

Policy Review and Development Panel

Grand Jury Room, Town Hall

20 August 2008 at 6:00pm

The Policy Review Panel deals with

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

Information for Members of the Public

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Terms of Reference

Policy Review and Development Panel

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

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL
20 August 2008 at 6:00pm**

Members

Chairman : Councillor Young.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Barlow.
Councillors Bentley, Davies, Hardy and Knight.

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

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 6 are normally brief and the last Agenda Item is a standard one for which there may be no business to consider.

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

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

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

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched to 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 personal

interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Have Your Say!

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

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

6. Minutes

1 - 4

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 14 May and 16 June 2008.

7. Review of Colchester's Housing Strategy Statement

5 - 45

See briefing paper by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

The Panel to receive a presentation from:

- Lindsay Barker, Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration,
- Tina Hinson, Strategic Housing Manager

8. Night-Time Town Centre for All **46 - 56**

See briefing paper by the Executive Director, Ian Vipond.

The Panel to receive a presentation from:

- Peter Carrington, Community Safety Co-ordinator

9. Historic Town Centre Improvement **57 - 60**

See briefing paper by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

The Panel to receive a presentation from:

- Howard Davies, Town Centre Project Manager and
- Paul Wilkinson, Transportation Policy Manager

10. Work Programme 2008/09 **61 - 66**

See report by the Head of Corporate Management.

11. Exclusion of the public

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

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

14 MAY 2008

Present:- Councillors Barlow, Bentley, Davies, Hardy, Knight, J. Young

1. Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor J. Young be appointed Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

2. Deputy Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Barlow be appointed Deputy Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

16 JUNE 2008

Present:- Councillor J. Young (Chairman)
Councillors Barlow, Bentley, Davies, and Hardy.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy Review Panel held on 3 March 2008 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Have Your Say! The Principle of Zero Waste

Paula Whitney addressed the Panel, pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1), on the principles of zero waste, which she considered to be the only option to achieve a sustainable environment for all. She referred again to the issues relating to climate change and recycling, the need for the waste capacity and fuel consumption of the Council's refuse vehicles to be investigated, the importance of introducing separated litter bins in the town centre.

Councillors J Young, (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council) and Bentley (in respect of his membership of Colchester Chamber of Commerce) declared their personal interests in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3).

5. Waste and Recycling Review

The Panel received details of the Colchester Borough Council Waste to Resources Policy together with the Peer Review of the Waste and Recycling Service which had been undertaken in January 2008 by the Improvement and Development Agency.

Tina Dopson, the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships, Matthew Young, Head of Housing and Environmental Policy, Chris Dowsing, Strategic Waste and Sustainability Manager, and Dave McManus, Street Care and Recycling Manager, attended the meeting to assist members in their discussions.

Councillor Willetts attended the meeting and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Panel concerning the Council's recent change in policy regarding the mechanical treatment of waste, his preference for a statement to be published explaining the implications of the change to residents. He was of the view that residents should be entitled to make the final decision in relation to any proposal to introduce fortnightly collections of waste.

James Watson, a resident of Attlee Gardens, addressed the Panel, pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1), on the problems associated with being a resident wishing to recycle but not having the facilities to store material within his home.

At the meeting, the Panel received a presentation by Chris Dowsing, which provided details of the Government's Waste Strategy 2007 and the measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gases, improving resource efficiency, protecting public health, protecting ecosystems and

safeguarding social amenity. An explanation was also given of the Waste Hierarchy, and its order of preference in terms of Prevention, Minimisation, Reuse, Recycling, Energy Recovery and Disposal.

In terms of Borough performance in 2007/08, dry recycling amounted to 20.6%, an increase of 1,109 tonnes, composting totalled 12.4% and combined recycling had a rate of 33.08%. Total waste and waste to landfill had decreased by 976 tonnes and 1,977 tonnes respectively.

Mr Dowsing explained that the Council's vision for the future of Waste Management was:

- Less waste produced by everyone;
- An active reuse culture;
- Home composting is 'the norm';
- Easy recycling for everyone;
- More recycled and composted waste than sent to landfill;
- High quality collection service;
- High customer satisfaction.

It was explained that the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Partnerships had asked for an Options Appraisal to be conducted to gather together suggestions, initiatives and examples of good practice with a view to achieving zero waste. The Panel was invited to contribute to this exercise by suggesting ideas for inclusion in the Appraisal. It was intended that the outcome of the appraisal would be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration in September 2008.

The Panel sought further information in relation to the following issues:

- The recycling practices of small and medium sized businesses;
- The dis-incentives associated with Landfill Tax;
- Recycling practices at local schools;
- The results of the Rubbish Recyclers initiative;
- The measures used to ensure that recycling arrangements continue to be competitive as circumstances change;
- Arrangements to improve recycling facilities for residents living in flats;
- The initial outcome of the clear sack initiative, in terms of increased volumes of paper and plastics and consequential reductions in black sack volumes.

The Panel suggested the following ideas for inclusion in the Options Appraisal:

- A seminar with local retail groups and the Chamber of Commerce with the theme 'Increasing Profit through Waste';
- A scheme whereby businesses can be awarded a 'Green' badge based on their compliance with certain energy efficiency criteria;
- The introduction of recycling litter bins in the town centre;
- Encourage schools to participate in a 'Recycler of the Month' award scheme;
- Encourage local supermarkets to offer half price special offers rather than Buy One Get One Free offers;
- Promote a recipe competition, 'The Colchester Feast', with residents and local restaurants to create a Leftovers Recipe for Colchester.

RESOLVED that –

- (i) Matthew Young, Chris Dowsing and Dave McManus be thanked for their very informative discussions with the Panel;
- (ii) The suggestions put forward by Panel members be incorporated within the Options

Appraisal, as appropriate;

(iii) Consideration be given to the results of the Options Appraisal being submitted to the Policy Review and Development Panel in due course.

5. Work Programme

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Corporate Services seeking the Panel's consideration of various suggested issues from which the Panel could select a number to comprise its work programme for 2008/09.

It was also explained that the next meeting date of the Panel clashed would prove difficult for principle officers' attendance and arrangements had therefore been made to change the date from 18 to 20 August 2008.

RESOLVED that, subject to possible review in the light of further advice on scope and timing, the following areas of work be identified by the Panel as their priorities and they be provisionally timetabled into the work programme as indicated:

Meeting on 20 August 2008 -

- Housing Strategy - final review prior to resubmission to Finance and Audit Scrutiny Panel;
- Night-time Economy - briefing paper to include SOS bus and anti-social behaviour issues and possibly determination of Terms of Reference for Task and Finish Group;
- Historic Town Centre Improvement - briefing paper to include pedestrian improvements and the town centre environment and possibly determination of Terms of Reference for Task and Finish Group;
- Town Centre Management - briefing paper on future arrangements.

Meeting on 30 September 2008 -

- Secondary Education - Educational Attainment in the Borough with invitation to guest speakers;
- Flexible Working - review of corporate policy;
- Equality and Diversity - review of corporate policy.

Meeting on 3 November 2008 -

- Neighbourhood Working - briefing paper;
- Waste and Recycling Review - result of Options Appraisal

Meeting on 19 January 2009 -

- Secondary Education - Outcome of initial discussions;
- Climate Change / Sustainability Issues

Meeting on 2 March 2008 -

- To be determined



Policy Review and Development Panel

Item

7

20th August 2008

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration	Author	Richard Hughes ☎ 282571 Tina Hinson ☎ 506903
Title	Review of Colchester's Housing Strategy Statement		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the Housing Strategy, its priorities and Action Plans and make any recommendations before Cabinet consider the Housing Strategy at its September meeting

1. Action required

- 1.1 The Panel is invited to review the Housing Strategy, its priorities and Action Plans and make any recommendations before Cabinet consider the Housing Strategy at its September meeting. A copy of the Housing Strategy and Action Plan is at Appendix 1.

2. Reason for scrutiny

- 2.1 The Policy Review Panel at its March meeting reviewed the Evidence Base for the Housing Strategy including outputs from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey and other research.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The report presented to the Policy Review Panel on the 3rd March 2008 contains more detailed information on the development of the Housing Strategy. This report made reference to emerging guidance on the production of local and sub regional Housing Strategies. However the release of new guidance has been put on hold and there are suggestions from Government Office (East) that housing strategies should form part of the Local Strategic Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 3.2 Although housing strategies should be an essential component of Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships neither of those documents have enough detail on the role housing will play in developing a Strong and Prosperous Community. There is therefore a need for these documents to be supplemented by a Housing Strategy for the Borough.
- 3.3 The Government's recent statutory guidance "Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities" emphasized the fact that Housing Strategies should be evidence based, tailored to local circumstances and periodically refreshed. In addition they should:
- Fully reflect the wider vision of the authority and its partners.
 - Reflect a clear evidenced approach.
 - Provide a strong focus on how partners will deliver their commitments, including on the infrastructure needed to support housing growth.
- 3.4 Essex's recently refreshed Local Area Agreement has a number of indicators which have a direct linkage to the Local Housing Strategy. These are included within Priority 2 –

More people supported to live independently in their own homes. The main indicators are:

- NI 141 - Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI 151 - Net additional homes provided
- NI 156 - Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Local Indicator 2.1 - People over 65 who say they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise control and live independently.
- Local Indicator 2.2 – Number of affordable homes delivered gross

3.5 The Local Strategic Partnership sets out a number of priorities for the area. Those most relevant to the Housing Strategy are in the Life Opportunities strand and envisage community benefits which include the provision of more affordable housing and improvements to the quality of the housing stock across the Borough.

3.6 The three paragraphs above summarise the strategic context for the Housing Strategy and the SMART Action Plans need to contribute to the goals set out above. In addition, we need to take account of the local context, the evidence base and the views of local residents and stakeholders in developing our priorities for the Housing Strategy.

