments said she had serious concerns about the adequacy of the fire risk assessment at Lion Walk. She said failure to provide an adequate means of escape for all users is discrimination, and did not believe that the current fire risk

assessment is compliant with Fire Safety Regulations. She added that the resultant increase in member numbers if Abbots closes will only exacerbate the problem.

Mrs. Webb said the Lion Walk Fire Risk Assessment only has arrangements for the evacuation of three wheelchair users, so in the event of a fire, one wheelchair user would be carried down the stairs by members of staff using an evac-chair. The other two wheelchair users would have to remain in the lobby upstairs until the fire brigade arrived. She said current legislation specifies that evacuation plans should not rely on the fire brigade to make them work.

She added that the risk assessment makes no mention of other mobility impaired users who do not use a wheelchair but are unable to escape via the stairs, and there is also no mention of visually or hearing impaired users, bariatric users, or users with cognitive impairments.

Mrs. Webb said the risk assessment specifies that up to 100 users can be in the centre at any one time, but if only three people who cannot use the stairs can be evacuated, then when the centre is at capacity, this is only 3% of members. However, in questionnaires to member of Lion Walk, 28% said they had difficulties with activities such as using the stairs and at Abbots it was 70%.

Mrs. Webb said the Lion Walk Centre has two escape routes, but those who cannot use the stairs are only able to use one of these. This could result in a situation where more able bodied members are trying to escape via one route and those that cannot use the stairs are trying to escape via another. This could lead to blocked corridors and the potential to hinder everyone's escape. She said that clearly the evacuation procedures are not sufficient and it will only get worse if the Abbots Centre closes and membership numbers at the Lion Walk Centre increases.

Mrs. Webb concluded by saying the subsidy costs for Abbots and Lion Walk are almost identical, so why close a centre that has good access for disabled and mobility impaired users and excellent measures for their safe evacuation, whilst keeping open a centre that has poor access for disabled and mobility impaired users and where the evacuation processes are so poor that in the event of a major fire it is likely there would be fatalities.

Mrs Nicky Hopkins (Mrs. Rogers spoke on behalf of Mrs. Hopkins)

Mrs. Hopkins said Colchester Borough Council's Strategic Plan aims to create opportunities for all residents, and give support to vulnerable groups by listening and responding, but the proposed closure of Abbots Activity Centre will destroy a valuable venue which provides stimulating activities and social outlets for many elderly and vulnerable members of Colchester' Society.

Mrs. Hopkins said whilst the Abbots Centre may only have 256 members, last year the centre had a footfall of 32,000 of Colchester's 58,000 elderly population. She asked how many of the Council's alternative suggestions can boast such popular use.

Mrs. Hopkins said the Councils' Equality and Diversity Policy appears meaningless

when considering the proposals made to take the place of Abbots. She said the Lion Walk Centre is not "fit for purpose" if considered on the grounds of accessibility, and believed that if only one centre can stay open, then common sense demands that it is the Abbots Centre, that it could not be faulted.

She wondered how the Council could do this to vulnerable members of the community, the very people who the Council promised to serve, listen and respond to. She added that these people had voted and trusted Councillors to work for them, that these members of our society have contributed for years to our community and they continue to do so because their brains have been kept active as a result of their social well-being.

Mrs. Hopkins said the members of the Abbots Centre care about each other, they are cared about by people they meet with daily, and if they lose this companionship they are likely to become depressed, sick and in need of care. Some of them are lonely and forgotten, and without this Centre to treat them as part of the community family, they would be lost completely.

She concluded by saying it would amount to discrimination against elderly and disabled people to close such a wonderful centre as Abbots in times when we ought to be helping the less fortunate as much as we can.

Mr. Alan Thomas

Mr. Thomas, a volunteer worker at the Lion Walk and Abbots Centres addressed the Panel.

Mr. Thomas said the Council is holding this meeting at firstsite, a building that cost the people of Colchester £24m and is now nicknamed by local people as the Golden Banana. This building this remained a sore point with local people, as most did not want it in the first place.

Mr. Thomas understood that the firstsite was subsidised by the Council to the tune of £150k per annum, whereas the subsidy to the Abbots Centre was £74k. Mr. Thomas said entry to firstsite was free, but if they were to charge an entrance fee it could generate sufficient income to offset the subsidy to the Abbots Centre.

Mr. Thomas said the Council had spent £2m on a bus station. He and his wife use bus transport to travel to the Lion Walk Centre as would others if the Lion Walk Centre became the only Centre available. He said it was well documented that the Abbots Centre was purpose built for wheelchair access and those with mobility impairment. He added that at the bus station buses have to double park because there are too few bus stops, and it is necessary for the bus users to walk between buses to exit the area, a situation that will be impossible for many of the people who would want to switch from the Abbots Centre should it close, to the Lion Walk Centre.

He believed both Centres should remain open, the Abbots Centre for the less able, and the Lion Walk Centre for the more able. Mr. Thomas concluded by urging the

Council not to put the Abbots Centre on the scrapheap and look for savings elsewhere.

Mrs Nicky Bailey

Mrs. Bailey addressed the Panel, pointing out that there is general confusion surrounding the 'numbers' at Abbots and Lion Walk even though the figures have been used to create a scenario in which Abbots is not popular, is insufficiently used and is unjustifiably expensive.

Mrs. Bailey said the figures on the web page, in the consultation letter and in two emails received last week from Colchester Borough Council, and a third email sent to Panel Members today, all the figures are different. She said none of the figures are consistent and none is the same as those from Councillor Tina Dopson on which the Council decided to pull out of Abbots in 2011.

She said that if the figures received today are correct, and even the e mail accompanying them suggests they may not be, what they show is a catastrophic decline in membership at Lion Walk since 2004 of over 60% and of 66% since charging was introduced. Charging at Abbots has not resulted in a similar level of decline. Over the same period the level of subsidy has increased by 12.5% at Lion Walk and decreased by 20.9% at Abbots.

She believed that calculating the subsidy per member is the wrong measure in any case. What was needed is actual visitor use, and that's how the real world measures operating success and how facilities such as firstsite, Leisure World and probably the new football stadium calculate their level of usage. She said they will count how many people come through the doors and use different services. She believed the correct measure is footfall and the correct calculation to establish how expensive something is to measure subsidy against visitor numbers. She said that if Leisure World for example calculated subsidy against membership the figures would be unacceptably high.

However, the Council has only very recently begun to collect usage figures at all, so a measurement method comparable with Leisure World or firstsite just did not exist.

Regarding policy and legal duty, Mrs. Bailey said while the council is happy to subsidy Sports visits and Arts Visits it is not willing to apply the same sort of assessment to elderly and elderly disabled mostly female visits, despite having a legal duty to treat people with protected characteristics such as age, disability, and gender just the same as other groups. This, despite having a number of adopted Council policies which state that the Council is committed to treating everyone fairly.

Mrs. Bailey said regarding the Equality Impact Assessment, the study within the agenda report purports to say that all negative impacts have been removed or minimised. The report is of very poor quality, contains numerous unsubstantiated assertions and conclusions and is inadequate and unreliable for the Council to rely upon. She added that she had provided detailed comments supporting her reasoning in the report circulated to the Panel in electronic and hard copy form.

Regarding the recommendation within the Cabinet report, Mrs. Bailey said if the Council is determined to close one Activity Centre then it must be Lion Walk, a centre with an annual declining membership, annual increasing subsidy costs and a centre that is unable to meet the needs of groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

In conclusion, Mrs. Bailey recommended that the Council needs to count usage properly, to an agreed set of criteria, measuring the same things at each of the Activity Centres and it needs to do that for a year. To this end, she said Abbots should remain open using the subsidy agreed by Council of £105,000 in 2012, for 3 years, count usage properly for a year and then review the results. At the same time she said there was an opportunity to decrease the need for subsidy by decreasing costs and increasing income. She believed there was scope and users there are willing to actively co-operate to achieve this. Then the Council will be in a position to apply the same measuring criteria of subsidy per visit for the Activity Centres as other facilities across the Borough.

Mr. Nick Chilvers

Mr. Chilvers addressed the Panel saying that the proposals were short sighted and unnecessary.

Mr. Chilvers said the council has some business talent at Head Office, so why hasn't it tasked someone to work with Abbots to improve its finances and potential. He said that no serious forward plan has been tried other than to get it off the books.

Mr. Chilvers believed that using membership figures for Abbots is misleading, and a low estimate of the footfall is 650 per week, but this would be more if there was less uncertainty. He said the report alleges the membership represents only 1% of the over 50 population. This again was misleading because most 50 to 60 year olds are working people.

He said there are fine words in the Council's Strategic Plan talking about creating opportunities for all residents, supporting vulnerable groups and listening and responding. Its aim was to be a place to where people want to live. Given that the proposal will spoil the lives of all Abbots users, isn't it a case of saying one thing and doing another.

He added that surely the council has to evaluate the harm caused by cuts across the board, that where does the Abbots score in relation to other areas of spending, and where is the priority list.

