

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Town Hall, Colchester
15 January 2013 at 6.00pm

The Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel look at policies and strategies from a borough-wide perspective and ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council. The Panel reviews corporate strategies within the Council's Strategic Plan, overviews Council partnerships, considers the Council's budgetary guidelines for the forthcoming year, and scrutinises Cabinet decisions or Cabinet Member decisions (with delegated power) which have been called in.

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

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

Have Your Say!

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

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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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Terms of Reference (but not limited to)

To review corporate strategies and strategic partnerships to ensure the actions of the Cabinet and Portfolio Holders accord with the policies and budget of the Council.

To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, and make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions.

To link the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic / Action Plans.

To scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member, the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee and the North Essex Parking Partnership (decisions relating to off-street parking only) which have been made but not implemented, and referred to the Panel through call-in.

To monitor the Council's operational performance in relation to the Strategic Plan and Performance Indicators, and the Cabinet's performance in relation to the Forward Plan.

The panel will be the appropriate route for any member to refer a 'local government matter' in the context of Councillor Call for Action.

Process for Councillor Call for Action

Councillors have the ability to call for debate and discussion a topic of neighbourhood concern, limited to issues affecting a single ward, in an attempt to bring about specific solutions for local problems, without going through the Council's executive decision making process.

Members may not call for debate matters relating to a planning or licensing decision, an individual complaint or where a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal is already provided for in law. Examples of where a member can bring an action to the panel's attention are poor service performance or increased anti-social behaviour.

The panel may reject a request as not within the guidance or where they consider the usual channels have not been exhausted, or accept that an investigation is the appropriate action.

The panel may conduct an investigation in the usual scrutiny manner and a report with recommendations will be compiled and brought to the Council or partners attention, with the Council or partners having a duty to respond. The panel will consider and publish the responses to their recommendations and feed back this information to the Councillor requesting the action.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
15 January 2013 at 6:00pm

Members

Chairman : Councillor Kevin Bentley.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Beverly Davies.
Councillors Kim Naish, Nigel Offen, Gerard Oxford,
Helen Chuah, Bill Frame, Pauline Hazell, Peter Higgins and
Terry Sutton.

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

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

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

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

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

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

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

2. Substitutions

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

3. Urgent Items

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

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any 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 - 13

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2012.

6. Have Your Say!

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any decisions taken under the Call in Procedure.

9. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

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

10. Half Yearly Performance Report Including progress on the Strategic Plan Action Plan 14 - 40

See the report from the Head of Life Opportunities.

11. Work Programme 41 - 42

See report from the Head of Corporate Management.

12. 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).

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

30 OCTOBER 2012

Present :- Councillor Kevin Bentley (Chairman)
Councillors Beverly Davies, Bill Frame, Pauline Hazell,
Peter Higgins, Kim Naish, Nigel Offen, Gerard Oxford
and Terry Sutton

Substitute Member :- Councillor Nick Cope for Councillor Helen Chuah

Also in Attendance :- Councillor Nick Barlow
Councillor Nigel Chapman
Councillor Annie Feltham
Councillor Sonia Lewis
Councillor Sue Lissimore
Councillor Will Quince
Councillor Paul Smith
Councillor Anne Turrell

15. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on **29 August 2012** was confirmed as a correct record.

16. Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact

The following Councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5);

Councillor Bentley in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor Frame in respect of being a Board Member of Colne Housing.

Councillor P. Higgins in respect of his spouse being a Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor Turrell in respect of being a Member of Essex County Council.

Introduction

Councillor Anne Turrell, Leader of the Council introduced the review of the Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact.

Councillor Turrell provided some context to the reasons for undertaking this review. The current operational ways of Council working has remained relatively unchanged for many years, but set against a backdrop of ever decreasing Government funding and the message from customers that they want to self serve, it was felt that changes to the way the Council works was the way to go forward, providing the efficiencies needed to fund the large costs of reinvestment.

The changes will mean a large investment in IT that will provide the opportunity to

customers to self-serve, whilst retaining some resources to help those who will continue to want face to face contact with officers.

Councillor Turrell said the Project Board leading this review was set-up almost two years ago and we are now at the stage where the Business Case is to be presented to Cabinet. Councillor Turrell asked the Panel to consider the content and welcomed any constructive criticism or comments prior to the decision being taken.

In response to Councillor Naish, Councillor Turrell said she was not advocating doing away with a face to face service, that this would be provided to customers, but evidence suggested the majority of customers do wish to have a self-serve system.

Councillor Frame said that paragraph 3.1 of the report on Alternative Options implied that any other option will delay what is being proposed or not deliver an alternative service, therefore suggesting there can be no alternative options / changes. Councillor Turrell confirmed that this detail could be adjusted or amended.

Councillor Sutton said he was concerned by the report that he felt did not provide the substance or evidence to support such a radical change and make the case credible. Councillor Turrell said the business case was drawn from a considerable bank of research and evidence and this detail could be provided to members if so requested. Members and officers had been briefed on some of the work to date, but if needed she would be happy to organise further briefings.

Councillor Offen questioned the title of the report, Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact, saying it was an awful lot more than that, that the title could mislead the public because the review was far more outreaching than just customer contact.

Presentation

Mr. Adrian Pritchard, Chief Executive Officer and Mrs. Pam Donnelly and Mrs Ann Hedges, Executive Directors, gave a presentation of the Fundamental Service Review (FSR) of Customer Contact (CC).

Introduction

Mr. Pritchard said the review had commenced twelve months ago.

The review was about changes to the way we work, the way we deliver services, e.g. the introduction of Street Services Zone Teams as part of the Street Services FSR.

Research shows that 26% of customer contact is outside of the customer service centre. The review began by looking at how we could address this issue but as the review proceeded it began to encompass much more including government policy changes and future resource reductions.

That said, and in response to Councillor Offen, Mr. Pritchard said the title of the report did have some traction from the outset.

The Business Case

Mr. Pritchard explained that the Business Case is a detailed document that had nine key themes, grouped as: How we do business, the changes we have to make and delivery and business benefits.

The business case also incorporated a new way of working, a model different to the current governance arrangement, with a universal customer environment providing self serve, a delivery arm for Borough wide services and a trading / business support service. Mr. Pritchard said it was felt this model best suited Colchester, though other alternatives are being pursued by other local authorities e.g. a pure commissioning philosophy, a user pays model etc. Mr. Pritchard said the business case and the business model provided an opportunity for a more commercial approach to some of the business of the Council.

How the Council will do business

Mrs. Donnelly spoke in detail about how the Council will do business.

It would be a more efficient and effective customer journey that makes life simpler for customers, simplifying what are currently complex processes. Customers would be able to access services and have more choice, with the flexibility to serve themselves, but supported by officers providing complex case management for the most vulnerable customers.

There will be a more commercial philosophy, with the creation of a commercial trading arm governed by a trading board, working within a public service ethos, important to the overall need to reduce costs or increase income in the climate of reducing public expenditure.

Changing behaviour would mean more flexible working arrangements and a more positive behaviour change from our customers. This will require changing the way we work and how services are delivered, and being proactive in the management of the increase of customers requiring services.

Operating Model

Mr. Pritchard spoke about the operating model.

It would need to respond to customers, with the universal customer environment encompassing contact via the web, telephone and face to face, operating within a triage process that will provide immediate advice or direction.

Mr. Pritchard said there would be less change in respect of service delivery but management would like to build on zone teams and zone working.

An improved commercial approach will look to improve existing procurement practices, improve existing income stream levels; better utilise the Council's assets; and the selling of expertise to others where possible.

It was confirmed that the Customer Contact, Service Delivery and Commercial arms of

the Council will be supported by one Professional Support Unit rather than the four currently within the Council.

ICT and Locations

Mrs. Hedges spoke about the development of ICT and locations.

The Council had invested in major ICT three and a half years ago, though very little investment had been made since then. In that time things have moved on, and with the current systems working to full capacity and with new ICT underpinning the changes, new investment was imperative to delivering the customer journey. Whether or not the new operating model was adopted, Mrs. Hedges said investment will be needed to maintain what is already being done.

Mrs. Hedges said the location(s) needed to be more accessible to customers, though the task was to reduce overall office accommodation space to reduce costs or increase revenue. Positive talks are progressing with Essex County Council in regards to moving the face-to-face contact to the Library, a location central to the town centre. Talks with other interested parties are still ongoing hence the need for a part of the supporting evidence having to be treated in confidence. Later in the debate and in response to Councillor Sutton, Mrs. Hedges acknowledged that some of the confidential information may have become public knowledge, though local press reports suggested a certain amount of misinterpretation.

Cultural Change

Mr. Pritchard provided more detail around the cultural change needed to bring about success to the overall changes and the governance arrangements to support the new structure.

The size of the task could not be underestimated, that to provide an organisation focused on customers would require full support from staff to implement and deliver the changes. This will be managed in a sensible stage by stage approach, moving through the transformation, taking people with us.

With regards to the new governance arrangements, Mr. Pritchard referred members to the structure chart provided within the presentation pack. The Committees to the left hand side of the page will remain in place, set by statute. Many of the companies / Joint Committees to the right hand side of the page are already in place, including Colchester Borough Homes and Colchester Community Stadium Company, Council owned companies. The scrutiny function was in place but there would need to be further discussions around the number of panels and terms of reference. The Trading Board was central to the new arrangement, sitting beside the Cabinet. Members of the board would need to be at the heart of the work of the Council's commercial activities, finding the most appropriate way of generating income / saving money. Task and Finish Groups have worked well within the current structure and these will remain a feature of the new arrangements, though allowing the Council to dispense with the Policy and Development Review Panel,

Financial Implications

Mrs. Hedges expanded on the financial implications, explaining that the figures are work in progress, and a more detailed analysis would be provided as the implementation progresses.

The implementation is dependent on ICT investment and mainly in the first two years, to provide future efficiencies and a positive ongoing revenue impact of up to £1.42m by year four of the implementation (2016/17), and a return on capital investment of £1.97m by year four.

It was felt that there was the potential for additional income over the first four years of £1.985m from other commercial activities.

In conclusion

Mr. Pritchard concluded the presentation by confirming the next steps following this scrutiny review, with the decision to be presented for approval to the Cabinet on 28 November.

This will be followed by the formation of an Implementation Group (IG) and Board, with the Chief Executive Officer chairing the IG. There will be a further round of roadshows in December as part of the staff consultation process and the introduction of the Communication Strategy.