4. Summary of evidence base and key issues

4.1 The evidence base presented to the Policy Review Panel at its March meeting covered a wide range of issues which need to be addressed in the Housing Strategy. A very high level summary is provided here:

- Significant reduction in housing market activity and continuing affordability problems. See paragraph 4.2
- New affordable housing delivery is below need and at risk from the credit crunch. See paragraph 4.3
- Action is needed in the private sector to address health and safety issues and to address the need for adaptations and reduce fuel poverty. See paragraph 4.4
- Decent Homes programme needs to continue in the public sector and Colchester Borough Homes still aims to be a 3 star ALMO. See paragraph 4.5
- There have been significant successes in preventing and tackling homelessness but there is still more to do in line with CBC's recently published Homelessness Strategy. See paragraph 4.6
- There are significant challenges with providing enough of the right kind of support to vulnerable people. See paragraph 4.7
- Housing is key to delivering sustainable communities and the Housing Strategy will identify its role in this work. See paragraph 4.8

4.2 Activity in the housing market has reduced significantly. The credit crunch has led to a lowering of house prices but a worsening of the ability of first time buyers to purchase a suitable home. In addition, existing homeowners may not be able to purchase another home when their current home is unsuitable, which creates a housing need. Repossessions are increasing and expectations are that in the near future a significant number of people who have purchased in the last 3 years will be facing increased and unsustainable housing costs. Median household incomes are generally low in the borough at £23,874 per annum yet housing costs mean that purchasing a home is still out of reach for a significant proportion of households in the borough.

4.3 The number of new affordable dwellings needed in the borough currently stands at 1,082 per annum for the next 5 years. Delivery of new affordable homes has increased over the last 3 years and in 2007/08 reached 265 homes, the highest since the early 1990's. Significant risks exist to the delivery of new affordable housing while the credit crunch lasts as the rate of all building is likely to slow dramatically. The reduced level of new housing will generate more demand for housing and homelessness services that the

Council and its partners provide, while simultaneously reducing our ability to meet housing need in the Borough.

- 4.4 Our recently published Private Sector Stock Condition Survey indicates that 3,117 dwellings have a category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). These require the Council to take action to ensure this is rectified. 12.5% of private sector housing is non decent and of these homes over 14% or 652 homes are lived in by 'vulnerable' households. 7% of private sector households are in fuel poverty, meaning they spend more than 10% of income on fuel costs. A Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) requirement has been forecast at over £1 million.
- 4.5 Colchester Borough Council's internal auditor has recently approved the estimate that 1389 council owned homes remain non decent, this includes homes where tenants have refused to have decent homes work done, which will be corrected as and when the properties become vacant. We now expect these to be tackled over the next 3 years. Management of tenancies remains of good quality and satisfaction levels of tenants are relatively good. Our managing agent Colchester Borough Homes wishes to expand the services it provides and begin a development programme. Colchester Borough Homes has responded to tenant's priorities and increased its efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour by setting up a dedicated team to support victims and tackle perpetrators. The sheltered housing service has also received recognition for its work in providing services to the most vulnerable of sheltered residents. Council owned homes achieved top quartile performance in energy efficiency, which means they are more cost effective to heat and therefore less likely to leave tenants in fuel poverty.
- 4.6 Colchester Borough Council adopted a new Homelessness Strategy at the Cabinet meeting on the 9th July 2008. In the preceding 5 years significant improvements were made in tackling and preventing homelessness with a reduction from 1,614 homelessness applications and 557 acceptances in 2003/04 to 1,064 applications and 283 acceptances in 2007/08. This represents a 66% reduction in applications over the period and a 51% reduction in acceptances over the period. There has also been reductions in the use of temporary accommodation with a reduction from 340 households in 2005 to 193 at the end of June 2008, meaning that Colchester is on course to reach the statutory target of 170 by 2010. The Homelessness Strategy sets out how we will continue to prevent and tackle homelessness thereby tackling deprivation in the Borough. The implementation of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan will be performance managed by the Homelessness Strategy Partnership.
- 4.7 Housing with support is vital to enable vulnerable people to move towards independent living and prevent homelessness in the borough. Currently Supporting People funds 1744 supported housing places in the borough. Two thirds of this is for elderly people in sheltered housing with the remaining third being split among all other specialist support needs. In addition, between 150 and 200 residents benefit from floating support which is low level support unrelated to tenure or tenancy but helps to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness. Currently Supporting People budgets are being cut year on year and there is no expectation of additional investment for new supported housing despite an evidenced need and continual lobbying. There is both an opportunity and a threat to Supporting People Grants as this money will be included in LAA budgets in future and will not be ring fenced. This may provide an opportunity to obtain further funding but must be balanced with the risk that once current contracts come to an end future funding could be switched to other LAA priorities.
- 4.8 Sustainable Communities is a key issue for all of the plans and strategies shared by the Council and its partners. Colchester Borough Council's planning policies seek to deliver mixed and sustainable communities by requiring a percentage of all new housing be affordable to meet community need. In addition developers will need to reduce the

negative environmental impact of building and maintaining homes and reach a carbon neutral target by 2016. A sustainable community is described as a place where people want to live and work in decent homes and neighbourhoods and where they have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Colchester Borough Council's work with partners through the Local Strategic Partnership describes how Colchester Borough Council will achieve these goals.

4.9 At the Policy Review Panel on the 3rd March 2008 a presentation was delivered which covered the evidence base for the Housing Strategy (a copy of this presentation is attached at Appendix 2 for information). Key Issues identified by the Policy Review Panel in March 2008 and responses to these points are set out below:

Issue Identified by Members	Summary of current activity
Mechanisms to speed up the deliver of affordable housing within housing developments	At the September meeting of the Major Developers Forum Registered Social Landlords and the Housing Corporation have been invited along to discuss the delivery of new affordable housing, this will lead to the development of an action plan for all partners to deliver high quality sustainable new affordable homes. As part of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Essex wide group is looking at mechanisms to improve delivery of affordable housing
Suitability standards for temporary housing stock	The Council owned stock of temporary accommodation is currently under review. The Housing Services Manager will be presenting a report to Cabinet in the autumn to decide on the future of specific schemes and set out the quality standards temporary accommodation will reach in future, both in terms of quality of stock and of support provided.
Rural Exception Sites	The Core Strategy which has been examined and if successful will be approved in December sets out a lower threshold for the deliver of new affordable housing in rural areas. The threshold has reduced from 25 across the borough to 3 units in rural areas. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identified sites where housing can be delivered across the Borough for the plan period. The focus is on building on previously developed land but sites have been identified within village envelopes as well.
The achievement of the Decent Homes Standard for all Colchester Borough Council stock by the 2010 deadline	This issue is covered in other reports received by Cabinet. Currently there are 1389 homes where work may need to be done to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard. As part of a new repairs and maintenance contract a plan will be developed to achieve this by the target of 2010.
The development of an Empty Homes Strategy to reduce the number of Colchester Borough Homes properties empty for more than 6 months	An Empty Homes Strategy is being developed but this will only address empty properties in the private sector and reduce the number which are empty for more than 6 months. Colchester Borough Homes void times have reduced and is now at an average of 29 days. Work is being undertaken by CBC and CBH to reduce this further.
Recent work being undertaken by officers with Housing Associations to enable the Council to more directly influence fundraising for the development of land	The Homes and Communities Act received Royal Assent at the end of July 2008. This Act will bring together key partners such as the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships into a new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The HCA will work with landowners, housing associations and Local Authorities to release land for housing and the provision of new affordable housing.
The number of properties currently comprising Colchester Borough	The Right to Buy has had a significant impact on the amount of affordable new homes in the Borough. All new affordable homes are now owned and managed by Housing Associations. The

council's housing stock (6,200) compared to the peak figure of 12,000 in the 1980's	total stock of affordable housing in the Borough as at the 1 st April 2008 is 9,580 homes and this number has increased for each of the last 3 years as more new affordable housing has been delivered than has been lost through the Right to Buy.
Homes which meet the Lifetime Homes Standard	All new affordable housing funded by the Housing Corporation has to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard. Some developers are using the lifetime home standard as a positive selling point when marketing homes for sale. It is expected that over time all housing will meet the lifetime home standard. Colchester Borough Council is currently developing a flexible wheelchair standard so homes can be built which are suitable for wheelchair users and with only minor adaptations can be made suitable for their specific needs and further adapted for any future occupiers with different needs with minimal expense. Consultation has been undertaken with people with disabilities to better understand the issues that affect their housing.

5. Strategic Plan references

5.1 The Strategic Plan has a number of direct priorities and outcomes which the Housing Strategy adopts as listed below:

Key aims	Outcomes
all council homes to meet 'decent homes' standard by end 2007	increase the number of council homes which meet this standard
further initiatives to encourage 'decent homes' in the private sector	improve standards of accommodation in privately-owned homes
explore ways to increase the number of new homes which are affordable to at least 30%	increase number of people who have access to affordable homes
develop new initiatives with private landlords to avoid or prevent homelessness.	fewer people being homeless.

Progress is monitored on achieving these actions every 6 months and reported to Cabinet.

6. Consultation

6.1 A partnership approach has been adopted to involving people in determining priorities for the Housing Strategy. A Housing Strategy Partnership chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods has been created and includes a number of key stakeholders in the Borough.

6.2 Consultation events have included:

- A survey of Colchester Borough Homes's tenants panel to determine what they felt were the most important issues for the Housing Strategy.
- A focus group of tenants to explore issues in more depth than a survey
- A focus group of people with disabilities to discuss their specific housing needs
- A series of focus groups with people in housing need held at a number of support and housing projects across the borough.
- Survey of residents to establish housing need and priorities as well as satisfaction with CBC Housing Services.

6.3 A separate document will be published showing how the feedback we have received from residents and stakeholders have fed into the Housing Strategy priorities and action plans.

7. Publicity considerations

- 7.1 Members of the Housing Strategy Partnership identified a key need for the Strategy was to create a communications plan to ensure that all partners and other stakeholders were aware of the actions, that their organisations had also adopted the same set of actions and that Colchester Borough Council kept them informed of both successful implementation and where there were risks and the possibility of delay to implementation. This will be the first action to be undertaken following the review of the draft Strategy by the Policy Review and Development Panel. Key stages will include:
- Consultation on the Action Plan and priorities
 - Launch of the final strategy to stakeholders and residents
 - Targeted action for partner agencies to adopt actions which are relevant to them.
 - News bulletin updates on implementation of the Strategy
 - Continuing consultation and review of the evidence base to reflect new circumstances and ongoing trends.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are financial implications to the Housing Strategy but these are considered within existing budgets. There are no specific financial implications to this report.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 9.1 As part of the development of the Housing Strategy an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken which will result in actions to minimise and remove any unintended discriminatory consequences. Initial work suggests that there are specific housing issues for people with disabilities, young people and migrant workers and services will need to continue to be as flexible and welcoming as possible to meet the needs of these and other disadvantaged groups. Services are provided in a flexible way and a variety of contact methods are employed for residents to make use of services. In addition translation services are offered in addition to aids to communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing such as Type Talk.

