



Colchester
City Council

Cabinet Meeting

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ
Wednesday, 06 September 2023 at 18:00**

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

Information for Members of the Public

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Colchester City Council

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COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
Cabinet
Wednesday, 06 September 2023 at 18:00

Leader and Chair Councillor King
 Councillor Burrows
 Councillor Cory
 Councillor Goss
 Councillor Jay
 Councillor Luxford Vaughan
 Councillor Smith
 Councillor Sommers

AGENDA
THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING
(Part A - open to the public)

Live Broadcast

Please follow this link to watch the meeting live on YouTube:

[\(107\) ColchesterCBC - YouTube](#)

1 Welcome and Announcements

The Chair will welcome members of the public and Councillors to the meeting and remind those participating to mute their microphones when not talking. The Chair will invite all Councillors and Officers participating in the meeting to introduce themselves.

2 Urgent Items

The Chair will announce if there is any item not on the published agenda which will be considered because it is urgent and will explain the reason for the urgency.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Cabinet will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023 are a correct record.

4 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the agenda about which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the item or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other registerable interest or non-registerable interest.

5 **Have Your Say! (Hybrid Cabinet Meetings)**

Members of the public may make representations to Cabinet meetings on any item on the agenda or any other matter relating to the business of Cabinet. This can be made either in person at the meeting or by joining the meeting remotely and addressing the Cabinet via Zoom. Each representation may be no more than three minutes. Members of the public wishing to address Cabinet remotely may register their wish to address the meeting by e-mailing democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting. In addition, a written copy of the representation should be supplied for use in the event of technical difficulties preventing participation at the meeting itself.

There is no requirement to pre-register for those attending in person.

6 **Decisions Reviewed by the Scrutiny Panel**

Cabinet will consider the outcome of a review of a decision by the Scrutiny Panel under the call-in procedure. At the time of the publication of this agenda, there were none.

7 **Resources**

7(i) **Treatment of War Pensions in the Calculation of Housing Benefit** 23 - 34

Cabinet will consider a report inviting it to reconfirm that war pensions should be disregarded as income for the purposes of calculating housing benefit and to make a recommendation to Council to that effect.

7(ii) **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - Annual Review Letter 2023** 35 - 42

Cabinet will consider a report providing details of the Council's Annual Review Letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

8	Economy, Transformation and Performance	
8(i)	2022-23 Year End Review of Risk Management	43 - 68
	Cabinet will consider a report providing an overview of the Council's risk management activity undertaken during the financial year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.	
8(ii)	Year End April 2022 - March 2023 Performance Report - Key Performance Indicators and Other Performance News	69 - 100
	Cabinet will consider a report providing details of performance against Key Performance Indicators at year end for 2022 - 2023 and other performance news.	
8(iii)	End of Strategic Plan 2020-2023 Performance Report - Delivering Cabinet Vision and Priorities	101 - 188
	Cabinet will consider a report providing details of delivery against the Council's 2020-23 Strategic Plan.	
9	Planning, Environment and Sustainability	
9(i)	The Impact of Pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	189 - 190
	Cabinet will consider a motion approved at the Council meeting on 19 July 2023 informing Cabinet of its view on the impact of pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	
10	Communities	
10(i)	Anti-Social Behaviour in the City Centre	191 - 192
	Cabinet will consider a motion that was approved at the Council meeting on 19 July 2023 on anti social behaviour in the city centre. As it relates to an executive function it is referred to Cabinet to consider further.	
11	General	

11(i) **Progress of Responses to the Public**

193 -
196

Cabinet will consider a report that provides information on the progress of responses to those members of the public who addressed meetings of the Council and Committees and Panels under the Have Your Say arrangements (please note that this excludes those who have made representations to meetings of Planning Committee and Licensing Sub Committee hearings).

12 **Exclusion of the Public (Cabinet)**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example 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).

Part B
(not open to the public including the press)

13 **Minutes (Not for Publication)**

Cabinet will be invited to approve the not for publication extract from the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023.

12-07-23 - not for publication extract

CABINET
12 July 2023

Present: - Councillor King (Chair)
Councillors Burrows, Cory, Goss, Jay, Luxford Vaughan,
Sommers

Also in attendance: Councillors Barber*, Dundas, Law,
Naylor, Pearson, Rippingale, Scordis, Spindler,
Sunnucks and J. Young.

* attended remotely

763. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

764. Urgent Item – Recommendation from Scrutiny Panel on Capita Data Breach

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that he had agreed to take the recommendation from the Scrutiny Panel from its meeting on 4 July 2023 as an urgent item, as it was important that issues to prevent a further data breach were considered before the next meeting in September 2023. A copy of the recommendation had been circulated to each member.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, and Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that the Council had taken the data breach very seriously and had been honest and direct with residents affected. It had been caused by human error at Capita. The recommendation would ensure that any contract would have to comply with the Council's data protection requirements. Many contractors had more stringent requirements, but this would ensure a minimum standard would be applied which would help protect Council data.

RESOLVED that;-

(a) All contractors be required, in writing, to agree to comply with the data protection requirements and policies of Colchester City Council.

(b) Internal Audit be asked to review the Council's data protection policy and arrangements, specifically regarding ensuring that the Council's requirements are met by its contractors and third-party data processors.

REASONS

Agreeing the recommendation would ensure that the Council's data was protected by ensuring that the Council's data protection requirements were applied to all contractors.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to Cabinet not to agree the recommendation from the Scrutiny Panel.

765. Have Your Say!

Sir Bob Russell attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). He stood by the comments he had made to the last Cabinet meeting about the administration's lack of moral legitimacy, as 36 Councillors were not represented by the administration. The Cabinet system of Council governance had been introduced by the Labour government in the 1990s, but the coalition government had legislated to allow Councils to return to a Committee system. However this was not supported by the local Liberal Democrat Group. Following his comments, at the last Cabinet meeting, an anonymous complaint had been made about his comments to the national Liberal Democrat party. This had been investigated and rejected, as he was speaking in an individual capacity and was not bound by collective responsibility. The Council should follow the example of other Liberal Democrat Councils and return to the Committee system.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that he was not aware of who had made the complaint and noted that they could be made by anyone. Whilst he could not offer redress, he was welcome to carry on attending Cabinet meetings as a critical friend. A switch to a Committee system required a two thirds majority on Council and he did not believe that there was appetite across the political groups for change. However, the administration would continue to work in a spirit of co-operation and openness.

Robbie Spence attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). Outhouse had received a three year grant in the previous year, despite having assets worth over £900,000 and income of over £600,000. This compared favourably with a number of other charities such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. The provision of a 3 year funding settlement to a charity that was so well funded was questioned. Concern was also expressed about Outhouse's promotion of discredited ideas on gender neutrality which posed a danger to school children. For instance, there had been a recent report of a serious sexual assault in a gender neutral toilet in an Essex school. The Council should reassess its grant funding to Outhouse in the light of these factors.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that multi year funding grants helped charities by giving them greater certainty over their long term funding. The Council would look at the issues raised and discuss with Outhouse if

necessary. Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that he worked with Outhouse and fully supported them. They provided support to those being bullied at school and undergoing traumatic times through confusion about their sexuality. Their funding was quite volatile which was why the Council had given them a three year funding agreement. As a school teacher he understood the issues that arose all too frequently in schools. Good sex education and relationship training was essential and he was pushing for that nationally. Looking at gender issues more broadly in society would be more productive than concentrating on issues arising from gender neutral toilets.

Councillor Barber attended remotely and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet to raise the following issues:-

- Whether, in the context of recent discussion on Ultra Low Emissions Zones, the Leader would rule out a congestion charge. Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that there were no plans to introduce a congestion charge. However in view of the evidence emerging of the health impact of air pollution, the Council needed to keep abreast of any developments that might address air pollution. Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste stressed that there were no plans to introduce a congestion charge or introduce any policies designed to restrict residents' movements out of the communities in which they lived.
- Whether unused space in car parks could be utilised for the storage of bicycles. Councillor King welcomed the principle of this which was consistent with the Council's Active Travel approach. The Council had recently opened a new cycle storage unit in the City Centre.
- Was the Council reviewing the latest information from National Grid on pylons and whether the Council would be submitting a consultation response and whether the Leader would be supportive of the Local Plan Committee reviewing the Council's policies. Councillor King and Councillor Luxford Vaughan, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment and Sustainability, stressed that the Council had responded to National Grid at every stage and opposed the proposals. Officers could be invited to review the relevant policies and look to see if there was any further guidance or information that could be provided.
- What was the Leader's view of Council vehicles parked on pavements and on yellow lines? Councillor King explained that he would be concerned by this and expected that officers would park in accordance with regulations and good practice.

Councillor Scordis attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet in respect of the recent garden waste proposals. There remained concern about the fairness of a system which charged residents for a bin under the new system, when residents in areas where wheeled bins had previously been introduced had received them without charge. Further information was requested as to how the system would be introduced in areas such as Rowhedge which were not suitable for wheeled bins due to narrow pavements. There was anecdotal evidence that the Neighbourhoods Team were struggling to keep up with the demands on the service and further consideration needed to be given to the resourcing of the team.

Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste, highlighted that the Labour Group had supported the introduction of charging for garden waste. The full

details of the scheme had not yet been agreed and a request had been made to the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel for a separate item to examine the detail and make recommendations to Cabinet. Charging for the wheeled bins was one area it could look at. However it needed to be understood that the Council was not seeking to make a profit, only to recover its costs. Also, the more expensive the scheme became to introduce or administer the smaller the saving that would result. The Council was looking at the provision of smaller wheeled bins in those areas of the City with issues such as narrow pavements.

He had recently met with the Neighbourhoods and Enforcement Teams and had a robust discussion on priorities. Like many teams across the Council, they were under pressure and if tasks were missed or not completed in accordance with agreed priorities, Councillors should raise this with the team or with him.

Councillor J. Young attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet to express her concern about recent press reports that the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was handing significant funding back to the Treasury after struggling to find projects to spend it on, and that a commitment to build 300,000 houses a year was being dropped. There was a real housing crisis in Colchester so it was a surprise money was going back to the Treasury. Could the Portfolio Holder for Planning give a reassurance that the Council would keep pace with its housing delivery targets?

Councillor Luxford Vaughan, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment and Sustainability, explained that she believed the removal of the 300,000 cap was sensible as it led to houses being built without the necessary infrastructure. There was an affordability crisis for young people and low income families. The commitment to meet, but not exceed, the housing delivery targets remained. The Council remained committed to increasing its stock of housing and looking at other methods of increasing the stock of affordable housing, such as ending right to buy. Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, stressed that the commitment remained unchanged from when the Labour Group had been part of the administration. The Council was looking to increase the stock of Council housing and would be radical in its approach. There was also concern that changes in policy by the Home Office would exacerbate matters by ending the housing of refugees in hotels, which would significantly increase demand for temporary and affordable housing. The Council was discussing with colleagues in the Ministry of Defence and Essex County Council what could be done to mitigate the impact of this policy.

766. Local Government Association Peer Challenge Action Plan Progress

The Chief Operating Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Dundas attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet. The Action Plan showed progress on many areas raised by the Peer Review. However, the Peer Review had stressed the need for the Council to agree its position on Local Government reorganisation and the report before Cabinet was vague on this issue. Did the Cabinet have an agreed position on the proposals coming forward, which seemed to favour a Greater Essex Combined Authority and an Elected Mayor. The Peer Review had also encouraged the Council to look again at the electoral system and suggested that

election by thirds was holding Colchester back. Whilst it was appreciated that the Council had taken on board the views of an all party group, if the Council did not look to change the system now it would be stuck with election by thirds for at least the next ten years. The Council should reconsider this issue and put Colchester first.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that he understood the arguments in favour of four yearly elections. However, it required a two thirds majority in Council to change and there was not sufficient support across the Chamber for this. In terms of devolution, there was no clarity on the final outcome. The Council continued to contribute to discussions on the way forward to ensure the best outcome for Colchester residents. Essex County Council was keen to involve districts in the discussions, even though there was no requirement to do so, and Colchester was engaged in the process and its views were respected. It was seeking to achieve the maximum powers from government and there were potential gains on skills, transport and health agendas. The principles of devolution supported the shared services agenda that the Council was pursuing.

Councillor Sunnucks attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. The Peer Review had identified that the capital programme needed immediate action and need to be reviewed urgently in view of the external environment. The report before Cabinet was unclear about what action was being taken to address this. It was not clear if the review was just looking at whether projects could be managed better, rather than a fundamental review. It was also unclear whether the Council was looking properly at the appraisals for the projects in the programme and the income streams that would be necessary to pay the interest charges that would result.

Councillor King explained that he would arrange for a briefing on the current position. Substantial work had been undertaken. The Council was looking to understand first of all the projects that were currently in the programme and the commitments and risks involved, rather than looking at significant additional commitments. The results so far were encouraging. Work on additional projects that could be undertaken had not yet been completed.

Pam Donnelly, Chief Executive, was invited to contribute and explained that the requirement to review the capital programme had received immediate and urgent attention. The gaps in the Council's strategic finance capacity had been addressed through the recruitment of the Section 151 Officer and access to his wider team. The review was wide ranging and the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer were giving it their full attention. It was not an isolated piece of work and fitted in with other elements such as the CIPFA review of the Asset Strategy. A full and far reaching set of recommendations was expected in September.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, endorsed the Chief Executive's comments. Councillor Sunnucks was meeting with the Section 151 Officer and had been invited to a workshop on the Capital Programme Review in September. An information pack would be circulated in advance of the workshop.

Councillor King introduced the report to Cabinet. The response to the Action Plan gave a clear and comprehensive indication of the current position. Significant progress had been made but there was more to do. The Peer Review team would visit again on 28 July and it

would be interesting to hear their views. They would concentrate on those areas that were most challenging.

RESOLVED that Cabinet noted the progress in responding to the Peer Challenge recommendations.

REASONS

To ensure the Council responds appropriately to the key recommendations made by the Local Government Association Peer Challenge and in turn support the continuous improvement of how the Council is operated.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

767. Acquisition of Four New Build Homes from a Developer as part of the Council's New Housebuilding Programme

The Client Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Rippingale attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed to cabinet to ask the following questions of the Portfolio Holder for Housing:-

- Despite the financial pressures on the Council, new housing was welcomed. The cost of living crisis was increasing homelessness, particularly for private renters who could not afford rent increases and homeowners who were facing interest rate rises. How would the Portfolio Holder adapt to these changing circumstances and what would be done to ease the looming housing crisis facing these two groups?
- Given the increasing pressure temporary accommodation was putting on the general fund, Councillors had recently received complaints about the standard and management of temporary emergency accommodation. Could the Portfolio Holder provide reassurance that temporary accommodation paid for by the Council was regularly checked to ensure that it was of a good standard. Could he assure Councillors that the temporary accommodation met the necessary standards within the Statutory Code of Guidance, particularly in relation to the Globe Hotel and Riverside development.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that Councillor Smith was not present but that a written response would be sent. He was aware of the challenge posed by the looming housing crisis which would be exacerbated by the eviction of Afghan refugees from hotel accommodation. The administration would continue to work with the Labour group and look for radical solutions to mitigate the crisis as far as it could.

Councillor Sommers, Portfolio Holder for Communities, explained that the Financial Support Team worked hard with residents to provide support before they were made homeless to relieve the pressure on temporary accommodation.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Golder for Resources, endorsed the proposals in the report and on the following item. They provided a good deal to taxpayers and to those on the housing waiting list. The purchases would be part funded by the disposal of 106/106A Shrub End Road, elsewhere on the agenda.

Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste, explained that none of the houses on this part of the Chesterwell Development were owner occupied. All the properties had been sold by the developer to a rental company, which was an indication of the changing housing market.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The Council shall pursue this opportunity as set out in the Client Services Manager's report and proceed with the offer, as outlined in Part B of the report, for the 4 units.
- (b) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to agree and negotiate any subsequent purchases of homes closer to completion, subject to normal viability and valuation considerations.
- (c) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to approve the exchange of conditional contracts to acquire the units, and any other related matters, to complete the purchase when all conditions are satisfied.
- (d) Colchester Borough Homes be appointed as a "clerk of works" or "employers agent" to supervise the quality of the construction of the homes to be acquired.

REASONS

There are approximately 2,560 households on the Council's Housing Register seeking social housing and approximately 285 households in temporary accommodation. It is a priority of the Council, as shown by its New Housebuilding Programme, to try and find new ways to provide more homes in response to this need.

The Council is delivering affordable homes, but it is still continually seeking new and innovative ways to increase the supply of affordable housing and provide good quality, affordable and secure homes for Colchester's residents who are in housing need.

Although there is a supply of new affordable housing through Section 106 provision via Registered providers, alongside Council led projects, supply is not meeting the need. The impact of Covid slowed affordable housing delivery in the market, and for the first year the Council delivered more affordable homes through its delivery Programme (including the Acquisition Programme/100 Homes) than all other Registered Providers combined; which evidences the importance of the Council's role.

These acquisitions will increase the Council's housing stock and diversifies the methods to bring forward additional affordable housing.

In Colchester, within the priority Bands A-C, there are approximately 640 applicants on the

Housing register with a need for a 1 bed property. This makes up for 24% of the housing register need. There is an average waiting time of 11.7 months for a 1 bed property for applicants in bands B and C (Average waiting time of 4.4 months for applicants in Band A).

There are approximately 156 applicants in temporary accommodation within Colchester with a studio/1 bed need. Residing in temporary accommodation, over a prolonged period of time, may have a negative impact on the residents and their support network, as well as placing the Council's allocated general fund budget under significant pressure.

There are approximately 14 applicants, in priority bands, with a need of a 1 bed property in the Mile End Ward alone.

There are approximately 13 applicants on the housing register with a Code 1 need (fully Wheelchair accessible), in priority bands A-C, who require a 1 bed property. These applicants can often be waiting for an extended period of time, in unsuitable properties, due to a lack of supply of adapted properties, within the Council's housing stock.

Proceeding with this opportunity and other similar opportunities, to work with developers to acquire units as part of their development, will help to alleviate pressure on the housing register, temporary accommodation and relevant budgets as well as allowing developers to continue to develop within the Colchester area.

It is estimated that these units will be available between August 2023 and October 2023, providing much needed homes within a short timeframe.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The Council could do nothing, but this will mean the Council will miss out on opportunities to maximise the delivery of newbuild social rent housing in Colchester and it will mean that households on the housing register and in temporary accommodation will wait longer for a secure affordable home.

768. Acquisition of Six Additional New Build Homes from a Developer as part of the Council's Housebuilding Programme

The Client Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The additional HRA capital budget that will allow the Council to pursue this opportunity as set out in the report and proceed with the offer, as outlined in Part B of this report, for the additional 6 units be agreed

(b) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to approve the exchange of conditional contracts to acquire the units, and any other related matters, to complete the purchase when all conditions are satisfied.