Councillor Bentley thanked officers for the presentation.

In respect of the business case, Councillor Bentley asked that the word 'customer' was used appropriately, that whilst he accepted the use of the word to describe a range of customers, he felt residents and local taxpayers should be referred to as such. Councillor Bentley also agreed with Councillor Offen that consideration needed to be given to the name of the document.

Have Your Say

Councillor Will Quince addressed the Panel saying he was supportive of the concept that was presented, that in tough financial times there was a need for a fundamental change to the way the Council did business and improve the processes for the external users of Council services. Councillor Quince was very supportive of this direction of travel.

Councillor Quince did though, have an issue with the document being presented to the panel for scrutiny. Councillor Quince said the document, though well put together, did not constitute a business case. The document did not provide any detail only bottom-line figures, was very light in content even omitting details about cost savings and job losses.

Councillor Quince said he found it hard to understand how the Panel could effectively scrutinise the report with confidence, that more information was needed. But sadly this was the Panel's only opportunity to scrutinise the business case.

Councillor Quince said that given the scale of the project he would of hoped the Administration is passionate about the future change, but he doubted this because he hadn't heard from them. Councillor Quince asked the Administration to stand-up and back the proposals and say why they are needed.

Councillor Turrell in response, said scrutiny of the project will continue stage by stage, providing the detail members were requesting. This presentation was about the overall strategic direction to be taken by the Council. This had been the first opportunity to put the concept proposed into the public domain, a concept that was to be approved by Cabinet in November and one the Leader hoped will be owned by all Councillors and staff.

General Discussion

Councillor Cope said he found the diagrams illustrated within the business case and showing the current and proposed operating models difficult to follow and to determine the relationship between both.

Mr. Pritchard said he would be happy to populate the operating model with services once it was approved. It was the intention to undertake this work once the Cabinet had approved the proposals.

Mrs. Donnelly explained that the customer experience as illustrated in scenario 2 on page 6 of appendix A was intended to show the future experience of a very vulnerable customer, to show that the process was about ensuring at a very early stage of contact that the person had as much information to hand to be able to have their enquiry qualified with help and advice given as required. It was also the intention that in more complex cases the customer would where required meet with an officer sooner than is the case at present.

Councillor Cope said the information he was now being given should have been reflected in the business case.

Councillor Davies said that given the explanation of the illustrated models on page four of the business case, this was not clear in the illustration and she had misread what had been presented. Councillor Davies also felt appendix F, the Theme summary for Cultural Change read like something copied from an external publication, made little sense and didn't believe it would be understood by many people reading it. Mr. Pritchard said the intention of the operating model illustrations was that by showing the 'As is' model with the current structure of six service provider blocks, plus the separated block showing the management activity it could for comparative purposes be assessed against the 'To be' model.

Mr. Pritchard confirmed that appendix F had not been copied from any publication, but was drafted by himself, and whilst you can never be sure of what people want to be included within the document, the intention was to provide some text that explained the current model in respect of procedures and processes, the way people work (with examples), was embedded in the culture of the Council, but this would need to change if the proposed model was to succeed. Mrs. Donnelly confirmed that a new Strategy

was being drafted that will include the cultural changes needed to fulfil the needs of the new operating model. Mr. Pritchard said the current way of working was how things have always been done, but now it was imperative that the organisation began to think as a commercial organisation where appropriate to ensure all aspects of service are provided effectively, efficiently and to a higher standard.

Councillor Sutton expressed surprise that the document had been nearly two years in the making giving that until now there had not been any political input into the process. Councillor Sutton reiterated the need for the business case to provide more statistical and evidence based information and governance detail. For example, membership of the Trading Board, figures to support the quoted bottom line savings and the expected number of staff redundancies.

Councillor Turrell said this decision was about approving the strategic vision that a lot of the detail is not known at present, but will be presented for scrutiny as and when the information becomes available. Councillor Turrell said she would be happy to discuss all the information presently available with all the groups.

In response to Councillor Sutton, Mr. Pritchard said the Council had completed many fundamental service reviews over the last 2.5 – 3 years that had resulted in significant staff redundancies, though the number of compulsory redundancies in that time had been something like nine. The intention always is to firstly create a structure and to ensure space from existing staff by not filling vacancies or filling on an interim; part-time or temporary basis. Mr. Pritchard gave the Senior Management Team as an example, where two posts, those vacated by the Heads of Resource Management and Strategic Policy remain vacant pending the outcome of the FSR. Mrs. Donnelly confirmed that officers can provide the supporting documents that underpin the business case.

In response to Councillor Hazell in respect of governance, and the effect on Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) and whether there was adequate provision for scrutiny, Mr. Pritchard said discussions concerning the CBH Housing Revenue Account review are still ongoing and included arrangements with CBH in regards to moving to an all embracing universal customer contact environment. Ultimately, residents and tenants remain Council customers and a fully integrated environment would be a preferred option. Mr. Pritchard said the CBH Management Agreement comes up for renewal in August 2013 and there are options on how to progress beyond this, including continuing with the current ALMO model or bringing the company back in-house. Mr. Pritchard agreed that the second option would mean a change in role for the current Chief Executive Officer of CBH.

In respect of scrutiny, Mr. Pritchard said the number of scrutiny panels was not being suggested or finalised and a lot will depend on the remit of e.g. The Trading Board. This could reduce the current remit of the scrutiny panels.

Councillor Frame was supportive of the concept presented to the Panel, welcoming the opportunity for the Council to move with the times and addressing the current economic problems facing all Councils. Councillor Frame noted the ICT risks as mentioned in the report but wondered what the risks would be associated with the Trading arm of the Council, given in his opinion that the suggested £30k cost in year one of the

commercial trading arm was very low. Mr. Pritchard said the risk associated with the commercial development was high level given this was a newer area of work. There are a number of governance models that the Council will consider for its own trading arrangements. The way officers worked and the physical use of resources had to be done in a commercially minded environment, to be able to increase future revenue streams, rather than just selling off assets for a short term gain.

Councillor Frame said it would be helpful if members had more detail around the estimate of year on year income from commercial activity leading to a £1.46m of anticipated income by 2016. Councillor Turrell said it was anticipated that revenue streams could be improved e.g. trade waste and the use of Council owned land. Mrs. Hedges said to improve trade waste income was about competing more effectively, and it had been shown e.g. Business Alarms, that income generation was more than just an aspiration and that there is a level of resilience in the estimates.

Giving that so many councillors held the view that a greater level of detail was required within the report so that the scrutiny process could be more effective, they requested that for future reports the detail is provided at a separate briefing in advance of the meeting.

Within the Executive Summary, Councillor Offen requested the wording for the fifth bullet point to be amended to read 'effective and efficient service delivery based on the standards of the best providers', not as stated in the report the 'best private sector providers'. Councillor Offen also requested clarification over the suggested £0.5m net saving from the HRA, saying he was of the understanding that this money was untouchable. Councillor Offen also believed there will be a need for more scrutiny throughout this overall process and suggested the comment of one single scrutiny panel meeting on a monthly basis as mentioned in the future governance arrangements should be taken out of the business case.

Mrs. Hedges said the HRA account is not untouchable, but it is ring-fenced and cannot normally benefit the Revenue Account. No savings mentioned in the business case included HRA money, and was all pure revenue.

Councillor Naish said despite all the assurances made about providing resources for those customers who would wish to retain a face-to-face contact with Council officers, he remained concerned about the ordinary people who will inevitably disappear off the radar. Councillor Naish was not surprised at this proposed new concept, saying the scruffy appearance of the Angel Court building gave weight to the rumours about vacating the building. Councillor Turrell said there will be a cultural change for customers as well as the organisation, with a need for the customer to deal with the Council in a new way. Councillor Turrell understood some customers will not wish to change, and the Library, plus other satellite libraries will provide the opportunity for customers to speak to officers face-to-face.

In response to Councillor G. Oxford, Councillor Turrell said the makeup of the Trading Board will be politically balanced. Mr. Pritchard said the existing staff resources will ultimately be reduced to make the anticipated savings, that there would be no growth, but some reductions. Mrs. Donnelly understood that some of the text within the

business case was inconsistent and these will be changed for inclusion in the November Cabinet report. Mrs. Donnelly said simplified processes will enable a reduction in face-to-face and telephony enquires but understood the need to retain a face-to-face resource. There was however an expectation that the 83% of current Customer Service Contact through face-to-face and telephony will be reduced significantly.

Councillor P. Higgins said when the future ICT needs is determined consideration should be given to 'cloud computing'. In response to Councillor Higgins in respect of the style of writing within the business case, Mr. Pritchard said it was written for the Cabinet but with the knowledge that staff also understood the language. A document intended for the public would be written differently. Councillor Hazell said members are members of the public and as such the report should be written in a language for all to understand, and questioned whether it was right for staff to be talking this language.

Councillor Bentley said the document sets out the direction of travel for the Council and whilst the business case without detail was difficult to understand he considered the document to be a visionary aspiration. That said he still wondered what the staffing implications will be, how many posts would be lost.

Mr. Pritchard said the staff modelling exercise had been completed and it was anticipated that there would be a reduction of between 35-40 posts. In addition to this, the level of management was anticipated to shrink from 10% to 9% reducing the staff levels further, with an anticipated overall reduction of approximately 45 posts, to be lost over a period of time. Councillor Bentley said he couldn't understand why this information needed to be teased-out, that a lot of the information provided verbally to the meeting could have been included within the business case.

RESOLVED that the Panel;

- i) Thanked officers for their presentation and responses to questions from the Panel.
- ii) Considered the report 'Fundamental Service review of Customer Contact', and asked the Administration to consider and note the comments made by the Panel members, particularly in relation to sense checking future documents on English, and the use of Local Government phrases, and references within the report to one scrutiny panel meeting monthly.
- iii) Requested a change of title to properly reflect what the review is about and that more detail in respect of the staffing implications should be included in the business case.
- iv) Requested the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the new Communication Strategy before being formally adopted.
- v) Requested that when future reports on the FSR UCC are reviewed, the detail is provided at a separate briefing in advance of the meeting, to avoid numerous requests for that information at the meeting.

- vi) Requested further detail on the risk matrix as soon as possible.

17. Localised Council Tax Support 2013/14

Mrs. Sara Wilcock, Project Manager, and Mr. Sean Plummer, Finance Manager presented the report on Localised Council Tax Support 2013/14.