10. Community Safety and Health and Safety implications

- 10.1 There are no specific implications to this report. However, the successful achievement of the Housing Strategy action plan will deliver both community safety and health and safety benefits. These will be in the form of more settled sustainable communities which will contribute to the reduction of crime and low level snit-social behaviour and the improvements to the housing stock in the borough, whether affordable or privately owned, will reduce risk to the health and safety of occupants.

11. Risk Management Implications

- 11.1 The risks to the achievement of these action plans mainly lay in the current state of the housing market and the economy overall.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Housing Strategy Priorities and Action Plans

Appendix 2 - Summary Housing Strategy Evidence Base – Powerpoint Presentation

Background Papers

Executive Summary of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (available on the website or hard copy available from Strategic Housing Team)

Colchester Borough's Housing Strategy

Vision for Housing in Colchester Borough

To make Colchester a place where people choose to live in a decent, safe home which meets their needs at a price they can afford and in locations and neighbourhoods that are sustainable and desirable. To balance the housing market so that supply of housing meets market demand and housing need.

Chapter 1: Delivering market and affordable housing to meet housing need and demand

Priorities

- 1 Seek to develop a balanced housing market in the Borough of Colchester where supply meets demand at a price that is affordable to residents of the Borough. Ensure that interventions in the Housing Market are based on robust evidence and set out clearly in the Local Development Framework.
- 2 Seek 35% of all new homes to be affordable over the lifetime of the strategy.
- 3 Support the application for housing corporation grant funding where this is used intelligently and creatively to maximise the supply of new affordable housing.
- 4 Prioritise the provision of affordable housing on the same site as market housing to ensure sustainable mixed communities. Where this is not possible set out clear priorities for investment decisions on the use of any commuted sums which may be received. Ensure that any commuted sums received will provide equivalent amounts of affordable housing.
- 5 Investigate new ways of developing or funding the delivery of new affordable housing including reviewing CBC's land use, land sales policy and the use of capital receipts.
- 6 Clearly set out what kind of housing is needed in terms of size and quality of properties and associated facilities to ensure the housing delivered in the market is attractive and meets need, creating neighbourhoods and communities which are sustainable.

- 7 Develop new initiatives and housing products which meet housing need and the demand between affordable rented and outright home ownership, to enable a fully functioning housing ladder where demand meets supply at a price that is affordable to households on below average incomes.
- 8 Ensure the needs of the most vulnerable households are met when delivering new market and affordable housing including people with disabilities and wheelchair users.

Actions: Delivering market and affordability housing to meet housing need and demand

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
2	<p>A balanced housing market based on robust evidence.</p> <p>An Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document that will clearly specify what housing is needed in the borough by size and tenure.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Market Assessment identified a need for 1,082 new affordable homes p.a.</p>	<p>Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document to be developed to specify housing needed.</p> <p>To be approved by Local Development Framework Panel.</p> <p>A Housing Developers' Partnership will be set up to develop strategic relationships with housing developers to make them aware of housing markets and what kind of housing is needed and where.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Market Assessment will be updated every 6 months and shared with partners across the Borough to ensure they understand the information we have available about the market.</p> <p>From December 2008 seek 35% of all new homes to be affordable on sites with 3 or more dwellings in rural areas and 10 or more dwellings in urban areas of the Borough.</p>	2009	CBC
4			September 2008 and ongoing	Housing Developers / CBC
6			October 2008 Ongoing	Housing Market Partnership
7			December 2008 Ongoing	CBC
2			<p>Support Housing Corporation Grant funding applications where this is issued creatively and intelligently and will achieve either more affordable housing or of a better standard such as the provision of homes adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.</p> <p>Where on site provision of affordable housing is not possible, maximise commuted sums received to ensure the delivery of the same amount of housing off site.</p> <p>Develop priorities for the investment of any commuted sums received.</p>	Ongoing
3	Ongoing			
4	Ongoing			
6	2009			
8				

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
1 5 6 7	Deliver housing which meets demand in the market Deliver more than the RSS minimum of 855 new dwellings per year in the Borough	Participate in a review of publicly owned land in the borough in partnership with the new Homes and Communities Agency to release available land supply in order to build more homes needed in the Borough.	Identify ownership of land 2010. Review completed 2011	Homes and Communities Agency / CBC /Landowners
7 8	Meet the housing need of those who can afford more than the cost of affordable rented properties but are unable to obtain suitable market housing. Promote shared ownership and sub market rented housing options in the Homechoice shop and through the offices of all affordable housing providers.	<p>Advertise all vacancies for shared ownership options in the Borough in each fortnightly bidding cycle. Publicise adverts for intermediate housing on Homechoice and CBC website.</p> <p>Explore the option of shared ownership for adults with learning disabilities so that, with support, they may live independently.</p> <p>Set out clear affordability criteria for market housing costs and average household income in the Borough.</p> <p>When negotiating for the provision of affordable housing demand that shared ownership / shared equity and sub market rented housing costs less than the cost of equivalent market housing (either to rent or to sell) in order for it to qualify as affordable, otherwise all affordable housing need reverts to rented housing.</p>	<p>End 2008</p> <p>Periodically</p> <p>Feasibility reviewed 2009. Options developed 2010</p>	<p>Zone Agent – Moat Housing / Homechoice Partnership</p> <p>Essex County Council / Colchester Borough Council / CBC / Developers / RSLs</p>
6	Improve the Quality and Design of new market and affordable homes.	<p>Conduct a survey of occupiers of new homes to understand issues and satisfaction and share results with Developers Forum</p> <p>Ensure that Local Development Framework Policies specify good quality design and space standards for new homes which enable householders to recycle easily.</p>	<p>2009</p> <p>2010</p>	Housing Developers / RSL's / CBC

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
6 7	Improve the image of affordable rented housing and reduce the level of neighbour nuisance to create mixed and sustainable communities	Publicise good news from affordable rented housing providers across the Borough through publications such as The Courier and local newspapers. Produce good neighbour guidelines for new tenants so that they clearly understand their responsibilities and can make a positive contribution to their neighbourhood. Develop a local lettings policy to ensure that where issues are identified the tenant mix is sustainable and will improve the quality of a neighbourhood.	Ongoing End 2008	CBH / CBC / Homechoice Partners CBC / Homechoice Partners
7	Meet need identified in SHIMA that up to 235 households in housing need could afford more than the costs of affordable rented but could not afford to purchase or rent their own home	In partnership with Greater Haven Gateway sub regional partners, develop a model of housing which genuinely meets need for part-buy part-rent homes or sub market rented which is affordable to households on below average incomes in the Borough.	End 2009	Greater Haven Gateway partners

Chapter 2: Managing and improving existing private sector homes

Priorities

- 1 Improve access to private rented properties and make private rented housing costs more affordable by encouraging landlords to rent out good quality properties at affordable rents through Homechoice, while still making the same amount of profit.
- 2 Seek Empty Dwelling Management Order on empty properties left empty for a significant period of time, where the offer of loans and grants, enforcement and negotiations with the landlord have not been successful.
- 3 Make best use of the existing housing stock by returning as many long term empty properties to use in the private sector through a combination of advice, grants, enforcement and loans.

- 4 Empower and involve private landlords through a partnership with Colchester Borough Council to make informed choices about the management and improvement of their properties with the objective of expanding the private rented sector and achieve good quality accommodation and management of tenancies.
- 5 Provide good quality information to both tenants and landlords in the private rented sector on help available to let and manage tenancies.
- 6 Use regulation to improve standards and improve the desirability of private rented accommodation by setting up and managing a private rented accreditation scheme for local landlords.
- 7 Use private rented housing to meet need and offer more housing choice to households in the borough.
- 8 Reduce the number of vulnerable people such as elderly people, people with disabilities and families with children who live in private sector non - decent housing or experience fuel poverty because they spend more than 10% of their household income on fuel costs.

Actions: Managing and improving existing private sector homes

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
1	Reduce the number of vulnerable households (as defined by the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (PSSCS)) living in non decent homes in the private sector from 652 in 2008 to below 400 in 2013	Develop a landlord accreditation scheme in partnership with private landlords. Landlords with Accreditation will be given the opportunity to let their properties through Homechoice which will save on the costs of letting. Publicise the availability of grants and loans in areas identified by the PSSCS as having high levels of disrepair and tackle disrepair at an early stage before it becomes costly to repair.	2010	CBC/ Landlords Forum
4			2009	
6			2013	
8				
2	Make best use of existing housing stock by returning empty properties to use.	Undertake a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey every 5 years to assess the effectiveness of this work.		
3	Reduce the number of long term empty properties to use.	Use negotiation, enforcement and where appropriate grants and loans to return long term empty properties to use, but where this is unsuccessful make use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders	Ongoing	CBC
5			2010	

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
7	empty private properties in the borough from 883 in 2008 to 441 or less by April 2013.	Publicise the availability of advice, grants and loans to return long term empty properties to use through mail shots to empty property owners through the council tax register. Use a Private Sector Leasing Scheme to return empty properties to use which meet the most urgent housing need. Develop an Empty Homes Strategy which sets out in detail what will be done to reduce the number of empty private sector homes in the Borough	2009 2008/09 End 2008	CBC/Landlords Forum Colne Housing Society / CBC CBC
1 4 5 6	Increase the supply of good quality rented accommodation and improve the quality of private rented accommodation in the Borough.	Develop a comprehensive financial assistance policy which sets out what help and support is available to owners and occupants. Target financial assistance to properties built before 1919 which the PSSCS indicates will be of poorer quality and more in need of repair. Where necessary take enforcement action against owners of properties to improve the quality of their homes if they refuse to take advantage of advice and assistance available	End 2009 Ongoing Ongoing	CBC / Landlords / Residents
8	Reduce the number of households in the private sector who experience fuel poverty from 7% in 2008 to less than 5% in 2013.	Target Warm Homes help available to residents on low incomes and to areas where the PSSCS has identified that high levels of fuel poverty may exist. Identify the remedial action owners can take to make their homes cheaper to heat and light Prioritise the installation of efficient heating systems through the new Financial Assistance Policy and target this help to those households on low incomes or who may be more adversely affected by excess cold such as pensioner households or those with children	2009 onwards 2010 onwards	Warm homes Agency / Anchor Staying Put / CBC
1 4 6	Reduce the number of shared homes and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) with a Category 1 hazard from 3117 to	In partnership with HMO landlords develop a specific policy and accreditation scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation that improves Health and Safety in these dwellings.	2010	CBC / Private Landlords