(c) Colchester Borough Homes be appointed as a “clerk of works” or “employers agent” to supervise the quality of the construction of the homes to be acquired.

REASONS

There are approximately 2,590 households on the Council’s Housing Register seeking social housing and approximately 285 households in temporary accommodation. It is a priority of the Council, as shown by its New Housebuilding Programme, to try and find new ways to provide more homes in response to this need.

The Council is delivering affordable homes, but it is still continually seeking new and innovative ways to increase the supply of affordable housing and provide good quality, affordable and secure homes for Colchester’s residents who are in housing need.

Although there is a supply of new affordable housing through Section 106 provision via Registered providers, alongside Council led projects, supply is not meeting the need. The Covid impacts have slowed affordable housing delivery in the market, and for the first year the Council delivered more affordable homes through its delivery Programme (including the Acquisition Programme/100 Homes) than all other Registered Providers combined; which evidences the importance of the Council’s role.

These acquisitions will increase the Council’s housing stock and diversifies the methods to bring forward additional affordable housing. This will also strengthen the Council’s investment partner status with Homes England and will provide more opportunities to bid for Affordable Housing Grant within the 2021/26 affordable homes programme.

In Colchester, within the priority Bands A-C, there are approximately 535 applicants on the Housing register with a need for a 3+ bed property. This makes up for 21% of the housing register need. There is an average waiting time of 16.5 months for a 3+ bed property for applicants in bands B and C (Average waiting time of 6.5 months for applicants in Band A).

There are approximately 90 families in temporary accommodation within Colchester with a 3+ bed need. Residing in temporary accommodation, over a prolonged period of time, may have a negative impact on the families and their support network, as well as placing the Council’s allocated budget under significant pressure.

There are approximately 32 families, in priority bands, with a need of a 3+ bed property in the Mile End Ward alone.

Proceeding with this opportunity and other similar opportunities, to work with developers to acquire units as part of their development, will help to alleviate pressure on the housing register, temporary accommodation and relevant budgets as well as allowing developers to continue to develop within the Colchester area.

It is estimated that these units will be available between August 2023 and October 2023, providing much needed homes within a short timeframe.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The Council could do nothing, but this will mean the Council will miss out on opportunities to maximise the delivery of newbuild social rent housing in Colchester and it will mean that households on the housing register and in temporary accommodation will wait longer for a secure affordable home.

769. The Disposal of 106/106A Shrub End Road

The Client Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced the report. The Council had owned the property and had looked at redeveloping itself but it had not proved viable. The disposal of the property would help the Council acquire further properties to help those in housing need so was a good deal for the Council and for taxpayers. The disposal was based upon a robust, independent valuation of the property.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) 106/106a Shrub End Road, Colchester be disposed of by open market sale for the amount stated in the report on Part B of the agenda.
- (b) The Head of Strategic Housing in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, be authorised to agree offers made on the property, if the offer stated in the report on Part B of the agenda withdraws, and settle final terms and consequential matters to complete any sale.
- (c) The money gained from the sale of the site, be recycled to acquire two family homes, with a preference of 4 bed properties, within the acquisitions programme, in addition to the annual target for acquisitions.

REASONS

Significant investment would be required to bring the energy performance of the two properties up to the Council's average Band C energy rating. The estimated cost to refurbish the property into one 4+ bed house, remodelling the current layout, is included in the report on Part B of the agenda.

The estimated cost to redevelop the unit into two x 4 bed houses is included in the report on Part B of the agenda.

If the property was sold for the amount offered, and two x 4 bed houses were acquired recycling these proceeds, the cost of the acquired units is in the report on Part B of the agenda (based on average market values).

By disposing of 106/106a Shrub End Road on the open market, the Council would be ensuring that the most value for money process is followed and this would likely be the quickest route to gaining the much-needed family homes.

By providing two further four-bedroom properties the Council would be providing secure larger accommodation to two families in housing need that is currently in short supply.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To refurbish the property into a 4+ bed home. This option would only meet the needs of one family on the housing register rather than two families.

To remodel the unit into two x 4 bed homes, project managed by Colchester Borough Homes. There is a possibility that this option may not achieve planning permission, proving to be a costly exercise with no guarantee of the outcome.

Do nothing and leave the property as is. However, the property would fall into disrepair with further costs for keeping it in a dilapidated state.

770. Policy Panel Work Programme

Cabinet considered the recommendation made by the Policy Panel in respect of its work programme at its meeting on 28 June 2023, a copy of which had been circulated to each member.

Councillor Law, Chair of the Policy Panel, attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. The Policy Panel had an important role in feeding the views of residents through to Cabinet. The proposal for the work programme echoed residents' concerns and reflected the issues that impact on their lives. For example, there was a focus on infrastructure of people's lives, such as sport and leisure facilities and community assets. It also highlighted the way in which residents live, through looking at equality and diversity and commemoration issues. It also recognised the impact of the cost of living crisis. The contribution of the Deputy Leader to the Panel's debate on its work programme was welcomed. It was a strong Panel with a wealth of experience and she looked forward to working collaboratively with the Cabinet. Whilst it was appreciated that the list of items was lengthy, experience showed that sometimes items were not able to progress so it would be provide some flexibility and back up options.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, stressed that the Panel's work on engagement was valued by Cabinet. The proposals were welcomed but consideration needed to be given to prioritisation. Some items would also require advice and input from external organisations. It was suggested that the Panel should concentrate initially on sports and leisure facilities and provision, as this was a public priority. It could also explore issues around the carbon impact of sports facilities. It could also build on work undertaken previously on issues such as the Youth Zone. The items on community assets and development should also be prioritised as it fitted in well with the Asset Strategy.

RESOLVED that

(a) The Policy Panel be given approval to examine the following subjects:

- a) Equality and Diversity Policy;
- b) The Council's Policy on Procurement;
- c) Commemorations locally, including benches, flags and statues;
- d) Ways to support an increase in the retail offer of Colchester and economic draw of its shops;
- e) Sport and leisure facilities and provision;
- f) Mapping and examination of community assets and asset-based community development approach;
- g) The Council's Licensing, Food and Health and Safety Policy;
- h) Policy on rights to bid on assets of community value, when up for sale;
- i) The Council's Parking Strategy.

(b) Particular priority be given to the items on sport and leisure facilities and provisions, mapping and examination of community assets and asset based community development and policy on rights to bid for assets of community value.

REASONS

Cabinet supported the recommendation that the Policy Panel look at the subjects identified but there was a need to prioritise the list.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to the Cabinet not to agree the recommendation or to only agree to certain elements recommended by the Policy Panel.

771. Progress of Responses to the Public

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a progress sheet a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Dundas attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Panel. At a recent meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Panel, some residents had expressed concern that they had not received responses to contributions made at the previous meeting of the Panel. It was suggested that the scope of the report should be widened to include all Committees and Panels to ensure that all those who spoke under Have Your Say! received an appropriate response.

Cabinet indicated that it agreed with this suggestion.

Councillor Burrows, Portfolio Holder for Leisure., Culture and Heritage, explained that a written response had now been sent to those who had raised issues about the provision of netball courts.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The contents of the Progress Sheet be noted.

(b) The scope of the report be widened to include contributions made to all Committees and Panels.

REASONS

The progress sheet was a mechanism by which the Cabinet could ensure that public statements and questions were responded to appropriately and promptly. By widening the scope of the report, it would ensure that all contributions made under Have Your Say! were responded to appropriately.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

772. Acquisition of Four New Build Homes from a Developer as part of the Council's New Housebuilding Programme

This minute is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding the information).

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

773. Acquisition of Six Additional New Build Homes from a Developer as part of the Council's New Housebuilding Programme

This minute is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding the information).

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

774. Disposal of 106/106A Shrub End Road

This minute is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding the information).

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

775. Colchester Northern Gateway Leisure Park Lease Arrangements

This minute is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding the information).

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

776. Colchester Community Stadium Services Agreement

This minute is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding the information).



Cabinet

Item
7(i)

6 September 2023

Report of	Head of Operational Finance	Author	Adam Wood
Title	Treatment of War Pensions in the Calculation of Housing Benefit		
Wards affected	All wards		

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Legislation allows Councils the discretion to disregard up to 100% of War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions in the calculation of Housing Benefit entitlement (referred to as the "Local Scheme").
- 1.2 War Pensions have been fully disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit since the Social Security Administration Act was introduced in 1992.
- 1.3 Given the length of time that the local scheme has operated in Colchester, it is therefore recommended that Members reconfirm that the prescribed War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions continue to be disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit.

2.0 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 Reconfirm that War Pensions (as defined in paragraph 6.3 of the report) should be disregarded as income when calculating the entitlement to Housing Benefit.
- 2.2 Recommend to Full Council that it reconfirms this decision.

3.0 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The recommendations are supported as the Social Security Administration Act 1992 requires the Council to formally adopt any modification of the Housing Benefit scheme where the whole or part of any War Pension is disregarded.
- 3.2 Continue to maximise the support available for those residents in receipt of any War Pension.

4.0 Background Information

4.1 The rules about the way in which Housing Benefit entitlement is calculated are detailed within the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and subsequent amending legislation.

These regulations state that a weekly disregard of £10 applies to the following income:

(a) War Disablement Pensions

(b) War Widow's Pensions

4.2.1 However, the Social Security Administration Act 1992 also allows Councils the discretion to disregard up to 100% of those incomes in the calculation of Housing Benefit entitlement (referred to as the "Local Scheme" or in some cases the "Local Modified Scheme").

4.2.2 War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions have been disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit since the Social Security Administration Act was introduced in 1992. In addition, the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme also contains a full disregard of these incomes, and this has been in place since it was introduced in 2013. Council approves the LCTS scheme on an annual basis.

4.2.3 Given the length of time that the Local Scheme has operated in Colchester, it is therefore recommended that Members reconfirm that the prescribed War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions continue to be disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 Where a customer who is eligible for Housing Benefit and is also in receipt of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit or Pension Credit (Guaranteed Credit), they are automatically "passported" to full Housing Benefit entitlement. Claims that are not "passported" are subject to a means test and these are affected by the decision to fully disregard certain War Pensions.

5.2 Generally, the Council is fully reimbursed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for payments of Housing Benefit, and this is referred to as "subsidy". Subsidy payments are demand-led and are not subject to a fixed sum grant.

5.3 However, payments of Housing Benefit made under the Local Scheme are subject to different rules. Providing that expenditure does not exceed 0.2% of the overall subsidy claimed, 75% of payments made under the Local Scheme are subsidised by the DWP, with the Council meeting the remaining 25%. In 2022/23, the Local Scheme cost £66k to CCC supporting 35 households.

5.4 The continued operation of a Local Scheme in Colchester will have no financial implications, as provision has already been made within the MTF.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 schedule 5 sets out the statutory income disregards for war pensions, as follows:

“Sums to be disregarded in the calculation of income other than earnings £10 of any of the following, namely-

(a) a war disablement pension;

(b) a war widow’s pension or war widower’s pension;”

6.2 The Social Security Administration Act 1992 section 134(8) gives Councils the discretion to fully disregard war pensions in the calculation of Housing Benefit, as follows:

“An authority may modify any part of the housing benefit scheme administered by the authority-

(a) so as to provide for disregarding, in determining a person’s income (whether he is the occupier of a dwelling or any other person whose income falls to be aggregated with that of the occupier of a dwelling), the whole part of any prescribed war disablement pension or prescribed war widow’s pension payable to that person;

(b) to such extent in other respects as may be prescribed, and any such modifications may be adopted by resolution of an authority.”

6.3 The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (War Pension Disregards) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 sets out the types of war pensions that will fall to be disregarded under the local scheme, as follows:

“The war disablement pensions prescribed are –

(a) any retired pay or pension or allowance payable in respect of disablement under an instrument specified in section 639(2) of the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003;

(b) any retired pay or pension payable, to a member of the armed forces of the Crown in respect of a disablement which is attributable to service, under-

(i) an Order in Council made under section 3 of the Naval and Marine Pay and Pensions Act 1865,

(ii) the Army Pensions Warrant 1977,

(iii) any order or regulations made under section 2 of the Air Force (Constitution) Act 1917,

(iv) any order or regulations made under section 4 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996,

(v) any instrument amending or replacing any of the instruments referred to in paragraphs (i) to (iv), or

(vi) any power of Her Majesty otherwise than under an enactment to make provision about pensions for or in respect of persons who have been disabled or who have died in consequence of service as members of the armed forces of the Crown; and

(c) a payment made under article 14(1)(b) of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme) Order 2005.

The war widow's pensions prescribed are-

- (a) any pension or allowance payable to a widow, widower or surviving civil partner under an instrument specified in section 639(2) of the Income Tax (Earnings and Pension) Act 2003 in respect of the death or disablement of any person;*
- (b) a pension payable, to a widow, widower or surviving civil partner of a member of the armed forces of the Crown in respect of death which is attributable to service, under-*
 - (i) an Order in Council made under section 3 of the Naval and Marine Pay and Pensions Act 1865,*
 - (ii) the Army Pensions Warrant 1977,*
 - (iii) any order or regulations made under section 2 of the Air Force (Constitution) Act 1917,*
 - (iv) any order or regulations made under section 4 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996,*
 - (v) any instrument amending or replacing any of the instruments referred to in paragraphs (i) to (iv), or*
 - (vi) any power of Her Majesty otherwise than under an enactment to make provision about pensions for or in respect of persons who have been disabled or who have died in consequence of service as members of the armed forces of the Crown; and*
- (c) a payment made under article 21(1)(a) of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme) Order 2005."*

7.0 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 1.

8.0 Standard References

- 8.1 There are no references to the Strategic Plan; consultation or publicity considerations; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

Background Papers

- (i) The Social Security Administration Act 1992
- (ii) The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
- (iii) The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (War Pension Disregards) Regulations 2007
- (iv) The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (War Pension Disregards) (Amendment) Regulations 2009

Colchester City Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

The Treatment of War Pensions within Housing Benefit – the ‘Local Modified Scheme’

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?
 - To allow the disregard of War Pensions within Housing Benefit
2. What main areas or activities does it cover?
 - Housing Benefit
3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?
 - No changes being considered.
4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?
 - Housing Benefit claimants who are in receipt of a War Pension
 - Future claimants of Housing Benefit who receive a War Pension
5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- Confirmation War Pensions can continue to be disregarded within Housing Benefit

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below.

- No

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff? *If so, provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.*

- No

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

- War Pensions have always been disregarded in Housing Benefit at Colchester. By continuing to do so it maximises awards for low income and vulnerable residents throughout Colchester who receive a War Pension.

¹Click on [Customer Insight](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local data on the 'protected characteristics' is available [on this page](#) of Sharepoint.

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a 'protected characteristic' that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

9. The Council has an important role in improving residents' health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This relates to both its 'core functions' (such as housing, leisure, green spaces and environmental health) and to its 'enabling roles' (such as economic development, planning and engaging with communities)⁵. The Council recognises that its Public Sector Equality Duty and its role in improving health are interrelated and mutually supportive. This is especially true across the 'protected characteristics' of age and disability.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to improve health/reduce health inequalities for residents:

- Continuing to disregard War Pensions helps maximise Housing Benefit awards for low-income and vulnerable residents throughout Colchester. This will continue to assist in increasing disposable income and improving customers quality of life.

⁵ The King's Fund: [The district council contribution to public health: a time of challenge and opportunity, 2015](#)

10. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate equality impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	Yes	Maximises Housing Benefit for customers in receipt of a War Pension	No	N/A
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	As above	As above	As above	As above
Disability	Physical	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Sensory	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Learning	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Mental health issues	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Other – <i>specify</i>	As above	As above	As above	As above
Ethnicity ⁶	White	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Black	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Chinese	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Gypsies/ Travellers	As above	As above	As above	As above

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, In As above dian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Other – <i>specify</i>	As above	As above	As above	As above
Language	English not first language	As above	As above	As above	As above
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	As above	As above	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	As above	As above	As above	As above
Sex	Men	As above	As above	As above	As above
	Women	As above	As above	As above	As above
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	As above	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	As above	As above	As above	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	As above	As above	As above	As above

11. If you have identified any negative impacts (above), how can they be minimised or removed?

- No negative impacts

⁷ The 'protected characteristic' of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex." This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any ‘protected characteristic’, either directly or indirectly⁹? (Yes/No)

- No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

13. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
A. No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No action required
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	

14. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Adam Wood – Benefits Manager

15. Date of completion:

- 14/08/2023

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

⁸ The Council has a general duty to ‘eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation’. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their ‘protected characteristic’ whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their ‘protected characteristic’.

⁹ If you answer ‘yes’ to question 11 (above) you will need to complete the following section *and* go on to complete 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

¹⁰ This is normally three years, but not always: You may know that the policy itself will be reviewed earlier in which case the EqIA should be reviewed at that time. Or, in the case of a five year strategy, you may want to have a review date of five years. In the case of a “one off” decision, such as closing a service, a review date

- N/A

may not be needed - in which case you should indicate 'N/A'. In any event, the review date should be brought forward if you receive information or feedback which raises new concerns, or if the public policy context changes. You can speak to the [Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator](#) for more advice.



Cabinet

Item
7(ii)

6 September 2023

Report of	Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer	Author	Andrew Weavers
Title	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter 2023		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman produces an Annual Review Letter on the number of complaints it has received regarding each local authority. This report provides details of Colchester City Council's Annual Review Letter for 2023.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To note the contents of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2023.

3. Reasons for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To inform the Cabinet of the contents of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter relating to Colchester City Council for 2023.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 No alternative options are presented.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman can investigate complaints about most council services, even if the service is outsourced to another organisation to provide. The Ombudsman issues an Annual Review Letter to each local authority. The Annual Review Letter for Colchester for the period ending 31 March 2023 is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 It is worth noting that anyone can choose to make a complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. Accordingly, the number of complaints is not an indicator of performance or level of customer service. In most instances there was no case to answer. The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman will normally insist that the Council has the opportunity to resolve the complaint locally through its own complaints procedure before commencing its own investigation.
- 4.4 The Governance and Audit Committee has an overview of Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman investigations, and the contents of the Annual Review will be reported to the Committee in due course. The Committee is also asked to note that Ombudsman cases are reported to Principal Liaison meetings attended by senior staff from Colchester City Council and Colchester Borough Homes and to the Housing Portfolio Holder briefings ahead of publication.

5. Key Headlines

5.1 The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter focuses on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. The statistics are on 3 key areas:

(i) Complaints upheld - The Ombudsman upholds complaints when it finds some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before it investigated.

(ii) Compliance with recommendations - The Ombudsman recommends ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with its recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

(iii) Satisfactory remedies provided by the authority – In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and the Ombudsman agreed with how the authority offered to put things right. The Ombudsman encourages the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

The Ombudsman compares the three key annual statistics for each authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance.