Mrs. Wilcock informed the Panel that Council Tax Benefit is to be replaced with a Local Council Tax Support Scheme, regulated through the Local Government Finance Act.

Providing some context, Mrs. Wilcock said the Welfare Reform Act abolishes Council Tax Benefit and replaces it with a Local Council Tax Support Scheme which has to be approved by the Council by 31 January 2013. A new Local Government Finance Act with associated regulations will set out how Councils must create a new scheme. This will mean all Working Age Local Council Tax Support awards will be based on criteria set & administered by each Billing Authority, having consulted with major preceptors such as the County, Fire & Police authorities. The new Act will prescribe exactly how authorities will support pensioners with little change in how their entitlement is currently decided.

Mrs Wilcock said the Council must agree a Scheme, but if it did not then the 'default scheme' will be imposed upon us the cost of which would almost certainly be higher than the level of grant funding provided. An agreed approach across Essex has been to deliver a cost neutral scheme, all be it individual authorities have tailored their schemes to reflect local circumstances.

It was explained that due to the financial risks associated with Local Council Tax Support, representatives from all Essex billing authorities & Essex County Council have worked together to develop a county wide framework, which are reflected in the proposals in the report. Draft proposals for the Scheme were considered by the Policy Review & Development Panel (PRDP) on the 6 August 2012, resulting in the Panel recommending the development of a cost neutral scheme & that the criteria proposed be approved.

The current Government subsidy meets the full cost of Council Tax Benefit and this year our expected cost is expected to be around £11.5 million, rising to £11.9 million next year. From April 2013 the Government will provide a fixed grant to be paid to the billing & major preceptors. Indicative grant figures for the level of funding for our scheme indicate we will receive a total of £9.9 million, leaving an estimated funding gap of £2 million.

The funding gap can only be born by Working Age claimants and currently 61% of these pay no Council Tax. The main effect of spreading the cost over all Working Age claimants is that the majority who currently pay nothing will therefore have to pay something. Using the recommended scheme criteria as agreed by the PRDP and model this against the number of people affected (as illustrated in paragraph 5.6 of the report) it is anticipated that there will be a saving c£2m.

Mrs. Wilcock said the scheme seeks to protect vulnerable claimants and to safeguard against child poverty with a variety of measures such as allowing additional allowances & premiums. Some current safeguards for customers who are blind or who also receive Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance will also continue, such as exempting them from non-dependant deductions.

To incentivise work, in essence the current Extended Payment scheme will continue, this provides assistance to help long-term unemployed people in the form of an additional four weeks Council Tax support at the level they were previously entitled to before they started work. The PDRP also supported the principle to develop an Exceptional Hardship fund, this would avoid distress and financial hardship for vulnerable customers, and funding for this is currently being reviewed.

In conclusion Mrs. Wilcock said the proposed scheme was open to consultation for the period 1 August 2012 to the 12 September, during which time 119 responses were received. 75% of these were from customers who are currently in receipt of Council Tax Benefit. A summary of the answers & the detailed comments are provided within the papers.

Since the publication of the agenda papers further additional information has been announced by the Government in the form of a one-off grant.

Mr. Plummer said the Government is to make £100m available for one year to support local authorities who adopt schemes that comply with criteria set by Government.

If the Council was to agree a scheme that complied with the criteria the grant that would be received is as follows:-

Colchester Borough Council £35,006, Essex County Council £196,952, Essex Police £24,776 and Essex Fire £12,037, providing a total of £268,771.

Mr. Plummer said the deadline for applications for the grant is 15 February 2013 with payments made in March 2013. Authorities can only apply after 31 January (i.e. when local schemes are required to have been agreed).

Mr. Plummer explained the criteria for applying for a grant namely; i) Those who would be entitled to 100% support under current council tax benefit arrangements pay between zero and no more than 8.5% of their net council tax liability; ii) The taper rate does not increase above 25%; and iii) There is no sharp reduction in support for those entering work.

Mr. Plummer said for Colchester, the main area affected in the current Council proposal was the maximum liability being set at 80% (i.e. paying a minimum of 20% of Council Tax). To qualify for the grant would mean that the scheme would need to change to ensure that those currently in receipt of 100% Council Tax benefit would pay a maximum of 8.5%. Other parts of the current proposals may also be impacted if the scheme was to be altered to comply with the grant. A prudent approach has therefore been taken to estimating the impact.

A table was presented that showed the best estimate of the total saving that would be

delivered if the scheme was altered to comply with the grant, and the overall net funding gap for the proposals. The table showed the funding gap to be nil for the proposals in the report and £1.061m for the grant compliant scheme.

The Panel was notified of the timetable and consultation, with the Cabinet being asked to recommend the scheme in November, for approval by Council on the 6 December 2012. The current proposals within the report have been considered by the Policy Review and Development Panel and have been subject to the required consultation with the public and major precepting bodies. If the Council was to propose significant changes to the current proposals to comply with the grant it would be necessary to consider whether to complete an updated consultation exercise.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, confirmed to Councillor Bentley that the recommendations to Cabinet would not change as a result of the Government's announced grant, and also confirmed that as far as he was aware, only Uttlesford District Council in Essex would apply for the said grant.

Mr. Plummer confirmed to Councillor Bentley that the timescales were so tight it would not be feasible to undertake further consultation before the 31 January 2013.

Councillor Offen commended officers on the report, saying the decision to be made by Cabinet was fair and straight forward and the £35k benefit by entering into the Government grant scheme for one year was not worth the risks and felt the Cabinet should not enter into this scheme. Councillor Oxford concurred with the comments of Councillor Offen.

In response to Councillor Naish's concerns regards to the continued long delays in processing benefit claims in general, Councillor Smith said the proposed changes to the scheme will simplify the process, make it more effective and in turn reduce the time to process claims.

In response to Councillor Davies's concerns about the possible increase in fraud, Mrs. Wilcock said the Fraud Team within Resource Management will continue their stringent check of the information provided as part of the current fraud prevention and detection policy. The Fraud Team are very active and this work will continue. Councillor Smith said Resource Management continue with the risk-based assessment of claims, concentrating resources on 'high' risk claims and this has and continues to prove very effective.

Mr. Plummer concurred with Councillor Frame concerning the importance of a arrears contingency given the risks associated with billing many residents with Council Tax Bills who had previously not been required to pay. Mr. Plummer said officers are being proactive in this work and when officers are making contact with these residents the residents are being forewarned of their duty to pay under the new regulations. Colchester will seek to maintain the current level of collection rates to minimize the level of write-offs. Essex County Council is making a provision for a 'Hardship Fund', but this will a very small amount, thought to be in the region of £20k. Councillor Smith said the feature of the bid was the need to be proactive in advising customers in advance of the changes, and Colchester has been pro-active. Mrs. Hedges said the work so far

undertaken had attracted attention and Colchester was happy to share this work with other authorities.

Mr. Plummer confirmed to Councillor Hazell that in the region of 8,000 local people are effected by the changes to varying degrees. But it is the Billing Authorities responsibility to collect as high a percentage of the Council Tax Bills as is possible though the risk of non-payment is a shared risk to the Council, Essex County Council and the Fire and Police services.

Councillor Frame said the Council Tax Policy Guide was a long complicated document though it was intended to help Council Tax Payers. He could not envisage many people wanting to plough through the document and suggested it was simplified. Mrs. Wilcock said the document will be simplified in anticipation of the scheme being approved. Resource Management will be writing to customers and explaining how they will be affected personally in advance of the billing operation, and officers are involving and advising the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and voluntary welfare groups about the changes. Mrs. Hedges said the CAB are experiencing increased enquiries about the future changes to welfare benefit, but they to are experiencing a reduction in resources and there is evidence that customers are being signposted back to the Council.

Councillor Bentley asked that the Chairman of the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel is briefed on these changes and requested that a note was added to the Cabinet report to support the partnership work with the voluntary sector.

RESOLVED that the Panel commented on and noted the report on Localised Council Tax Support 2013/14 to be presented to the Cabinet meeting on 28 November 2012.

18. Work Programme

RESOLVED that the Panel commented on and noted the Work Programme 2012/13.



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item
10

15 January 2013

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

The Panel is invited to consider the performance report for the period up to end of September 2012. This includes progress of our performance measures and an update of progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plan.

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to review and comment on this report, ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 23 January 2013.

The draft Cabinet report is attached.



Cabinet

Item

23 January 2013

Report of	Head of Life Opportunities	Author	Lucie Breadman 📞 282726
Title	Half yearly Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan - Draft for Scrutiny		
Wards affected	'Not applicable'		

The Panel is invited to consider the performance report for the period up to end of September 2012 (which includes progress of our Performance measures and an update of progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plan).

1. Action required

The Cabinet is asked to consider / comment upon the performance update, as at Appendix 1, for the period up to the end of September 2012 in relation to our key performance measures and the progress update of the Strategic Plan Action Plan to the end of September 2012 as at Appendix 2.

The Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel review the report on 15 January and members are also asked to consider any comments from that scrutiny. The panel's comments/minute extract will be circulated in a Supplemental Agenda.

2. Reason for scrutiny

Part of the Council's performance management framework includes the commitment to report our half yearly performance progress to Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

3. Background information

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

4. Performance Summary

- Our overall basket of organisational performance measures shows that 71% (12) of our measures are green, 29% (5) amber and none are red.
- Monitoring of the actions within our Strategic Plan Action Plan shows that there is a huge amount of really positive activity being undertaken across the council and with our partners to achieve our Strategic Priorities. Most are progressing well and where there are challenges it remains in those areas most impacted by the economic climate, namely Inward Investment; Improving opportunities for local business; Regenerating the borough; and Providing more affordable homes.
- The Council has also received a number of awards and accreditations highlighted at the end of appendix 1.

5. Strategic Plan references

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

6. Consultation

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

7. Publicity considerations

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

8. Financial implications

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

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

Progress and improvement of these and many of the actions within the Strategic Plan Action Plan support our aims of improving the lives and services for everyone in the Borough. Where required, specific Equality Impact Assessments will exist for policies and activities rather than individual performance indicators or actions. Progress of the Councils Equality Objectives are included within the Strategic Plan Action Plan Update.

10. Community Safety implications

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

11. Health and Safety implications

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

12. Risk Management implications

We aim to deliver against indicators and the Strategic Plan Action Plan Actions as both form a key part of our performance framework and expectations around delivery of our priorities to the residents of Colchester borough.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Performance Summary

The Council agreed a number of key performance areas for 2012/13 which are used as part of the Performance Management Framework to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides a summary of our position at the end of Quarter 2, the half year stage.