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
	less than 2400 in 2013.	Through the financial assistance policy target enforcement action to ensure the least safe properties are brought up to reasonable standard first.	2010 onwards	
5 7	Ensure private tenants are more involved in decisions about services they receive and can influence service providers to meet their needs.	Set up a Private Tenants Consultation forum to involve private tenants in decision making about issues such as planning for new homes, anti social behaviour, and important changes to landlord / tenant law.	Terms of reference Agreed and first meeting 2009	Landlords forum / CBC

Chapter 3: Managing and improving council and housing association homes

17 Priorities

- 1 Ensure all affordable rented housing providers in the borough are 'excellent' housing management organisations and are beacons of resident involvement and community development.
- 2 Work in partnership with all providers of affordable homes to maximise the best use of their stock and assets to meet housing need.
- 3 Maintain the decency of all housing stock and have a robust evidence base and Asset Management Business Plan to ensure this, with priorities for maintenance following on from Decent Homes, incorporating the views of tenants.
- 4 All providers of social housing to take co-ordinated and systematic action to improve the life chances of their tenants.
- 5 Improve the appearance and attractiveness of affordable housing and enable tenants to take a more direct role in improving the quality of their homes and neighbourhoods. Develop a positive image for renters, both privately and affordably ensuring that renting is genuinely a tenure of choice.
- 6 Develop a robust partnership approach with affordable housing providers to ensure effective help reaches those who need it most particularly in areas such as tackling anti social behaviour and improving the life opportunities of tenants.

- 7 Work through a public service village to improve the proportion of tenants obtaining and sustaining employment to increase incomes and life chances; creating sustainable mixed income communities.
- 8 Ensure that tenants with disabilities, who make up 32% of the affordable rented population, have a repairs, maintenance and management service which is tailored to their needs.

Actions: Managing and improving council and housing association homes

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
1	Improved tenant satisfaction levels with affordable rented landlords and all affordable rented housing providers to operate to excellent housing management standards	All Providers to develop a Tenant Engagement Compact setting out what involvement activities they will undertake and how the results will feed into their service planning processes.	End 2010	RSL Forum
2		Registered Social Landlords to be invited to participate in the Public Sector Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership	2009	LSP
6		Set up a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Forum to share good practice on a range of management and service delivery issues.	1st meeting to agree Terms of Reference by end 2008.	RSL's / CBC
5		Undertake a survey of tenants who rent to establish how many are in paid employment and use this as a baseline against which improvements can be measured and to target help and support more effectively.	2009	RSL Forum
4	Reduce worklessness and increase opportunities for tenants to obtain suitable employment.	All affordable housing providers to participate in the development of a Public Service Village enabling people to empower themselves by accessing a range of help and support to improve their life chances.	2012	LSP
6		Provide people with clear and straightforward information about any employment opportunities at the point of sign up for a new tenancy.	2009 then ongoing	Job centre Plus / RSL Forum / CBH
7				

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
1 2 3	Improve the quality of council owned affordable rented housing by completing the Decent homes programme by 2010.	<p>Review any stock condition information held to identify where homes are not decent and specify what work will need to be done to make them decent.</p> <p>Identify what resources are available to complete the Decent Homes programme and develop a work plan for the delivery of the programme, where possible making use of shared services with other affordable housing providers.</p> <p>Consider developing a joint maintenance programme with other affordable housing providers to maintain Decent Homes after 2010</p>	End 2008 End 2008	Colchester Borough Homes / Colchester Borough Council
8	Higher tenant satisfaction ratings as measured by the STATUS survey from 83% satisfied in 2006 to 85% satisfied in 2008/09	<p>Appoint a new repairs and maintenance contractor to complete the Decent Homes programme, with a clear suite of Performance Indicators and Quality Standards</p> <p>Plan all outstanding works and develop a detailed area based action plan and a communications plan to keep all tenants informed about progress on achieving the decent homes standard.</p>	End 2008. Beginning 2009	CBH / CBC
4 6 7	A well developed housing 'ladder' which enables tenants to purchase a suitable home when their economic circumstances allow will free up suitable housing for those in housing need and maintain the	<p>Full and accurate data to be held on IT system about tenants with disabilities and to be checked when a tenant is reporting a repair, as tenants with disabilities may be less able to undertake small scale repairs which are the responsibility of tenants.</p> <p>When resources become available an expansion of the handyperson scheme from the current 37 hours per week to 74 hours per week to reduce waiting times.</p> <p>Publicise the availability of other housing options such as shared ownership and shared equity to tenants through the Homechoice shop.</p> <p>Support tenants who are able to purchase their own homes either outright or through a shared ownership scheme to move into market housing in an affordable and sustainable way.</p>	End 2008 2009 ongoing Ongoing	CBH / CBH /RSL's

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
	affordable rented housing stock	Provide tenants with information about the responsibilities and costs of home ownership including repairing obligations and the effect of changes to interest rates on their housing costs enabling them to make housing choices which are sustainable in the long term.	2009 ongoing	
4 6 7	Improved Partnership working with all affordable rented providers. Equality of service received by tenants regardless of landlord and more efficient service delivery which achieves Value for Money	Through the RSL forum explore opportunities to work together on; preventing homelessness; maintaining decent homes; tenant and leaseholder involvement; shared services to achieve value for money and efficiency savings. Review effectiveness of partnership within one year of set up.	Work programme set up by March 2009. March 2010	CBC / RSL's / CBH
3 5 6	Enable CBC and RSL leaseholders to have choice and control over the services they receive and ensure their needs are met	Deliver a high quality service to leaseholders which compares favourably, in terms of value for money and efficient service delivery, with that received in the private sector	Ongoing	CBH / RSL's

Chapter 4: Preventing and Tackling Homelessness

On July 9th 2008 Colchester Borough Council's Cabinet adopted the Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013. This strategy contained a detailed action plan and evidence base, along with a report on the consultation work that had been undertaken to review homelessness in the borough in line with our statutory responsibilities in the Homelessness Act 2002. Progress achieved on the actions will be regularly reported to stakeholders and residents and implementation will be managed by the Homelessness Strategy Partnership. The Homelessness Strategy is part of the Housing Strategy and links to a range of other documents.

Chapter 5: Housing with Support

Priorities

- 1 Ensure people can access the support they need to live independently.
- 2 Enable those people who need permanent supported housing to have equal access to suitable housing which meets their needs.
- 3 Ensure investment, including supporting people investment, meets the strategic priorities of CBC based on a robust understanding of our residents needs and is an effective use of resources.
- 4 Deliver a nominations agreement, consulted on with partners, which enables move on from supported housing into more independent living and enables the best use of supported housing stock to meet need.
- 5 By April 2009 make use of the information we have available to improve our understanding of people's housing and support needs, particularly older people and develop an Older Persons housing strategy to meet the identified need. Develop an appropriate range of housing options for older people which meet their aspirations and needs including leasehold properties, improved extra care, and homes to purchase.
- 6 Develop temporary supported housing placements which enable people to be discharged from hospital and have support to move back to independent living.
- 7 Ensure that residents in need of housing and support receive a robust assessment of their needs and a plan to move towards independent living where that is desired outcome. Include the use of an agreed Common Assessment Framework with partners, supported by a common information sharing protocol across all providers of supported accommodation including risk assessments and plans for move on
- 8 Work in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to support vulnerable people and prevent drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce the level of teenage pregnancies.
- 9 Enable better sharing of information, especially with regard to needs data which is available, through closer working with Essex Supporting People.
- 10 Develop a single referral panel for the allocation of supported housing in the borough to ensure the most appropriate placement is made to meet people's housing and support needs.

Actions: Housing with support

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
4 7 10	Residents in short term supported housing will have an improved range of housing options available to them	<p>A Single Referral Panel will be set up for all supported housing in the borough, except sheltered housing. The panel will consist of representatives from all providers and referring agencies and share information to ensure that the most suitable placement is found and that individuals have support plans built in before they move into supported housing.</p> <p>Nominations to supported housing, and from it into more permanent housing options, will be agreed by partners at the panel.</p> <p>Consult with partners on terms of reference for a Single Referral Panel and Nomination Agreements.</p> <p>Use Private Sector leased properties to meet the housing needs of vulnerable single people who may otherwise find it difficult to obtain suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Where appropriate, increase the supply of suitable and sustainable one bedroom accommodation, either through the planning system and section 106 agreements or through the targeted use of grant, if appropriate.</p>	2009	Housing Forum members / CBC / RSL / Supported Housing Providers CBC
1 2 3 9	Deliver more supported housing and improved partnership working with the Supporting People Team at Essex County Council	<p>Identify the strategic priorities for supported housing in the Borough and encourage Essex Supporting People to reflect this in its Supporting People Strategy.</p> <p>Clarify the bidding procedure for revenue support funding and use this information to submit at least one bid to meet identified need for supported housing each year for grant and revenue funding through the Housing Corporations continuous market engagement process.</p> <p>Establish clear targets for new supported housing supply for the main client groups and the capital and revenue requirements to achieve these targets.)</p>	2009 2009 2012	CBC / ECC CBC / ECC CBC / ECC
1	Increase the number of people successfully	In partnership with the Primary Care Trust(PCT), North East Essex Drug and Alcohol Service (NEEDAS) and Open Road we will introduce	2010	NEEDAS / PCT / Open

Priorities met	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
2 6 7 8	completing a rehabilitation programme and provide sustainable housing options for them on discharge.	a Common Assessment Framework for vulnerable people to ensure they get the support required to move towards a healthier life. Risk assessments will be undertaken when people with substance misuse histories begin tenancies to prevent relapse and ensure their tenancy can be managed in a sustainable way. Develop support options which enable people with complex needs and chaotic lifestyles to live independently by bidding for resources or using existing resources to maximize their impact and effectiveness	2009 2009/10	Road / CBC
2 3 5 8 9	Increase the provision of supported housing in the borough from 1,744 units in 2008 to 1,800 in 2013	Use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to identify what type of supported housing is required by client group and number of units. Explore alternative sources of funding such as through the Local Area Agreement, the Department of Health and working in partnership to deliver Essex County Council's Accommodation Strategy for people with Learning Disabilities, People with Mental Health Problems and Older People.	2009 2009	ECC / CBC / Supported Housing Providers
5	Ensure that services received and housing options available to older people, meet their needs	Develop an Older Persons Housing Strategy which clearly identifies need, sets out strategic priorities and involves older residents in setting those priorities. The strategy will set out housing and support options which are deliverable and meet older people's housing aspirations.	2008/09	CBC /CBH / Sheltered Housing Providers in the Borough

Chapter 6: Sustainable Communities

Priorities

- 1 Share, with housing organisations, the targets set out in the Borough's plan to reduce carbon emissions asking them to adopt similar targets and reduce the harmful effect of housing on the environment.
- 2 Tackle fuel poverty by ensuring that vulnerable residents have access to home insulation and benefit from warm homes to keep their energy costs and consumption low.