	Period ending 31/03/23	Period ending 31/03/22	Period ending 31/03/21	Period ending 31/03/20
Complaints Upheld	2	1	No detailed investigations carried out	1
Compliance with Ombudsman's recommendations	100%	100%	No recommendations due for compliance	100%
Satisfactory remedies provided by the authority	0	0	No detailed investigations upheld	0

5.2 The Ombudsman upheld two complaints relating to housing allocations managed by Colchester Borough Homes on behalf of the Council. Neither of the upheld complaints had a finding of maladministration.

5.2.1 In the first case the complainant complained about the time it took the Council to support his stepson into suitable housing, thereby endangering both himself and his wife. The investigation concluded by making a finding of fault by the Council. Although the Council took reasonable steps to alleviate any immediate danger presented, the Ombudsman found the Council failed to act on evidence provided to it that demonstrated receipt of Disability Living Allowance. The Ombudsman also found that the Council had failed to make a referral to social care services when it had enough information to do so. There should have been a referral for a sheltered accommodation assessment sooner and this caused an injustice to the complainant. The Council agreed to the recommendations proposed by the Ombudsman in order to prevent any future similar occurrences by: (i) explaining what it will do to ensure evidence it receives as part of any application is considered and used as appropriate and (ii) make a payment to the complainant of £300 in recognition of the stress and trouble incurred from the ongoing living situation the Council could have otherwise reduced. Both recommendations were completed to the satisfaction of the Ombudsman.

5.2.2 In the second case the complainant complained he and his family were living in unsuitable housing which had a detrimental effect on his family's health. The Council was found to have appropriately followed legislation, policy and procedure in allocating housing. However, the Council were found to be at fault for misclassifying autism, failing to understand the complainant's additional needs and failing to record and explain a decision to remove the garden as a reasonable preference.

The Council is working with its partner organisations to review the assessment framework and how it will explain decisions to applicants with neurodevelopmental conditions. In addition, the Ombudsman recommended that the Council: (i) apologised in writing to the complainant, (ii) review the complainant's family's need for a garden and explain its decision fully in writing, and (iii) make a payment of £500 for the distress caused to the complainant and the time and trouble he has taken to deal with this complaint. All recommendations were completed to the satisfaction of the Ombudsman.

5.2.3 Whilst there was no finding of maladministration in either case, Colchester Borough Homes have reviewed their processes in the light of both complaints and made necessary improvements.

The Annual Review Letter also acknowledges that the Ombudsman had provided complaint handling on line training for Colchester Borough Homes staff.

5.4 The following table provides a comparison of complaints and enquires received. (NB. categories are those used by the Ombudsman)

Year	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and other services	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
2022/23	2	0	0	0	4	4	0	10
2021/22	2	1	4	1	7	4	2	21
2020/21	2	1	4	4	1	3	0	15
2019/20	3	1	5	3	6	2	0	20
2018/19	0	1	4	0	5	10	0	20

5.5 The following table provides a comparison of enquires and decisions made by outcome.

Year	Incomplete / Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed after Initial Enquiries	Detailed Investigations			Total
					Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	
2022/23	0	0	6	2	0	2	100%	10
2021/22	1	3	5	10	2	1	33%	22
2020/21	1	0	5	7	0	0	N/A	13
2019/20	2	0	9	6	3	1	25%	21
2018/19	2	1	4	10	3	3	50%	23

5.6 The following table shows Colchester's performance compared with other Borough, City and District Councils in Essex.

Name	Complaints Upheld % (numbers)	Compliance with recommendations	Satisfactory remedies provided by Council (numbers)
Basildon	100% (2)	100%	0% (0)
Braintree	67% (2)	None	0% (0)
Brentwood	13% (3)	100%	0% (0)
Castle Point	None	None	None
Chelmsford	50% (1)	100%	0% (0)
Colchester	100% (2)	100%	0% (0)
Epping Forest	67% (6)	100%	0% (0)
Harlow	50% (2)	100%	0%(0)
Maldon	0% (0)	None	None
Rochford	None	None	None
Tendring	67% (2)	100%	0% (0)
Uttlesford	100% (2)	100%	0% (0)

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The lessons learnt from complaints to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman link in with our Strategic Plan aims to be efficient accessible, customer focused and always looking to improve. Having an effective complaints process helps us to achieve the Strategic Plan's themes of a Wellbeing, making Colchester an even better place to live and supporting those who need help most.

7. Publicity Considerations

- 7.1 Details of the Annual Review Letter are published on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's website and will also be published on the Council's website.

8. Financial, Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, Consultation, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications.

Appendix 1 – Annual Review Letter 2023

19 July 2023

By email

Ms Donnelly
Chief Executive
Colchester City Council

Dear Ms Donnelly

Annual Review letter 2022-23

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2023. The information offers valuable insight about your organisation's approach to complaints. As always, I would encourage you to consider it as part of your corporate governance processes. As such, I have sought to share this letter with the Leader of your Council and Chair of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee, to encourage effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer such valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

The end of the reporting year, saw the retirement of Michael King, drawing his tenure as Local Government Ombudsman to a close. I was delighted to be appointed to the role of Interim Ombudsman in April and look forward to working with you and colleagues across the local government sector in the coming months. I will be building on the strong foundations already in place and will continue to focus on promoting improvement through our work.

Complaint statistics

Our statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess your organisation's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before we investigated. We include the total number of investigations completed to provide important context for the statistic.

Over the past two years, we have reviewed our processes to ensure we do the most we can with the resources we have. One outcome is that we are more selective about the complaints we look at in detail, prioritising where it is in the public interest to investigate. While providing a more sustainable way for us to work, it has meant that changes in uphold rates this year are not solely down to the nature of the cases coming to us. We are less likely to carry out investigations on 'borderline' issues, so we are naturally finding a higher proportion of fault overall.

Our average uphold rate for all investigations has increased this year and you may find that your organisation's uphold rate is higher than previous years. This means that comparing uphold rates

with previous years carries a note of caution. Therefore, I recommend comparing this statistic with that of similar organisations, rather than previous years, to better understand your organisation's performance.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for organisations to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations.

Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the organisation upheld the complaint and we were satisfied with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit organisations that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your organisation with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data, and a copy of this letter, will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), on 26 July 2023. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read the public reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

I know that complaints offer organisations a rich source of intelligence and insight that has the potential to be transformational. These insights can indicate a problem with a specific area of service delivery or, more broadly, provide a perspective on an organisation's culture and ability to learn. To realise the potential complaints have to support service improvements, organisations need to have the fundamentals of complaint handling in place. To support you to do so, we have continued our work with the Housing Ombudsman Service to develop a joint complaint handling code that will provide a standard for organisations to work to. We will consult on the code and its implications prior to launch and will be in touch with further details.

In addition, our successful training programme includes practical interactive workshops that help participants develop their complaint handling skills. We can also offer tailored support and bespoke training to target specific issues your organisation might have identified. We delivered 105 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1350 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training or get in touch at training@lgo.org.uk.

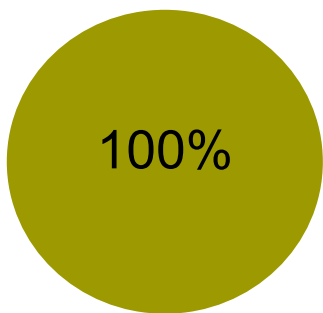
We were pleased to deliver an online complaint handling course to staff at CB Homes during the year. I welcome your Council's investment in good complaint handling training and trust the course was useful to you.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Najsarek
Interim Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Interim Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld



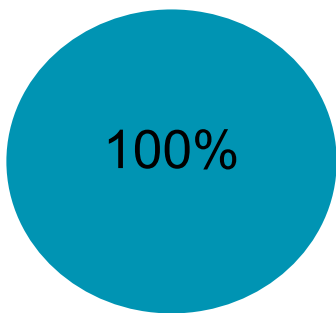
100% of complaints we investigated were upheld.

This compares to an average of **59%** in similar organisations.

2
upheld decisions

Statistics are based on a total of **2** investigations for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations



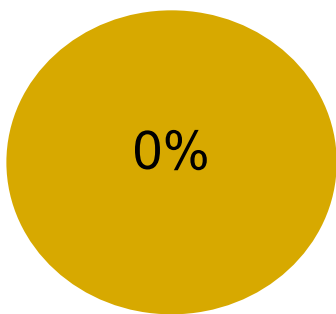
In **100%** of cases we were satisfied the organisation had successfully implemented our recommendations.

This compares to an average of **100%** in similar organisations.

Statistics are based on a total of **2** compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

- Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An organisation with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the organisation



In **0%** of upheld cases we found the organisation had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.

This compares to an average of **15%** in similar organisations.

0
satisfactory remedy decisions

Statistics are based on a total of **2** upheld decisions for the period between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

06 September 2023

Report of	Corporate Governance Manager Corporate Services	Author	Hayley McGrath ☎ 508902
Title	2022/23 Year End Review of Risk Management		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the Council’s risk management activity undertaken during the financial year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 1.2 Effective management of risk is essential to ensuring that the Council’s aims and objectives are achieved. The Council has therefore approved a Risk Management Strategy, which is included in the Council’s Policy Framework. This provides a comprehensive risk management process that is embedded across the organisation and includes a strategic risk register (which is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Board), operational risk registers which are produced by each service, project risk monitoring and specific risk mitigation initiatives.
- 1.3 The Risk Management Strategy and processes are reviewed annually to ensure that they are still appropriate to the Council’s needs and continue to be effective in identifying and mitigating risks to its aims and objectives.
- 1.4 The key strategic risks are:
 - Organisational Resilience
 - Budget Strategy
 - Economic Climate
 - Cyber & Data Security
 - Workforce wellbeing
 - Financial Inequality

2. Recommended Decisions

- 2.1 Consider and comment on the Council’s progress and performance in managing risk during the period from April 2022 to March 2023.
- 2.2 Approve the current strategic risk register.
- 2.3 Approve the proposed Risk Management Strategy for 2023/24 and recommend to Full Council that it be included in the Council’s Policy Framework.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 Cabinet has overall ownership of the risk management process and is responsible for endorsing its strategic direction. Therefore, the risk management strategy states that Cabinet should receive an annual report on progress and should formally agree any amendments to the strategy itself.
- 3.2 During the year progress reports are presented to the Governance and Audit Committee, detailing work undertaken and current issues. This report was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 1 August 2023, where they approved its referral to this meeting.
- 3.3 As part of the Policy Framework, any changes and reviews of the strategy need to be approved by Cabinet and ratified by Full Council.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options to consider.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The aim of the Council is to adopt best practice in the identification, evaluation, cost-effective control and monitoring of risks across all processes, to ensure that risks are properly considered and reduced as far as practicable.
- 5.2 In broad terms risks are split into three categories:
 - Strategic – those risks relating to the long-term goals of the Council.
 - Operational – risks related to the day-to-day operation of each individual service.
 - Project – the delivery risks of specific initiatives.
- 5.3 Identified risks, in all three categories, are judged against levels of probability and impact to give them an overall score. This allows the risks to be shown as 'high, medium or low' which enables a prioritised action plan to be set for managing risks. A high score does not mean that a risk has, or will definitely, occur.
- 5.4 In many cases the causes of risks are outside of the Council's control, such as general economic issues. The Council cannot stop these risks from occurring (the probability score) but can put plans in place to mitigate against their effect if they occur (the impact score). Likewise, there are occasions that risks can be reduced with preventative actions but there is not much that can be done to mitigate their effect if they do occur, such as a failure to protect public resources. Therefore, some risks will tend to maintain the same score, regardless of the controls that the Council puts in place.

6 Work undertaken during the 2022/23

- 6.1 There were no fundamental changes to the risk management function, or the processes used to identify and control risk, during 2022/23.
- 6.2 In response to the recommendations of the Local Government Association Peer Challenge and the independent reviews of the Council's subsidiary companies, support has been provided to the Council's interim shareholder team, and Colchester Commercial (Holdings) Limited, to develop risk and governance processes between the organisations and within the company.

- 6.3 During the year a comprehensive management system was developed, encompassing all aspects of Health and Safety, including reporting dashboards and indicators. This is currently being rolled out across the organisation and will be reported in further detail as part of the annual Health and Safety update to Governance and Audit Committee later in the year.
- 6.4 Work has continued to develop the insurance programmes for Colchester Borough Homes Limited and Colchester Commercial (Holdings) Limited, to ensure that emerging risks are appropriately managed.
- 6.5 Support continues to be provided, reviewing the risk elements of event plans to the Colchester Safety Advisory Group.
- 6.6 The risk registers, and strategies, for the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museum Service and the North Essex Parking Partnership both continue to be produced and reported to the joint committees.

7 Strategic Risk Register

- 7.1 During 2022/23 the strategic risk register was reviewed by the senior management team every quarter and reported to the Governance and Audit Committee every six months.
- 7.2 For the majority of 2022/23 the Council's strategic risks were consistent and were mainly around the impacts of the economic climate, data security and recovery from the pandemic.
- 7.3 A fundamental review of the strategic risk register was undertaken with the Senior Leadership Board in July 2023, to ensure that the captured risks were still appropriate.
- 7.4 As a result of the review the risks have been amended to reflect the significant challenges the Council faces, and are concentrated on the key concerns, to ensure that mitigating actions are focused on delivering the changes required.
- 7.5 It is recognised that several of the risks are impacted by rapidly changing wider socio-economic factors, therefore the strategic risks and mitigating actions, will be considered monthly as part of the Senior Leadership Board meetings, to ensure that the Council is agile in responding to the changing environment.
- 7.6 The current register is shown at Appendix 1. These risks have been mapped onto a risk matrix, shown at Appendix 2, that shows the risk profile before, and after, mitigating actions.

8. Risk Management Strategy for 2023/24

- 8.1 The Council's current approach to managing risk was introduced in 2006/07. A requirement within the strategy, and also of the annual audit assessment, is to review the approach each year to ensure that it is still appropriate to the Council's needs.
- 8.2 Therefore a review has been undertaken and the strategy has been updated for 2023/24. The revised strategy is attached at Appendix 3. There are no changes proposed to the risk process, with amendments only to external review comments and the updating of responsibilities, to reflect the revised management structure.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

9.1 There are no equality, diversity or Human Rights implications as a result of this report.

10. Strategic Plan References

10.1 The strategic risk register reflects the objectives of the strategic plan and the actions have been set with due regard to the identified key strategic risks. Therefore, the risk process supports the achievement of the strategic objectives.

11. Risk Management Implications

11.1 The failure to adequately identify and manage risks may have an effect on the ability of the Council to achieve its objectives and operate effectively.

12. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

12.1 There are no environmental or sustainability implications as a result of this report.

13. Other Standard References

13.1 There are no particular references to consultation or publicity considerations or financial; community safety or health and safety implications.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Strategic Risk Register

Appendix 2 – Risk Matrix

Appendix 3 – Risk Management Strategy for 2023/24

Appendix 4 – Minutes from the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 1 August 2023

Colchester City Council Strategic Risk Register

Reviewed by Senior Leadership Board 13 July 2023

- Strategic Plan 2023-26 Outcomes**
1. Respond to the climate emergency
 2. Develop modern services for a modern city
 3. Improve health, well-being, and happiness
 4. Deliver homes for those most in need
 5. Grow our economy so everyone benefits
 6. Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture

Ref	Risk Title	Strategic Plan link	Description	Potential Consequences	Initial Score			RATING	Lead	Mitigation	Residual Score			RATING
					P	I	O				P	I	O	
A	Organisational Resilience	1 - 6	Following the prolonged period of austerity, coupled with the Covid -19 pandemic, the Council, and its companies, are already in a position where the workforce is weakened, finances are reduced and organisational resilience is low	The Council does not have the resources, or resilience, to be able to make the changes required to deliver the strategic plan outcomes.	5	4	20	Very High	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the health and wellbeing programme, including regular monitoring and reporting. • Promote personal development and resilience options. • The creation of a flatter, more transparent management culture. Clear strategic plan delivery plan linked to available resources Ensure the transformation programme maintains momentum and delivers it's objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the Medium Term Financial Forecasting to plan for future challenges. 	4	3	12	High
B	Budget Strategy	1 - 6	The budget strategy does not accurately reflect the unprecedented level of savings required. The new S151 officer is also reviewing all elements and assumptions underpinning the budget which creates an additional element of risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inability to deliver the budget strategy as planned. •Requirement for in-year budget and service adjustments. •Unplanned additional use of balances / reserves •Potential S114 notice 	4	5	20	Very High	Chief Operating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective use of the controls built into the annual budget strategy, to enable the Council to respond quickly to changes. • Regular monitoring of actual spend/income and sensitivity analysis to consider the impact on income streams and the capacity of the Council to deliver services. • Regular and open reporting and updating of the budget position through Cabinet, • Prudent use of reserves where necessary to mitigate in-year losses. • Monitor and refine the Transformation agenda to ensure it contributes savings to balance future budgets. 	3	4	12	High

Ref	Risk Title	Strategic Plan link	Description	Potential Consequences	Initial Score			RATING	Lead	Mitigation	Residual Score			RATING
					P	I	O				P	I	O	
C	Economic Climate	1 - 6	The national economic climate continues to be challenging resulting in increases in demand on Council services exceeding capacity, unavoidable operating costs exceeding budgets and income expectations not being met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is unable to deliver the outcomes and priorities of the Strategic Plan. Reduction in levels of service provision and potential cessation of services. Inability to create opportunities to develop and boost the local economy. Depletion of Council's reserves, potential S114 notice 	4	4	16	Very High	Chief Operating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a constant review of the Council's budget situation, including the impact of decisions from central government. Identify additional actions and areas for increasing income and reducing costs as necessary, including through the Council's Transformation Programme. Reduce reliance on New Homes Bonus to support the base budget. Lobby Government for a fair, multi-year funding settlement. 	4	3	12	High
D	Cyber & Data Security	2 & 5	Sensitive data, in any format, is not correctly managed, processed or protected from loss or theft (including as a result of a cyber attack) in line with GDPR and Data Protection Act requirements, including council data managed and handled by third parties. The ever increasing sophistication of phishing attacks increases the likelihood of officers and members inadvertently opening malware emails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe disruption to core services Financial, legal and reputational impacts for the Council, including ICO fines. Significant harm caused to residents with release of their personal details. 	4	4	16	Very High	Service Director (shared) ICT & Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing review of IT policies and protocols to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Implement a training program for all staff and members. Implement defined action plans to rapidly respond to any attacks on systems to help minimise any potential damage. Ongoing review of data security policies and protocols to ensure that they are fit for purpose and implement a training program for all staff and members as required. Provision of secure Council devices to staff and Members. 	4	3	12	High
E	Workforce Wellbeing	1 - 6	Workforce wellbeing is affected by the increase in demand for services and requirement to achieve savings, coupled with difficulty in recruiting into specialist roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An unwarranted sense of 'personal failure' for some staff who put pressure on themselves to perform at a certain level, that is not sustainable. Decline in service performance. Reduction in efficiency and productivity. Inability to meet changing requirements and needs. Insufficient capacity to deliver the Transformation agenda. Customer perceptions decline as less is delivered. Loss of key staff. Staff who would be considered as some of the Council's vulnerable residents (in terms of financial resilience), thereby increasing the pressure on them from both work and personal perspectives. 	4	4	16	Very High	Head of People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor staff morale and trends using staff surveys and by monitoring the People Dashboard. Ensure good communications with staff, exploiting new technologies such as Yammer. Shared Services programme to recruit and retain staff and share skills in hard to recruit roles Implement the action plan for the People Strategy; ensuring that performance is regularly monitored. Regularly report the progress of the learning and development strategy, including financial considerations and business behaviours, and exploring training alternatives. Use it as an opportunity to review individuals in the community who could be retrained and reskilled, using processes such as supported internships. Ensure that all staff are reminded of the Employee Assistance Programme on a regular basis and are enabled to have 'safe conversations' with managers or other 	4	3	12	High