It seemed to Mr. Chilvers that if you are feckless and irresponsible, fit and trendy, a cyclist or an art lover, you get plenty of officer time and money. He added that Abbots' users feel they are bottom of the pile. Understandably, they feel aggrieved, their impression is the more you put in over the years with this council, the less you get out.

Mr. Chilvers said to save money the Council should slash subsidies to things that cause

less harm, and asked whether the Council has checked how safe their tenancy is at the Lion Walk Centre with the new owners of Lion Walk because one day soon they might want the Council out.

Mr. Chilvers said the myths that members won't chip in more or adapt to change must be demolished. Most understand a future Abbots will be different to the past and will accept some sensible revision of fee structure.

It isn't them who are inflexible. Mr. Chilvers said he had asked fellow members these questions, but Life Opportunities hadn't.

In conclusion, Mr. Chilvers asked why doesn't the Council look at options that include fair access for seniors and disabled as well as others, and to work with some of the members and the manager, that with some give and take, you might find it easier than you think to relaunch Abbots. He urged the Council to be constructive, rather than just walking away.

Mr. Stewart Francis (Mr. Galleway spoke on behalf of Mr. Francis)

Mr. Galleway said he was someone who has benefited hugely from the support provided by Abbots Activity Centre.

Having suffered a stroke in December 2012, and following help from the NHS, it was suggested to Mr. Francis that he should attend the Centre to continue his rehabilitation. For the last three months he has visited the Abbots Centre every Monday morning.

Mr. Francis said the support provided here by Mrs Elaine Rogers and her volunteers has been outstanding. He had been given consistent individual help and therapy and the whole atmosphere is supportive and congenial. As a result he had made steady progress. Indeed, the weekly session is a highlight to him, both therapeutically and socially.

He said that Mrs. Rogers is not simply hardworking and committed, but inspired and inspiring. The Abbots Centre also allows him to chat with other sufferers and lets him see how extreme many of their situations are and how much they need the help. It is a thriving place, each day is packed with a variety of activities and the catering staff provides good, low-priced meals.

Mr. Francis said the Abbots Centre offers access to wheelchair users. The Lion Walk Centre, suggested as an alternative Centre does not have this, and questions arise about general access and parking. Abbots does not have these problems.

Mr. Francis said he was lucky that he was able to send this statement to the Panel, that many of those served by the centre do not have the capacity to do so. He added that many of the possible voices which would protest are unable to, and his own absence from this meeting is because of his stroke that had induced incapacity.

He wondered why the Council threatens to close something so flourishing and of such obvious usefulness. The cost of £74,000 is pitifully small compared with the amounts spent by the council in some areas. He added that how could the Council be so lacking

in compassion and humanity, and be so mean minded as even to contemplate closing an asset of such value.

In conclusion, Mr. Francis said the word consultation is often meaningless nowadays, but he trusted the Council to use the word with honesty, that the consultation is genuine and real.

Mrs. Margaret Bannister

Mrs. Bannister addressed the Panel. Mrs. Bannister said she suffers with Bipolar Disorder.

She wondered whether anyone had considered alternative income streams such as increased fees or an increase in the Meals on Wheels service.

Mrs. Bannister said there appears to be some indication that one of the alternative uses could be clog dancing. An additional income stream could be renting out rooms for example, if someone wished to organise a function for a funeral.

Mrs. Bannister said when the new traffic flow and parking arrangements were introduced to the town centre High Street, somebody wrote to Essex County Council to say disabled people are selfish by continually going on about the different places where disabled access is required, and this feeds into a false general belief that all disabled people are selfish.

Being Bipolar, Mrs. Bannister said she also suffers from mild paranoia, and was beginning to suspect that the centre's proposed closure was about other reasons that have not been mentioned. It was a very versatile facility and should not be gutted.

Mr. Avery

Mr. Avery addressed the Panel explaining that he visited the Abbots Centre two to three times weekly, on my own, and it is a wonderful place to visit.

Mr. Avery said that it was being suggested that people do not use the Abbots Centre, yet the measured footfall taken over a nine month period averaged 615 per day, rising to a daily maximum of 975. These figures did not strike Mr. Avery of Abbots being a place that was not being used.

Mr. Avery said we live in a democratic society, with equality that did not discriminate against age or disability, with a society that looked after the elderly and disabled, yet it felt as though we are being left to just get on with it.

Mr. Avery concluded by saying the Council needs to consider it is our money you are spending and we pay your wages.

Mr. Fred Bryant

Mr. Bryant addressed the Panel to say he was here to fight to save the Abbots Centre.

Mr. Bryant said he joined the centre in 1989 shortly after retiring. He said that he had organised the bingo events at the centre for the last fifteen years. He said the centre had many members and a large usage born out by the footfall.

Mr. Bryant felt that if the proposed closure was about money why not just increase the fees.

He said the centre was purpose built, a fantastic facility with excellent parking and believed if the charges are increased it will go some way to solving quite a few of the problems.

In conclusion Mr. Bryant asked the Council to search its conscience and look to find alternative options that will allow the centre to remain open.

Mr. Derek Mead

Mr. Mead addressed the Panel to say that by closing the Abbots Centre it will deprive wheelchair users of the use of an activity centre.

Mr. Mead said from his own experience that wheelchairs were not allowed into the Lion Walk Centre, banned by the Fire Service.

Mr. Mead now understood that although wheelchair users are now permitted access to the Lion Walk Centre, but doing so, they are breaking the law.

Tim Oxton

Mr. Oxton addressed the Panel, saying please do not be fooled by the call to close one centre rather than the other. He said both Abbots and Lion Walk Centres were important to local residents, and the proposal should not be about closing one centre and keeping one centre open. This could lead to the closure of the second centre a year down the line.

Mr. Oxton urged the Council to make every effort to publicise the two centres more widely, especially Abbots, because a great number of local elderly people do not know of either of the centres and the facilities and events they provide. He added that as far as he could see, there were no members from the Fabian Society or the Colchester Pensioners Group present because they would be unaware of both centres existence.

Mr. Oxton said a concerted effort should be made to ensure all retired local people are made aware of the centres. This he said would increase membership, increase revenue, reduce the need for subsidy and avoid the proposal for closure.

Mr. Andy Raison

Mr. Raison addressed the Panel saying that although he had heard passionate and moving stories this evening, he was sure Members had heard them all before. The proposed closure was nothing new, with closure being considered for many years.

Having spoken to Councillor Feltham, Mr. Raison said he was very angry because it was being suggested the proposed closure was a fete accompli.

He said in order for proper scrutiny to be undertaken and for members to make an informed judgement they should have all the information that had been provided to him. He added that there is ambiguity about the numbers being provided, though if the centre was going to be closed the evidence and information provided had to support a robust case, that there needed to be some certainty about the accuracy of the information provided.

Mr. Raison reiterated these points and urged Members to examine the figures further before making a final decision.

Mr. John Small

Mr. Small addressed the Panel.

Mr. Small, who worked for the MS Society in Colchester said he thought that as part of the consultation process the MS Society should have been asked to respond. He said the MS Society has never been asked by anyone from Colchester Borough Council to respond and this was wrong.

Mr. Small said by not correctly consulting the Council was not getting the correct numbers that were forming part of the report on which the decision would be made.

He said the Council should allow the manager of the Abbots Centre one year to eighteen months to reduce costs and increase revenue, to try to turn a profit, and then decide whether to close the centre. He said he believed this was a far more sensible approach than just closing it now and letting the building fall into disrepair.

Have Your Say – Visiting Councillors

Councillor Brian Jarvis

Councillor Brian Jarvis, Shadow Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure Services addressed the Panel.

Councillor Jarvis said we are told that the Centre currently requires a subsidy of £74,000 per annum which works out at £290 per member. Given that the Centre is not a Statutory Function, that is, one that the Council is obliged to fund, it now considers that the Centre does not reach out to sufficient residents across the borough and therefore no longer justifies the Council's financial support. He said this rather begs the question when allocating funding to non statutory functions what are the criteria that is used, is it numbers or value. Given the budgetary constraints that we currently work

under he asked how the Cabinet explains the decision to extend into this year the Locality Budget which last year gave each councillor £2000 each to spend in their ward in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. This was surely a one off gesture to mark an important occasion and not a discretionary "gift" to ward councillors on an annual basis. He said this is a questionable way of spending £120,000, particularly in the light of the closure of Abbots.

He suggested to the Panel that the Portfolio Holder's decision on this matter had been reached by looking at the case for the closure of Abbots from a far too narrow perspective, that great emphasis had been placed on the number of members registered at the Centre and the small percentage of the over 50s that they represent within the borough. This is far too simplistic, we are all aware of Fitness Centres for example that boast a membership 1,000 or more but in reality a much smaller number are regular and consistent attendees.

Councillor Jarvis said that by contrast, at Abbots in the month of May they had over 1200 members and non-members sign in for activities which not only included popular events such as keep fit, line dancing, carpet bowls and bingo but also therapeutic sessions for stroke and brain damage victims. The benefit from these sessions you cannot put a price on and are simply not available elsewhere. He added that his point is that it is not just the number of people that receive the benefit but the importance and the value of that benefit. You wouldn't for example close the Samaritans simply because it served only a small percentage of the population.