- 3 Clearly identify the contribution housing providers can make to improving the life chances of disadvantaged residents in the borough and achieve the improvements agreed by the Local Public Sector Partnership.
- 4 Co-ordinate multi agency involvement in tackling anti social behaviour through the Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAP). The effectiveness of interventions to be measured by the reduction in anti social behaviour across the Borough.
- 5 Clearly identify residents priorities and involve them in 'place shaping' and determining priorities for housing in the borough. Use resident involvement and capacity building of residents groups to achieve more efficient and effective service delivery in the public sector.
- 6 Enable financial inclusion by providing and promoting an active Credit Union across the borough by 2010.
- 7 Increase the number of work placements in the building trade for college students in order to improve the skills and earning potential of young people locally.

Actions: Sustainable Communities

Priorities	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
1 2	Promote modern energy efficient building methods and ensuring homes consume less resources to heat, light and power	Through the Local Development Framework establish an incremental approach to reaching Carbon Neutral homes by 2016. Establish the impact on carbon emissions of developing a new dwelling and negotiate a sequenced reduction in emissions levels with developers. In partnership with other authorities in the region and sub region, develop an award for the most environmentally friendly homes built. Secure commitment from Developers and RSLs to improve the environmental sustainability of new homes built in the Borough through the Developers Forum and the RSL forum Target Warm Home Assistance to residents who may experience fuel poverty and ensure that new housing minimises the cost of heating by maximising the insulation and minimising the heating cost by wherever possible using cost effective heating methods.	2009 & 2016 Ongoing Partners agree to Policy end 2009	CBC / LSP / Developers
4	A reduction in low level cases of anti social behaviour to	Develop 'good neighbour' guidelines for residents. Establish where higher than average levels of ASB are reported to the Police or CBC and support the ongoing work of the Neighbourhood	2013	Essex Police / Neighbourhood Action Panels

Priorities	What will be achieved	How will it be achieved	When will it be achieved?	Who will lead?
	Colchester Borough Council or Essex Police by 10% over the period of the strategy.	Action Panels. A high proportion of neighbour nuisance complaints are made about noise and are as a result of poor sound insulation in flats. Publish information on what can be done to minimise the impact neighbours have on each other.		
4	Housing Need caused as a result of hate crime will be reduced over the lifetime of the strategy.	Establish a baseline for housing need caused by hate crime and set appropriate targets for the reduction over the lifetime of the strategy. Work in partnership with the Hate Crime Panel to tackle perpetrators of hate crime and support victims by enforcing a zero tolerance of hate crime approach in the Borough. Develop a clear policy on how we tackle hate crime and train staff in reporting procedures, supporting victims and working with the Police to prosecute perpetrators	September 2008 Ongoing End 2008.	Essex Police / Hate Crime Panel / CBC
3	Improved Life Chances of residents in the Borough.	Encourage all housing providers to adopt the targets set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy which relate to housing and regularly monitor progress on achieving those targets.	Early 2009	RSL Forum
5	Clearly identify residents priorities for housing in the borough.	Undertake regular engagement with residents groups and use methods such as the Courier to communicate Colchester Borough Council's plans for housing and gain feedback on them. Provide support to residents groups to develop a vision for their neighbourhood and look at ways in which housing can support that.	6 monthly progress reports	Federation of Residents Associations
6 7	More people in paid employment and fewer people in debt.	Support, promote and publicize the availability of credit unions in the Borough to avoid people on low incomes making use of much more expensive door step credit providers. Publicise and promote the availability of debt advice services to enable people to manage and resolve their financial situation in a sustainable way. Provide at least two apprenticeships each year to Colchester Institute students to enable young people to gain skills and develop expertise in a maintenance trade such as plumber, electrician or carpenter, adding to the diversity of Colchester's workforce and increasing the individual's long term employability.	Regularly	CBC / All partners CAB / CBC /All partners Colchester Borough Homes

Housing Strategy 2008

Policy Review Panel 3rd March
2008

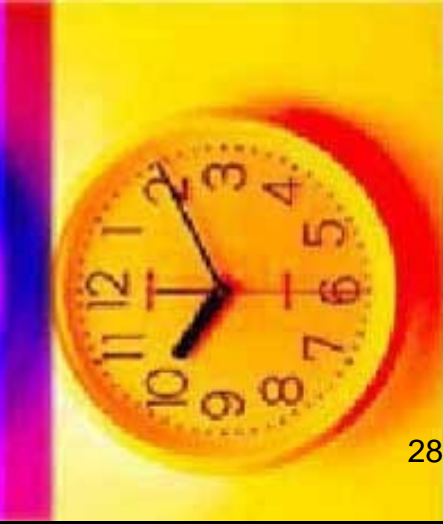
Policy Review Panel

- The Policy Review Panel is invited to review progress made on developing a local Housing Strategy for the Borough of Colchester.
- No local housing strategy since 2005 but a sub regional one instead. There is a case for a local position statement and outlined evidence base.
- Electronic format is more cost effective and more easily updateable over time.



What is the Housing strategy connected to?

- Sustainable Communities: Homes for all 2005: ‘Decent Homes at prices people can afford, clean safe green environments, access to jobs and excellent local services.’
- Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2010 ‘more, sustainable housing provision, in high quality homes and environments, creating inclusive communities’.
- Local Area Agreement - 4 blocks: Safer and Stronger Communities; Children and Young People; Healthier Communities and Older People; Economic Development
- Sub Region (GHG & HGP)
- Colchester 2020
- Local Development Framework
- Strategic Plan – Tackling Deprivation and Improving Quality of Life



Introduction & Demographics

- 170,800 people in borough. 71,192 dwellings.
- Unemployment levels are low - Colchester - 2.34%. the gross average earnings in Colchester are £353pw or under £19,000pa
- Net increase in households of 1425 per annum. Average incomes of households moving in are lower than of those moving out.
- Expect to build a minimum of 17,100 dwellings by 2021. More than 4630 of these have already been built.
- The population is expected to grow to 196,500 people in 2021, an increase of 25,900 people in 15 years.



Diverse communities

- 7% of the population come from a Black or Minority Ethnic Community.
- Between 12.5% (census) and 16.8% (SHMA) of the population have a disability.
- 15.2% of the population are over 65.
- More than 11,500 households in the Borough have some kind of support need.
- Around 32% of the borough's population is living in satellite towns, villages and hamlets. 68% in urban areas.



Housing Market Assessment

- 72% of dwellings are owner occupied. 13% are social rented. 8% are private rented. 7% other public sector eg. MOD / Uof E.
- 76% of households have an income of less than £20,000pa. 93% of households have an income less than £30,000pa
- Average household income £31,396.
Median household income £23,874
- 24,990 (35.1%) underoccupied dwellings in the borough across all tenures but mostly owner occupied.
- 965 (1.36%) overcrowded dwellings across all tenures but disproportionately in the social rented sector.



Dwellings Stock

- 9,120 affordable dwellings in the borough. (12.81%)
- Delivering more new affordable dwellings each year: increased from 34 in 2004 to 188 in 2007.
- Last year 14.5% of new dwellings were affordable compared to target of 25% which may increase to 35%.
- Total dwellings have increased by 3202 since 2004.



Housing Costs per week

An entry level priced property costs 6.4 times average household income.

Housing costs aren't affordable if they are more than 25% of gross household income.

Dwelling size	Social rent	Private rent	Owner occupation	New Build
1 bed	£63	£104	£125	£171
2 bed	£77	£133	£166	£206
3 bed	£90	£157	£201	£275
4 bed	£103	£219	£290	£356



New Affordable Housing

- SHMA assessed that there is a need for 1082 new affordable dwellings per year. 79% social rented, 21% intermediate housing*
- SHMA suggests shortfall between planned supply and need is mostly for 1 bed units (60%), and 2 bed units(25%), and less need for 3 and 4 bed units (15%).
- 4,762 applicants on register, of those likely to be housed (774 in E, A &B) 30% need a 1 bed, 28% need a 2 bed, 32% need a 3 bed and 10% need a 4+ bed.
- Between 18 to 21 affordable properties let per week (council and RSL)



Equalities and housing

- SHMA suggests BME households are more likely to live in private rented accommodation and more likely to live in unsuitable housing.
- 24.6% of all households are older person households. 71% are homeowners with no mortgage. 5.6% are homeowners with a mortgage. 20% are rented affordable housing and 3% are renting privately.
- Households with support needs are more likely to be in the social rented sector and owner occupiers with no mortgage.
- 3,991 households with support needs are living in unsuitable housing (5.8% of all households). If you have a support need you are 5 times more likely to be in unsuitable housing.
- 78% of the borough's need for affordable housing is in urban areas and 22% in rural areas.
- Decline in the number of gypsies and travellers on unauthorised sites, roadsides and open land. There is still a need for further gypsy accommodation in Colchester.