Ref	Risk Title	Strategic Plan link	Description	Potential Consequences	Initial Score			RATING	Lead	Mitigation	Residual Score			RATING
					P	I	O				P	I	O	
F	Financial Inequality	3 & 4	The current, and future, impacts of the costs of living and housing crisis are likely to increase the number of vulnerable residents, leading to greater financial inequality and increasing the number of residents seeking support from the Council, especially for housing and temporary accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support available for the most vulnerable residents is not sufficient, leading to an increase in crisis intervention. Housing supply is depleted leading to increased demand for temporary accommodation and rising costs. 	4	4	16	Very High	Deputy Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly monitor the impact of the resources allocated to supporting customers to ensure that they are signposted to appropriate providers/partners. Ensure welfare support service are targeting customers who may not be aware of the service, working with other council services to identify residents who may benefit from the support. 	4	3	12	High
G	Service Innovation	1 - 6	The Transformation agenda and budget savings programme, including the review of the council's companies, does not deliver the changes required to meet the council's budgetary pressures and Strategic Plan priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of opportunity to innovate. Adverse impact on local residents / resources. Missed opportunities to boost local economy. Conflict between Council / Government agendas. Reduction in levels of service provision and potential cessation of services. 	4	3	12	High	Deputy Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a clear approach and 'roadmap' for transforming the Council and delivering budget savings monitored by the Senior Leadership Board and reported to Cabinet as part of the budget process. 	3	3	9	Medium
H	Corporate Assets	2 & 6	Failure to develop a comprehensive management plan for the Council's corporate assets, encompassing compliance, utilisation and future development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assets are not maximised to their full potential statutory building procedures are breached resulting in fines and liability claims The repairs and maintenance programme for the assets is insufficient to respond to issues, especially in connection with heritage sites. 	4	3	12	High	Chief Operating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive asset management plan. Ensure that a suitable repairs and maintenance programme is developed with fully costed budget allocations. Establish clear facilities management processes with named responsibilities, reporting lines and escalation procedures. 	3	3	9	Medium
I	ICT	2	The increasing reliance on IT to continue normal business leaves the Council potentially vulnerable to any major system failure, across all service areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe disruption to core services Financial, legal and reputational impacts for the Council, including fines and lost income. Inability to respond to customer requirements including benefit processing and housing repairs. 	2	5	10	High	Service Director (shared) ICT & Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to shift any remaining legacy systems into more resilient, cloud-based solutions in line with ICT strategy. Ensure that the IT Disaster Recovery plan, and service plans, adequately reflect the organisation's requirements and provide an effective framework for maintaining service provision. Regularly review the IT development strategy to ensure it continues to support the organisations ambitions and provides appropriate safeguards for IT service delivery. 	2	4	8	Medium

Ref	Risk Title	Strategic Plan link	Description	Potential Consequences	Initial Score			RATING	Lead	Mitigation	Residual Score			RATING
					P	I	O				P	I	O	
J	Capacity	2,4 & 5	The continuing high level of inflation, coupled with the reduced availability of specialist staff, impacts on the ability to deliver the planned Capital programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Key projects are delayed or withdrawn •Increase in expenditure •Inability to attract future investment •Failure to deliver benefits to residents 	3	3	9	Medium	Chief Operating Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the recruitment and development processes to ensure that the organisation has the appropriate skills and expertise. • Frequently review the Capital Programme to ensure that programmes are realistic and deliverable with available resources and / or identify any additional resources required to deliver key projects. • Agile methodology enables project scopes to be adjusted through effective governance processes. • Establishment of the Capital Programme Steering Group (informal Cabinet) to oversee the entire capital programme and address any capacity and other risks before they become issues. 	3	2	6	Medium

SCORE DEFINITIONS	1	2	3	4	5
Probability	10% May happen – unlikely	10 -25% Possible	26 – 50% Could easily happen	51 – 75% Very likely to happen	Over 75% Consider as certain
Impact	Very Low Insignificant effect on delivery of services or achievement of Strategic Vision & Corporate Objectives.	Low Minor interruption to service delivery or minimal effect on Corporate Objectives.	Medium Moderate interruption to overall service delivery/effect on Corporate Objectives or failure of an individual service.	High Major interruption to overall service delivery or severe effect on Corporate Objectives.	Very High Inability to provide services or failure to meet Corporate Objectives

RISK MATRIX
G&A July 2023

Low Risks	Medium Risks	High Risks
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Initial Score Matrix

Scoring 1-5

Risk Tolerance Line

Probability of Occurrence	5 Very High			A		
	4 High			G H	C D E F B	
	3 Medium			J		
	2 Low				I	
	1 Very Low					
		1 Very Low	2 Low	3 Medium	4 High	5 Very high
Severity of Impact						

Residual Score Matrix

Scoring 1-5

Risk Tolerance Line

Probability of Occurrence	5 Very High					
	4 High			A C D E F		
	3 Medium		J	G H	B	
	2 Low				I	
	1 Very Low					
		1 Very Low	2 Low	3 Medium	4 High	5 Very high
Severity of Impact						



Risk Management Strategy 2023/24

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

This document outlines the Council's commitment to managing risk in an effective and appropriate manner. It is intended to be used as the framework for delivery of the Risk Management function and provides guidance to ensure management of risk is a routine process for all services.

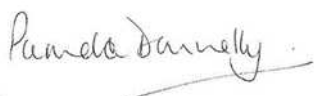
INTRODUCTION

This strategy will ensure that:

1. The management of risk contributes towards ensuring effective service delivery and the achievement of the Council's strategic objectives.
2. Members and the Senior Leadership Board own, lead and support on risk management.
3. Ownership and accountability are clearly assigned for the management of risks throughout the Council.
4. There is a commitment to embedding risk management into the Council's culture and organisational processes, at all levels, including strategic, programme, project and operational.
5. All members and officers acknowledge and understand the importance of risk management as a good governance process, by which key risks and opportunities are identified, evaluated and managed.
6. Effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place to continuously review the Council's exposure to, and management of, risks and opportunities.
7. Best practice systems for managing risk are used throughout the Council, including mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing effectiveness against agreed standards and targets.
8. Accountability to stakeholders is demonstrated through periodic progress reports and an annual statement on the effectiveness of and the added value (benefits) from the Council's risk management strategy, framework and processes.
9. Where possible the Council's approach is regularly assessed by an external, independent body against other public sector organisations, national standards and Best Practice.
10. The Risk Management Strategy is reviewed and updated annually in line with the Council's developing needs and requirements.

Endorsement by Pamela Donnelly, Chief Executive

“Colchester City Council is committed to ensuring that risks to the effective delivery of its services, and achievement of its overall objectives, are properly and adequately controlled. It is recognised that effective management of risk will enable the Council to maximise its opportunities and enhance the value of services it provides to the community. Colchester City Council expects all officers and members to have due regard for risk when carrying out their duties.”



WHAT IS RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management is the control of business risks in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. It is an essential performance management process to ensure that both the long- and short-term objectives of the Council are achieved and that opportunities are fully maximised.

Risk Management is not about eliminating risk, as this would limit the ability of the organisation to develop and deliver its ambitions. Its purpose is to recognise the issues that could affect the achievement of objectives and develop actions to control, or reduce, those risks. Acknowledgement of potential problems and preparing for them is an essential element to successfully delivering any service or project. Good management of risk will enable the Council to rapidly respond to change and develop innovative responses to challenges and opportunities.

The ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government’ 2016 framework, jointly issued by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives states that there are seven core principles of good governance including ‘Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management’. The document goes on to state ‘Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and are crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision-making activities.’

A process for managing risks was first adopted by the Council in 2003 and since then has been developed to ensure that it continues to be an effective management system. This strategy defines Colchester City Council's definition of risk and the processes to be followed.

In broad terms risks are split into three categories:

- Strategic – those risks relating to the long-term goals of the Council.
- Operational – risks related to the day-to-day operation of each individual service.
- Project – consideration of the risks occurring as a result of the Council's involvement in specific initiatives.

The following are some of the practical ways that risks are managed and how effectiveness is measured:

- Provision of a comprehensive strategic register, that is regularly reviewed.
- Provision of operational risk registers for all service areas.
- Consideration of risk in Committee reports.
- Development of a comprehensive risk register for the project management programme and consideration of risk as a project management tool.
- Successful internal and external assessment.
- Provision of advice to other authorities regarding our management of risk.

This has led to a practical and workable approach to managing risk, which has resulted in the Council becoming more risk aware and taking more risks, as demonstrated by the comprehensive project risk register. Colchester is also highly regarded for managing risk by both our insurers and other authorities.

The 2022/23 Internal Audit of risk management gave a reasonable assurance opinion. Four recommendations were raised during the audit relating to Producing the Operational risk registers, the project risk management process and dates of review on registers.

OWNERSHIP

The responsibility to manage risk rests with every member and officer of the Council however it is essential that there is a clearly defined structure for the co-ordination and review of risk information and ownership of the process.

Appendix 3 is from the CIPFA/SOLACE risk management guide, Chance or Choice. It is a generic map of responsibility for each part of the risk management process.

The following defines the responsibility for the risk management process at Colchester:

Cabinet – Overall ownership of the risk management process and endorsement of the strategic direction of risk management.

Portfolio Holder for Economy, Transformation & Performance – Lead Member for the risk management process

Governance and Audit Committee – Responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the risk management process and reporting critical items to Cabinet as necessary.

Senior Leadership Board (SLB) – Ownership of the strategic risks and overview of the operational risks. Actively support the Risk Management Strategy and framework.

Head of Governance – Lead officer for the risk management process, demonstrating commitment to manage risk.

Corporate Governance Manager – Responsible for co-ordination of the risk management process, co-ordinating and preparing reports and providing advice and support.

All Heads of Service – Ownership, control and reporting of their service's operational risks. Contribute to the development of a risk management culture in their teams.

All Employees – To understand and to take ownership of the need to identify, assess, and help manage risk in their individual areas of responsibility. Bringing to the management's attention at the earliest opportunity details of any emerging risks that may adversely impact on service delivery.

Internal Audit, External Audit and other Review Bodies – Annual review and report on the Council's arrangements for managing risk throughout the Council, having regard to statutory requirements and best practice. Assurance on the effectiveness of risk management and the control environment.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Council is to adopt best practices in the identification, evaluation, cost-effective control and monitoring of risks across all processes to ensure that risks are properly considered and reduced as far as practicable.

The risk management objectives of Colchester City Council are to:

- Integrate risk management into the culture of the Council.
- Ensure that there are strong and identifiable links between managing risk and all other management and performance processes.
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice.
- Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements.
- Prevent injury, damage and losses and reduce the cost of risk.
- Raise awareness of the need for risk management by all those connected with the Council's delivery of services.
- Ensure that opportunities are properly maximised through the control of risk.
- Reduce duplication between services in managing overlapping risks and promote 'best practise'.

STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategic risks are essentially those that threaten the long-term goals of the Council and therefore are mainly based around meeting the objectives of the Strategic Plan. They may also represent developing issues that have the potential to fundamentally effect service provision, such as proposals to dramatically change the corporate assessment process.

Strategic risks will be controlled using a register that will detail the risks and associated controls. The register will be owned by the Senior Leadership Board, with ownership for risks being assigned to individual officers, and will be reviewed every quarter. The strategic risks will be reported to the Governance & Audit Committee at least twice a year.

OPERATIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT

Operational risks are those that threaten the routine service delivery of the Council. Each service area will have their own operational risk register that details the risks associated with providing the service. These registers will be reported, in summary format, to the Senior Leadership Board and committee on an annual basis. High risks and the success in controlling them will be reported to Senior Leadership Board on a quarterly basis, as these will help in the formulation of the strategic risk register.

LINKS

It is essential that risk management does not operate in isolation to other management processes. To fully embed a risk management culture, it has to be demonstrated that risk is considered and influences all decisions that the Council makes. It is essential that there is a defined link between the results of managing risk and the following:

- The Strategic Plan
- Service Plans
- Revenue and Capital Budgets
- Annual Internal Audit Plan

ACTION REQUIRED

The following actions will be implemented to achieve the objectives set out above:

- Considering risk management as part of the Council's strategic planning and corporate governance arrangements.
- Ensuring that the responsibility for risk management is clearly and appropriately allocated.
- Maintaining documented procedures for managing risk
- Maintaining a corporate approach to identify and prioritise key services and key risks across the Council and assess risks on key projects.
- Maintain a corporate mechanism to evaluate these key risks and determine if they are being adequately managed and financed.
- Establish a procedure for ensuring that there is a cohesive approach to linking the risks to other management processes.
- Including risk management considerations in all committee reports
- Providing risk management awareness training to both Members and officers.
- Developing risk management performance indicators.
- Establishing a reporting system which will provide assurance on how well the Council is managing its key risks and ensures that the appropriate Members and officers are fully briefed on risk issues.
- Preparing contingency plans in areas where there is a potential for an occurrence to have a significant effect on the Council and its business capability.
- Regularly reviewing the risk process to ensure that it complies with current national Governance Standards and Best Practice.
- Developing risk management links with key partners and contractors, to ensure that principles are adopted in all areas of service delivery.

REVIEW

To ensure that the risk management process is effective it will need to be measured and reported to Senior Leadership Board, Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet. As well as a structured reporting process of risks and controls during the year there will need to be an annual review demonstrating the success of the following:

- The inclusion of risk management principles within Service Plans and budgets.
- The development of the Internal Audit plan based on the risk issues.
- Achievement against identified performance indicators.
- Members consistently ensuring managing risk is considered as part of the decision-making processes within the Council.
- Heads of Service making recommendations that regard risk as an opportunity as well as a threat.
- Risk management principles being considered in service reviews, for example in areas such as options for change and service improvements.
- Changes in risk being independently identified and assessed by Heads of Service
- Compliance with any self-assessment requirements.

Suitable opportunities to benchmark the risk management service against other organisations should also be explored, to ensure that it is effective, and the work carried out by the Council conforms to best practice.

The three appendices attached give greater details of key areas:

Appendix 1 – Outline of the risk management process.

Appendix 2 – Details of how Risk Management will be reported.

Appendix 3 – CIPFA guidance on Risk Management Responsibilities

APPENDIX 1

The Risk Management Process

Risk Management is a continual process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and determining the most effective methods of controlling them and / or responding to them. The risks faced by the Council are constantly changing and the continual process of monitoring risks should ensure that we can respond to the new challenges. This process is referred to as the risk management cycle.

Stage 1 – Risk Identification

Identifying and understanding the hazards and risks facing the council is crucial if informed decisions are to be made about policies or service delivery methods. There is detailed guidance available on how to identify risks which includes team sessions and individual knowledge. Once identified a risk should be reported to the relevant Head of Service who will consider its inclusion on the relevant risk register. If the risk is identified in between register reviews, then it is reported to the Corporate Governance Manager for information and the Head of Service is responsible for managing the risk.

Stage 2 – Risk Analysis

Once risks have been identified they need to be systematically and accurately assessed. If a risk is seen to be unacceptable, then steps need to be taken to control or respond to it.

Stage 3 – Risk Control

Risk control is the process of taking action to minimise the likelihood of the risk event occurring and / or reducing the severity of the consequences should it occur.

Stage 4 – Risk Monitoring

The risk management process does not finish with the risk control procedures in place. Their effectiveness in controlling risk must be monitored and reviewed. It is also important to assess whether the nature of the risk has changed over time.

APPENDIX 2

Reporting

No matter how good the process to identify and control risks is, it will not be effective unless the information gained from it is reported and used to influence other management issues / processes. Therefore, it is essential that there is a defined process and timetable for reporting the results of the risk management process to both members and officers.

Types of Report

- The strategic risk register is reviewed a minimum of twice yearly by Senior Leadership Board, with interim reports quarterly as required.
- Six monthly review of the operational risk registers and a summary report of these reviews to Senior Leadership Board
- Project risks are reported through the project management process and reported to the project management board. Significant issues will also be included in the reporting process to Senior Leadership Board
- A six-monthly report is provided to Committee (Governance and Audit) detailing the current strategic and high-level operational risks and the progress made in controlling them.
- An annual report reviewing Risk Management activity and an action plan for the coming year – taking into account changes in methodology and results of internal and external reviews. Going to Senior Leadership Board, Governance & Audit and Cabinet.
- Ad-hoc reports need to be provided to Senior Leadership Board when new, significant risk issues arise.

The reports can be summarised as follows:

	Services	Senior Leadership Board	Governance & Audit Committee	Cabinet
Quarterly		Review of strategic risk register		

6 Monthly	Review of operational risk register	Summary of operational review from services	Progress report of strategic & high-level operational risks	
Yearly		Scrutiny of annual progress report to committee on risk management	Endorsement of annual progress report on risk management.	Summary of past years work on risk management.