Councillor Jarvis said he mentioned at the recent Full Council meeting that he had attended an Old People's Forum organised by Colchester Borough Council which was also attended by a number of local support groups. At this meeting there was a presentation on Mental Health, and it was stressed that this was about mental health not Mental Ill-health which is a completely different subject. During this talk three important facts as they relate to elderly people emerged: i) Loneliness and isolation has a big impact on physical health and mental health, ii) It is important that elderly people feel valued within the local community, and iii) It is important to have links with other people in order to maintain social cohesion.

He added that this information comes from an authoritative source and should be recognised when evaluating the merits of keeping this centre open. He said that make no mistake, by closing Abbots the Council will deny the majority of members and non-members this social inter-action which is so important to their well being. Abbots on the other hand fulfils these requirements for better physical and mental health and it does it in a purpose built centre which is DDA compliant and is easy to access on foot and by transportation. He said it was unlikely Colchester will see another facility like this being built in the foreseeable future.

Councillor Jarvis said it has been suggested that when Abbots closes members could use the Activity Centre in Lion Walk which is to remain open at least for the present. For many of Abbots members this is not an option as the Lion Walk Centre is in a pedestrian area and has no direct vehicle access. It is also situated on the first floor thereby making wheelchair access more difficult with the premises not being DDA compliant, and as an activity centre it does not compare to Abbots.

Councillor Jarvis reiterated that the Cabinet considers the decision to be about finances and about how limited funds are apportioned. He said he strongly urged that the Cabinet look more closely at their decision and assess Abbots from a much broader aspect taking into consideration the value of the services that it provides and the impact on the quality of people's lives it will have if the centre closes.

In conclusion, he said it was not a good decision by the Cabinet and will affect a part of Colchester's society that is most vulnerable and it will also impact on carers, staff and volunteers. He said there are options to the closure, but he didn't believe that these have been either sought or listened to. Councillor Jarvis said why not allow all interested parties the time to draw up a Business Plan and submit it to the Cabinet before any final decision is made.

Councillor Will Quince

Councillor Quince addressed the Panel.

Councillor Quince agreed with a previous speaker that there is a lot of history to the proposed closure, but was pleased that previous administrations had chosen not to force the closure.

He believed there was still a lifeline and that it was important members listened to the speakers, and those making this decision did as asked, search their consciences when making that final decision. Whilst discussions made it feel like it was an Abbots Centre versus the Lion Walk Centre, this was a complete red herring, though as Councillor Quince believed this will be the thin edge of the wedge, leading to the future closure of the Lion Walk Centre, 'a case of watch this space'.

Councillor Quince said bringing Lion Walk into the debate was misleading. Both centres are valuable sites, important in their own right, so why should either of them need to close.

He said that there are many budgeted items provided that is not a statutory need for the Council to provide. For example, that the Council spends £50k on a one day cycle race is questionable placed in the context of retaining a cycle race or closing an activity centre for vulnerable elderly and disabled residents, most of whom have put more into the 'pot'.

Councillor Quince said he understood the importance of cost, but more importantly was the value of the service. He said he would fund the cost of things such as the Castle and the Mercury Theatre because they have a value. He felt though, that by closing the Abbots Centre the Administration know the cost of everything but the value of nothing.

Councillor Quince said it was obvious from all the previous speakers that everyone at the centre knew one another and this was enormously important regarding the value of the service, with members provided with the opportunity of friendship and avoid isolation.

Councillor Quince, like previous speakers felt the figures on membership were questionable given the numbers now being presented are different to those presented by Councillor Tina Dopson in 2011. The figures on membership provided today suggests there now seems to be a similar level of membership at both centres, a difference from those that formulated the proposal to close the centre, making it fundamentally flawed.

Councillor Quince said the centre was being allowed to run down, but it was important the centre survived, and equally important to publicise the centre more widely thereby enabling it to morph into a community centre, a more vibrant hub.

In conclusion, Councillor Quince said the centre did not need to close, but with plenty of additional uses to support its current use it could become vibrant with potential to raise revenue. Councillor Quince asked the Panel to request the Cabinet not to implement the proposal of closure.

Councillor Dennis Willetts

Councillor Willetts addressed the Panel.

Councillor Willetts said the future of the Abbots Centre seemed to be drawing to its inevitable conclusion and shame on those who were determined to see the centre closed. He said there seemed to be some patterns emerging with the closure of Joyce Brooks House followed by the closure of the Tymperleys Clock Museum.

The purpose of the report was following the same pathway, concluding with a sell-off, an extremely sad situation, and one that drew on the maxim 'if at first you don't succeed, try and try again'.

Councillor Willetts said those organisations rejected in the 2011/12 process may have been successful if they had been given the opportunity to widen out the current centre to a community centre. Now, with the threat of closure it was a shame that the Administration felt a need to relinquish their responsibility to provide the services.

In 2012 it was decided that the cards were stacked against any new provider unless some funding was provided. Having been told this solution would not fail we are now being told the new master plan has fallen apart.

Councillor Willetts said the financial outturn for 2012/13 was an underspend on the revenue budget of £534k, and with the contingency reserve of £285k not used, it amounted to an overall underspend of £828k. Councillor Willetts said the Abbots Activity Centre at an annual cost of £74k could run for eleven years on the 2012/13 underspend. But instead, things of a lower priority are given precedence. He said it was unacceptable to blame the proposed closure on finances.

Regarding the true costs of the services provided it was necessary to know the footfall. Councillor Willetts believed the figures were being presented in a way to make running the centre as difficult a proposition as possible. In conclusion he said there was an overwhelming argument to support a proposition to keep the centre open. Councillor

Willetts urged the Panel to put the points made forcefully to the Cabinet. He was in no doubt as to the wishes of the residents of Colchester and the Cabinet should be made to listen to those views.

Councillor Sonia Lewis

Councillor Lewis addressed the Panel.

Councillor Lewis said she had wanted to speak last, so as to be able to listen to what all the other speakers had said.

She believed the social needs for the members of the centre are very important and this had been covered by earlier speakers.

She also believed the comparisons made between the Abbots Centre and the Lion Walk Centre was wrong as they both complimented one another. She had nothing but praise for both centres and it was wrong for them to be pitched against one another in the debate.

Councillor Lewis said in 2011 she had asked for a task and finish group to be setup to consider all options for the centre and to draw up a business plan. She said there was still time for a business plan to be drawn up and asked whether Ms. Young, the Abbots Centre Manager had been consulted on how to take this forward.

She said the members had themselves raised large sums of money to pay for everyday essentials used within the centre, and these had not been taken into account when making the assessments and final judgement and believed it was still possible to extend the centre to a community centre for wider use.

Councillor Lewis urged the Cabinet to listen to what had been said this evening. All the points raised are valid, and like other speakers believed the success of the centre should be gauged using footfall numbers not membership numbers. She begged the Cabinet to listen to the people and not go forward with the proposal of closure.

Introduction

Councillor Feltham, Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure Services, Councillor Anne Turrell, Leader of the Council and Ms. Lucie Breadman, Head of Community Services attended the meeting for this item.

Councillor Feltham introduced the report and explained her reasoning for the Cabinet decision to be taken on 4 September.

Councillor Feltham said it felt like people were suggesting that closing the Abbots Centre was an easy decision to be made. It was not, although she was in no doubt the users of the centre loved it, and it provided a lot of benefits to them.

Councillor Feltham said she didn't believe any of the evidence given that suggested there was a way to make the centre viable. She said they had taken a standard

approach to see if someone could do better. Taking into account the evidence at the time, the decision was changed, to offer a three year grant to the successful bidder following the Council's procurement process. Even with the extra grant there were no other groups that thought they would be able to make the Abbots Centre work.

It remains the case that it is difficult to see how the Council can continue to run the centre without avoiding a substantial subsidy

Councillor Feltham recognised that people are passionate about wanting to retain the centre but it was too expensive to run for too small a return. She said she was doing what she believed to be right.

Councillor Feltham said lets be straight, it is a cut of a service that had been subsidised for many years and it was a very difficult decision to be made.

In conclusion Councillor Feltham said the Administration is very proud of its support to vulnerable groups and the support to the voluntary sector had increased by 2% in 2013/14. Councillor Feltham said the overall cost to the Council regarding the Cycle Race was £20k.

Councillor Turrell said Essex County Council had the statutory responsibility for supporting the elderly and vulnerable, and that by closing the Abbots Centre Colchester Borough Council was not breaking the law. Essex County Council had also confirmed they will not be able to provide any additional funding for the Abbots Centre.

Open discussion

In response to Councillor Higgins regarding ambiguity in the information provided, Councillor Feltham said the financial disparity is between the budget and the running costs, and the subsidy is the quoted figure of £74. Councillor Feltham confirmed the usage figures are based on membership numbers not the footfall numbers. She added that whilst the footfall generates income, the income came out of the membership. The footfall shows the popularity of the centre, but is not a measure of how it increases its income.

Councillor Feltham apologised on behalf of the Council and officers for not including the MS Society in their overall consultation process. This was a true error and she would not be able to do anything about it at present.