71% (12) of our measures are green, 29% (5) amber and none are red. Of our organisational indicators sickness absence is being monitored closely along with three projects relating to budgetary savings in Street Services. Both areas have been flagged as 'Amber alerts' due to the challenges of meeting the targets but mitigating activity is in place. Figures for net additional homes provided last year have been confirmed at 1,000 against a target of 650 which is really positive in this climate, as is the fact that the prevention of homelessness performance is on track despite some real concerns at the start of the year. Planning continues to perform consistently well as does recycling. The amount of waste collected is higher than we would like it to be at this stage of the year, so more activity is going into encouragement and education to bring about reductions in overall levels of waste and recycle more, an important area both for the environment but also to manage the costs of this service for the taxpayers of Colchester. Improvements following the Fundamental Service Review of Benefits and Revenues are now evident in the performance data with the number of days being taken to process new claims at 14, a significant reduction from 20 days this time last year.

Table of awards and accreditations achieved:

Clean Britain Awards	The Council's Zone Teams were awarded a 'four star' rating for the cleanliness of the borough.
RSPCA - Silver Footprint Award	Community Animal Welfare Footprint award for our work to address the issue of stray dogs.
Colchester in Bloom	Gold Award for displays in the 'small city' category after two years of silver-gilt.
Marine Conservation Society	West Mersea added to Good Beach guide (CBC has carried out environmental work to achieve this).
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park has received its eleventh consecutive Green Flag, with High Woods receiving its tenth.
Green Heritage Award – Castle Park	For the management and interpretation of a site with local or national historic importance.
Customer Service Excellence	Successful re-accreditation of Corporate Management, and Environmental and Protective Services.
CIPFA – CPD accredited employer	Our continuing professional development for finance and accounting staff meets industry standards.
LABC – building control awards	Firsites won the best community building category in the eastern region for our building control work.
LEXCEL	Achieved the Law Society's practice management standard for the thirteenth consecutive year.
PPMA HR awards	Vine (online Essex HR Partnership) won the Innovation in Workforce Skills and Development award.
BBC Countryfile Magazine awards	Colchester Castle - finalist is the 'best heritage attraction' category – 1 of the top 10 in the country.
Essex Countywide Business Awards	Finalist in the Environmental Awareness category – only council in the county-wide Newsquest finals.

Alert Explanations
Green The indicator is meeting performance expectations to date or as forecast to the next reporting period.
Amber The indicator is not meeting performance expectations to date. There are mitigating circumstances in most cases and improvement is likely but risks are being flagged in regard to this indicator.
Red The indicator is not meeting performance expectations to date and/or is unlikely to improve by year end, forecast is that it is very unlikely that the targets set will be achieved.

1. Progress of our Resources and Organisational Key Indicators

We are on target or exceeding targets in five of our seven Resources and Organisational Indicators. Our sickness rate position is flagged as Amber, but this is a position that is being closely monitored as is the Council Tax collected.

Indicator	Target 2012/13	Performance April – Sept 2012	RAG	Service Comments
KI R1 % Council Tax collected	98.5%	57.8%	A	Performance accumulates up to the target by the end of the year. It is slightly behind where we were this time last year and there are more accounts in arrears at this point, attributable to the current economic climate. However, further enforcement and support for these customers should bring collection back to target by Q3.
KI R2 % NDR Collected	98.5%	61.5%	G	On target. (also accumulates to the year end)
KI R3 Sickness rate	7.5 days	8.15	A	Our current sickness figure of 8.15 days is better than it was at the same time last year (8.49 days). To continue to improve performance a very challenging 7.5 day target was set which combines long and short term sickness. For us to achieve this target, improvements in sickness will need to happen. Close monitoring continues along with sickness management workshops and training for managers. Individual cases are managed with HR and SMT review corporate and service performance monthly. Short term sickness currently makes up 35.5% of the overall days lost with long term sickness making up the remaining and larger proportion of 64.5% days lost.

**Appendix 1 - Performance Summary
Quarter 2 - April 2012 to September 2012**

KI R4 Reduce CO ₂ from LA Ops	25% less by Dec 2012	20%	G	<p>This has been a rolling programme for which we are now in the final year. The overall target to reduce CO₂ by 25% equates to a reduction of 2,333 tonnes of CO₂. We expect to exceed the target and estimate for total savings once all planned projects are complete are 3,268 tonnes which is a 35%, however it is not guaranteed that all projects will go ahead as some require funding to be identified or feasibility studies completed.</p> <p>Current forecast reported to FASP to be within budget.</p>
KI R5 Forecast variance at year end	-2% to +1%	-1%	G	<p>June – Corporate Management had their yearly assessment and retained the CSE Standard.</p> <p>August – Environmental and Protective Services had their yearly assessment and retained the CSE Standard.</p>
KI R6 New Customer Service Excellent Achievements	1 award	2 yearly assessments	G	<p>£1.561m of the £1.762m target for 2012/13 consists of £450k Housing, £435k Revenues and Benefits, and £676k Street Services. These have all been accounted for in the 2012/13 budgets for these 3 services, however Street Services budget forecast is currently flagging that not all anticipated income /savings are likely to be achieved which will create a possible shortfall of up to £214k. This specifically relates to projects including: yard partnership; void clearance and community alarms. In all cases mitigating activity is being taken to address the issues along with direct marketing resources to help minimise any possible shortfall. The £1.762m target also includes £201k being the agreed net Sport and Leisure FSR saving as shown in the full business case. The implementation stages are now underway for the Sport and Leisure FSR, and progress in achieving its target of £201k savings for 2012/13 will be reviewed through the year. Currently, it is expected that this will be achieved this year.</p>

2. Housing Key Indicators

We are on target in all but one of our Housing Indicators – number of affordable homes delivered, but it is to be noted that delivery is not evenly spread through out the year. Prevention of homeless cases in on track despite the difficult climate and challenging target.

<i>Indicator</i>	Target 2012/13	Performance April – Sept 2012	RAG	Service Comments
<i>KSI H1</i> Net add homes provided	751	330	G	Data only collected annually. All monitoring now undertaken by CBC (previously joint with ECC), so new systems being established which may allow more frequent reporting. Figures now available for 2011/12 which show just over 1,000 new homes were built (against a target of 650). The half year figure for 2012-2013 is based on Building Regulation completions data and can only be used as a guide.
<i>KSI H2</i> Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	149	49	A	A total of 49 affordable homes have been delivered during the first 6 months of this year. Whilst this is lower than half the total target for the year, we know that delivery is not evenly spread through out the year. Our delivery partners have indicated that over the course of the year they will deliver the affordable homes to meet the annual target.
<i>KSI H3</i> Number - homelessness cases prevented	260	143	G	Our performance has improved and we are now on track to achieve this year's target. Some of this improvement has been achieved by diverting more resources to sourcing private accommodation for customers. Another part of the improvement has come from us starting to include aspects of the Housing Options team's work that the government's definition of prevention of homelessness allows, but which we were not counting before, such as our work to help young homeless people return and stay home.
<i>KSI H4</i> Rent Collected	98.8%	97.33%	G	The rent collection rate is where we would expect it to be at the mid-year point and remains on track to meet the year end target. Performance is better than for the same period last year which was 96.83%.

**Appendix 1 - Performance Summary
Quarter 2 - April 2012 to September 2012**

KSI H5 Average time to re-let council houses in days	General Needs - 19	16.81 days	G	Performance on void re-let times continues to improve and we are currently exceeding our targets for all property types.
	Sheltered 72	47.60 days		
	Temp - 32	27.47 days		

3. Key Planning Indicators

A positive half year set of results on our key planning indicators with all areas exceeding targets.

Indicator	Target 2012/13	Performance April – Sept 2012	RAG	Service Comments
KSI P1 processing of planning applications	Majors 65%	71.8%	G	Performance continues to exceed national & local targets.
	Minors 70%	75.2%	G	
	Others 85%	89.6%	G	
KSI P2 Planning appeals allowed against our decision to refuse	30%	25%	G	The Council continues to win significantly more appeals than the national average. This is encouraging. When last tested it was clear that this excellent performance is NOT being achieved simply by approving more applications than other authorities there by reducing the appeal risk.

4 Waste and Recycling Key Indicators

Recycling levels have improved and half year performance is above target. Residual waste however continues to be a challenging target.

Indicator	Target 2012/13	Performance April – Sept 2012	RAG	Service Comments
KSI W2 Residual household waste per household	440kg	233.kg	A	The target is based on total annual kg of waste per household, Q2 result accounts for the first six months of the current financial year and overall we would hope to encourage households to produce less waste so aiming for a lower figure is good performance. If we continue to collect the same level of waste for the next six months the year end weight will be more than we had hoped for. To try to reduce that and change behaviour further work is being carried out by the Zone teams to encourage households to recycle more waste and also reduce the overall amount of waste produced and placed out in the black sacks. There has also been an increase in the amount of litter and rubbish being collected by Zone teams due to an increase in clean-up activities. On the one hand this is good because it means we are providing a cleaner more attractive environment but sad because people drop it in the first instance and it adds to the overall weight of the waste collected.
KSI W3 Household waste reused, recycled and composted	43%	44%	G	The data for the first six months of the year shows that we are exceeding recycling targets within the borough. The recycling rates were as follows – April 39%, May 42%, June 45%, July 48%, Aug 44% and Sept 44% showing a steady increase in recycling since the beginning of the financial year. It is likely that the following factors would have contributed to the recycling rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of fortnightly collections for food waste trial areas • Increase in amount of garden waste collected during this period • Targeting of non-recycling households by Zone teams

5. Benefits Key Indicators

Indicator	Target 2012/13	Performance April – Sept 2012	RAG	Service Comments
KSI B1 Time to process Housing Benefit new claims and changes	14 days	14.08 days	G	There has been a significant improvement from the same period last year (20 days to 14.08 days) which has been largely due to the implementation of the Fundamental Service Review and the uptake of e-claims from a previous paper based application process. In addition with the implementation of a risk based verification process this has also reduced the number of days to process new benefit claims and changes.