APPENDIX 3

Risk Management Responsibilities – CIPFA / SOLACE Guidance

	Framework, Strategy and Process	Identifying risk	Analysing Risk	Profiling risk	Prioritising action based on risk appetite	Determining action on risk	Controlling risk	Monitoring & Reporting	Reporting to external stakeholders.
Members	Agreeing the Framework, Strategy and Process determined by Officers	Identifying risk	Analysing Risk	Profiling Risk	Determining the risk appetite and prioritising risk. Agreeing the priorities determined by officers			Reviewing the effectiveness of the risk management process.	Reporting to external stakeholders on the framework, strategy, process and effectiveness.
Corporate Governance Team	Providing advice And support to the Leadership Board Members	Providing advice and support.	Providing Advice and support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support			Co-ordinating the results for reporting to the corporate management team and members	
Senior Leadership Board	Determining the framework, Strategy and Process	Identifying strategic and cross-cutting issues	Analysing Strategic and cross-cutting issues.	Profiling strategic and cross-cutting issues.	Determining the risk appetite and prioritising strategic and cross-cutting issues	Determining action on strategic and cross-cutting issues. Delegating responsibility for control.		Monitoring progress on managing strategic and cross-cutting risks and reviewing the implementation of the risk management framework, strategy and process. Reporting to members.	Reporting to external stakeholders on the framework, strategy, process and effectiveness.
Head of Governance .	Providing Advice and Support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support	Providing advice and support	Co-ordinating the results for reporting to the Senior Leadership Team and Members	Preparing draft reports for the corporate management team and members to issue.
Heads of Service		Identifying service Risks	Analysing Service risks.	Profiling service risks.	Prioritising action on service risks.	Determining action on service risks. Delegating responsibility for control.		Monitoring progress on managing service risks. Reporting to the group management team	
Employees, contractors And partners		Maintaining awareness of risks and feeding these into the formal process.	Maintaining awareness impact of risks and feeding information into the processes				Controlling risk in their jobs.	Monitoring progress on Managing job related risks Reporting to the Head of Service	

376. 2022/2023 Year End Review of Risk Management

The Committee considered a report providing members with an overview of the Council's risk management activity undertaken during the financial year from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Hayley McGrath, Corporate Governance Manager, attended the meeting to introduce the report and assist the Committee with its enquiries. During the course of the municipal year, the Committee received 2 reports relating to risk management, a mid-year report and an end of year report. The report which was before it was the end of year report, which focussed on 3 key areas:

1. The Council's Risk Management Strategy
2. Work which had been undertaken during the financial year 2022/2023
3. The Council's current Strategic Risk Register

The Committee heard that it was good practice that it was presented with the Council's Risk Management Strategy once a year, to ensure that the Strategy provided the assurance that the Council's risks were managed appropriately. No significant changes had been made to the Strategy for 2023/2024, save for minor changes to update job titles of staff. The Strategy was approved by the Council's internal auditors each year and had received a 'reasonable' assurance level.

There had been a couple of significant areas of work in the preceding financial year, due to the results of the Council's Peer Review Challenge, and the subsequent review of the Council's wholly owned companies. Work had been undertaken to examine the governance arrangements and risk processes of the Council's companies, Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) and Colchester Commercial (Holdings) Ltd (CCHL).

The presence of an interim Health and Safety Manager during the year had afforded the opportunity to implement a system of managing health and safety risks to provide assurance to managers across the organisation. The programme was comprehensive and was being implemented across all the Council's services. The Committee would receive a more detailed report on this work later on in the municipal year.

Additionally, the Corporate Governance Manager had been working with the Council's joint committees, the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) and the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service (CIMS), to provide their Committees and Boards support with managing their own internal risk management processes and governance arrangements.

The Strategic Risk Register which was presented to the Committee had a revised format, and a lot of work had taken place with the Council's Senior Leadership Board (SLB) to carry out a detailed, honest and robust review of the risks which the organisation faced. As a result of this review, the contents of the Register had been

amended, and the risks related to the 6 outcomes of the Council's Strategic Plan to provide assurance from a corporate governance point of view across the organisation that the Council's objectives would continue to be met. Fewer risks were contained in the Register than before, as the decision had been taken to focus on the risks which it was considered would present the greatest challenge to the authority. SLB had been very honest about the risks that the Council faced, and a key risk had been identified as organisational resilience.

The Committee was asked to agree the proposed Risk Management Strategy in order that it could be presented to Cabinet for approval before being presented to Full Council for inclusion in the Council's Policy Framework.

The Committee noted the number of high priority risks which had been identified, and considered that this demonstrated a high level of transparency, and was to be applauded.

The Committee discussed the critical importance of the Council's staff, and wondered how best to ensure that staff were able to provide honest feedback about the stresses that they faced. It was noted that surveys and morale monitoring had taken place, and particular praise was reserved for the Council's Employment and Financial Inclusion team who were carrying out excellent work in difficult circumstances. Pam Donnelly, Chief Executive of the Council, addressed the Committee and confirmed that in her opinion the levels of honesty which staff felt empowered to express had risen. There had recently been a significant level of staff engagement from the whole SLB, including webinars and regular monthly sessions with the Chief Executive based on the principles of 'listen, learn, lead'. Any member of staff was afforded the opportunity to raise any concerns with the Chief Executive in a totally confidential environment, and these sessions had been very well attended. The wellbeing and resilience of Council staff was of key importance at all levels of the Council.

It was noted by a member of the Committee that the Budget Strategy Risk contained a referenced to a S.114 notice, and considered that this could cause concern among the public that the Council may be in danger of having to serve this Notice, when in reality there was no danger of this at the present time. It was suggested that as soon as the revenue outturn reports for quarter 1 were available, then these should be shared with the Committee, which had a duty of oversight to ensure that the Council was delivering on its ambitious savings plans. Chris Hartgrove, Deputy S151 Officer, confirmed to the Committee that the quarter 1 figures would be presented to it at its' meeting in September. It was noted that Risk 'J' in the Register related to delays in the Council's Capital Programme, which was listed as a medium risk. Given that delays had already occurred, should this risk not be at a more elevated level? The Corporate Governance Manager was happy to discuss the points which had been raised with the Council's SLB, HM to take this back to SLB, and explained that the Risk Register was currently being reviewed on a monthly basis to allow the very fluid economic situation to be kept under constant review. It was the purpose of the Register to list the worst possible outcomes from a given risk, and this was the only reason that a S114 Notice had been included in it.

In response to a comment from a Committee member who noted that the Strategy made reference to the Council taking more risks, the Corporate Governance Manager said that an example of this was the current Turnstone Development, and the fact that the Council was an innovative authority which gave rise to potentially greater risk exposure. Although there was no mention of the Council's risk appetite in the Strategy, this appetite had been assessed and could be added to the Strategy in the future if this was appropriate.

In discussion, it was noted that the Committee had considered the Council's financial statements, together with their production and the potential for qualified statements, and these issues were not mentioned in the Risk Register. Had they been considered and had their omission been a conscious decision? The Council's S151 Officer considered that the risk around the Council's financial statements was adequately covered within the Council's Risk Register under the Budget Strategy in section B of the Register.

A Committee member wondered what the large, unforeseen, catastrophic events were which could have a significant impact on the Council? The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed that such events would be considered by Cabinet, SLB and the Leader to consider, and there were a range of issues which could cause unexpected problems for the Council. Consideration would be given to mentioning such events in the Register in the future. Big issues which could disrupt the council's services were considered and included in the Council's Business Continuity Plans which were approved by this Committee annually.

The Chief Executive considered that in general terms the Council was facing more risks at the current time than it had in the past. These risks included the level of savings which the Council was required to make, the new approach which was being taken to the leadership of Council staff, and the resizing of the workforce which was taking place. A Committee member pointed out that staffing levels were currently at their highest number over the last 5 years, however, noted that the full time equivalent (FTE) in staffing was considerably lower, which was a deliberate choice of the organisation. It was suggested that the Council should take note of this when thinking about or discussing recruitment. The Chief Executive confirmed that the organisation had made a choice to offer more flexible working for staff, and it was considered that there were three key benefits to this choice:

1. Allowing groups into the workforce who may previously have been excluded such as working parents.
2. If the Council were to adopt a more fixed employment model this would not recognise the significant improvements which had been made in retention and productivity.
3. The Council's approach encouraged a wider recruitment market, both geographically and in terms of the skillsets which the Council was able to attract.

Ultimately, the outcome of the Council's policy was a richer, more diverse workforce which better mirrored the community that the Council served.

Councillor King, The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, attended the meeting and offered the Committee his assurance that the approach being taken by the Council with regard to risk management was one which was balanced and given weight which was appropriate to the fluctuating circumstances the Council found itself in. He considered that it was important to understand the FTE number of staffing, and suggested that the flexibility which the Council was able to offer to its employees was part of a desirable employment package which supported recruiting and retaining the staff who could best deliver the Council's aims and objectives, while continuing to support the savings which had to be made.

In discussion, the Committee noted the high levels of interrelationship between elements of the Risk Register, considering that the impact of continued economic hardship could have a knock-on effect on the provision of social housing, for example. Could this be reflected in the Register in some way? It was considered that when setting the budget in the future years, it was essential that the Council didn't try to deliver the same level of service with fewer staff, as this would not lead to a healthy organisation. A Committee member praised the layout and content of the Register, but wondered whether the Council's Project Risk Register should also be considered by the Committee, as some of the Council's projects were large in scope and had the potential seriously impact the Register. The Corporate Governance Manager would discuss this suggestion with the Council's SLB to determine how best to reflect the project risks within the Strategic Risk Register.

The Committee considered whether or not it was appropriate for the risks which were posed to the Council by its wholly owned companies CBC and CCHL to be included on the Strategic Risk Register. The Corporate Governance Manager explained that each of the companies would bring their own Risk Registers to the Committee for scrutiny at the appropriate time. Although the failure of the companies did pose a risk to the Council, in strategic terms, such a failure would potentially have broader consequences on the Council's service delivery. The Chief Executive did consider that when considering risks which were contingent risks, there was now a strong case that these be included in the Council's Strategic Risk Register as the interdependence of the Council and its' companies was highlighted more strongly than ever before.

RESOLVED that: The submission of the Corporate Governance Manager's report to Cabinet to approve the Risk Management Strategy for 2023/2024 be endorsed.

Cabinet

Item
8(ii)

6 September 2023

Report of	Chief Operating Officer	Author	Cezara Cosma ☎ 01206 508404
Title	Year End April 2022 – March 2023 Performance Report Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Other Performance News		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details of performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) at year end for 2022 – 2023. The report also includes other performance news.

2. Recommended Decisions

2.1 To review performance against Key Performance Indicators and where Key Performance Indicators have not been met that appropriate corrective action has been taken.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 To review year end performance for 2022 – 2023 and ensure robust performance management of key Council services.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 No alternative options have been presented to Cabinet.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Council has agreed key performance indicators which it uses as part of its Performance Management Framework to help monitor progress and improvement. This report provides an update on the Council's Key Performance Indicators and a review of other performance achieved throughout the reporting period.
- 5.2 The report at Appendix A features an improved graphical presentation of year-to-date performance, previous year performance and targets.
- 5.3 At the year end point for April 2022 – March 2023, the overall position is that 8 targets were achieved (or 'green'), and 5 did not meet the target in full ('red').
- 5.4 Of the eight KPIs that have been achieved ('green' KPI's), it is worth noting that some have been exceeded. These are:
- K1B1 Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Scheme
 - K1H2 Affordable Homes Provided
 - K1H4 Rent Collected
 - K1P1 Processing of Planning Applications
 - K1W3 Percentage of Waste Collections Made
- 5.5 **Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Scheme.** Residents are receiving benefits after an average of two days processing time, one of the lowest processing times in the country.
- 5.6 **Affordable Homes Provided.** Despite completions being adversely affected by the pandemic lockdowns, delivery has steadily increased as the market has settled and Covid restrictions reduced. Delivery via Section 106 agreements through Registered providers, First Homes, and internal acquisitions programme and new build have resulted in this three-year target being exceeded at the end of the period.
- 5.7 **Rent Collected.** Despite the effects of the Covid pandemic and Cost of Living crisis, the rent collection target is achieved with low level of eviction.
- 5.8 **Processing of Planning Applications.** The team achieved a consistently high level of decision making and targets for processing all types of Planning applications have been exceeded.
- 5.9 **Percentage of Waste Collections Made.** Significant investment has been made in behavioural change of the Recycling and Waste crews resulting in this target being achieved for 2022-2023.
- 5.10 Targets have not been met for five indicators ('red' KPIs) due to a range of impacts. These are:
- K1H1 Net Additional Homes Provided
 - K1H3 Number of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households
 - K1R3 Sickness
 - K1W1 Residual Household Waste per household
 - K1W2 Household Waste recycled, reused and composted

- 5.11 **Net additional homes provided.** The 2022/23 forecast housing delivery is in the region of 880 dwellings this year. The delivery figure has fallen short largely as a result of delay in the expected delivery of a large site at the University of Essex. These units (548) are now on track to be completed in August 2023 and will significantly boost overall delivery in 2023/24. Annual delivery is also expected to pick up significantly with more large sites starting to deliver at full capacity. This will ensure the Council can continue to demonstrate a deliverable supply of housing over the 5 year period 2023/24 to 2026/27.
- 5.12 **Number of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households.** There is a lack of affordable housing supply both in the social and private rented housing sectors leading to an increase in the number of households being housed in temporary accommodation. We continue to work with the private sector to encourage landlords to work with us, however, this is becoming increasingly challenging with a very competitive market where demand is outstripping supply and some landlords choosing to sell properties following mortgage interest rate rises in recent months.

Whilst the Council's housebuilding and acquisitions programmes continue to bring additional homes into the housing stock, these initiatives are not able to keep pace with the current needs to house homeless families and we continue to explore alternative affordable housing supply with partners and stakeholders. This service area is under considerable pressure and having to increase the use of bed and breakfast accommodation as temporary accommodation – all efforts are directed at minimising this usage and where possible prevent homelessness occurring in the first place.

- 5.13 **Sickness.** The sickness rate is still higher than the KPI target but we have seen the figures start to reduce during the year. After peaking in May 2022, the sickness rate has reduced for 12 consecutive months and is at its lowest rate since October 2021 standing at 8.7 days per employee. This is in the main due to the positive impact of a new sickness absence policy which involves action from managers more quickly. Further efforts will be made to continue to drive sickness levels down across the organisation.

The report at Appendix B features sickness rates for 2022-2023 broken down by service areas. This shows that if the front-line Environmental Services were excluded the KPI target would have been met. A significant proportion of sickness in these services arises from the physical requirements of the Waste Collection system used.

- 5.14 **Residual household waste per household.** There has been a significant reduction in the amount of waste being produced by residents from 378 Kg to 353.80 Kg per household at Period 12 versus the previous year, following our ongoing campaign to enforce the limit on collections to 3 black bags or one 180 litre wheeled bin. This represents a 6.84% reduction in residual waste over last years performance. Although performance is below the current stretching target, performance is well above that of other councils. The data available shows we collected 34.38 Kg less waste per household than similar councils.
- 5.15 **Recycling.** Performance has been impacted by both the exceptionally dry weather in June, July and August which reduced garden waste volumes. However, overall the level of recycling dropped by only 0.21% against last years performance. Performance is well above that of other comparable councils. In 2021-2022 our recycling rates were 11.46% higher than other similar councils.

5.16 In addition to the performance described above, the Council has again received numerous awards and accreditations, and these are highlighted at the end of Appendix C.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 Robust performance management of key Council Services supports the aims of improving both services and the lives of everyone in the borough. Where required, specific Equality Impact Assessments will exist for policies and activities rather than for individual performance indicators or actions.

7. Strategic Plan References

7.1 There are no references to the 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan.

8. Consultation

8.1 The reports contents do not have any direct implications regarding consultation.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 The performance report contains measures for our key performance indicators. Many of these are used to monitor the performance of our services, and as such these may be of public interest. The report and related information are published on the Performance and Improvement section of the Council's website.

10. Financial implications

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

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

11.1 Many of the KPI targets reported above ensure that Council Services that have a positive impact on Health and Wellbeing are delivered effectively.

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report.

13. Risk Management Implications

13.1 There are no direct risk management implications associated with this report.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

14.1 The KPI's relating to recycling and the levels of residual waste collected are the key indicators that contribute to Environment and Sustainability.

Appendices

- A. [KPI Year End Report covering April 2022 – March 2023](#)
- B. [Sickness Rates Report by Service covering April 2022 – March 2023](#)
- C. [Awards and Other Performance News covering April 2022 – March 2023](#)

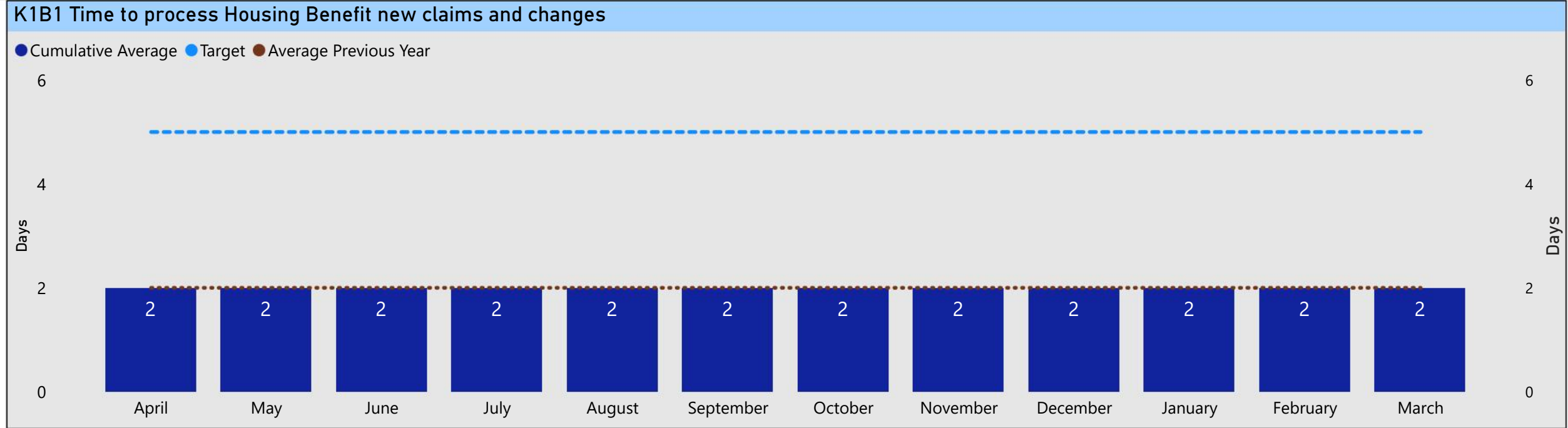
Corporate Key Performance Indicators April 2022 - March 2023

- K1B1 Housing Benefit →
- K1B1 LCTS →
- K1H1 Additional Homes →
- K1H2 Affordable Homes →
- K1H3 Homelessness →
- K1H4 Rent Collected →
- K1H5 Re-lets →
- K1P1 Planning Apps (Majors) →
- K1P1 Planning Apps (Minors) →
- K1P1 Planning Apps (Others) →
- K1R1 Council Tax →
- K1R2 NNDR →
- K1R3 Sickness →
- K1W1 Residual Waste →
- K1W2 Recycled Waste →
- K1W3 % of Scheduled Collections Made →

- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023
- 2023-2024

- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March

K1B1 Time to Process Housing Benefit new claims and changes



Cumulative Average against Target

2 ✓

Target: 5
March

Supporting Narrative

The team continue to assess claims as quickly as possible, achieving some of the lowest processing times in the country.