Councillor Hazell said the Colchester Institute is looking at ways to increase campus sites and the opportunity for students to learn and train in work such as looking after the elderly and care management. She had been informed that the Institute would be interested in talking to the Council about ways of expanding their services and being of benefit to Abbots members, and could provide further information is requested.

Councillor Hazell said nowhere in the report did it provide the cost of officer and transport time to support the CCVS and move people around the Town if the Abbot Centre closes. Also, no comparative figures were provided in terms of involvement and cost of the Zone Teams. Councillor Feltham said the cost of moving services had not

been costed, but whatever the costs they are not quantified, but will be met no matter what decision is taken. The Zone Teams network with all Council staff across the Borough, providing a range of different services based on residents needs.

Councillor Harrington said he was overwhelmed by the arguments in favour of keeping the Abbots Centre open. Councillor Harrington said if services are signposted following the closure of the centre, there will be costs that have not been provided. Whilst Councillor Harrington was full of admiration for the Zone Teams he did not believe they had the expertise to meet some of the needs mentioned by this evening's speakers, that to suggest the teams could provide this was like comparing apples with pears. Councillor Harrington said he hoped when Councillor Feltham and the other Cabinet members discussed this proposal on 4 September, they did so with an open mind.

Councillor Feltham said she did not expect Zone Team operatives to meet variety and complex needs of many elderly and vulnerable residents. Councillor Feltham said she will follow-up the suggestions made this evening, particularly the one from Councillor Hazell, but said she would be surprised if it will be sufficient to keep Abbots open, and that was as honest as she could be at the moment. Councillor Davies said she was disappointed by what Councillor Feltham had implied, because the whole point of this review was to scrutinise the proposal and put forward alternative proposals or suggestions the Cabinet will properly listen to and consider, but now the Panel were being told the Cabinet will not consider them. Councillor Feltham said this is not what she had implied.

In response to Councillor Harrington, she said it is very difficult to respond to a hypothetical question about what would be considered an acceptable subsidy for each member. She added that she did not have a fixed figure in mind. She appreciated that the subsidy had decreased year on year and she will, together with Cabinet colleagues consider all the suggestions put forward. Also in response to Councillor Harrington she said they will also take account of the Abbot's members comments that they will be prepared to agree to an increase in fees.

Responding to Councillor Davies, who was pleased Councillor Feltham had said she and her colleagues will consider all the proposed suggestions and comments, Councillor Feltham said this will be done in advance of the September Cabinet meeting and will be debated at that meeting, but the review date will not be deferred to a later date. Councillor Turrell confirmed that this will be a Cabinet decision and all Cabinet members will consider the points and suggestions raised at tonight's meeting, some of which have already been raised and considered, and the final decision will be made by Cabinet in September.

Councillor Ford said the arguments put forward for retaining the Abbots Centre had been very powerful. The closure will be considered as something that will bring a lack of social inclusion. The Abbot's members had paid taxes for a lifetime and they rightly expected something in return. He added the argument to remain open was powerful, but this was his heart, whereas his head was clear that money is tight and a very difficult decision has to be made. Councillor Ford said when the Cabinet consider alternative options and suggestions he hoped it will include consideration to Councillor Willetts suggestion to use reserves to cover the financial subsidy.

In response to Councillor Hayes, Councillor Turrell said whilst Colchester Borough Council had continued to fund this centre since it opened, Essex County Council, the responsible authority, said they would not be able to afford the subsidy and the Centre would have to close.

Councillor Hayes read out a proposal to put forward to the Cabinet (see resolution).

Mr. Sean Plummer, Finance Manager, responded to Councillor Ford. Mr. Plummer said the quoted underspends on the overall budget was for 2012/13, and that £300k of the underspend had been allocated by Cabinet. The allocation of funding for 2014/15 set out in the Budgets papers included in tonight's agenda is based on a number of assumptions including a reduction in Government spending. Mr. Plummer said the report suggests there is going to be significant gaps in coming years, with the 2014/15 budget forecast being £1.3m. This figure was the overall figure, and already took account of the delivery of anticipated savings and increased income. In conclusion he said there is some money in reserves but the Council will need to consider this in light of the overall budget position.

Councillor Cope asked whether the subsidy could be reassessed against other subsidies and reprioritised, that surely this decision, in the context of what has been said this evening, was about social justice. In response Councillor Turrell said the Cabinet will listen to all the comments, though the overall Budget had been set and was agreed by Full Council; this could not be changed. Councillor Turrell said an alternative budget could have been submitted but this did not happen.

Councillor Hazell said many millions of pounds have been put into Leisure World over the years though this facility did not serve all the local population. She asked that given Leisure World had been provided with the investment to dramatically change processes and the structure to ultimately make the centre cost neutral, why not do the same for the Abbots Centre. Councillor Feltham said the resultant fundamental service review at Leisure World was to change its operational structure (with the use of capital money). This has resulted in a £680k reduction in the overall budget including £280k in staff cuts. The turnaround and refurbished centre was due to the hard work of its staff. Councillor Feltham said she had not been able to find that sort of flexibility in Abbots and that's the sort of question she had been unable to find an answer to.

Having heard many brave and passionate speeches, Councillor Hogg said the Panel were here to scrutinise the report with the purpose of trying desperately to find a solution, but that said, those present at the meeting should be prepared that this may not happen. Councillor Hogg said he would like to see the option to change the use of the centre from an activity centre to a broader community centre.

Councillor P. Higgins said whilst a way to decrease the subsidy would be to increase fees and charges, and the members in attendance of the meeting said they would be prepared to do so, you ran the risk that membership will fall. He said he would like to take the suggestion of Councillor Hazell further and see consideration given to broadening the base of the centre from an activity base to a community centre.

Councillor Harrington requested the Cabinet to keep the Abbots centre open for the

duration of time that the offer of £105k lasted, the remainder of 2013/14 and two further years, during which time the Cabinet could do what others had suggested, investigate the real possibilities of making Abbots financially secure.

Councillor Hazell said she as a member of the scrutiny panel, she was uncomfortable with just requesting the Cabinet to listen to and consider the recording of the meeting, that the Panel needed to put down in the proposal their thoughts and ideas as a definite request for an outcome.

In response to Councillor Davies regarding whether the Centre's management had been consulted on the proposal, Ms. Lucie Breadman said the management consisted of the manager, Mrs Debbie Young, who with support from other officers and staff tried very hard to change the fortunes of the centre by keeping costs down, but it had been a struggle to get membership number up.

RESOLVED that the Panel;

- i) Reviewed the proposals set out in the covering report in terms of managing the closure of the Abbots Activity Centre.
- ii) Requested the Cabinet to take into account the views and comments of all the public speakers and members of the Panel when the Cabinet make their decision on the proposals at the meeting on the 4 September 2013.
- iii) Some of the main proposals and comments made by Members of the Panel have been encapsulated below, and the Cabinet is requested to consider these so that a more informed judgement can be made on 4 September 2013. These included;

Requesting the Cabinet to listen to the recording of this evening's meeting and in particular the words of the members of public speakers, and to bear in mind all the points made when considering the decision to be made on 4 September, especially the accuracy of all the figures on which the decision is based, and the possibility that Colchester Institute might be able to host some services such as the Stroke Club.

Requested the Cabinet to consider alternative funding streams.

Asked the Cabinet to work with any relevant organisations, institutions and services to fully explore how the Abbots Centre can become sustainable, for example;

Requested the Cabinet, given the Colchester Institute is looking at ways to increase campus sites and the opportunity for students to learn and train in work such as looking after the elderly and care management, to consider investigating further the opportunity for the Institute to expand their services to the Abbots Centre.

Requested the Cabinet to consider broadening the base of the centre from an activity centre to a community centre.

16. 2014/15 Budget Strategy

Councillor Paul Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources and Mr. Sean Plummer, Finance Manager, attended the meeting for this item.

The Scrutiny Panel was requested to consider and note the 2014/15 Budget Strategy, Medium Term Financial Forecast and Budget Timetable, to be presented to the Cabinet on 10 July 2013, and refer any comments or concerns back to the Cabinet for further consideration.

Councillor Quince addressed the Panel and mentioned a number of observations. He said the underspend within the Budget was excellent news, largely down to better returns from treasury management, and we should all congratulate officers for this position. Councillor Quince said that regarding Budget, there are significant efficiency savings mentioned in the report including those from the current fundamental service reviews, and also significant income targets. He asked how confident was the Portfolio Holder in meeting all these targets? especially in light of the fact that even including these, there remains a budget gap.

Regarding balances and reserves, Councillor Quince said we are constantly reminded that they are being kept at a prudent level of £2.1m (against an advised level of £1.8m), with £5.8m in reserves, and asked for a breakdown of what this monetary figure is earmarked for, what other pots of reserves there are, and what are they being kept for?

Councillor Smith said whilst we could not underestimate the role of officers in the Council's treasury management a lot of the credit might lie with the Bank of England and their policies on quantitative easing.

Regarding balances and reserves, Councillor Smith said there are a large number of reserves for many different purposes, but given the late hour, asked the Panel to agree that he would ask officers to circulate a breakdown outside of the meeting.