Tackling Homelessness

- Strategy must be in place by 30th June 2008. Strategy steering group will coordinate. Highlights from Evidence Base:
- 1225 households applied as homeless in 2006/07. we accepted a duty to house 30% of them - 367 households.
- The 3 main causes of homelessness were:
 - Parents eviction -27.8%.
 - Other friend's & family eviction 13.4%.
 - Relationship breakdown (including violent) – 15.3%.
- Target of reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010 – to 170 from 340 in 2005. currently at 290 households.



Privately sector stock condition survey draft results

- 464 vulnerable households live in non-decent private sector housing
- £5m is needed to ensure no vulnerable household lives in non decent private sector housing.
- 5.1% of private sector dwellings have a category 1 hazard requiring immediate attention.
- Approximately £12m is needed to deal with dwellings with Category 1 hazards
- Levels of unfitnes are very low at 0.5%
- 4,859 private households have someone with a disability in them. A DFG requirement of almost £1m has been forecast.
- 11% of private dwellings are classed as an House in Multiple Occupation.
- Low rate of empty properties at 1st April 2007 - 2.3% or 1588, 522 (0.73%) of which for more than 6 months.



Privately rented homes

- 38% of private rented homes are flats (but only 16% of the overall stock is flats)
- 63% of private tenants spend more than 25% of gross household income on rent.
- 14% of renters are in unsuitable housing, and they represent a quarter of all those in unsuitable housing
- 9% of private renters are in housing need, and they represent 38% of all need
- 22% of private tenants claim HB



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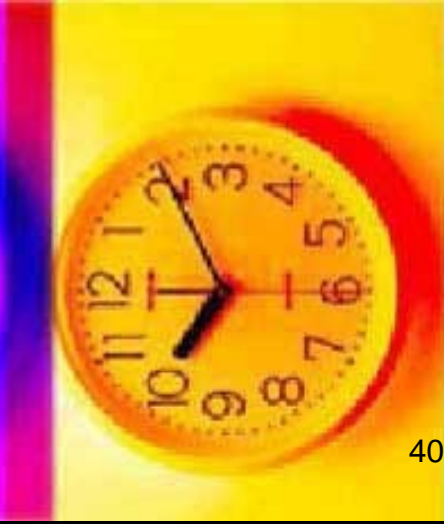
Council Owned homes

- At 1st April 2007 the council owned 6,349 dwellings.
- In 2006/07 we spent £12.9m to make 968 dwellings decent and prevented a further 296 from falling into non-decency.
- At 1st April 2007 there were 1,403 dwellings which were non-decent.
- CBC spent just over £1million undertaking adaptations to 720 homes for disabled or elderly tenants
- Void relet time is now 27 days
- Of the 685 sheltered properties 99% are let but some hard to lets continue.



Inspection and Status Survey

- CBH was inspected by the Audit Commission as a good service with promising prospects for improvement
- Positive commendations included the effectiveness of tackling anti social behaviour and the approach to equality and diversity.
- STATUS survey suggests 82% of tenants are satisfied with the service overall.
- 75% are satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision making



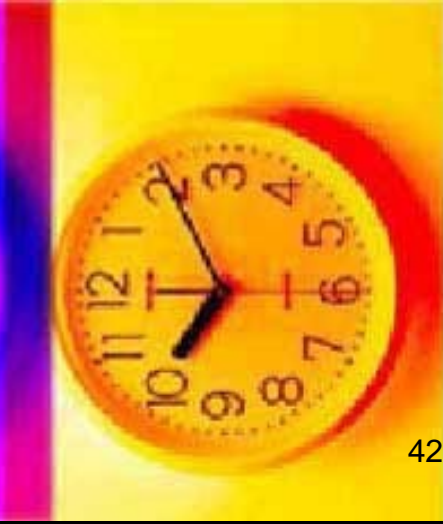
Housing with Support

- Currently there are approximately 160 households receiving Floating Support in the Borough.
- 1740 households live in supported housing at any one time.
- The challenge to the development of new supported housing is delivering revenue and capital funding at the same time.



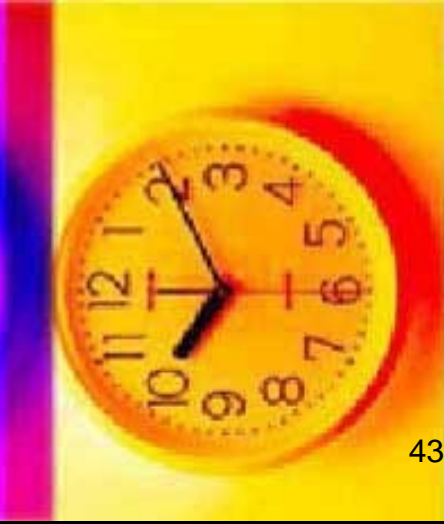
Supporting People Services

Service Client Group	Units (%)	Services
Homelessness and related services	201 (11.4%)	18
Learning Disabilities	141 (8%)	32
Mental Health	52 (2.9%)	5
Older People	1148 (65.2%)	44
DV women's refuge	20 (1.2%)	1
Physical Disabilities	117 (6.7%)	4
Young People	81 (4.6%)	11
Total	1760 (100%)	114



Sustainable Communities

- Community Safety Panels tackle anti social behaviour and low level crime
- Colchester has 3 wards in the 30% most deprived wards nationally and 1 in the 10% most deprived wards which has the highest levels of children living in poverty in Essex.
- Target to reach at least 2.83ha (7 acres) of public open space in all areas by 2011 from current 240 hectares.
- Generally safe place to live. Safest borough in the country* 17 offences per 1,000 of the population, compared to 25 national average
- Increasing in migration from Europe, no evidence available



Sustainable Homes and communities

- There has been an annual completion of 735 flats and 515 houses in 2006/07.
- High and mixed density developments are delivering more dwellings whilst consuming less land.
- In 2001, flats and maisonettes represented about 15% of total housing stock.
- Between 2000 and 2006, about 31% of new dwellings constructed were flats and maisonettes, whilst 69% were houses or bungalows.
- In 2006, flats and maisonettes represented about 17% of total housing stock.



Questions

- What are the key issues arising from the evidence base?
- What are the gaps in the evidence base which need addressing?
- What are the consultation and involvement needs of the Housing Strategy both in terms of relevant groups and subject matters?
- What are the priorities for the Housing Strategy to address?
- What time period should the strategy cover, in terms of the priorities and action plans



20 August 2008

Report of	Executive Director	Author	Ian Vipond
Title	Night Time Town Centre for all		
Wards affected	All		

This report considers the need for an initiative to deliver a town centre which in the evening is welcoming to all

1. Action required

- 1.1 To invite the Policy Review and Development Panel to consider the best way to deliver an initiative which would provide Colchester with a Town Centre that feels safe and welcoming to all in the evening.

2. Reason for report

- 2.1 Colchester, like many town centres in the Country, suffers from a perception that in the evening it can feel an unwelcoming place to many people in the community. There may be concerns about a dominance of certain types of bars and clubs, yobbish behaviour by some, a grubby environment despite all the street cleansing and other initiatives such as night toilets that have been undertaken.
- 2.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on every local authority to work in partnership with statutory, non-statutory, community and voluntary agencies to develop and implement strategies for tackling crime and disorder. Under Section 17 of the Act, Colchester Borough Council has a duty to 'exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it can to prevent crime and disorder'.

3. Background information

- 3.1 Despite a number of measures in the past including the setting up of a 'STAND' initiative the Town still, at certain times, in certain areas, portrays a poor environment in the evening where people would not choose to bring their families or where young and older people alike would not feel comfortable to walk and linger. This does not take away from the value of previous initiatives or the valiant efforts of street cleaning staff, police and others to ensure that the environment is the best it possibly can be.
- 3.2 It needs to be stated quite clearly that Colchester has a record of being safer than many similar towns. It is also important to state that for most of the day Colchester remains a very attractive place to visitors. The issue is as much about how it feels in the evening in certain areas to all people, the atmosphere and perceived safety as opposed to a poor record on actual crime figures.

- 3.3 There are a number of groups and partnerships that have a role to play. Essex Police in partnership with the CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) has now developed a Town Centre Tasking Group (TCTG) to co-ordinate the work and roles of partners in making the town centre safer. This group brings together, as appropriate to the task in hand, CBC/Police Licensing, CBC Street Services, Transport, Club/Pub Watch, CBC Anti-Social Behaviour Team, CBC Environmental Services, Neighbourhood Action Panel, Neighbourhood Watch and Resident Group representation.
- 3.4 There are two Action Plans for the Town Centre Tasking Group which are attached in Appendix A and B and reflects the on-going work required to develop a safer town centre. Appendix A is the first Action Plan that was developed and Appendix B is currently under development with our partners. The TCTG Action Plans remain 'live' documents as the actions need to constantly change to meet the new projects, initiatives or crime trends.
- 3.5 However some of the recent initiatives, while innovative and very effective such as the Street Pastors Scheme and the proposed SOS and Community Resource Bus, are primarily dealing with the symptoms of the situation. There needs to be a hard look at the causes and how a change to the public's perception of the evening atmosphere in Town can be brought about.
- 3.6 A range of proposals could be considered further such as:
- Bulk review of licenses
 - Award scheme for trade premises that change their approach
 - More visible night time cleansing
 - Night Time Street Wardens
 - Enforcement of industry code on point of sale promotions.
 - Physical improvements to design out crime(see also Town Centre improvements report)
 - More varied offer in evening venues
 - 'Action Nights'
- 3.7 These are only initial thoughts and the issue for consideration by the panel is whether the consideration of best practice elsewhere and the development of a broad range of proposals seeking to address the causes by a range of partners would be able to make a significant difference and add value to the existing work already being undertaken.
- 3.8 The nature of the best way forward for this work is a question for the panel which it needs to consider in the light of the alternatives put forward in the 'work programme' report featured on this agenda. One option is for a 'Task and Finish Group' which, if it was felt appropriate, would need some terms of reference. Those could be pulled from this report and any further comments from Panel members.