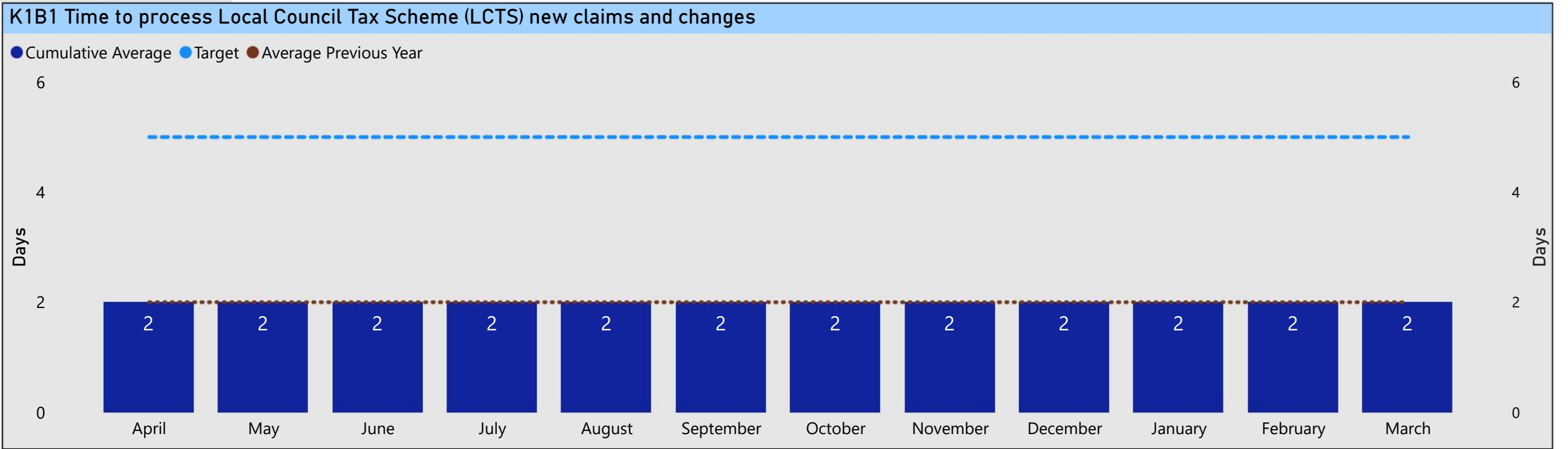
2023-2024 Target

4 days

- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023

- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March

K1B1 Time to process Local Council Tax Scheme (LCTS) new claims and changes



Cumulative Average against Target

2 ✓

Target: 5
March

Supporting Narrative

The team continue to assess claims as quickly as possible, achieving some of the lowest processing times in the country.

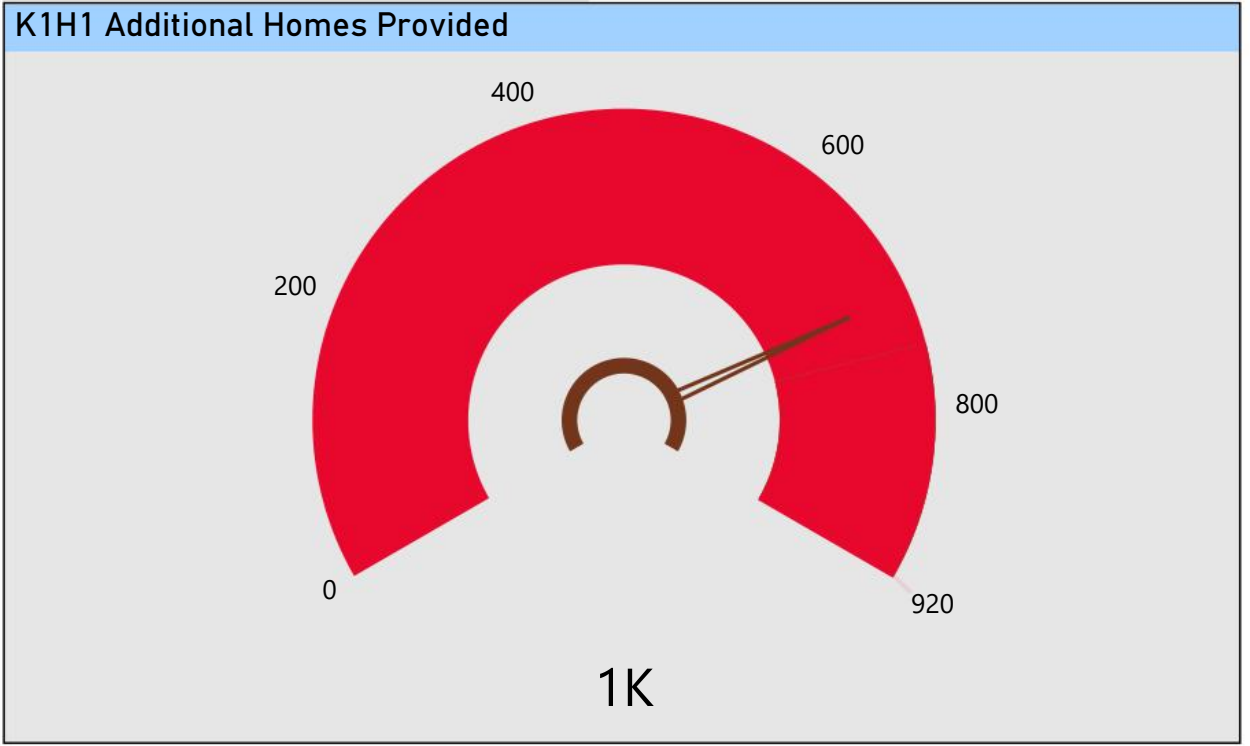
2023-2024 Target

5 days

- 2015-2016
- 2016-2017
- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023**
- 2023-2024
- 2024-2025
- 2025-2026

- June
- September
- December
- March**

K1H1 Additional Homes Provided



Actual towards Target

711!

Indicative Target: 920
March

Supporting Narrative

The 2022/23 housing trajectory forecast delivery in the region of 880 dwellings this year. The delivery figure has fallen short largely as a result of delay in the expected delivery of a large site at the University of Essex. These units (548) are now on track to be completed in August 2023 and will significantly boost overall delivery in 2023/24. Annual delivery is also expected to pick up significantly with more large sites starting to deliver at full capacity. This will ensure the Council can continue to demonstrate a deliverable supply of housing over the 5 year period 2023/24 to 2026/27.

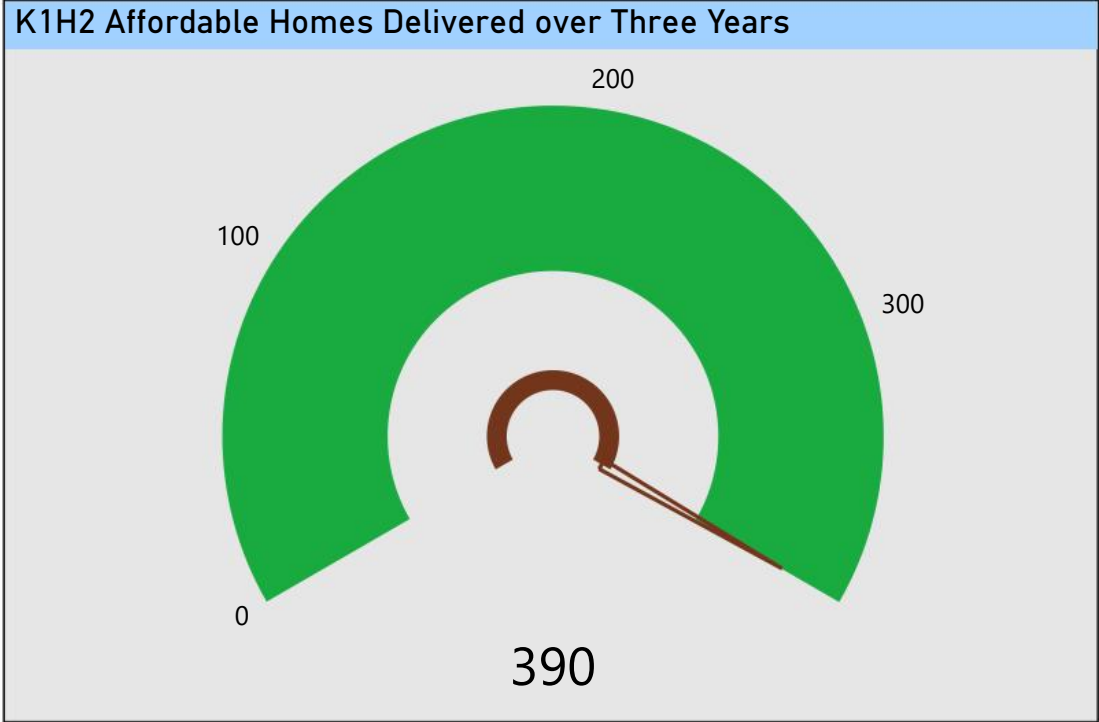
2023-2024 Target

920 homes

- 2015-2016
- 2016-2017
- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023**
- 2023-2024

- June
- September
- December
- March**

K1H2 Affordable Homes Delivered over Three Years



Actual against Year Two Target

390 ✓
 Indicative Target: 380
 March

Supporting Narrative

Despite completions being adversely affected by the pandemic lockdowns, delivery has steadily increased as the market has settled and Covid restrictions reduced. Delivery via Section 106 agreements through Registered providers, First Homes, and CBC internal acquisitions programme and new build have resulted in this three-year target being exceeded at the end of the period.

2023-2026 Target

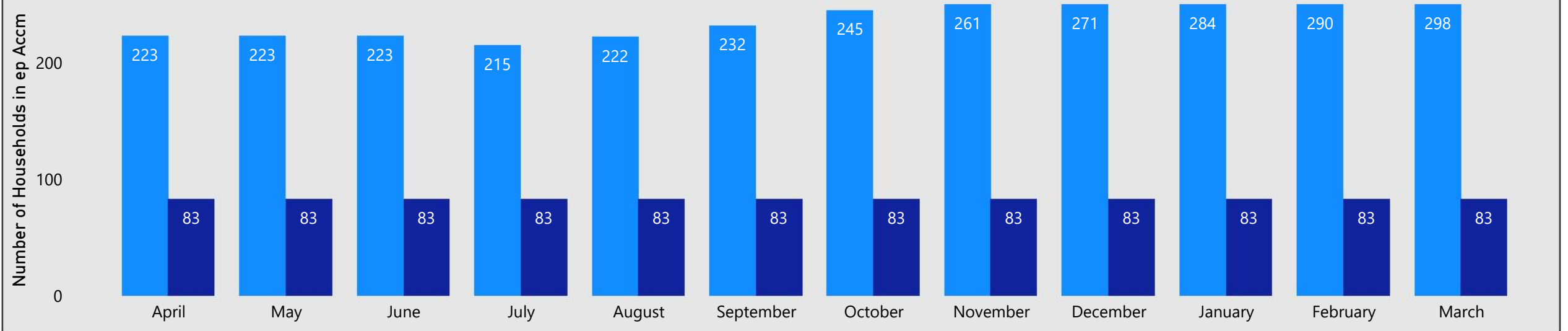
380 homes over three years 2023-2026

K1H3 Number of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households



K1H3 Number of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households

● Number of Households in Temp/Interim/B&B ● Estimated Number of Households '000s



Actual against Target

3.59!
Target: 2.90
March

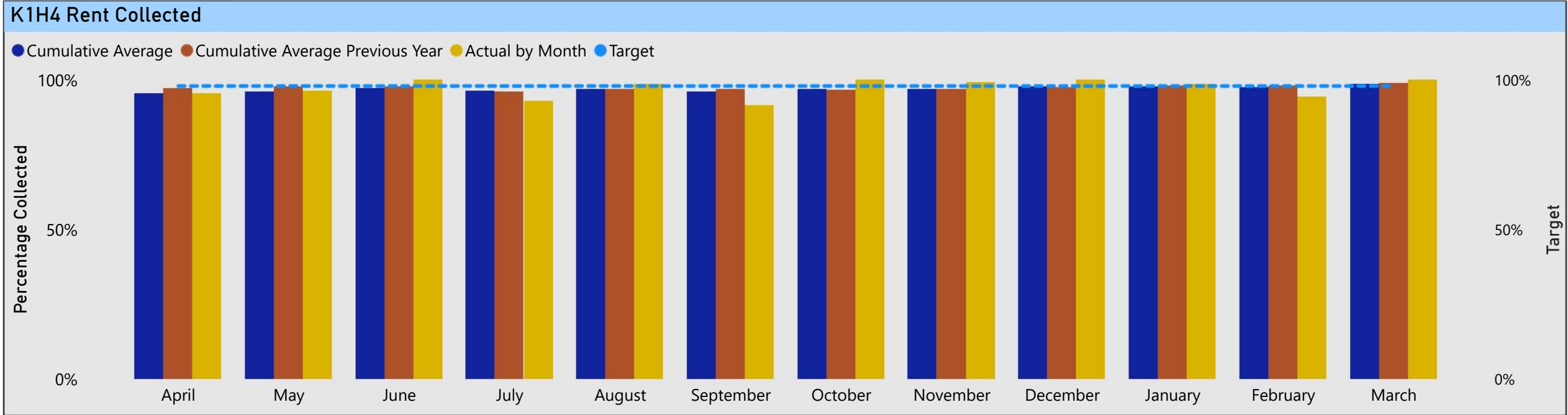
Supporting Narrative

There is a lack of affordable supply both in the social and private rented housing sectors leading to an increase in the number of households being housed in temporary accommodation. We continue to work with the private sector to encourage landlords to work with us, however, this is becoming increasingly challenging with a very competitive market where demand is outstripping supply and some landlords choosing to sell properties following mortgage interest rate rises in recent months. Whilst the Council's housebuilding and acquisitions programmes continue to bring additional homes into the housing stock these initiatives are not able to keep pace with the current needs to house homeless families and we continue to explore alternative affordable supply with partners and stakeholders. This service area is under considerable pressure and having to increase the use of bed and breakfast accommodation as temporary accommodation – all efforts are directed at minimising this usage and where possible prevent homelessness occurring in the first place.

2023-2024 Target

3.0 households per 1,000 of the population

K1H4 Rent Collected



Cumulative against Target

98.70% ✓
 Target: 98%
 March

Supporting Narrative

Rent collection target achieved with low level of eviction. A small number of tenants still have high levels of debt which they accrued during Covid pandemic and the resulting Cost of living crisis. A high proportion of rent arrears is now owed by those tenants claiming Universal Credit.

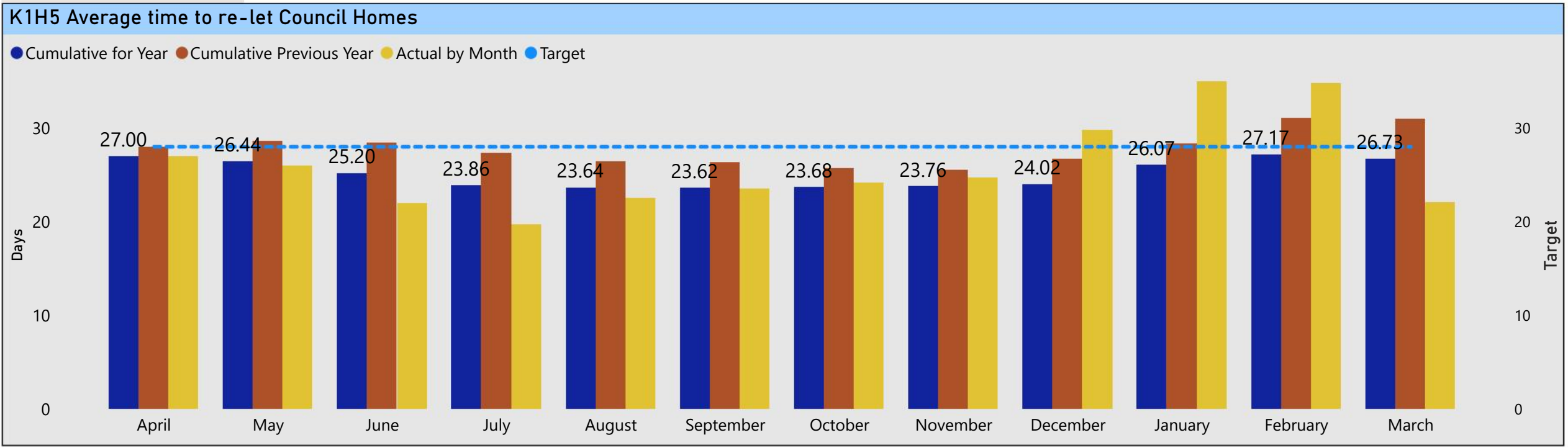
2023-2024 Target

98%

- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023

- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March

K1H5 Average time to re-let Council Homes



Cumulative against Target

26.73 ✓
Target: 28
March

Supporting Narrative

Good year end performance achieved. An additional contractor was used to support the service through contract change period at year end. There continues to be issues with delays to clear properties and supply issues with key components.

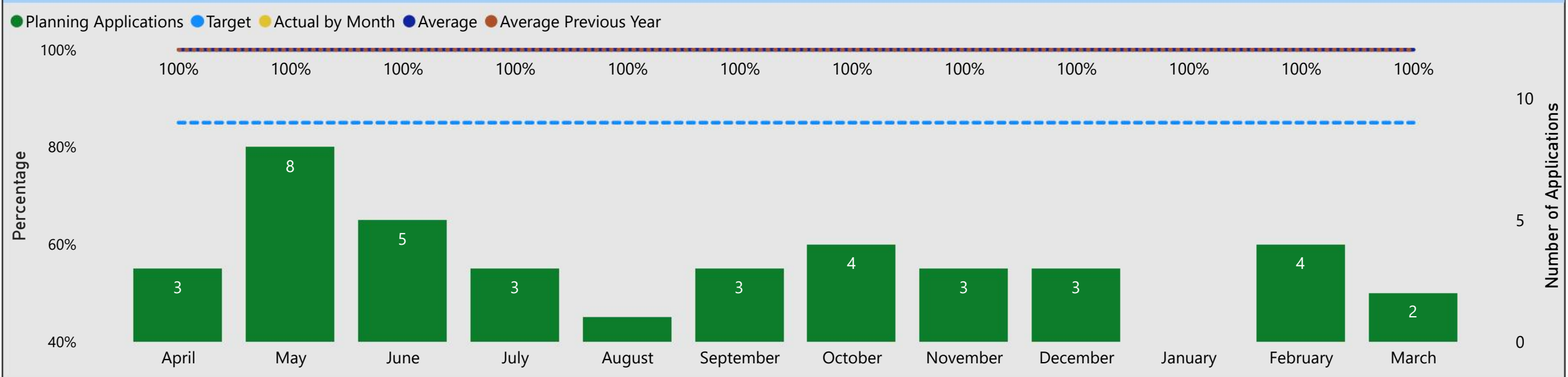
2023-2024 Target

For 2023-2024 this indicator will be monitored at service level.

K1P1 Processing of Major Planning Applications



K1P1 Processing of Planning Applications - Majors



Average against Target

100% ✓
 Target: 85%
 March

Supporting Narrative

The team achieved a consistently high level of decision making for major applications, 37 major applications were determined during this period, performance remains high and targets have been met.

2023-2024 Target

For 2023-2024 this indicator will be monitored at service level.