Councillor Smith said it was good that the Council was able to report an underspend, and page 43 of the Budget report provided details of how the sums have been allocated and recommended for funding from balances.

Councillor Smith said he was confident that the Council will achieve the savings predicted not only for 2014/15 but also for the current year, based on but not solely, of Colchester's past record of achieving the predicted budget savings.

In response to Councillor Hazell, Mr. Plummer said the £45k cost pressure for Trade Waste in 2013/14 related to a reduction in the income.

Whilst a budget gap remained, Councillor Smith said the UCC (Universal Customer Care) fundamental service review was starting to produce savings and additional income streams from commercial activities are being considered that will produce additional income.

RESOLVED that the Panel considered and noted the 2014/15 Budget Strategy,

Medium Term Financial Forecast and Budget Timetable, to be presented to the Cabinet on 10 July 2013.

17. Treasury Management 2012/13 Annual Report

Councillor Paul Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources and Mr. Sean Plummer, Finance Manager, attended the meeting for this item.

The Scrutiny Panel was requested to note the activities relating to treasury management and performance in 2012/13 and note the performance of the Council's treasury management advisors.

RESOLVED that the Panel noted the activities relating to treasury management in 2012/13 and the performance of the Council's treasury management advisors.



Scrutiny Panel

Item
10

20 August 2013

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Robert Judd
Title	Work Programme 2013-14		Tel. 282274
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Action Required

- 1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the 2013-14 Work Programme.

2. Reason for Action

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

3. Work Programme

- 3.1 The completion of the report of the final overview of the firstsite project has unfortunately been delayed, and this review has been rescheduled for the 10 September 2013.

The evening of the 10 September will form two meetings, the Crime and Disorder Committee for the Safer Colchester Partnership review, and the Scrutiny Panel for the firstsite review.

Meeting date / agenda items and relevant portfolio
11 June 2013 1. 2012-13 Year-end Performance Report and SPAP (Leader / Hd.Community) 2. 2012-13 Revenue Expenditure Monitoring Report 3. 2012-13 Capital Expenditure Monitoring Report
2 July 2013 (extra) 1. New Housing Arrangements (Housing / Hd. Of Commercial) deferred from 11 June 2013
23 July 2013 (briefing 18 July, 5pm, S11 Rowan House) 1. Pre-scrutinise the Portfolio Holder decision 'To Close the Abbots Activity Centre' (Community and Leisure) 2. Budget Strategy, Timetable and MTF (Leader / Business and Resources) 3. Annual Report on Treasury Management (Business and Resources)
20 August 2013 (briefing 14 August, 5pm, S11 Rowan House) 1. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – June 2. 2013-14 Financial Monitor, period April – June

<p>10 September 2013 (briefing 5 September, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee) (Planning and Community Safety) 2. firstsite project: Final Overview (Scrutiny Panel)(I Vipond, Executive Director)
<p>29 October 2013 (briefing 24 October, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial & Corporate Management FSR - Pre Cabinet scrutiny of Business Case (Leader)
<p>12 November 2013 (briefing 7 November, 4.30pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Localising Council Tax Support (follow-up on 2012-13 implementation review) 2. 2013-14 Revenue Monitor, period April – September 3. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – September
<p>10 December 2013 (briefing 5 December, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treasury Management – Half yearly update
<p>28 January 2014 (briefing 23 January, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2014/15 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and MTFP (Pre-scrutiny of Cabinet Decision (Leader / Business and Resources) 2. 2013-14 6-monthly Performance report and SPAP (Leader / Business and Resources) 3. Treasury Management Investment Strategy
<p>11 February 2014 (briefing 6 February, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – December 2. 2013-14 Revenue Monitor, period April – December
<p>18 March 2014 (briefing 13 March, 5pm, S11 Rowan House)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colchester Community Stadium Limited review (last review 20-Mar-2012)(Leader)



Scrutiny Panel

Item
11

20 August 2013

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Graham Coleman ☎ 282741
Title	Capital Expenditure Monitor 2013/14 – Quarter 1		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the progress against all capital schemes in the first three months of 2013/14

1. Action Required

- 1.1 To note the level of capital spending during 2013/14, and forecasts for future years.

2. Reason for scrutiny

- 2.1 Monitoring capital spending is important to ensure:
- Spending on projects is within agreed scheme budgets.
 - The overall programme is delivered within budget.
- 2.2 This report also gives the Panel the opportunity to hold Service Managers and Portfolio Holders accountable for their budgets.

3. Background

- 3.1 This report sets out details of spending for the financial year 2013/14 (April to June) and revised forecasts for future years
- 3.2 The report includes new capital funding and changes to the capital programme.
- 3.3 The report includes capital expenditure in respect of the Housing Investment Programme, including expenditure on the Council's housing stock.

4. 2013/14 review

- 4.1 **Appendix A** sets out details of spending on all schemes along with existing expenditure forecasts provided by budget managers to provide an indication of progress against schemes in monetary terms. It should be pointed out that expenditure is unlikely to be incurred evenly throughout the year, so any apparent variances from the forecast position for the year are unlikely to indicate any over or under spending against projects as a whole, but tend to relate to timing differences between anticipated payments and actual payments to contractors. Any significant divergences from planned activity will be brought to the Panel's attention in the following paragraphs.
- 4.2 Accrued capital spending in the first three months of the year totalled £2.1 million. This expenditure represents 8.2% of the projected spend for 2013/14. Historically spending in the first quarter of a new financial year tends to be quite low. The most significant areas of planned expenditure in the year are summarised in the following table:

Scheme	Forecast £'000	Actual Q1 £'000
Decent Homes & Upgrades	7,775.0	313.9
Castle Museum Redevelopment	3,477.8	120.6
Sheltered Accommodation Review	2,023.0	27.7
Universal Customer Contact FSR - ICT	1,510.7	37.0
Council House New Build	1,000.0	5.0
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,000.0	29.0
Garrison ex-Medical Centre	700.0	700.0
Sport & Leisure FSR – Building Works	632.3	353.4
Private Sector Renewals – Loans & Grants	625.1	24.1
Temporary Accommodation Review	600.0	400.0

- 4.3 Significant expenditure in the first quarter of the financial year included the payment of £700k towards the refurbishment of the ex-Garrison Medical Centre and £400k paid towards the refurbishment of Ascott House.
- 4.4 Where negative expenditure is showing in the report this arises from payments accrued to the previous financial year 2012-13 for works completed where invoices have still to be received and paid.
- 4.5 The Capital Programme has increased by £10.5m since the previous report. New funding has been added to the capital programme including £8.1m for the 2013-14 Housing Investment Programme, £439k from Government Grant for Disabled Facilities Grants, £416k awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Moot Hall Organ restoration, £1.39m contributions from Section 106 monies, and £31k funded from revenue budget contributions. The Capital Programme now stands at £29.0 million.
- 4.6 It should be noted that the programme includes a number of major schemes where spending is planned across more than one year. Budget managers have profiled their forecasts for expenditure in line with expectations for 2014/15 and beyond. The table below provides a summary of the capital programme by service area:

	Total Prog.	2013/14 Spend	2013/14 Forecast	Future Years Forecast	(Surplus) / Shortfall
Service / Scheme	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate & Financial Mgmt	3,401.6	58.9	1,871.5	1,533.3	3.2
Operational Services	789.0	415.7	789.0	0.0	0.0
Professional Services	2,573.5	453.1	2,225.1	348.4	0.0
Commercial Services	3,886.0	(194.0)	3,393.4	515.8	23.2
Community Services	6,706.1	1,005.9	5,636.3	1,069.8	0.0
Completed Schemes	22.1	13.7	22.1	0.0	0.0
Housing Revenue Account	11,603.3	348.4	11,603.3	0.0	0.0
Total Capital Programme	28,981.6	2,101.7	25,540.7	3,467.3	26.4

- 4.7 The Scrutiny Panel on 11 June requested more information regarding the 'CBC Enhancements' element of the Bus Station capital scheme – specifically how the spend of £250k in 2012/13 was broken down, as well as what the £170k expenditure planned for 2013/14 will consist of. This information is given in the paragraphs below.

4.8 In respect of the £250k spent in 2012/13 the Council have made a contribution to the enhancement of the new bus station in three distinct areas, these are:

- £70,000 to enhance the public realm. This is an upgrade, agreed by the Council's urban designer, to the pavers used along Osborne Street and Stanwell Street and the distinct pavers used around the new waiting room.
- £178,125 to supply and maintain 5 Information Pods in the town centre, including two at the new bus station. The information pods provide bus information, specific to where they are situated, and in addition show visitor information on the other side which is interactive. This offers journey planning, news about events in the town centre and more general BBC news and weather etc.
- £1,784 for signage at the former bus station advising passengers of the changes. New vinyl signage to the refurbished canopy and new waiting room announcing the new bus station.

4.9 The £170k balance will be spent on:

- Updating the towns existing signage to reflect the new location of the bus station.
- Remediating the former site back to a grassed area.

Full costings for this element are awaited.