6. Other Performance News – a summary of performance-related items from April to September 2012

DCLG Code of Practice on Data Transparency – opening up Council performance and financial information for the public

This Code aims to open up information so that people can easily access data to help them assess how well councils are doing. The Code covers more than two dozen headings across many different areas and services, with an “as a minimum” list of data items which councils must provide. Much of this was already published in various places on our website, but we have drawn the threads together to give people a short list on a single webpage which mirrors the Code’s requirements, with links to similar Government requirements such as the Freedom of Information Act’s Publication Scheme – please see [our Data Transparency webpage](#). DCLG is currently consulting on extending the range of items covered.

Strategic Plan

The Council’s webpage for the [Strategic Plan 2012-15](#) now includes the Strategic Plan Action Plan for 2012-13 as agreed by the Cabinet in July 2012. The [Strategic Plan 2009-12](#) webpage now shows all of the three year-end reports against its action plans, as an archive and/or audit trail.

Draft Local Audit Bill – proposals for a new local public audit framework for local government

The Government consulted on its proposals for a new local public audit framework, following its announcement that the Audit Commission was to be disbanded after 2012. Resource Management co-ordinated our response as shown in this [Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel](#) report. In July 2012, the [draft Local Audit Bill](#) was published for consultation and pre-legislative scrutiny. The draft Bill sets out the proposed new audit framework for local public bodies, the process for the appointment of auditors, and the regulatory framework for local public audit. The consultation period ran until 31 August 2012, and further developments are awaited.

The Council's Performance Framework

The Council's existing [Performance Framework](#) had been due to run from 2009 to 2012. In the light of the draft Local Audit Bill mentioned above, we have carried out a 'refresh' of the existing content so that it remains current, and will carry out a full review when the Government's consultation process has been completed and the future national arrangements for performance management and audit have been agreed.

Single Data List

DCLG published its first 'Single Data List' of all central departments' data requirements from local authorities in April 2011. Its revised set followed in July 2011, and there have been additions and deletions over the last year. The summary of the items which apply to district councils has been updated to reflect and summarise the July 2012 position. This has been sent to the Council services and officers concerned.

Quality of our performance data

In line with our Data Quality Strategy, arrangements are made for Internal Audit to review some key indicators within this report each year. The audit's emphasis is very much on data quality – the processes, methodology, targets, and accuracy of measurement behind the indicator. Each year, we look to streamline and improve these arrangements, and this year we are working to bring together any items which are reported as key indicators for Colchester, have been retained in the Government's Single Data List after its initial introduction (as above) and are also in the Internal Audit Work Programme - but which are related/relevant to each other – to improve co-ordination and remove any potential duplication.

For example, the review of KSI H3 'homelessness prevented' which is part of this performance report is related to our 'activity under homelessness provisions of the Housing Act' in the Single Data List, and both of these will be incorporated into the planned 2012/13 Internal Audit of the homelessness/housing needs register.

Appendix 2 - Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2012-2013 - update

Delivering high quality, accessible services

The priorities in this section of our action plan are about actual delivery of direct services either through our own Council resources or using others to provide services.



Delivery of an efficient benefits service

The key action here is to ensure continuous improvement through monitoring of our performance indicators and the development and ongoing implementation of our Fundamental Service Review (FSR) outcomes.

Overall Rating G

Output measures

- **Evaluation of FSR implementation by June 2012** – Implementation of the agreed actions have continued throughout the year and ongoing evaluation and monitoring is in place. Performance shows outcomes are being achieved but this is an ongoing process.
- **Ongoing monitoring of performance indicators and continuous improvement in place following FSR implementation** - There are a number of different performance measures used to measure progress and performance of both New Claims and changes in circumstances processing. One of these is also included in the corporate indicator set and all are currently performing well against targets. From 5th November Revenues and Benefits service will join the Customer Service Centre as a combined service due to new interim arrangements before the Universal Review of Services is agreed and implemented. The combined service will work together to deliver an efficient benefits service and continue to improve performance and outcomes for customers.



Reducing, reusing and recycling our waste

Key actions here include plans for our Shrub End Depot to provide improvement, income, efficiencies and partnership working opportunities for the future along with implementation of recycling educational activities, progress of Section 46 enforcement and the introduction of plastic recycling collections from flats.

Output measures agreed

- **Contract agreed with successful Bidder and Depot Improvement Plan agreed** – Due to the termination of the previous tender process work an options appraisal is being undertaken to agree the way forward in this area.

Overall Rating G

Appendix 2 - Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2012-2013 - update

- **Household waste reducing and recycling and composting rates increasing** - Residual household waste is currently exceeding the agreed target. Recycling rates are however also increasing which highlights the benefit of changes to the waste collection service and work to encourage behaviour change.
- **Progress of Section 46 enforcement activity** - Work has been carried out to understand the Councils implementation options for S46 following recent and on-going changes to the act by central government. A Portfolio Holder report will be produced adopting these powers for the Council.
- **Introduction of plastic recycling collections from flats** - A Full project plan has been developed and site surveys of flats will commence at the beginning of November. This improved collection service for flats will be in place by April 2013.
- **Other activities** – Our Zone teams have continued to work with local residents to try to help encourage reductions in household waste and increases in recycling. The teams are also being pro-active in cleaning up litter in their Zones and two successful days of action have brought partners, the council and residents together to help clear up their localities.



Providing more affordable homes across the borough

Key actions here include the use of our own land and assets to facilitate the building of new affordable housing, with 35% of all new homes being affordable on sites with 3 or more homes in rural areas and 10 or more in urban areas. We also aim to ensure the Housing Trajectory demonstrates a 15 year supply of housing sites, including a 5 year supply of deliverable sites and we will undertake a range of measures to bring empty homes back into use.

Overall Rating – Amber

Output Measures

- **400 new affordable homes to be built over three years** – This period started in 2012 so we are in the first year and currently do hope to achieve the three year target. Delivery is still strong in this first year. More affordable homes are needed but the strong ‘Growth Agenda’ is calling for flexibility from Councils with planning gain (S106). Officers continue to seek 35% of affordable housing but viability assessments often demonstrate that this percentage of affordable housing could jeopardise delivery of a whole site and therefore we sometimes have to accept less than 35%.
- **Qualifying sites achieve 35% of affordable housing and total number of homes secured** – During the period there have been no planning decisions on qualifying sites over the threshold for affordable housing.
- **270 empty homes bought back into use over the next three years** - Bringing back empty homes into use should gain a helping hand from a new Financial Assistance Policy for private homeowners in early 2013 offering new loans to help bring empty homes back into use. We are implementing an action plan, which includes new ways of working, to bring more empty homes into use. As part of

Appendix 2 - Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2012-2013 - update

this, we are running a trial to trace “hard to find” owners of empty homes which has no cost to the Council. As a result of all this work we have bought 13 homes back into use.

- **To update the housing trajectory which will inform the Annual Monitoring Report** - The Housing Trajectory is being updated through an annual review of the Strategic Housing Land availability Assessment.



Improving our streets and local environment

Improved street cleanliness and shifting resources to increase responsiveness to environmental and cleanliness issues is a key action here along with Enabling Community Ownership to facilitate communities taking an active role in keeping their local environment clean, tidy and loved. Developing and maintaining strategic partnerships (Essex County Council, Bus and Rail operators) to help deliver improvements in air quality and sustainable transport infrastructure is an important action to improve our local environment.

Overall Rating G

Output Measures – Cleanliness & Air Quality

- Street Sweeping timetable reduced from 8 weeks to 6 weeks turnaround - The revised street sweeping timetables are working well and have shown improvements in the cleanliness of our streets. The new 6-week rota system enables more flexibility across the zones where the sweepers can be shared more easily when emergency requests come through.
- More staff trained to deal with environmental issues - Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team members are currently being trained to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and dog fouling and the ASB Team are training Parks and Recreation Officers/Rangers to issue Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) to youths displaying unacceptable behaviour in Castle Park.
- In addition town centre litter picking routes have been re-organised to maximise the use of available resources and positive comments have been received on the improved cleanliness and street cleaning requests have reduced by 13% and street sweeping requests have reduced by 9% since introduction of the Zone system.
- Improved Air Quality - Improvement work includes the adoption of planning guidance which means that any future development within any of the Borough’s Air Quality Management Areas must not adversely impact the quality of the air and where possible, should seek to improve it. Air Quality further assessment work is complete with a draft report being considered and the results to inform further investigation for later this year and the Air Quality Action Plan (formally due in 2013-14). The updating and screening assessment has been completed in compliance with statutory requirements and submitted to DEFRA and the Air Quality Steering Group meetings are ongoing with representatives from ECC Highways, Transport Planning, Planning and the Town Centre Steering Group.

Appendix 2 - Strategic Plan - Action Plan for 2012-2013 - update

Output measures - Enabling community ownership & active participation

- Delivery of our Days of Action - Two Days of Action have been delivered so far this year (Stanway in March and Highwoods in July); and one more is planned (Castle in November). 16 organisations participated in the most recent day which was a great success and included key actions around responsible dog ownership, namely over 500 dog fouling information leaflets were delivered, 8 dogs were micro-chipped and dog waste bags given out free of charge.
- Key Zone performance indicators demonstrate improvement - The Zone Teams have integrated well into their local communities and key improvement can already be seen within the borough. The total number of street-based service requests has reduced from 3,510 between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011 to 2,564 over the same period in 2011/12 (27% reduction). This highlights the zones ability to 'see it and solve it', reducing the need for residents to report issues as they are dealt with far more quickly and efficiently. The Council was awarded 4 stars in the Clean Britain Awards. The overall report highlights some areas which were regarded as immaculate (including Wivenhoe, the University, Dedham, Marks Tey and Tiptree). It also highlighted some key areas for improvement particularly around the town centre. Zone 7 is considering utilising DEFRA's Voluntary Code of Practice for 'Food on the go' establishments as a way to improve food related litter in the town centre and the introduction of the new task management system will also give us increased data on Zone performance in the future.



Tackling anti-social behaviour and using enforcement to support priorities

Our key actions for this priority include the achievement of Purple Flag accreditation, thereby recognising excellence in the management of town centres in the evening and at night and to raise standards and improve the experience of Colchester town centre after dark. We also want to focus and continue working with partners to deal with anti-social behaviour in its widest sense, including issues relating to noise, graffiti, litter and dog fouling as well as more traditional anti-social behaviour, with the emphasis on behaviour change rather than just enforcement. We aim to work with local communities to reduce anti-social behaviour and promote pride.