2017-2018 2018-2019

2019-2020 2020-2021

2021-2022 2022-2023

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

January

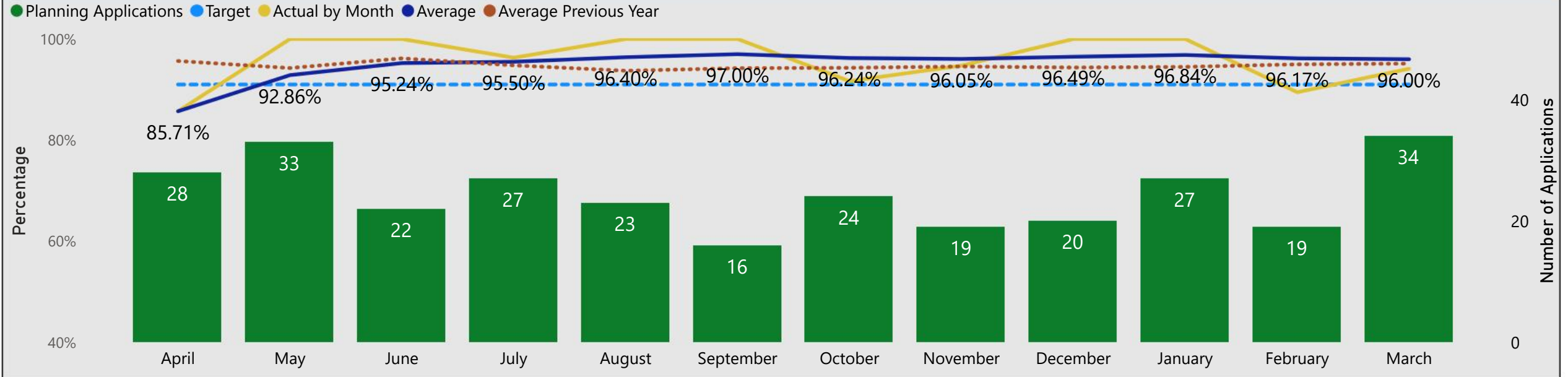
February

March

K1P1 Processing of Minors Planning Applications



K1P1 Processing of Planning Applications - Minors



Average against Target

96.00% ✓

Target: 91%
March

Supporting Narrative

The team achieved a consistently high level of decision making for minor applications. 295 minor applications were determined during this period, in a category that includes applications up to 10 new dwellings, commercial development of up to 1,000 square metres, or sites with areas of up to 1 hectare. Performance has been strong and targets have been met.

2023-2024 Target

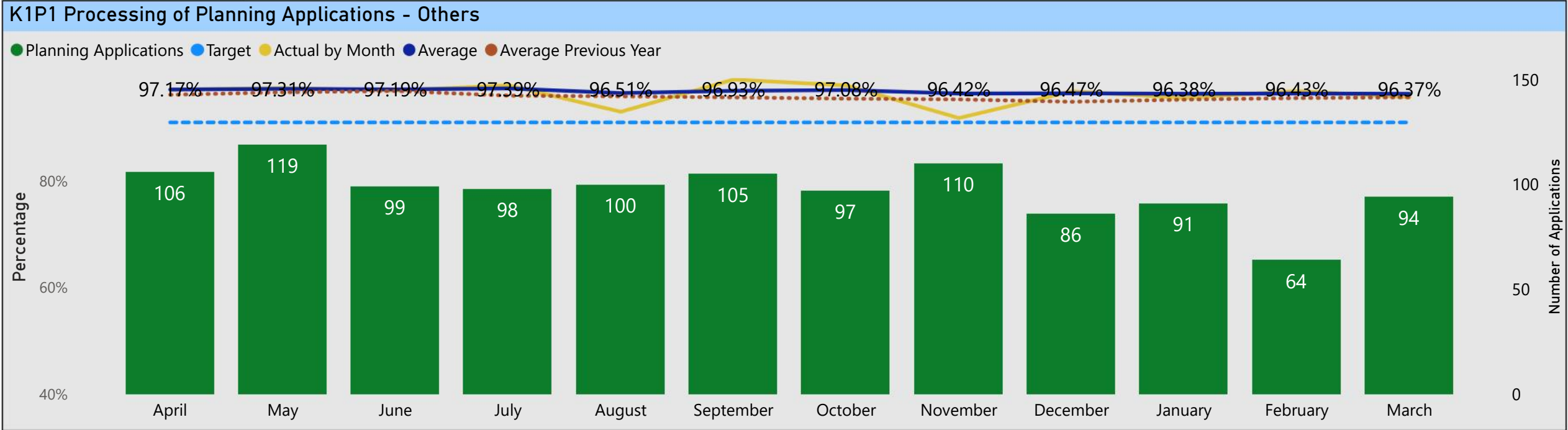
For 2023-2024 this indicator will be monitored at service level.

- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023
- 2023-2024

April May June July August September October November December January February **March**

K1P1 Processing of Other Planning Applications

← → ↺



Average against Target

96.37% ✓

Target: 91%
March

Supporting Narrative

The team achieved a consistently high level of decision making for “other” planning applications, with over 1169 applications determined during this period. The category includes applications for householder extensions, changes of use, adverts and lawful development certificates. This category saw the highest number of applications and forms the bulk of the planning work. Performance has been good and targets have been met.

2023-2024 Target

For 2023-2024 this indicator will be monitored at service level.

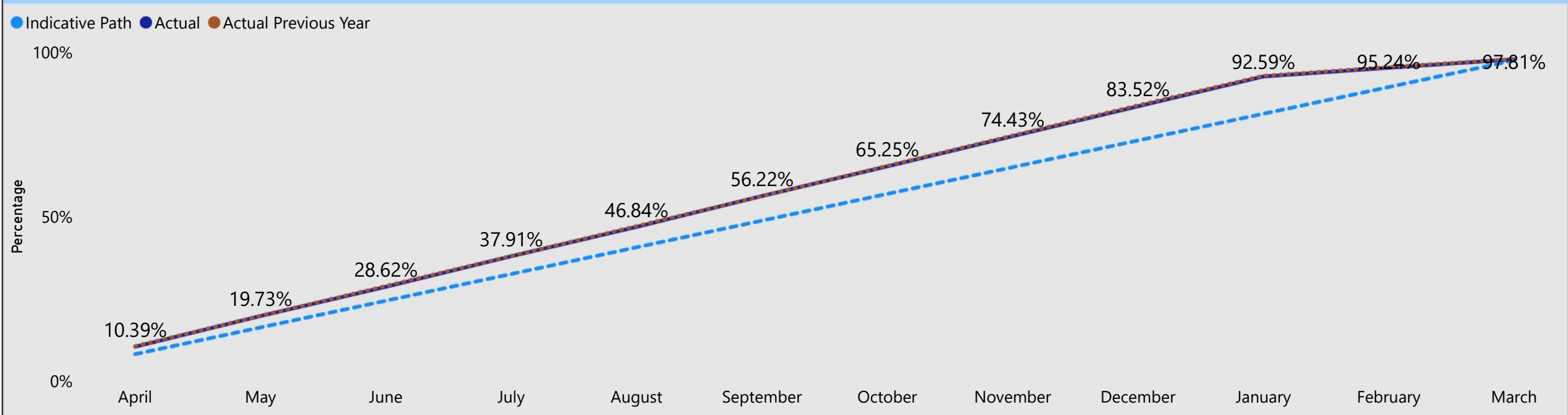
- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023
- 2023-2024

- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March

K1R1 Council Tax Collected



K1R1 Council Tax Collected



Actual against Year End Target

97.81% ✓
 Indicative Path: 97.50%
 March

Supporting Narrative

Collection has exceeded target despite a number of pressures, including the cost of living crisis. The team have worked hard to support customers who are struggling financially, whilst maintaining a strong focus on collection. We benchmarked with similar councils and our performance is higher. In 2021-2022 (this is the latest complete set of data) the percentage of Council Tax we collected is 97.92% compared to 97.09% collected by other councils.

2023-2024 Target

97.65%

2017-2018 2018-2019

2019-2020 2020-2021

2021-2022 2022-2023

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

January

February

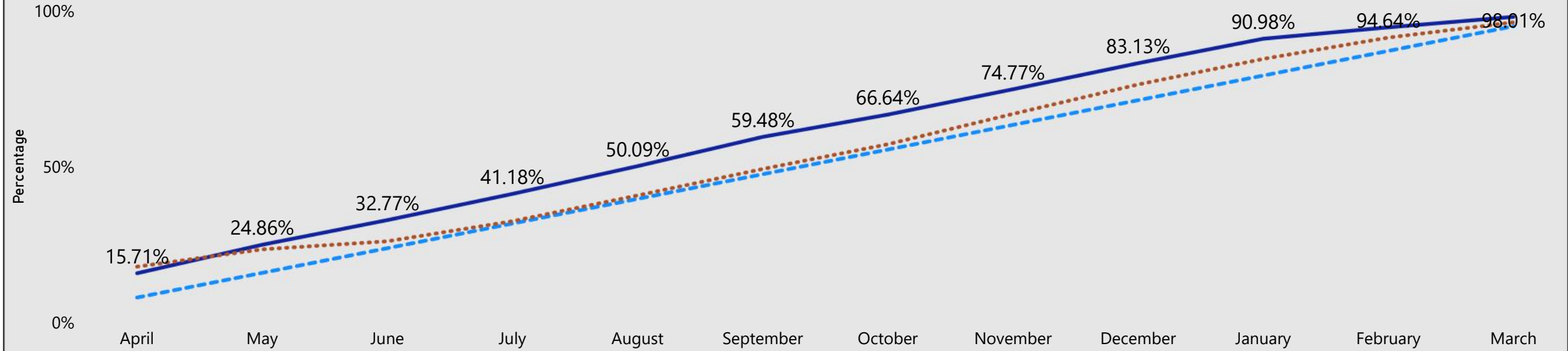
March

K1R2 Business Rates (NNDR) Collected



K1R2 Business Rated (NNDR) Collected

● Indicative Path ● Actual ● Actual Previous Year



Actual against Year End Target

98.01% ✓

Indicative Path: 95.00%
March

Supporting Narrative

Collection has exceeded target and is now up to pre-covid levels. The team work well with local businesses, supporting them to pay rates on time and negotiating payment arrangements where they are struggling.

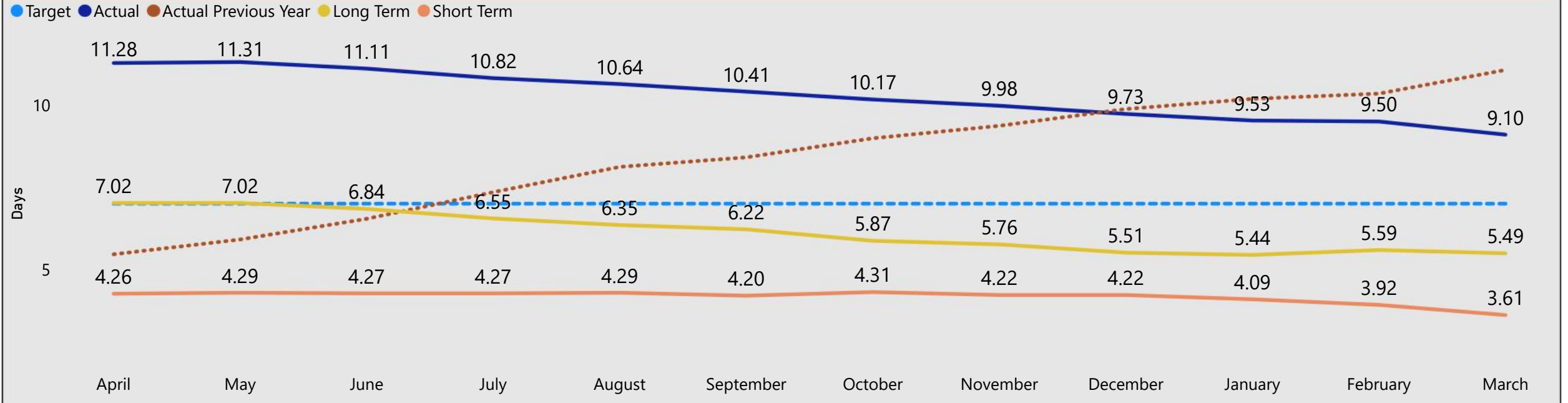
2023-2024 Target

98%

K1R3 Sickness Rates in Days



K1R3 Sickness Rates (Rolling Figures)



Actual against Target

9.10!
 Target: 7
 March

Supporting Narrative

The sickness rate is still higher than the KPI target but we have seen the figures start to reduce during the year. After peaking in May 2022, the sickness rate has reduced for 12 consecutive months and is at its lowest rate since October 2021 standing at 8.7 days per employee. This is in the main due to the positive impact of a new sickness absence policy which involves action from managers more quickly. Further efforts will be made to continue to drive sickness levels down across the organisation. A separate report is available featuring sickness rates for 2022-2023 broken down by service areas. This shows that if the front-line Environmental Services were excluded the KPI target would have been met. A significant proportion of the sickness in these services arises from the physical requirements of the Waste Collection system used.

2023-2024 Target

8 days

- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019
- 2019-2020
- 2020-2021
- 2021-2022
- 2022-2023

- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December
- January
- February
- March

K1W1 Residual Waste (Rapid)



K1W1 Residual Household Waste per Household

● Indicative Path ● Rapid Cumulative Actual ● Rapid Cumulative Actual Previous Year



Actual against Target

353.80!

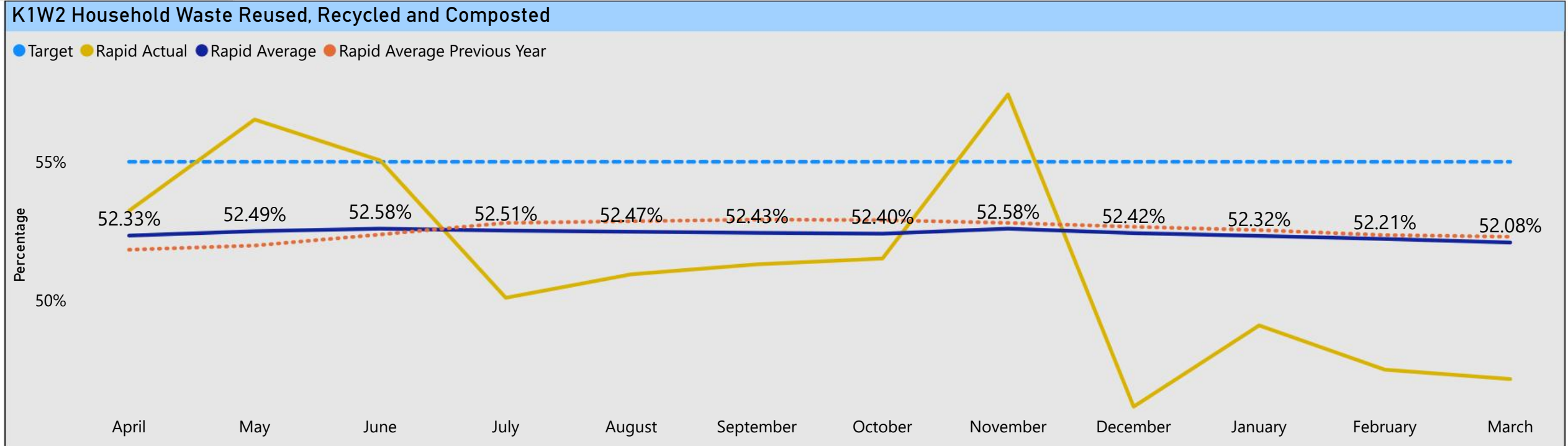
Indicative Path to date: 346.00
March

Supporting Narrative

There has been a significant reduction in the amount of waste being produced by residents from 378 Kg to 353.80 Kg per household at Period 12 versus the previous year, following our ongoing campaign to enforce the limit on collections to 3 black bags or one 180 litre wheeled bin. This represents a 6.84% reduction in residual waste over last year's performance. Although performance is below the current stretching target, performance is well above that of other councils. The data available shows we collected 34.38 Kg less waste per household than similar councils.

2023-2024 Target

354 Kg



Average against Target

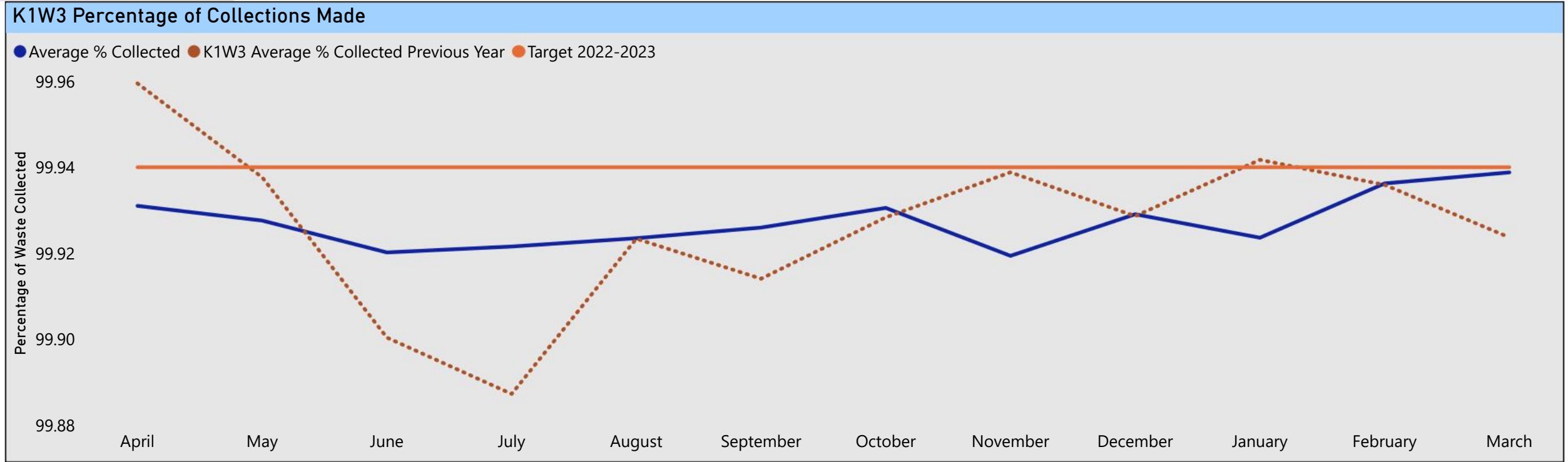
52.08%!
 Target: 55%
 March

Supporting Narrative

Performance has been impacted by both the exceptionally dry weather in June, July and August which reduced garden waste volumes. However, overall the level of recycling dropped by only 0.21% against last years performance. Performance is well above that of other comparable councils. In 2021-2022 our recycling rates were 11.46% higher than other similar councils.