4.10 As shown in the table above there is currently a forecast net overspend on the capital programme of £26.4k. This is detailed below:

Scheme	Over/ (Under) £'000
Town Hall DDA Sensory Project	3.2
Site Disposal Costs	23.2
Total Net Overspend	26.4

4.11 The previously reported small overspend on the Town Hall DDA Sensory Access Project is now forecast to be around £3.2k rather than £7.6k reported before. The previously predicted overspend on Phase 2 of the Carbon Management Programme is now not expected to occur. Costs of Site Disposals are now £23.2k over budget. This has resulted from the legal costs incurred in the recent sale of land at North Colchester which has generated a capital receipt of over £2m. These sums will be referred to Cabinet to consider alongside an updated forecast of capital receipts.

5. Strategic Plan references

5.1 The Council's Capital Programme is aligned to the Strategic Plan.

6. Financial implications

6.1 As set out above.

7. Risk management implications

7.1 Risk management issues are considered as part of all capital projects.

8. Other Standard References

- 8.1 Having considered consultation, 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.

Background Papers

None

Town Hall BDA Sensory Project	7.7	0.0	7.7
Carbon Management Programme phase 2	86.9	(2.3)	84.9
Moot Hall Organ	444.1	0.0	40.8
Universal Customer Contact Fundamental Service Review - ICT	2,635.7	37.0	1,510.7
Universal Customer Contact Fundamental Service Review - Accommodation	145.0	0.0	145.0
ICT Strategy Phase 2	52.0	8.2	52.0
Financial Systems Migration	30.2	16.0	30.2
TOTAL - Corporate & Financial Management	3,401.6	58.9	1,871.5
OPERATIONAL SERVICES			
Flat Recycling Extension	10.3	0.0	10.3
Street Services FSR	44.8	1.0	44.8
Sport & Leisure FSR - Building works to Colchester Leisure World	632.3	353.4	632.3
Sport & Leisure FSR - IT works	72.0	31.7	72.0
Charter Hall Staging	29.6	29.6	29.6
TOTAL - Operational Services	789.0	415.7	789.0
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			
Provision of broadband in parishes	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	1,348.4	29.0	1,000.0
Private Sector Renewals - Loans and Grants	625.1	24.1	625.1
Temporary Accommodation Review	600.0	400.0	600.0
TOTAL - Professional Services	2,573.5	453.1	2,225.1
COMMERCIAL SERVICES			
Park & Ride	124.4	0.0	0.0
Community Stadium	22.1	0.0	22.1
North Colchester Development Land	97.6	4.0	60.0
North Colchester Business Incubation Unit	71.2	0.0	71.2
King Edward Quay	5.2	0.0	5.2
St Botolphs Regeneration	416.9	26.7	300.0
St Botolphs Public Realm	0.1	0.0	0.1
Town Centre Improvements	151.2	0.0	151.2
Town Station Square	251.7	1.1	251.7
Bus Station - CBC Enhancements	170.1	(231.0)	170.1
Osborne Street Bus Station	130.8	(722.5)	130.8
A12 Junction Facilitation	162.5	0.0	162.5
Creative Business Hub	120.8	0.0	120.8
Transcoast	685.2	168.1	685.2
Firstsite (VAF)	348.6	(34.5)	348.6
Site Disposal Costs	2.8	26.0	26.0
Moler Works Site	41.4	0.0	41.4
Assistance to Registered Housing Providers	746.9	550.0	550.0
Pumping Main - Distillery Lane/Haven Road	86.0	0.0	86.0
Upgrade of CCTV Equipment	96.0	0.0	96.0
Cemetery Extension	125.0	0.0	85.0
Replacement of Cremators	29.5	18.1	29.5
TOTAL - Commercial Services	3,886.0	(194.0)	3,393.4

Castle Park Sensory Garden S106	65.0	0.0	65.0
West End Sports Ground Car Park S106	13.6	0.0	13.6
Cook's Shipyard Playsite Wivenhoe S106	33.9	3.3	33.9
Baden Powell Play Area S106	18.0	0.0	18.0
Castle Park Olympic Legacy Project	125.0	0.0	125.0
Old Heath Recreation Ground Improvements	430.0	11.3	0.0
Shrub End Sports Ground Car Park	71.3	65.9	71.3
Heritage Fund - incl. Roman Walls	335.0	3.0	200.9
Castle Walls	479.5	0.0	479.5
Redevelopment of Castle Museum	3,980.5	120.6	3,477.8
TOTAL - Community Services	6,706.1	1,005.9	5,636.3
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT			
Decent Homes & Upgrades	7,775.0	313.9	7,775.0
Adaptations	562.0	1.8	562.0
Sheltered Accommodation Review	2,023.0	27.7	2,023.0
Council House New Build	1,000.0	5.0	1,000.0
Housing ICT Development	243.3	0.0	243.3
TOTAL - HRA	11,603.3	348.4	11,603.3
COMPLETED SCHEMES (OR WHERE RETENTION ONLY OUTSTANDING)			
Electronic Service Delivery	1.0	0.0	1.0
Boada Skatebowl	0.2	0.0	0.2
Gladiator Way - Play Equipment S106	0.4	0.0	0.4
Pondfields/Ripple Way Play Areas S106	0.2	0.0	0.2
Colchester Leisure World - Fitness Pool LACM and Modernisation	5.4	5.4	5.4
Mercury Theatre - Roof & Windows	13.3	8.3	13.3
Highwoods CP Drainage S106	1.4	0.0	1.4
New Braiswick Park Cycle Route	0.2	0.0	0.2
TOTAL - COMPLETED SCHEMES	22.1	13.7	22.1

20 August 2013

Report of	Head of Resource Management	Author	Sean Plummer ☎ 282347
Title	Financial Monitoring Report – April to June 2013		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the financial performance of all General Fund services and the Housing Revenue Account for the first three months of 2013/14

1. Action required

- 1.1 The panel is asked to note the financial performance of General Fund Services and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in the first three months of 2013/14.

2. Reason for scrutiny

- 2.1 Monitoring of financial performance is important to ensure that:
- Service expenditure remains within cash-limited budgets.
 - Potential variances at year-end are identified early so that remedial action can be taken to recover the position or 'recycle' any surplus budgets.
 - Performance targets are being met.
- 2.2 This report also gives the panel the opportunity to hold Service Managers and Portfolio Holders accountable for their budgets.

3. Background and Summary Position

- 3.1 This report reviews the Council's overall position based on profiled income and expenditure for the three months to 30 June 2013, and also shows a projection of the outturn figures for the full year. All the information presented in respect of General Fund Services shows the position based on net 'direct costs'. The review of the Housing Revenue Account is different in that it shows all costs, both direct and indirect.
- 3.2 The projected outturn for the General Fund is currently a net overspend of £181k. The Housing Revenue Account forecast outturn position is currently an underspend of £75k.
- 3.3 The General Fund position is set out in more detail in the following paragraphs and the HRA position explained in section 6.

4. General Fund – Position to 30 June 2013

Service Budgets

- 4.1 Appendix A summarises the Council position by expenditure group and by Service Group. The net position shows a variance against profiled budget for General Fund Services (excluding benefits) of £496k (favourable). This comprises total expenditure being £748k lower than expected and less income than expected totalling £252k.

Appendix B provides a more detailed view, breaking this information down by individual Service Groups.

4.2. Both Appendices A & B to the report include traffic light indicators. The thresholds are as follows:

Green – Variance less than £50k and 5% of budget
 Amber – Variance greater than £50k **OR** 5% of budget
 Red – Variance greater than £50k **AND** 5% of budget

4.3. Benefits payments are not shown in Appendix A to avoid distorting the reported position for Service Groups. It is currently projected that this area will be on budget at year end, when the final subsidy claim is paid.

5. Outturn Forecast / Risk Areas

5.1 This is the first review this year of the 13/14 budget position and the current forecast outturn is net overspend of £181k.

	£'000	
Service budgets	331	See paras. 5.2 – 5.3 and Appendix C
Technical Items - Interest	(150)	See paras. 5.5.
Potential net overspend	181	

Service Budgets

5.2 The following table sets out the forecast outturn for all service areas with outturn variances. This shows a net forecast overspend of £331k. As the table shows, this mainly reflects a number of pressures within Operational Services which have been offset by cost savings in other service areas.

Service	Forecast outturn		
	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Net</i>
	<i>£'000</i>	<i>£'000</i>	<i>£'000</i>
Commercial Services	(20)	(40)	(60)
Operational Services	91	350	441
Professional Services	(50)	0	(50)
Total all services	21	310	331

5.3 Appendix C sets out details of all forecast variances against service budgets at the year-end totalling £395k. These include a budget shortfall of £64k in respect of Museum expenditure. Under the terms of the joint museum service, if this forecast transpires then this overspend will be carried forward and as such will not impact on balances. Therefore, this has been excluded from the table at paragraph 5.1.

5.4 There are other risks, both positive and negative, to the outturn position that are not currently shown such in the forecast. For example, land charges income is currently higher than budget, whilst some of other income areas remain below targets such as community alarms, planning and building control. These and other areas will be closely monitored over the coming months and if necessary the outturn forecast will be revised.