Overall Rating G

Output measures

- **Undertake research on Colchester's Night Time Economy during 2012 and make an application for Purple Flag status** - Economic impact of Colchester's Night Time Economy report has been completed and key performance indicators identified for future performance monitoring. Purple Flag application will be submitted in the October 2012 – January 2013 window.
- **Shift resources to enable a targeted approach to enforcement and increase staff able to investigate and issue Fixed Penalty Notices** - ASB Team members are currently being trained to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering & dog fouling and are training Parks and Recreation Officers/Rangers to issue Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) to youths displaying unacceptable behaviour in Castle Park. The team are also training the Street Team at the University of Essex to tackle ASB. In addition to helping increase skills and available enforcement resources the ASB team have undertaken lots of activities, including; support of Days of Action and

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Crucial Crew; during school holidays they worked with the Army to provide diversionary events for young people; the team achieved Respect Charter Accreditation (April) and Police Accreditation enabling improved information sharing (April) and have worked in partnership with the Police and Braintree DC to secure an ASBO regarding a young female causing problems throughout the Colchester, Braintree and Witham areas.

- **Delivery of shared Anti-Social Behaviour team with Colchester Borough Homes** - CBC/CBH Merger of ASB Teams – launched 3 April 2012. and a new ASB Policy developed in consultation with residents and partners and signed off by Colchester Borough Homes Board (September).
- **In addition to the above measures** the Zone teams have developed a number of initiatives within local areas to tackle anti-social behaviour, including a trial period of youth activities and the Tiptree youth hub which was developed with local children to give them fun and educational activities on a Friday evening. The Zone teams continue to work closely with PCSOs across all zones to fully understand local issues and tackle them together. The Weekend Noise Service has diversified, making best use of officers' skills and knowledge enabling checks to be made on licensed premises out-of-hours to ensure that licence conditions are adhered to and a Responsible Dog Ownership Strategy was launched in September and the Council has been awarded the RSPCA's Silver Community Animal Welfare Footprint award for our work on Stray Dogs.



Enabling local communities to help themselves

Our key actions for this priority are to enable communities to improve or develop new facilities such as community centres, sport and recreational facilities and for Zone Teams to identify and engage with formal and informal community groups within the borough.

Overall Rating G

Output Measures

- **Use of S106 Funding for community developments** - A variety of projects have been funded from S106 open space sport and recreational facilities contributions, in partnership with Parish and Town Councils to provide new or improved facilities delivering community benefits.
- **Develop a plan in conjunction with Sport England to provide leisure facilities and activities in North Colchester** in response to local need - Sport England is providing support and resource to plan new facilities and an engagement event with National Governing Bodies has taken place, the findings of which are currently being analysed.
- **Community-led activities taking place in addition to planned and reactive service delivery** - The Zone teams are working closely with a wide range of organisations including Town and Parish Councils, community groups, charities and other local associations. The Zones have developed a range of activities with local people and groups such as:
 - Setting up a steering group in St Anne's Ward to enable residents to actively improve their own community.
 - Working with Voices of Greenstead to support projects that they are setting up.

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- Developing the Tiptree Youth Hub.
- Working with volunteer groups to help improve cleanliness of problem areas in the town centre.
- Coffee mornings which are used as a platform to educate residents of Council services and encourage recycling.
- Locality Budgets awarded to all Ward Councillors enabled up to a total of £120k of enhancements to be spent across the Borough through different local community projects. This has enabled a range of different things to be delivered including new tree planting, jubilee celebrations, new seating, play equipment, grit and salt bins, dog litter bins and in some cases the combining of ward funds to enable spend across a wider locality.
- The Council has invested £30,000 in Hythe Forward. Aided by a new website, and other more traditional means of communication, local residents, landowners and business owners within the Hythe community have been brought together to form a Development Trust. This will be used as a vehicle for the community to own assets, apply for funding from sources unavailable to the Council, and to be a voice in deciding the future priorities for change and investment in the Hythe.



Supporting more vulnerable groups

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The main actions identified to help support vulnerable groups includes, working with partners in the voluntary sector and sub-region to provide new specialist support services to prevent households becoming homeless and to support and develop skills within vulnerable groups in respect of confidence and assertion to support independent living and safety. Another key action is to support and contribute to the Essex Families Pilot aimed at working with partners to support vulnerable families

Output Measures

- **Support for Street Homeless - funding and agreement about new service level secured** - Significant funding has been secured from DCLG to provide a new service for street homeless people, and to help provide private rented accommodation for single people with no priority need throughout the sub-region and Uttlesford. Colchester is leading on this work. Grant awards have been made to The April Centre, Open Road and the Youth Enquiry Service to deliver specialist support and advice to residents to prevent them becoming homeless.
- **Ongoing monitoring of existing performance indicators** – Prevention of homelessness performance is more positive than anticipated given the challenging target and current climate. Increased resources, targeted support and monitoring processes are helping in this area.
- **No cold caller' zones** - Community Days of Action to be used as a means of gauging residents' interest in/the need for these zones in various parts of the borough. The responses received will be considered alongside any other available intelligence held by ECC Trading Standards and the Police.

Overall Rating G

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- **Skills training to assist vulnerable individuals** - We provide support and advice to 'Fresh Beginnings'. They are a voluntary organisation that assists migrants and refugees to live independently, by providing welfare advice, IT, Maths and English classes
- **'Crucial Crew' programme** - Crucial Crew has been delivered and included six scenarios which were shared with over 1500 pupils from our primary schools across Colchester. The scenarios included road and rail safety, bullying, drug and alcohol awareness, and internet safety.
- **Prototype approach and cross partner targets agreed for the Essex Families Pilot** – A multi-agency team is in place from the beginning of October and starting to work with some of the families in Colchester with complex needs. A set of high-level objectives have been agreed and data collection to assess current costs will begin very shortly to enable longer term monitoring of impact.
- **In addition** – activities and dedicated support has been put in place to help customers impacted by Welfare Reforms. This includes money advice guidance, assistance with understanding the changes and housing support where over occupation or high rent may impact families in the future. The Museums Service has delivered a number of projects that support vulnerable groups, these include Street Angels, part of the Out in the Open project and each year we award approximately £600,000 of Disabled Facility Grants to people with disabilities to enable them to continue living independently in their own homes. These grants fund a mixture of works including the installation of stair lifts to the building of extensions.



Providing sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality green spaces and play areas

Our key actions here are to develop a sport and leisure service that embraces new technology and responds to customers' needs in order to improve access to services so that sports participation is increased. We also want to enable communities and work with partners to deliver better open spaces and leisure and work with local sports clubs, leisure providers and other partners to deliver projects that build on the energy and excitement resulting from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics.

Output Measures

- **Improvements at Colchester Leisure World** – This includes the extension of the Activa Gym, new dance studio, new café and new technology which will include greater ability for self serve. This project is well underway and within timescales set.
- **Improvement work with our parks and open spaces** – this includes a number of projects, namely the new Clubhouse facility at Abbey Field, a tender process has been completed and work on site began on October 1st. We estimate approx 3 months to completion. The review of Old Heath Recreation Ground public consultation event took place on 29 September attended by approximately 100 residents and users, a website consultation continues until end October. We will share the consultation results with Ward Members in early November and then have a meeting with residents planned for the 24 November. Visitor attractions at High Woods Country Park are set to improve again and the visitor centre plans are in the final tender stages with a new wheeled sport facility being consulted on along with interest for a Segway experience.

Overall Rating G

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Despite the weather this years Tour Series was a success and offered 11 different activities as part of a Community Event that attracted over 500 participants. In addition to this our aim to increase participation included six Sport in the Park sessions (football & cricket) have been delivered in partnership with CUCST & Essex Cricket during summer holidays along with a holiday programme at Sports Centres including sessions in handball, basketball, volleyball, archery and table tennis. The town was packed once again for the Olympic Torch relay and the new sports Pavilion at the Garrison is now underway.



Engaging with the voluntary sector

Our key aim for 2012/13 is to look for opportunities to transfer the management of assets and services to the voluntary sector where this can achieve improved services and efficiencies and work with the voluntary sector to address strategic issues, support communities and groups and further strengthen partnerships.

Overall Rating G

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Output Measures

- **Creation of community awards grant pot for administration by the voluntary sector for community awards of up to £200** - This pot was created and of a total of £6,000 has been allocated to small projects.
- **Management Transfers** - The transfer of Abbots Activity Centre and the ex-Garrison gymnasium building are both still being progressed. Expressions of interest regarding Abbots has been revisited as the only interested party in the initial EOI identified the need for a grant so a new EOI round has been agreed by the portfolio holder to ensure fairness to all. Negotiations are continuing with Abbeyfield Church regarding the refurbishment and management of the Garrison Gym.
- **Other activities** – A review of our partnership Foodbank Service has demonstrated that this continues to be successful and with growing demand improvements are being planned. We continue to work with individuals and families impacted by cancer through our project with Macmillan and have once again supported the voluntary sector with the award of over £200k in grant funding. The Council is working with partners and communities to communicate and take forward rights, responsibilities and opportunities set out in the Localism Bill. A recent Scrutiny session reviewed a number of key areas that are changing and looked at ways that the council can work with voluntary partners and communities in the future.

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Leading our communities

This section of the action plan is about influencing others in a range of functions where the Council does not have direct responsibility for delivery, but knows these things are vital to the future of the borough and its residents.



Regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure

This is arguably one of the most challenging but important priorities for the Council in the current climate. The main actions here are to support the delivery of the key regeneration sites, and bring back existing buildings into use including stalled sites to deliver new homes and jobs. We also aim to bring forward the regeneration of key areas in the borough to provide enhanced community facilities and infrastructure, including public spaces, by working in partnership with the public and private sectors.

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Output Measures

- **Support the delivery of Greyfriars Hotel and East Hill House conversion** - Greyfriars hotel development is onsite and East Hill House planning application expected Spring 2013.
- **Development of the first Phase of the Severalls site** – commenced
- **Delivery of a Masterplan for the Cuckoo Farm South / Northern Gateway to deliver new leisure facilities and jobs including development of a hotel, health and fitness centre and associated retail** - Vision/Masterplan completed for Northern Gateway.
- **Completion of new hotel and new retail in the St Botolph's Quarter** - Hotel development operator going through internal restructure and further information awaited on timescales.
- **Adoption of Supplementary Planning Document for North Growth Area Urban Extension** - June 2012.
- **Consider for approval a planning application for North Growth Area Urban Extension** – Under Consideration.
- **Completion of Transcoast project delivering new pontoons and community benefits** - Underway with artists consultation in respect of wayfinding project.
- **Creation of a new public park within the Maltings Development** - Planning consent granted for Maltings development including publicly accessible park. Work commenced on site.
- **Creation of a Masterplan for the Coldoc / Fieldgates sites** – Work underway
- **Planning consent achieved for Phase 2 of the St Botolph's Quarter, providing new homes and retail opportunities** - Timescales regarding Phase 2 planning application currently under review.