4 Strategic Plan references

- 4.1 This work directly contributes to the Council's Strategic Plan for 2006-2009 objectives for safer communities. It would also contribute to the LAA objective to reduce the fear of crime.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Depending on the approach adopted for this proposal consultation with public partners and experts would be considered.

6 Publicity Considerations

- 6.1 Once an initiative was developed it would probably be appropriate to consider substantial publicity in order to bring about a change in perception.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 These would need to be assessed.

8 Human Rights Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific human rights implications as we are looking at ways to improve peoples' lives.

9 Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 The Community Safety implications are the subject of this report.

10 Health and Safety Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific health and safety implications.

11 Other Standard References

- 11.1 None.

Appendices

Appendix A – Original Town Centre Tasking Group Action Plan

Appendix B – Current Town Centre Tasking Group Action Plan

Target: Reduce Violent Crime in the Colchester Town Centre by 5% (not including POA Offences)

Approach: Partners/Education

Action	Agency	Dates	Funding	Outcome	Target by milestone
Develop an SOS and Community Resource Bus for the town. 'The Colchester Bus', as it will be known, scheme is aimed at reducing ASB, violence at night and providing a community resource for other agencies during the day 7 days a week.	Police, CBC, CDRP PCT, Essex Rivers, Fire & Rescue Service, EoE Ambulance Service, Essex County Council, YMCA, St Johns Ambulance, MOD Garrison, Open Road, Pub/Club Watch, Licensing, Essex University, and other partner agencies.	Start project from October 2007. Launch by late 2008.	£191,000 raised against £206,000 costs from: Essex Police: £20,000 ✓ CDRP: £42,000 ✓ CBC: £38,000 ✓ Home Office: £2,000 ✓ ECC: £50,000 ✓ NEEPT: £12,000 ✓ High Sherriff: £2,000 ✓ Pub/Club Watch: £15,000 ✓ Private donations: £10,000 ✓	1. First aid and emergency medical facility provided for the town centre at night between 8.00pm & 3.30am 2. Safe haven for all vulnerable people and those in distress for any reason at night between 8.00pm & 3.30am 3. Community resource during the day for all partner agencies and community or voluntary groups to promote their services, advice or information 4. To promote volunteering and recruit 90 volunteers for this project	1. Project Group to deliver phase 1 (full project plan, costings & 90% of funding) by July 2008 ✓ 2. Deliver phase 2 to secure & refit bus, agree operational policies & best practice by July 2008 ✓ 3. Deliver phase 3 to recruit co-ordinator, train 90 volunteers and launch project by late 2008? <u>GREEN</u>
Implementation of Street Pastors Scheme	1. Baptist Church 2. Colchester Police 3. CBC 4. CDRP	Start project from June 2007 and launch by 08/12/07	£9,000 from: Col' Police: £2,000 CBC: £1,000 CDRP: £2,000 Churches: £4,000	1. To provide pastoral, but strictly non religious, support and help to all vulnerable people and those in distress for any reason at night between 10.00pm & 3.30am 2. To promote volunteering and recruit 30 volunteers for this projects 3. To commence a second night of Street Pastors by September 2008	1. Promote concept of project and identify 30 potential volunteers 2. Train and fully equip 30 volunteers. ✓ 3. Commence project by 08/12/07 ✓ 4. Commence second night of Street Pastors by September 2008 ✓ <u>GREEN</u>
Partnership monitoring of CCTV particularly key	1. CBC CCTV 2. Colchester Police	Immediately (Fri, Sat, Sun	Nil – apart from partnership staff time	1. Improve intelligence gathering, prevention and	Now commenced and fully working from

APPENDIX A

days and times (Fri, Sat, Sun 2200-0300)	2200 - 0300)	which is a hidden indirect cost.	detection of crime and disorder	November 2007. ✓ GREEN
Establish new Town Centre Tasking Group	Established and working in partnership	Nil – apart from partnership staff time which is a hidden indirect cost.	1. Engage with those leading licensees who are best able to provide guidance and resources, in partnership with the police, to reduce alcohol related crime and ASB issues 2. Ensure a better partnership approach to making the town centre safer due to risks caused by alcohol consumption	Now commenced and fully working from July 2008 . ✓ GREEN.
Safe drinking advice via SOS Bus (To be renamed The Colchester Safer Communities Bus) scheme	Link to delivery of SOS Bus project	Nil – apart from partnership staff time which is a hidden indirect cost.	1. Phase 1. Provide educational advice and guidance on safe drinking linked to the night time economy Phase 2. For appropriate statutory, community and voluntary groups to visit schools, neighbourhoods, communities, and colleges etc during the day to provide advice and guidance on safe drinking	1. Phase 1 to distribute leaflets linked to safer drinking in pubs and clubs linked to the night time economy by October 2008 . 2. Phase 2 of this target is subject to the delivery of the SOS bus project by late 2008 . AMBER
Further improve the use of the Behave Or Be Banned (BOBB) scheme	Immediately	Nil – apart from partnership staff time which is a hidden indirect cost.	1. Identify those people committing acts of crime, violence and ASB in licensed premises. 2. Ban those offenders for a set period from all participating premises as per the requirements of the scheme 3. Ensure that licensees take a more proactive approach to	Now commenced from November 2007 . ✓ GREEN

APPENDIX A

					dealing with offenders 4. Increase number of offenders on database as a requirement of the Crime & ASB Group.	
Approach: NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PANELS						
Action	Agency	Dates	Funding	Outcome	Target by milestone	
Work in partnership with Castle and Newtown NAPS to identify quality of life, crime and ASB issues and subsequently identify workable solutions	1. Colchester Police 2. CDRP 3. CBC Officers 4. Cllrs 5. Community Groups 6. CBNW 7. Residents 8. Businesses 9. Others	Immediately	Non specific but the CDRP does ring fence £11,000 (08-09) funding for all NAP's to fund community agreed actions.	1. Develop 'community profile(s)' of NAP area to inform group of priority issues and wider information about their neighbourhoods. 2. To identify quality of life, crime and ASB issues impacting upon the town centre community and residents 3. Develop workable solutions and appoint lead persons who will deliver those actions to address local problems. 4. To develop the involvement and leadership skills of local communities to decide, and develop actions, that resolves their priorities for crime reduction and community safety.	Now commenced and fully functioning. ✓ GREEN Information will also be fed into the new Town Centre Tasking Group.	
Approach: Enforcement						
Action	Agency	Dates	Funding	Outcome	Target by milestone	
Designated Public Place Order	1. Colchester Police 2. CBC	Immediately as once the	£2,500 for initial DPPO then nil there afterwards	1. To allow police officers to remove, and immediately	Now commenced and fully functioning. ✓	

APPENDIX A

	3. CDRP	DPPO is approved it is a permanent by-law.	apart from partnership staff time	dispose of, any form of alcohol from any person acting in a disorderly manner 2. To reduce or prevent acts of crime, disorder, violence or ASB caused by alcohol	GREEN.
Dispersal Orders	1. Colchester Police 2. CBC 3. CDRP	Various as DO's are subject local needs and are for a fixed time frame as agreed between the police and council	Nil – apart from partnership staff time which is a hidden indirect cost.	1. To reduce the incidence of ASB, nuisance, crime and intimidation within a specified area of the community primarily caused by children and young people or late night revellers 2. To inform actions that provides long term solutions for local communities.	Now commenced and fully functioning. ✓ GREEN
Use of Rapid Deployment Camera, remote monitoring and relocation costs.	1. Colchester Police 2. CBC 3. CDRP	Deployment will be available from start of February 08	£17,750 has been provided through the Colchester CDRP for the camera with a further £3,000 to cover relocation costs up to 2011.	1. To allow a mobile CCTV system that can be quickly erected within the town or borough to tackle crime, ASB and disorder issues 2. To gather local community intelligence that informs police operations and address crime priorities for the CDRP	By February 2008 and <u>on-going.</u> ✓ GREEN
Appropriate use of police resources	1. Colchester Police 2. CBC 3. CDRP	Immediately subject to operational needs.	Nil – apart from partnership staff time which is a hidden indirect cost.	1. To deliver safer neighbourhoods by ensuring police resources are targeted effectively. To include Business Watch Specialists, PCSO's	Now commenced and <u>on-going.</u> ✓

APPENDIX B

Activity	Outputs and outcomes to be achieved	Lead Partner	Resources	Deliverable date	Progress
1 -Agree and implement a multi-agency approach to tackling drinking and related problems	1-Agreed protocols between partners 2-Roll out training 3-Reduction in complaints	All key partners			
2 -Training for bar staff	1-Training delivered to x people per quarter 2-Evaluation at completion of three month follow up	Licencees Police			
3 -Implement a programme of multi-agency visits to targeted problem premises	Reduction in reported disorder associated with those premises	Police CBC Residents Assoc RMP			
4 -Look at implementation of taxi/ bus marshalling scheme	Reduce victims of crime Reduce ASB	CBC Strategic Licensing Group			

APPENDIX B

<p>5-Training for police and others with the new powers within the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006</p>	<p>Increased awareness (measured by survey and training evaluation)</p>			
<p>6-Establish a programme of HVP (involving high visibility door staff, paramedics, street pastors in the early evening with targeted arrests and the use of fixed penalty notices.</p>	<p>Reduction in ASB Provide support/guidance/education</p>	<p>Police Licensees PCT Ambulance Trust Street Pastors</p>		
<p>7-Implement an SOS Bus</p>	<p>Reduction in A&E attendance Positive impact on perception of safety Reduction in sexual assaults</p>	<p>CDRP Open Road</p>		
<p>8-Deliver a social marketing awareness campaign on</p>	<p>Increased awareness of campaign messages</p>	<p>Media Police CDRP</p>		

APPENDIX B

sensible drinking						
9 -Build on schemes such as Street Pastors	Provide re-assurance and Safe Haven	Church				
10 -Ensure expedited licence reviews	Reduction in alcohol related offences	Police CBC				
11 -Test purchase operations with partners	Reduction in alcohol served to under aged drinkers	Police CBC Trading Standards				
12 -Formation of NTE problem solving group	Look at ways to tackle specific NTE issues	Partners				
13 -Core police activity inc extra patrols	Business as usual	Police				
14 -Pro-active activity to target those who use other ID to gain entry to licensed premises or bogus ID.	Warnings to those that you bogus ID to gain entry using verbal warning and prosecution for repeat offenders.	Police CBC ASB team Licensees				



Policy Review and Development Panel

Item

9

20 August 2008

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy & Regeneration	Author	Howard Davies/Paul Wilkinson
Title	Historic Town Centre Improvement		☎ 507885
Wards affected	N/A		

This report concerns – This briefing paper sets down the process now required to take forward the Historic Town Centre Improvements Project which will include enhancements to the pedestrian experience in the Town Centre, together with other environmental and transportation improvements

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 Note the strategy to be adopted in order to progress the project to deliver Colchester Historic Town Centre Improvements which has been developed in partnership with Essex County Council (ECC) and Colchester Borough Council (CBC).