Corporate / Technical Items

- 5.5. The budget includes a number of corporate and technical budget areas such as net interest earnings, the provision to repay debt, pension costs and some non-service specific grants. The table below sets out that it is currently forecast that there will be an underspend of £150k in these areas. The main reason for the position is in respect of the interest budget where costs of borrowing are expected to be lower due to timing of capital schemes, funding decisions and the current strategy.

Council Tax and Business Rates

- 5.6. The 2013/14 included some important key changes to the budget with the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme and local retention of business rates. The final budget report set out the increased risks in respect of these items. At this early stage in the year no specific variances are forecast and a more detailed review will be carried out at the half year stage to consider any potential impact on the overall General Fund budget.

Summary position and action proposed

- 5.7. The forecast outturn shows a potential net overspend of £181k. Further more detailed work will be undertaken during Quarter 2 to ensure forecast outturn positions are robust, including where underspends to date have not been reflected in the forecast outturn position. It should be noted that as reported to the previous meeting of this Panel balances are currently £242k above the recommended level.
- 5.8. SMT continues to monitor the budget position on a monthly basis. The next report to the Panel will consider the position after 6 months. This will provide a better opportunity to assess progress against budget targets and income levels.

6. Housing Revenue Account

- 6.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account which is affected by a number of variable factors. At the end of June 2013, the HRA is showing a net underspend of £275k compared to the budget for the same period. This is primarily due to lower expenditure on Premises costs (£162k) and Supplies & Services costs (£43k). Furthermore, we have received £45k more income than anticipated.

Position to date

- 6.2 Premises related costs are showing an underspend of £162k as at the end of June 2013. Overall, there is a net underspend of £45k on Repairs and Maintenance, which primarily relates to the timing of expenditure on repairs and maintenance of pumping stations, Homeless Persons Units and other delegated areas. There are further underspends of £61k on Grounds Maintenance budgets which relate to the timing of expenditure, and £20k on Council Tax on Empty properties. Finally, there is an underspend of £13k on Utility and Water costs.
- 6.3 Supplies & Services costs are underspent by £43k at the end of June. There is a general underspend across most budget headings, however these are partially offset by an overspend on IT costs which relates to the timing of expenditure.
- 6.4 We have received £45k more income at the end of June 2013. This has primarily arisen due to less rental & service charge income being lost from dwellings and garages than assumed within the budget, through a combination of voids and the timing of the garage site redevelopment project.

Forecast Outturn

- 6.5 The current projected outturn for the HRA is that it will be underspent by £75k, taking into account the additional rent & service charge income we have received to date.

7. Strategic Plan references

- 7.1 The priorities within the Strategic Plan are reflected in the Medium Term Financial Forecast. This makes assumptions regarding government grant and Council Tax income, and identifies where necessary savings will be found in order to achieve a balanced budget. The 2013/14 revenue budget was prepared in accordance with the Strategic Plan's priorities, in the context of the Council facing growing financial pressures. Budget monitoring enables the financial performance against these priorities to be assessed.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 As set out above.

9. Risk management implications

- 9.1 Risk management is used throughout the budget cycle, and this is reflected in the strategic risk register. The 2013/14 revenue budget report that was approved by Council in February 2013 detailed a number of potentially significant risk areas that had been identified during the budget process. In addition, Heads of Service identify a number of both positive and negative risk areas during the year.

10. Other Standard References

- 10.1 Having considered consultation, 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.

Background Papers

None

Budget Monitoring Summary - Period 3 2013/14		Full Year Position					
		Annual Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance (fav) / adv £'000			
Account Description	Budget to Period 3 £'000	Actual to Period 3 £'000	Variance (fav) / adv £'000				
By Subjective Group							
Employees	5,865	5,857	(8)	green	23,483	23,474	(9)
Premises Related	1,333	909	(424)	red	7,606	7,556	(50)
Transport Related	442	350	(92)	red	2,467	2,567	100
Supplies & Services	2,260	2,097	(163)	red	8,500	8,544	44
Third Party Payments	320	276	(44)	amber	1,186	1,186	-
Transfer Payments	73	56	(17)	amber	292	292	-
Capital Financing Costs	-	-	-	green	130	130	-
Subtotal Expenditure	10,293	9,545	(748)	red	43,664	43,749	85
Government Grant	(262)	(302)	(40)	amber	(465)	(465)	-
Other Grants & Reimbursements	(260)	(233)	27	amber	(2,945)	(2,945)	-
Customer & Client Receipts	(4,699)	(4,434)	265	red	(18,601)	(18,291)	310
Income-Interest	-	-	-	green	(2)	(2)	-
Inter Account Transfers	-	-	-	green	-	-	-
Subtotal Income	(5,221)	(4,969)	252	amber	(22,013)	(21,703)	310
Total General Fund Services	5,072	4,576	(496)	red	21,651	22,046	395
By Service Group							
Corp & Democratic Core	26	26	-	green	257	257	-
Assistant Chief Executive	1,810	1,755	(55)	amber	8,270	8,270	-
Executive Management Team	245	244	(1)	green	909	909	-
Community Services	1,573	1,489	(84)	red	5,984	6,048	64
Commercial Services	(328)	(516)	(188)	red	(301)	(361)	(60)
Customer Services	771	771	-	green	2,690	2,690	-
Operational Services	224	75	(149)	red	599	1,040	441
Professional Services	751	732	(19)	green	3,243	3,193	(50)
Total General Fund Services	5,072	4,576	(496)	red	21,651	22,046	395

APPENDIX B

Budget Monitoring Report for All Services - April - June 2013

Corp & Assistant Executive Management Community Commercial Customer Operational Professional
Democractic Chief Executive Services Services Services Services Services
Core ACDC ACEX CORM CMTY COML CTMR OPER PROF
£'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000

Account Description	ACDC	ACEX	CORM	CMTY	COML	CTMR	OPER	PROF	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

EXPENDITURE EMPLOYEES

Profiled Budget to Date	-	863	202	1,030	795	705	1,333	937	5,865
Actual to Date	-	854	202	1,073	750	717	1,349	912	5,857
Variance to Date	-	(9)	-	43	(45)	12	16	(25)	(8)
	green	green	green	green	amber	green	green	green	green
Annual Budget	-	3,471	807	4,117	3,181	2,814	5,333	3,760	23,483
Projected Outturn	-	3,471	807	4,117	3,181	2,814	5,324	3,760	23,474
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	(9)	-	(9)

PREMISES

Profiled Budget to Date	-	346	-	431	118	-	286	152	1,333
Actual to Date	-	326	1	331	78	(3)	77	99	909
Variance to Date	-	(20)	1	(100)	(40)	(3)	(209)	(53)	(424)
	green	amber	amber	red	amber	amber	red	red	red
Annual Budget	-	1,452	2	2,525	883	-	2,137	607	7,606
Projected Outturn	-	1,452	2	2,525	883	-	2,137	557	7,556
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(50)	(50)

TRANSPORT

Profiled Budget to Date	-	15	1	25	8	4	381	8	442
Actual to Date	-	12	2	24	8	4	294	6	350
Variance to Date	-	(3)	1	(1)	-	-	(87)	(2)	(92)
	green	amber	amber	green	green	green	red	amber	red
Annual Budget	-	61	5	140	38	13	2,178	32	2,467
Projected Outturn	-	61	5	140	38	13	2,278	32	2,567
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	100

APPENDIX B

Budget Monitoring Report for All Services - April - June 2013

Corp & Assistant Executive Management Community Commercial Customer Operational Professional
 Democratic Chief Executive Services Services Services Services Services
 Core ACDC ACEX CORM CMTY COML CTMR OPER PROF
 Demographic Assistant Executive Management Community Commercial Customer Operational Professional
 Core ACDC ACEX CORM CMTY COML CTMR OPER PROF
 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000 £'000

Account Description	ACDC	ACEX	CORM	CMTY	COML	CTMR	OPER	PROF	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
SUPPLIES & SERVICES									
Profiled Budget to Date	26	807	103	314	242	255	391	122	2,260
Actual to Date	26	798	105	287	154	244	348	135	2,097
Variance to Date	-	(9)	2	(27)	(88)	(11)	(43)	13	(163)
	green	green	green	amber	red	green	amber	amber	red
Annual Budget	257	3,793	188	1,314	811	515	1,084	538	8,500
Projected Outturn	257	3,793	188	1,378	791	515	1,084	538	8,544
Variance	-	-	-	64	(20)	-	-	-	44
	green	green	green	amber	green	green	amber	green	amber
THIRD PARTY									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	-	103	70	-	108	39	320
Actual to Date	-	-	-	97	72	-	68	39	276
Variance to Date	-	-	-	(6)	2	-	(40)	-	(44)
	green	green	green	amber	green	green	amber	green	amber
Annual Budget	-	100	-	116	309	-	471	190	1,186
Projected Outturn	-	100	-	116	309	-	471	190	1,186
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TRANSFER PAYMENTS									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	-	-	-	37	-	36	73
Actual to Date	-	-	-	-	-	33	-	23	56
Variance to Date	-	-	-	-	-	(4)	-	(13)	(17)
	green	green	green	green	green	amber	green	amber	amber
Annual Budget	-	-	-	-	-	148	-	144	292
Projected Outturn	-	-	-	-	-	148	-	144	292
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B