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- **Complete Town Station (Oyster) Square and Berryfield extension to transfer the outside play area back to St Thomas More school as per the legal agreement** - planning consent obtained and discussions underway with Network Rail regarding start onsite date.



Improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail.

Key actions for this priority include the implementation of key projects within the Better Town Centre Programme Plan, including delivery of the new Creative Business Centre providing flexible work space and network and business support facilities for a priority growth sector. Also to deliver the Colchester Digital Strategy and develop local networks and business support to enable Colchester businesses to start up and to grow.

Output Measures

- **Securing a minimum of 6,000ft² of flexible workspace** and business support facilities creating up to 100 onsite and offsite jobs - Funding bids submitted to secure capital for refurbishment of Old Police Station building into Creative Business Centre.
- **Planning consent achieved for Vineyard Gate Shopping centre 2013-14** - Discussions ongoing with developer to complete legal agreements for Vineyard Gate.
- **Complete a review of what makes independent retailing route/s in the town centre special to Colchester in terms of history, events and characters and seek external funding up to £300,000 to deliver the resulting programme to create a 'Lanes-style' retail offering.** - Local Distinctiveness Audit completed by HEART Norwich July 2012 results and recommendations fed back to local business stakeholders September 2012. Appropriate funding bids are being researched.
- **Adoption of Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document** - Expected December 2012
- **Delivery of superfast broadband (50Mbps) and mobile connectivity (10 Mbps) by end 2013** - Negotiating contract and commercials with alternative provider of 4G enabled Wi Fi 'mesh' in the town centre and deployment scheduled for early 2013. Wireless broadband deployment by Briskona/Motorola due to commence in November 2012 and following their successful deployment in West Bergholt, our digital partner County Broadband are currently in negotiation with Abberton, Langenhoe and Eight Ash Green Parishes about deploying wireless broadband. We are also in negotiations to utilise the Council owned fibre network and ducting to provide superfast broadband in the town centre
- **Provide a virtual 'one stop shop' for business support, networking and procurement opportunities by end 2013** - Improved web signposting being developed. Also working with 'Colchester Works' and 'iEssex' to enable users to access current information on apprenticeships, training, skills and employment opportunities

Overall Rating A

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Giving local people the chance to improve their skills

Our key actions here are to work with the Adult Community College and Job Centre Plus to increase the number of residents with skills for work by providing extra courses in community venues. We also want to help reduce the number of young people aged 18 to 24 in the borough who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) and increase the take-up of Apprenticeships in the borough.

Overall Rating G

Output Measures

- **7 Work Clubs with Job Centre Plus operating throughout the borough and deliver work-focused training for 50 people -** Approximately 100 residents are attending work clubs and approximately 10 participants have gained employment since April. Two of the clubs focus on young people and 1 work club runs from the April Centre to work with clients of the Nightshelter. The Executive work club is now run by volunteers and has an Open Day coming up at Firstsite. We continue to work with Garrison and service personnel in setting up a Garrison work club. Rolling programmes are currently running under the name of Pathways to Employment with 20 Learners already completing one of these accredited courses at Wilson Marriage, with referrals from Work Clubs and negotiations are in place to run one of these courses in a community setting at the Ark Centre in Highwoods.
- **Work with Essex County Council to deliver 30 'paid work experience' placements for young people in the NEET group by 31 March 2013 -** We are working with The Prince's Trust to deliver "Get Into" course in the Autumn for 12 NEETs and assisting ECC with marketing the 30 "paid for work placements". In addition we are developing complementary career advice, job search and CV/presentation skills development via Catten College (Flexible Support Fund). The Finding Futures project that provides one to one mentoring for 16-24 year olds, in partnership with Youth Enquiry Service, has received a further six months funding from the DWP under the Flexible Support Fund (will now run to Feb 2013). So far 60 young people have been assisted in some way with 40 going into employment, education or certified training. The Skills and Employment Fair on 18 September with 25+ agencies and employers attending. We are also working with the Colchester NEET Group to ensure that apprenticeships and other work/training initiatives benefit the Colchester NEET group and reduce the cohort numbers.
- **Working with Colchester Institute and BCT Consortium to secure 150 Apprenticeships by 31 March 2013 -** We are working with 'Sound Choices', Firstsite and ECC to deliver 25 Level 3 Creative & Media Apprenticeships we had a joint stand promoting apprenticeships at the Colchester Careers Convention held at Thurstable School on 16 October attended by more than 1,600 Year 11 students. We have worked to link Creative and Media sector apprenticeships and training to St Botolph's quarter development and to key local employers.
- **Other activities -** Our Welfare Reform Support Team has included a secondment from JCP to help those customers impacted by the reforms consider work alternatives and ways to attain new or better skills to aide with employability. The team have also worked with customers to help with money management skills. The council has participated in a number of Job / Careers Fairs and has worked to secure a number of internal apprenticeship opportunities within the councils own services.

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Promoting sustainability and reducing congestion

Our key actions for this priority are to support the reduction of unnecessary traffic in the town centre. We also aim to use the public realm strategy to develop a package of measures to enhance the vitality and economic prosperity of the area. We want to develop, with Essex County Council, the sustainable transport infrastructure for the North Colchester Connectivity corridor and deliver Travel Change Behaviour programmes with transport providers to help address congestion and air quality. We also aim to review Nottingham Declaration strategy and develop a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

Overall Rating G

Output Measures

- **Implement scheme to improve public transport access and reduce traffic in the High Street as part of the better town centre project** - Consultation on traffic regulation orders was undertaken at the end of 2011/12. Objections were received and we are now in discussion with ECC on the way forward to deliver traffic reduction in town centre in a way that addresses these objections.
- **Secure funding to move forward streetscape and public realm enhancements in the town centre** - Construction of the new Osborne Street bus station commenced in July. Refurbishment of lifts, toilets, paving, canopy, waiting lounge and information screens are being funded by CBC.
- **Improvements in air quality** - In 2011, the Council was awarded £31,500 grant funding by DEFRA to support our ongoing work to improve air quality within the borough. A further £85,000 has recently been awarded and the funded project (Love your Car), is run in partnership with Colchester's 20/20 Travel Plan Club. The aim is to raise awareness of, and encourage car sharing, smarter driving techniques and travel planning, all of which will reduce levels of NO₂. The smarter driving element of the campaign raised awareness of fuel use reduction measures that everyone can adopt such as regular tyre pressure checks, driving at efficient speeds, and using other modes of transport like cycling and walking for short journeys. With the additional funding boost further promotion is possible along with a feasibility study for a low emission zone.
- **Sustainable Transport / Commence construction of 1,000-space Park and Ride facility at North Colchester** - Growing places funding provisionally allocated by LEP. Working with ECC to secure funding. ECC advise that the target is to open facility by end of 2013.
- **Sustainable Transport / Approve a solution for bus priority in the North Station Area through to the town centre** - ECC developing proposal to aid the operation of park and ride. Proposals yet to be formally presented to CBC.
- **Sustainable Transport / Prepare for the delivery of the NAR2 Rapid Transit Corridor** - Planning application to vary existing planning conditions has been submitted and is to be considered at November Planning committee. Growing places funding has been provisionally allocated.
- **Behaviour Change and Increase the use of public Transport** - Businesses and major organisations engaged to increase the use of public transport, walking and cycling. Bi-annual survey with partner organisations commenced to measure progress. The Hospital has

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committed to Travel Plan through its planning application and a new travel plan initiative is included as part of legal agreement to King Edward Quay student accommodation unit.

- **Behaviour Change and Transport strategies** containing a set of proposals to address issues in North Colchester, Stanway and commence preparation a draft for the Eastern Approaches - Draft strategy has been produced and released to the public as evidence based material to support growth. Strategy for Stanway is being drafted. A presentation has been delivered to members and shared with key stakeholders.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - A draft Sustainability Strategy has been developed to set out ways in which the Council will mitigate and adapt to climate change. Work is also being carried out to understand new initiatives including Green Deal, Climate Local and the new Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) requirements will impact on the Council and to develop a plan to implement these in the best way for our customers



Showing tolerance and changing behaviours to create better local communities

Our key actions for this priority is to work with partners to successfully introduce a new integrated offender management programme to reduce repeat crime. We also want to develop and agree a service level agreement with the Probation Service to enable positive use of the Community Payback scheme. We have an overarching aim to promote tolerance and work with partners and communities to meet the diverse needs across the borough, and consider equality and diversity implications in our policies on those with protected characteristics* (*age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment – Equality Act 2010).

Output Measures

- **Develop (with partners) new offender management programme** - The new Integrated Offender Management programme for Colchester and Tendring is operational. Housing and gaining employment have been identified as the two single issues with the first cohort. Planning work is underway to integrate this programme with our partnership with Job Centre Plus.
- **Develop SLA with the Probation Service to enable Community Payback scheme** – The SLA has been agreed and first placement achieved.
- **Consider Equality and Diversity and promote tolerance and diverse needs** – The Council continues to have a robust and embedded approach to equality and diversity with Equality Impact Assessments being undertaken on all policies, a dedicated resource in place, support and participation in groups and a number of activities and improvements being undertaken in services. The annual update to Policy Panel confirms examples of work being undertaken and the areas that we recognise need focus and ongoing action. Those examples include examples such as, the use of development gain monies, in the form of Community Section 106 funding, which have been used to support local projects as well as those that provide borough-wide services. Examples include awards to The

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Samaritans, Outhouse East and The Salvation Army, and improved disabled access to community buildings and new community buildings.

- **Zone working principles focusing on local needs** - The Zone Teams have enabled Street Services to interact more with 'hard to reach' groups to ensure that all residents can access Council services and support. This includes a significant increase in vulnerable adult visits and work with a number of community groups and organisations.



Supporting tourism, heritage and the arts.