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The Historic Town Centre Project is a key infrastructure project within the Borough and needs to be progressed for social, economic and transportation reasons. The Town Centre, and in particular the High Street as the heart of the town centre needs to continue to prosper and meet the aspirations set out in Colchester's LDF Core Strategy, which states "Colchester town centre will be an attractive, vibrant and accessible regional centre with a range of excellent facilities and an increased number of visitors".
- 2.2 It is important that members are aware of and informed of the ongoing delivery process in respect of this high profile project.
- 2.4 This project has now received external funding (£100,000) through the Haven Gateway Growth Point which needs to be committed by 31 March 2009 and significant progress can now be made in the delivery of this project

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 A decision could be made not to move ahead with this project, but this would mean losing funding already secured and the ability to make significant economic, social and transportation improvements to the Town Centre Core and in particular the High Street, would be lost.
- 3.2 The Project lead could be handed over to Essex County Council as a Transport/Highways project, but Colchester Borough Council would lose the ability to make significant differences to the social and economic well being of the Town Centre Core, through this project

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Transport for Colchester, adopted by Colchester Borough Council in November 2003, highlighted key priorities for the Historic Core Zone;
- Make the town centre accessible for all people who live in, work in or visit the town
 - Make the town centre a place where people want to be – a pleasant and safe environment with low traffic volumes and speeds
 - Priority will be given to those on foot, closely followed by bike and bus access. Deliveries and access for residents and disabled will be planned for, but non essential traffic will be discouraged
- 4.2 These themes have been included within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy covered by transportation and public realm policies.
- 4.2 A workshop was held jointly by Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council in May 2008 to discuss the best strategy for the delivery of the Historic Town Centre Improvements Project. It was agreed that an incremental approach should be taken and some key short term outcomes were established: for the period August to end 2008,
- ❖ The appointment of a project manager and subsequent creation of a Project Team and Project Board which would include Council Members from CBC and ECC,
 - ❖ The definition of a vision for the Town Centre Core, i.e. what will define a successful, safe and economically vibrant town centre
 - ❖ The Development of a realistic Implementation Plan with some key milestone projects in the short, medium and longer term.
 - ❖ The delivery of some of the short term “quick win” projects which would start to make a difference to the High Street in particular
- 4.3 A Job Accountability Statement has already been agreed between ECC and CBC for the Project Lead and interviews are underway at the present time.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The key objective of this project is to revitalise and rejuvenate the public spaces and streets of Colchester town centre in a way that improves the sense of enjoyment and pleasure for people using the town and to implement proposals that emphasize the historic assets of the town while delivering a quality of urban fabric that increases the desire of people to want to work, visit, reside and learn in the town centre.
- 5.2 The council have secured funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government for the year 08/09, with provisional additional funding for a further year (09/10).

As part of the year one works it is proposed:

- To create a Project Team and Project Board to develop this vision which is to be led by the Town Centre Project Manager and will include officers and Members from CBC and ECC, together with other key stakeholders such as English Heritage.
- A further series of workshops will be set up with the key stakeholders to develop this vision and to consider an initial first phase of projects which will deliver real outputs on an incremental basis.

- As the project progresses, the Project team, Project Board and the key stakeholders will be required to develop medium and longer term projects which meet the aspirations of the agreed Vision.
- CBC are currently looking to recruit a Project Leader to manage and provide leadership for this process who will additionally be required to seek further funding for the ongoing projects from external sources.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The vision set out in the Strategic Plan 2006 – 2009 states that the public have told us there are 6 important elements required to make somewhere a good place to live the proposals outlined in this paper will have a direct link and positive effect on 4 of them: low level of crime, clean streets, low level of traffic congestion, public transport.
- 6.2 One of the key aims to delivering quality services is tackling traffic congestion; this project will deliver better management in the town centre core and add to the economic vibrancy of the town centre
- 6.3 Realise Colchester's potential as a preferred destination for visitors, businesses, location and investment.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Extensive consultation will take place with business and retail representative groups, local residents, bus operators, hackney carriage representative groups and accessibility groups. This consultation will be jointly carried out by Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 A timetable of meetings will be programmed for those mentioned above and regular updates will be given to members, via the Project Board.
- 8.2 A communication/media programme will be put in place to ensure maximum positive publicity is achieved and all publicity material will be collated and distributed in accordance with this programme

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 As mentioned above CLG funding (£100,000) has been secured for financial year 2008/9 and needs to be spent within this financial year. In addition, there is a provisional allocation of £700,000 from, CLG in 2009/10. The role of the project leader will include sourcing additional funding for specific projects as identified by the Project Team.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

- 10.1 This project will seek to remove unnecessary vehicle movement from the town centre core, thereby making a town centre that is accessible to all

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The Transport for Colchester document states that accessibility, safety and pleasant environment are essential.

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 N/A

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 In year one the main risk is not spending the funding monies by 31 March. However, a full risk register will be available upon commencement of project.

Background Papers

Colchester Borough Council Strategic Plan 2006 - 2009
Transport for Colchester 2005

20 August 2008

Report of	Head of Corporate Management	Author	Amanda Chidgey
Title	Work Programme 2008/09		☎ 282227
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report seeks consideration of issues to comprise the 2008/09 Work Programme for the Policy Review and Development Panel.

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 The Policy Review and Development Panel is asked to consider issues to formulate the Panel's work programme for 2008/09.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Work Programme has been updated since the meeting of the Panel held on 16 June 2008 to reflect the areas of work identified by the Panel as their priorities and they have been provisionally timetabled into the work programme, as requested.
- 2.2 The item on town centre management originally scheduled for this meeting, has been rescheduled for 30 September 2008 when we will be better placed to report on this subject.
- 2.3 Members of the Panel will need to determine whether they would wish to undertake reviews directly through the Panel or whether there is a preference for forming Task and Finish Groups. This would largely be dictated by the envisaged scope of the reviews. Reviews which would be completed by means of an interim report, gathering information, followed two or three months later by an update with final recommendations could generally be accommodated within the Panel's own work programme. Reviews of a more extensive nature, involving a more frequent meeting regime, the calling of witnesses, site visits etc. would perhaps merit the formulation of a Task and Finish Group.
- 2.4 In respect of the mechanism for setting up a Task and Finish Group, the Panel would need to appoint appropriate members, agree timescales, scope and terms of reference and details of potential witnesses or experts. Attached to this report is an example of a pro forma used in the past for this purpose which provides some guidance as to the type of information required.

3. Alternative options

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

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are likely to be no significant financial implications relating to the work of the Policy, Review and Development Panel itself. However if the Panel choose to set up a number of Task and Finish Groups this may well have a financial impact in terms of the corresponding administrative arrangements.

5. Standard References

- 5.1 There are no specific strategic plan references or equality, diversity and human rights, community safety, health and safety, publicity and risk management implications in this matter.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP (POLICY PANEL)

Chairman: T.B.C.

PROJECT BRIEF

Terms of Reference:
<p>This Task and Finish group has been set up to aid the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Licensing in considering matters relating to the waste reduction and recycling strategy.</p> <p>The group will also consider issues arising from the ongoing countywide strategy/contract process and in particular the proposals of the East Area Working group.</p>
Desired Outcomes:
<p>Improved understanding of the potential benefits/disbenefits, risks and costs to the Council of a countywide contract arrangement for waste and recycling.</p> <p>Improved understanding of the implications to the Council from changes to waste management legislation.</p> <p>Improved understanding of potential waste disposal technologies.</p> <p>Maximising participation in kerbside collection schemes</p> <p>Delivering effective and economic recycling services to flats</p> <p>Recommendations to be made by the task and finish group to the Policy Panel before being taken into consideration by the Portfolio Holder.</p>

PROCEDURE GUIDE

Witnesses	Who / Why
Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Licensing	Councillor Terry Sutton / Inform the group of progress through the East Area working group and Waste Management Advisory Board
Officers of Environmental Policy and Street Services together with other expert witnesses as advised	To advise the group as to the likely outcomes and technical implications of various alternative options

Documents / evidence / research / site visits (what/where/why/who)	Information to be gathered
Waste Best Value Review Waste reduction and recycling strategy Framework for a joint waste strategy for Essex Others as advised	
Site visits/engaging public/partners (where/why)	Information to be gathered
Proposals to be put to the group as appropriate	
Other information	
Completion Date	December 2004 NB: This may be influenced by the progress of the Countywide Strategy/Contract arrangements

Policy Review and Development Panel
WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09

	<u>16 June 2008</u>	<u>18 August 2008</u>	<u>30 September 2008</u>
Policy Initiatives		Night-time Economy - briefing paper to include the Annual Partnership Plan and possibly determination of Terms of Reference for Task and Finish Group; Historic Town Centre Improvement - briefing paper to include pedestrian improvements and the town centre environment and possibly determination of Terms of Reference for Task and Finish Group;	Secondary Education - Educational Attainment in the Borough with invitation to guest speakers. Town Centre Management - briefing paper on future arrangements.
Review of Corporate Policies		Housing Strategy - final review prior to resubmission to Cabinet	Flexible Working - review of corporate policy; Equality and Diversity - review of corporate policy.
Task and Finish Groups			

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	<u>3 November 2008</u>	<u>19 January 2009</u>	<u>2 March 2009</u>
Policy Initiatives	Neighbourhood Working - briefing paper.	Secondary Education - Outcome of initial discussions; Climate Change / Sustainability Issues	To be determined
Review of Corporate Policies	Waste and Recycling Review - result of Options Appraisal		
Task and Finish Groups			