Budget Monitoring Report for All Services - April - June 2013

Democractic Core	Corp & Executive	Assistant Chief Executive	Executive Management Team	Community Services	Commercial Services	Customer Services	Operational Services	Professional Services
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Account Description	ACDC £'000	ACEX £'000	CORM £'000	CMTY £'000	COML £'000	CTMR £'000	OPER £'000	PROF £'000	Total £'000
CAPITAL FINANCING									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actual to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Variance to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Annual Budget	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green
Projected Outturn	-	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	130
Variance	-	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	130
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE									
Profiled Budget to Date	26	2,031	306	1,903	1,233	1,001	2,499	1,294	10,293
Actual to Date	26	1,990	310	1,812	1,062	995	2,136	1,214	9,545
Variance to Date	-	(41)	4	(91)	(171)	(6)	(363)	(80)	(748)
Annual Budget	green	green	green	amber	red	green	red	red	red
Projected Outturn	257	9,007	1,002	8,212	5,222	3,490	11,203	5,271	43,664
Variance	257	9,007	1,002	8,276	5,202	3,490	11,294	5,221	43,749
	-	-	-	64	(20)	-	91	(50)	85
INCOME									
GOVERNMENT GRANT									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	(50)	(32)	-	(130)	-	(50)	(262)
Actual to Date	-	-	(50)	(29)	-	(152)	(21)	(50)	(302)
Variance to Date	-	-	-	3	-	(22)	(21)	-	(40)
Annual Budget	green	green	green	amber	green	amber	amber	green	amber
Projected Outturn	-	-	(50)	(54)	-	(311)	-	(50)	(465)
Variance	-	-	(50)	(54)	-	(311)	-	(50)	(465)
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B

Budget Monitoring Report for All Services - April - June 2013

Democractic Core	Assistant Chief Executive	Executive Management Team	Community Services	Commercial Services	Customer Services	Operational Services	Professional Services
ACDC	ACEX	CORM	CMTY	COML	CTMR	OPER	PROF
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

Account Description	ACDC £'000	ACEX £'000	CORM £'000	CMTY £'000	COML £'000	CTMR £'000	OPER £'000	PROF £'000	Total £'000
OTHER GRANTS									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	(18)	(3)	(29)	(39)	(11)	(155)	(5)	(260)
Actual to Date	-	(4)	(16)	(33)	(48)	(11)	(109)	(12)	(233)
Variance to Date	-	14	(13)	(4)	(9)	-	46	(7)	27
	green	amber	amber	amber	amber	green	amber	amber	amber
Annual Budget	-	(74)	(13)	(1,231)	(199)	(135)	(1,287)	(6)	(2,945)
Projected Outturn	-	(74)	(13)	(1,231)	(199)	(135)	(1,287)	(6)	(2,945)
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CUST & CLIENT RECPTS									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	(203)	(8)	(269)	(1,522)	(89)	(2,120)	(488)	(4,699)
Actual to Date	-	(231)	-	(261)	(1,530)	(61)	(1,931)	(420)	(4,434)
Variance to Date	-	(28)	8	8	(8)	28	189	68	265
	green	amber	amber	green	green	amber	red	red	red
Annual Budget	-	(663)	(30)	(943)	(5,322)	(354)	(9,317)	(1,972)	(18,601)
Projected Outturn	-	(663)	(30)	(943)	(5,362)	(354)	(8,967)	(1,972)	(18,291)
Variance	-	-	-	-	(40)	-	350	-	310
INCOME-INTEREST									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actual to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Variance to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green
Annual Budget	-	-	-	-	(2)	-	-	-	(2)
Projected Outturn	-	-	-	-	(2)	-	-	-	(2)
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B

Budget Monitoring Report for All Services - April - June 2013

Democractic Core & Assistant Chief Executive
 Core ACDC ADEX CORM Community Services CMTY Commercial Services COML Customer Services CTMR Operational Services OPER Professional Services PROF

Account Description	ACDC £'000	ADEX £'000	CORM £'000	CMTY £'000	COML £'000	CTMR £'000	OPER £'000	PROF £'000	Total £'000
INTER ACCOUNT TRANS									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actual to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Variance to Date	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Annual Budget	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green	green
Projected Outturn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Variance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME									
Profiled Budget to Date	-	(221)	(61)	(330)	(1,561)	(230)	(2,275)	(543)	(5,221)
Actual to Date	-	(235)	(66)	(323)	(1,578)	(224)	(2,061)	(482)	(4,969)
Variance to Date	-	(14)	(5)	7	(17)	6	214	61	252
Annual Budget	green	amber	amber	green	green	green	red	red	amber
Projected Outturn	-	(737)	(93)	(2,228)	(5,523)	(800)	(10,604)	(2,028)	(22,013)
Variance	-	(737)	(93)	(2,228)	(5,563)	(800)	(10,254)	(2,028)	(21,703)
TOTAL NET									
Profiled Budget to Date	26	1,810	245	1,573	(328)	771	224	751	5,072
Actual to Date	26	1,755	244	1,489	(516)	771	75	732	4,576
Variance to Date	-	(55)	(1)	(84)	(188)	-	(149)	(19)	(496)
Annual Budget	green	amber	green	red	red	green	red	green	red
Projected Outturn	257	8,270	909	5,984	(301)	2,690	599	3,243	21,651
Variance	257	8,270	909	6,048	(361)	2,690	1,040	3,193	22,046
Variance	-	-	-	64	(60)	-	441	(50)	395

Forecast Outturn Variances

Service Area	Variance			Comment
	Spend £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	
Community Services				
Colchester and Ipswich Museums	64	0	64	Forecast to be £64k over budget at year end due to negative carry forward from 2012/13.
Commercial Services				
Bereavement Services	0	(20)	(20)	Income is currently £22k above budget at the end of the first quarter, including £4k from mercury abatement offsetting, which has been reflected in the forecast outturn position.
Property	0	(20)	(20)	The final 2012/13 rent reconciliation for Colchester Business Park was £20k higher than anticipated and has been included in the forecast outturn position.
Policy & Strategy	(20)	0	(20)	This variance reflects the potential saving on the 2013 Tour Series, given that costs are currently lower than budgeted.
Operational Services				
Sport and Leisure	(9)	0	(9)	Some staff savings have been identified, mainly in Aqua Springs, Pools and Beauty Therapy. Income has been forecast to come in on budget by year end although it is under budget across the whole service at the end of the first quarter, however, changes within the service may yet resolve early income issues. The Head of Service & Service Manager are meeting to ensure the service is proceeding in line with Business Case.
Recycling and Fleet	100	150	250	There are cost pressures on employee costs due to interim management arrangements & salary savings target, but more work is required to assess the impact at year end. There is a saving on yard operatives & trade tipping charges, to partly mitigate unachievable targets for partnership working (depot & trade refuse). There are additional income pressures on trade refuse & recycling credits.
Car Parking	0	200	200	Income levels from casual car parking are currently at 93% of the same period in 2012. NCP income for 2012/13 is lower than anticipated. The service is analysing the performance of each car park and will be working with the Portfolio Holder to introduce marketing activity that will stimulate more usage over the remaining months of the financial year.

Service Area	Variance			Comment
	Spend £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	
Professional Services				
Housing Options	(50)	0	(50)	A £50k net under-spend on B&B/Homelessness Initiatives is currently being forecast at year end.

Housing Revenue Account – Period 3

June 2013	Current Period - June 2013			Forecast Year-End Position		
	Profiled Budget to Period 3 £'000	Actual to Period 3 £'000	Variance (under) / over £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Variance (under) / over £'000
Account Description						
HRA - Direct & Non-Direct						
EXPENDITURE						
Employees	35	30	(5) Amber	139	139	- Green
Premises Related	1,110	948	(162) Red	6,793	6,793	- Green
Transport Related	1	-	(1) Amber	5	5	- Green
Supplies & Services	164	121	(43) Amber	982	982	- Green
Third Party Payments	1,373	1,369	(4) Green	3,302	3,302	- Green
Transfer Payments	36	19	(17) Amber	141	141	- Green
Support Services	535	536	1 Green	3,309	3,309	- Green
Capital Financing Costs	-	-	- Green	15,174	15,174	- Green
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,254	3,023	(231) Red	29,845	29,845	Green
INCOME						
Other Grants & Reimbursements	(13)	(13)	- Green	(133)	(133)	- Green
Customer & Client Receipts	(7,606)	(7,651)	(45) Green	(29,002)	(29,077)	(75) Amber
Income-Interest	(1)	-	1 Amber	(23)	(23)	- Green
Inter Account Transfers	-	-	- Green	(315)	(315)	- Green
TOTAL INCOME	(7,620)	(7,664)	(44) Green	(29,473)	(29,548)	(75) Amber
TOTAL NET - HRA	(4,366)	(4,641)	(275) Red	372	297	(75) Red