Our key actions for 2012/13 are to work with partners and local industry businesses to increase the economic impact of tourism in the borough. We also want to work in partnership with Colchester Arts Centre, Firstsite, the Mercury Theatre and the Museum Service to provide leadership and support to deliver the Creative Colchester strategy and increase skills, jobs, community development and forge new links between cultural, creative, tourism and hospitality sectors. We have our exciting Castle re-development project and the associated interpretation of the wider heritage in the borough and our aim to deliver increased visitor numbers, and encouraging day visitors to overnight/weekend stay visitors.

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Overall Rating G

Outcome Measures

- **To increase trips to the borough and spending while here** - Each year we aim to increase the number of visitor trips to our Borough and the amount that is spent here. For 2012/13 our target is for visitor trips to increase by 0.5m so from 4.7m to 5.2m and half year figures show that we are on track with 4.9m trips having been made. Visitor spend aims were to increase from £224m to £230m and half yearly performance has already exceeded that with £239.7m. Acknowledging the limitations of statistical models, it is clear that there has been significant investment in Colchester's tourism offerings at Colchester Zoo, Firstsite and the retail experience which could help to explain this rise.
- **To increase the number of people employed in tourism from 3,910 to 4,100 ('full-time equivalent' by 31 March 2013)** - The employment figures (4,071) again shows that Colchester is broadly on track considering that the figures are mid-term.
- **Creative Colchester strategy / Deliver identified priorities within the Action Plan** – The Creative Colchester Strategy has been agreed by key stakeholders and work is ongoing to develop the action plan.
- **Deliver the Castle redevelopment project (end of 2012/13 through to 2013/14)**. - The procurement process for the principal building works contractor and for the main display fit out and for audio visual displays is underway. After the approval process work will commence in the new year. PR and marketing for the Castle project is in the process of being agreed and detailed planning is now in hand for the Castle closure period and the empty Castle open period. An alternative in-school learning programme has been developed for the closure period. The Castle will close to the public on 7 January 201 and will temporarily re-open on 9 March when it

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will give visitors the chance to see the Castle as an empty building for the first time since 1935. The Castle will then close again from 8 April 2013 until Easter 2014 when it will re-open following redevelopment.

- **Develop and maintain delivery mechanisms for improvement and maintenance of our heritage assets across the borough -** We have been building the Council's connections with local heritage groups in recent months. There has been ongoing engagement with a number of groups on various projects, including; Friends of Colchester's Roman Wall; Colchester Archaeological Trust; The Catholic Heritage Society; Mersea Island Museum Society and Friends of Colchester Castle Park. We have also continued to work closely with English Heritage on a variety of sites including the Town Walls, Mersea Barrow, Lexden Mount and Colchester Castle. This work is laying the foundations for the drafting of the Heritage Strategy and the associated action plan in the next few months.



Bringing investment to the borough

Our key actions in 2012/13 are to work with Invest Essex to promote the Colchester offer and attract inward investment into the borough. Work with the Integrated County Strategy and Haven Gateway Partnerships to secure the infrastructure investment identified in Colchester's Local Investment Plan and target 20 companies in key growth sectors to secure additional investment in the borough in excess of £1m. We aim to secure funding from Growing Places Fund, Integrated County Strategy investment fund, Europe, private sector partners and other sources for key projects.

Outcome Measures

- **Target 20 companies in key growth sectors to secure additional investment in the borough in excess of £1m -** Currently working on 6 active leads, 2 of which were provided by Invest Essex.
- **Secure funding from Growing Places Fund, Integrated County Strategy investment fund, EU funding programmes, private sector partners and other sources for key projects -** two successful Growing Places Funding bids have been secured for Colchester which will bring £5m into Colchester for the Northern Connectivity Corridor and £2.4m for the Parkside Office Village development at the University of Essex. Bids have also been submitted to the EU and to the Department of Energy and Climate Change in respect of the proposed Creative Business Centre.
- **Other activities -** £3.2m has been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the redevelopment of Colchester Castle, with the total investment secured from a range of sources exceeding £4m. It is anticipated that the re-launch of the Castle Museum will attract annual visitor figures in excess of 100,000 and complements the existing diverse cultural offering which will boost the regional attraction of Colchester in relation to tourism and leisure visits and spend. The current planning application by Fenwick for investment of £30m into Williams and Griffin will be an important boost to Colchester High Street and Lancaster Group look set to invest a further £4m into North Colchester. The Council is also supporting Wilkin and Sons in progressing its redevelopment plans for the Tiptree Jam Factory which involve a £25 million investment in a new factory funded in part by residential development.

Overall Rating A

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Working in partnerships to help tackle health and crime issues

Our key actions for 2012/13 include working with our partners on the Safer Colchester Partnership to agree a plan to reduce crime and support the Neighbourhood Action Panels we also aim to develop our partnership with Essex Probation Service. We want to work with ECC to improve health by reducing smoking rates and childhood obesity and continue joint working between EEC, Environmental Health and Sport & Leisure to coordinate and integrate our public health work with the wider agenda and the Public Health Outcomes framework.

Overall Rating G

Outcome Measures

- **Plan agreed by Safer Colchester Partnership** - Partners on the Safer Colchester Partnership have produced an Annual Partnership Plan with one of its priorities being to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- **Neighbourhood Action Panel meetings and action plan progression** – Panel continue to meet and progress their priorities.
- **Develop Service Level Agreement including work programme for Community Payback groups and first placement** - done
- **Life Opportunities health targets agreed and achieved** - Life Opportunities targets and action plans agreed with Public Health NHS North Essex/ ECC and Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE) in April 2012. In August 2012 smoking quitter figures show good progress towards meeting end-of-year NHS and Life Opportunity targets and CBC Sport and Leisure Services aim to tackle childhood obesity with their targeted Life Opportunity priority areas and schools activities. Data that became available in June 2012 suggests a downward trend in Reception and Year 6 children in Colchester who are overweight or obese. Work completed June 2012 to document CBC's contribution to wider Public Health agenda and Outcomes Framework. The newly formed Public Health and Enforcement Service contributes towards the delivery of the nationally agreed set of Public Health Outcomes. Specific contributions in 2012/13 include our ongoing work to improve air quality, our activities in preventing and tackling noise pollution, encouraging healthy eating in commercial premises through the administration of a Healthy Eating Award, and sharing intelligence with the Police and Trading Standards and tackling irresponsible drinking and alcohol related crime.
- **Intelligence Database** – delivery and then using it to increase efficient delivery of services Intelligence Database Software is a product developed and owned by the East of England Trading Standards Association (EETSA) - A visit has been made to ECC Trading Standards Dept. to receive a demonstration in the use of the system and this was well received. However, there are implications to its use including double keying of data plus the annual subscription fee, and therefore we have repeatedly requested further information from EETSA as to the actual benefits and positive outcomes delivered so that an informed decision can be made. This information has yet to be supplied.
- **Flytipping – SMARTWATER initiative and increased use of stop-checks** - SMARTWATER campaign – the Essex Regulatory Services Partnership has not yet progressed this initiative and owing to pressure on local authority resources, it is possible that this will not now take place in 2012/13.
- **SOS Bus** - Colchester's successful SOS bus continues to provide important late night services. Largely manned by volunteers, it is estimated to have reduced money spent and resources needed in A&E and ambulance call outs significantly.



Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Item
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15 January 2013

Report of	Head of Corporate Management	Author	Robert Judd Tel. 282274
Title	Work Programme 2012-13		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

**This report sets out the 2012-13 Work Programme for the
Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

1. Action Required

1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and note the work programme for 2012-13.

2. Reason for Action

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

3. Setting the Work Programme

3.1 Overview and scrutiny needs to be member-led, with Members proactive in determining the work programme and ensuring its relevance to the future needs of the Council. Members need to take a lead on the work to be undertaken, focusing on strategic and significant issues, and the programme needs to be flexible to allow for relevant other items to be included.

4. Changes / Amendments

4.1 Members Locality Budgets, provisionally scheduled for this meeting will be presented to the February meeting.

4.2 Updates on the Communications and Engagement Plan, and Risk Register, all related to the UCC FSR will be scheduled into the work programme.

5. Standard and Strategic Plan References

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

5.2 Scrutiny is a key function to ensure decisions have been subject to full appraisal and that they are in line with the Council's strategic aims. The role of scrutiny is also an important part of the Council's risk management and audit process, helping to check that risks are identified and challenged.

5.3 There is no publicity, equality and diversity, human rights, community safety, health and safety, risk management or financial implications in this matter.

Meeting date / reviews	Portfolio
12 June 2012 1. Annual Scrutiny Report 2. 2011-12 Year-end Performance Report and Strategic Plan Action Plan	Leader / Communities & Leisure
11 July 2012 1. Call in hearing – Decision STR-001-12 Hythe Forward funding contribution	Deputy Leader / Street and Waste Services
17 July 2012 1. ECC Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – ECC presentation on proposals (submissions to ECC by 31-July-12. Strategy presented to September's ECC HWB. Clare Hardy, Senior Manager ECC HWB to give a presentation. 2. Budget Strategy, Timetable and MTFF	Communities and Leisure Leader / Business & Resources
29 August 2012 1. HWB – Local arrangements, including the work and progress of Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Cllr Ann Naylor, ECC PH HWB and Clare Hardy to attend. Dr Gordon and Dr Sweeney (CCG) to attend. A 2013 meeting to be arranged to review the outcomes from the new Strategy	Communities and Leisure
18 September 2012 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee)	Planning, Community Safety (CS) and Culture
30 October 2012 1. Pre Cabinet review of Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact 2. Localising Council Tax Support	Cabinet Business and Resources
11 December 2012 – cancelled	
15 January 2013 1. 2012-13 6-monthly Performance report and Strategic Plan Action Plan	Leader / Communities & Leisure
12 February 2013 1. Welfare Reform (Lead Officer Ann Hedges, Executive Director) 2. Members Locality Budgets	Business and Resources
19 March 2013 1. Investment in Colchester's Arts and Culture – Venue "The Auditorium, firstsite" Public Transport in the Borough (following the opening of the new bus station) PH Renaissance This review is primarily about the effect of the new bus station (Bus Operators to be invited) and the SPAP "Congestion Busting" action to reduce traffic, improve bus reliability and air quality, plus updates to Members on the Northern Approaches Road and Busway, and the delivery of Park and Ride. HRA Reform – Local Housing Review – date to be confirmed. Communications and Engagement Plan / Risk Register – UCCFSR – to be ongoing, with dates to be confirmed.	Planning, CS and Culture