2023-2024 Target

53%



Average against Target

99.94!
 Target: 99.94
 March

Supporting Narrative

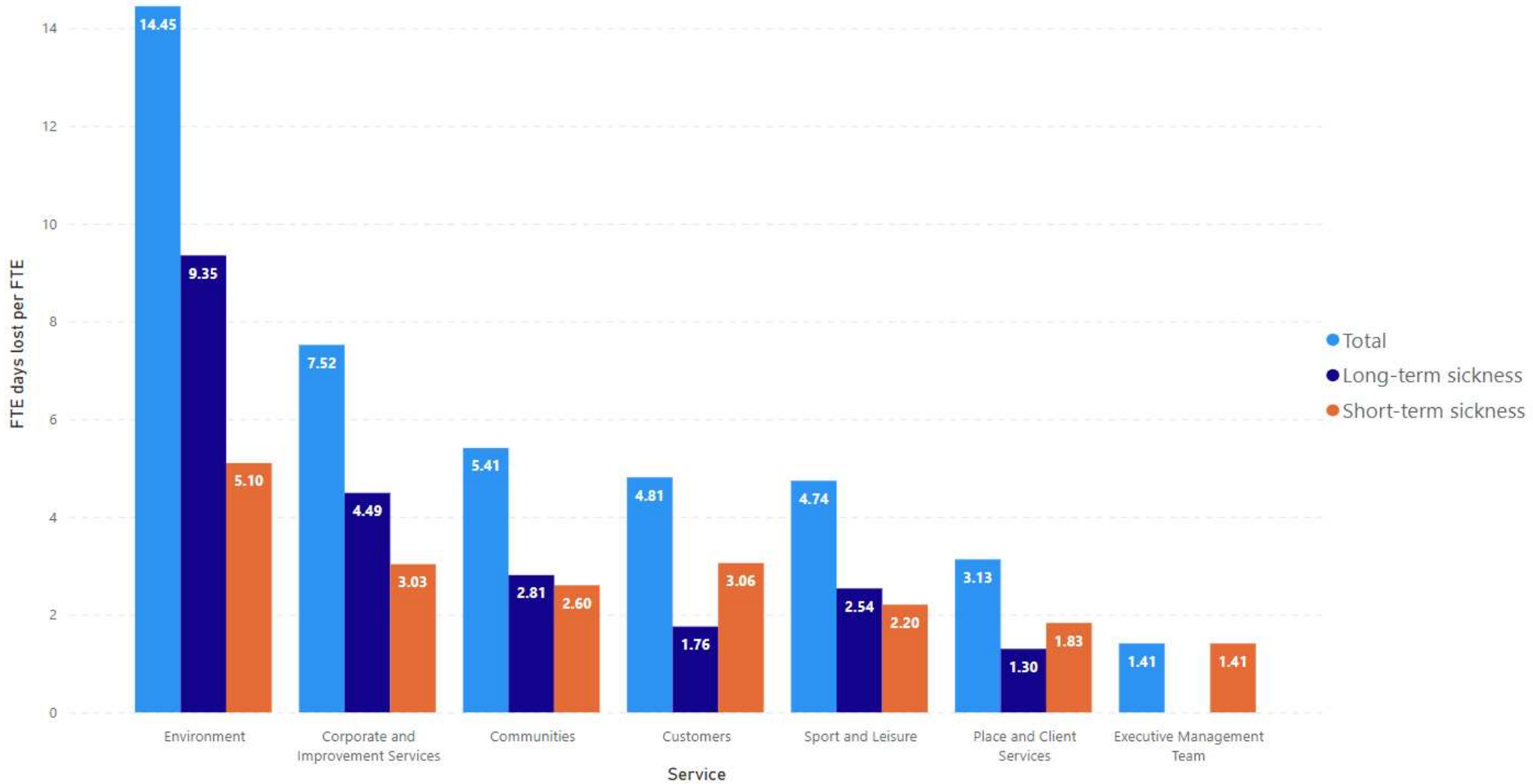
The K1 W3 Performance has out turned at 99.94% which is target. Significant investment has been made in behavioural change of the Recycling and Waste crews.

2023-2024 Target

For 2023-2024 this indicator will be monitored at service level.

Sickness Rates Report by Service covering 2022-2023

Across the Council the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) days lost per Full Time Equivalent in 2022-23 was 9.1 days. In all services the figure was lower than this, except for Environment which was at 14.45 days. The chart below compares sickness levels by service.



The main reason for this difference is due to long-term absence levels. The days lost per full time equivalent due to long-term absence in Environment was more than twice that of any other service.

The main drivers for sickness in Environment are mental health related absences and absence due to musculoskeletal or back problems or injuries or fractures.

The absence relating to musculoskeletal, back problems, injuries or fractures is significantly higher in Environment due to the more physical, manual nature of many of the roles in this service, which puts more strain on bodies and leads to more injuries, or means that where there is a musculoskeletal or back problem the member of staff cannot perform their duties.

Over 70% of the absence due to musculoskeletal or back problems or injuries or fractures within the Council occurs within the Environment service.

The nature of these types of injuries, as well as mental health issues, can often take longer to recover from or get treatment for, which leads to longer periods of absence compared to other services.

In Environment the average number of days lost per absence (8.32 working days lost per absence) was 57% greater than the rest of the Council (5.30 days days lost per absence).

The tables below show the top 10 reasons for sickness in Environment compared to the total figures across the Council (including Environment):

Top 10 reasons for sickness - Environment

Absence Reason	Working Days Lost
Mental Health - Non Work Related Stress	615
Injury/Fracture	599
Musculoskeletal - Other	568
Mental Health - Anxiety/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	349
Back Problems	345
Chest/Covid/Respiratory	319
Benign & Malignant Tumours - Cancers	281
Gastrointestinal	269
Cold/Cough/Flu	204
Mental Health - Work Related Stress	167

Top 10 reasons for sickness - Colchester City Council

Absence Reason	Working Days Lost
Mental Health - Anxiety/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	1086
Injury/Fracture	942
Musculoskeletal - Other	713
Mental Health - Non Work Related Stress	665
Chest/Covid/Respiratory	620
Cold/Cough/Flu	605
Gastrointestinal	483
Back Problems	461
Benign & Malignant Tumours - Cancers	293
Covid19 - Long Covid	243

Other performance news

- **Awards and accreditations**

The highlights are summarised here and are also shown on www.colchester.gov.uk in the [achievements](#) section

Achieved April 2022 to March 2023 – Year Report	
National RTPI awards for planning excellence winners 2022	Karen Syrett, the Council’s lead officer for planning and place strategy, was awarded the Head Planner of the Year Award . Beth Jones, Principal Planning Officer, was a finalist in the Young Planner category. These are the most established and respected awards in the UK planning industry. Running for over 40 years, they celebrate exceptional examples of planning and the contribution planners make to society. December 2022
East of England Local Government Association - Senior Leadership Challenge	This aimed to give aspiring leaders the skills to support their councils to better serve their communities. It involved a Council team competing against teams from other local authorities. Our team won the ‘Best Collaborators’ award. As winners they now have the opportunity of taking part in a development session with the East of England Local Government Association, with a focus on stakeholder engagement. November 2022
Colchester tops the league for Covid business support	The Council was named as the top-performing local authority in Essex for getting urgent financial support to businesses hit by the coronavirus pandemic. November 2022
Quest - UK quality scheme for sport and leisure	Colchester Sports Park is now a Quest Accredited Site , with the full report highlighting the facilities as “Very Good”. Quest is the Sport England recommended continuous improvement tool for leisure facilities and sports development teams, designed to measure how effective organisations are at providing customer service. It is the industry’s recognised barometer of success. October 2022
British Parking Awards	The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) were finalists in five categories. The ‘ Rising Star ’ award went to Jake England, Group Operating Manager, Environment. This award shines a spotlight on the rising stars of parking, in recognition of the person “who has consistently made an outstanding contribution to their team and the wider parking sector”. October 2022
Park Mark awards and Park Mark Plus - British Parking Association (BPA)	All 20 CBC-owned car parks across Colchester borough have retained national Park Mark awards for their safety, accessibility and quality management for the fourteenth consecutive year. In 2020, the Council’s Priory Street Car Park was only the second car park in the country to receive Park Mark Plus status, and it has retained this elite award in 2022. The award recognises only the highest-quality car parks, and assesses a range of criteria, including services, operations, design and build. To qualify for the award, car parks must already have the BPA’s Park Mark award and meet the Disability Parking Accreditation criteria. September 2022

Fantastic for Families Awards and the Museums and Heritage Awards	Colchester and Ipswich Museums were shortlisted in both the 'Partnership of the Year' category of the Museums and Heritage Awards and by Fantastic for Families . This is for the Creating Joy at the Jobcentre project when Ipswich Museum created five days of arts, crafts and play at Ipswich Job Centre Plus. September 2022
Fields in Trust - UK's favourite parks	Colchester Castle Park and High Woods Country Park were voted 'East of England Local Favourites'. The public nominated 364 parks for UK's Favourite Parks 2022 and cast over 30,000 votes for local green spaces close to their hearts. Those parks finishing in the top 20% of the public vote achieved 'Local Favourite' status, reflecting the love shown for them by their local communities. August 2022
Working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community status	The Council has been recognised for its continuing efforts to raise awareness of dementia among staff and residents. The Council, which is a member of the Colchester Dementia Action Alliance (CDAA), has been accredited and awarded ' Working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community ' status. August 2022
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park, High Woods Country Park and Colchester's Cemetery and Crematorium have received Green Flag Awards . Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and they promote the community value of green spaces. As well as receiving its twentieth Green Flag award, Castle Park has also once again been awarded Green Heritage Site status, which recognises its work to promote its historic surroundings. July 2022
East of England RTPi 2022 – Head Planner of the Year	Karen Syrett, the Council's lead planning officer, was presented with the Head Planner of the Year award at the East of England RTPi awards and goes through to the national finals in November. The prestigious awards celebrate outstanding plans, projects and people that demonstrate the power of planning – highlighting exceptional examples of how planning and planners have a positive impact on people's quality of life in creating exceptional places and protecting the environment. July 2022
Colchester named England's most recycling conscious town	Food waste disposer supplier, InSinkErator, analysed the recycling habits of towns and cities across England, generating a 'recycling-conscious score'. Colchester also came out on top, with a recycling conscious score of 94%. June 2022
Kids in Museums	Colchester Castle was one of three venues shortlisted for ' Best Accessible Museum 2022 '. Hundreds of families across the country voted for their favourite heritage attraction. A panel of museum experts, children and young people then whittled down the nominations to this shortlist, saying "What set the venues on our shortlist apart was that they not only created an excellent visitor experience for families, but also showed a great commitment behind the scenes to respond to family feedback and improve access, especially for those who are not regular visitors". June 2022
Promoting Awareness of Civil Enforcement through Reporting (PACER) Awards	North Essex Parking Partnership won the 'best use of Design' category of the 2022 PATROL PACER Awards for their NEPP Parking Annual Report 2020-21 . The PACER awards are presented to the best parking and traffic management Annual Reports across seven categories. June 2022

LEXCEL	Legal Services have been re-accredited following the Lexcel standard's annual inspection, for the 22nd consecutive year. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. June 2022
Health and Wellbeing Awards – Colchester Gazette	Donna Hoy from Colchester Leisure World was awarded first place in the Personal Trainer category. The Activa Gym took third place in the Best Gym category. May 2022
GeoPlace Exemplar Awards	The Council has been awarded the ' Platinum Award for Address Data '. It recognises councils that have maintained Gold, which is the highest level of data quality in all of the Annual Improvement Schedule criteria. These awards recognise best practice and outstanding address data management by local authorities who have consistently maintained the highest level of data quality. Land, property, street and address information are used to connect different services across the Council – giving communities and individuals a 'property-level view' of the services available to them. May 2022
Museums and Heritage awards	Colchester + Ipswich Museums' Power of Stories exhibition won the temporary or touring exhibition of the year . Why the judges chose this winner: <i>The judges were impressed by how brilliantly the Power of Stories connected with its community. They felt it was genuinely powerful and demonstrated a clear and lasting benefit. Delivered on a budget which only just took them into this category, this block buster was extremely good value as well as being both surprising and smart.</i> CIMS won the 2022 award when other finalists included the V&A, Natural History Museum and Blenheim Palace. May 2022
EDIE Sustainability Leaders awards 2022	The Council's ' CAREless pollution ' campaign was Highly Commended in the Consumer Engagement Campaign category. The campaign was established in 2020 to tackle poor air quality in Colchester. The aim is to encourage drivers to switch off their vehicle engines when stationary, cutting pollution by up to 30%. April 2022
Councillor Development Charter	<p>This award recognises that the Council has achieved best practice in the way it provides learning and development opportunities for its elected members (councillors). The Council was first awarded Charter Status in 2011 and was reaccredited in 2015, 2018 and 2022. The accreditation lasts for a period of three years, followed by a full reassessment.</p> <p>The Charter is recognition of the Council's achievement of best practice in the way it provides learning and development opportunities for its elected members and also provides effective support to its elected members. This provides reassurance to current and potential members. It also provides a reassurance to residents that their elected representatives will be supported to enable them to undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively.</p> <p>To achieve Charter Status the Council had to demonstrate that it has met all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support b) The Council has a strategic approach to councillor development

	<p>c) Learning and development is effective in building skills and knowledge.</p> <p>To meet these criteria, the Council demonstrates its commitment to supporting and developing councillors and how this is reflected in its policies and procedures. Key elements include an all-party member development group, a member development policy and strategy and formal methods of assessing member training needs. April 2022</p>
<p>Customer Service Excellence standard</p>	<p>The Council's Contact and Support team were awarded the Customer Service Excellence standard for the third year in a row, following a rigorous assessment day.</p> <p>Customer Service Excellence is a government-backed industry standard that tests in depth those areas that research has shown are a priority to customers, with a particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Achieving the standard gives us formal recognition of our commitment to, and delivery of, customer service. This helps confirm to our residents, current and potential customers and staff both the quality of the service and the support they will receive should they contact Colchester Borough Council. February 2022</p>

Other sources of performance data

Statistics and data – the way we collate and publish a range of council statistics, performance indicators, datasets and information has been updated. Pulling all this together will help us to maintain open and accessible information for customers, businesses, and other interested parties.

The [Council Data](#) section at colchester.gov.uk/council-data is designed so that people can easily find out information we hold, our obligations on open data and transparency, as well as how to make a freedom of information request.

Categories include spending, business rates, democracy, housing, land, parking, planning and licensing, recycling and waste.

Annual reports – the Council produces annual reports on its performance in various areas. These are brought into one place on the Council's website [here](#) for ease of reference, and to make it easier for the public to find which annual reports are available.

[Single Data List](#) - this is a list of all the datasets that local government must submit to central government. The list is reviewed and updated annually. Local authorities are not obliged to provide any data which is not on the list without extra funding.

6 September 2023

Report of	Chief Operating Officer	Author	Simon Thorp simon.thorp@ colchester.gov.uk
Title	End of Strategic Plan 2020-23 Performance Report - Delivering Cabinet Vision and Priorities		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Report provides details of delivery against the Council's 2020-23 Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 The Plan set out how the Council would address the key challenges facing the borough through five strategic priority themes:
 - Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability
 - Creating safe, healthy and active communities
 - Delivering homes for people who need them
 - Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits
 - Celebrating our heritage and culture
- 1.3 The plan outlined 15 priorities (3 under each strategic theme), considering the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and set out the key goals by which success would be measured, together with a clear set of commitments that would be delivered. These formed the basis for the Strategic Plan Action Plan.
- 1.4 Performance prioritised in the 2020-23 Strategic Plan will remain a focus for the new Strategic Plan 2023-26 (A City fit for the Future) - responding to the climate emergency; delivering modern services for a modern City; improving health, well-being and happiness; delivering homes for those most in need; growing our economy so everyone benefits and celebrating our City, heritage and culture.

2. Recommended Decisions

- 2.1 To confirm delivery against the 2020-23 Strategic Plan.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure satisfactory delivery of Cabinet's vision and key priorities.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no appropriate alternative options.

5. Background Information

5.1 To deliver the Cabinet vision several key priorities were identified. The priorities with key highlights of progress and achievements are shown below.

5.2 Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability

Respond to the Climate Emergency	The Council's carbon emissions have been reduced by 10.1% since 2019/20.
	The Council agreed to develop a 17.5 Hectare Solar Park and Microgrid at the Northern Gateway and has completed RIBA stage 1 and 2 feasibility/viability work, now proceeding onto the planning application stage.
Conserve and enhance biodiversity	The Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project planted trees in suitable areas and by focusing on the naturalisation of sites, enhanced the biodiversity further, reviewing the management regimes and continuing to communicate changes to our communities.
	'Open Up Our River': by clearing up and cutting back, improving access and walks along the River Colne, with ongoing scheduled maintenance work through Grounds Maintenance Contract.
	'Cherish Our Parks': to improve their condition, with yet more tree and wildflower planting and path improvements, with continued review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract incorporating additional wildflower planting where budget allows and dialogue with key stakeholders on planting approach alongside the continuation of wild verges in Wivenhoe.
Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester	The infrastructure for sustainable travel has been boosted through Levelling Up Fund and Town Deal projects included a number of walking and cycling improvements such as the City Centre to Greenstead and University walking and cycling route Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 4, alongside the Fixing the Link and Active Travel Fund 2 projects also progressing in support of the wider LCWIP programme with Essex County Council.

5.3 Creating safe, healthy and active communities

Build on community strengths and assets	Embedding Communities Can with system partners and communities including training and awareness, learning from best practice, capacity building and outcomes focus, enabling an Asset Based Community Development Approach.
Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people	Prioritising support for those faced with terrible choices, between food or warmth or other

	essential needs, working with communities and through our community partners to build community wealth. This has included working with partners, strengthening the capacity of the Council's high performing welfare support team, and leveraging resources to provide targeted help for those in extreme difficulty, acknowledging rising demand for help and support for the most vulnerable.
	A Colchester Emergency Fund provided targeted help for those in extreme difficulty, whether with food or warmth or other essential needs, as a supplement to national schemes and other support, working through our community partners
	A Crisis Reaction Service drew on and strengthened our high performing benefits team, acknowledging rising demand, continuing to connect residents to sources of support and to otherwise alleviate hardship, at pace, with partners. This enabled a Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Fund to launch, enabling discretionary support, with remaining funding from the main scheme, of up to £100 to all Council Taxpayers in hardship, with minimal application process.
Provide opportunities for young people.	Through Town Deal funding, commencing work to transform youth facilities in the City Centre (Townhouse youth centre), Stanway and Highwoods.
	Completion of Buffett Way Playground refurbishment (£30k), modernising this play space after years of deprivation, with 'Priority 1' play areas to invest an additional £150k playground funding made available to upgrade play areas that are in desperate need.

5.4 Delivering homes for people who need them

Increase the number, quality, and types of homes.	The Strategic Plan target was to deliver 380 affordable homes (set pre Covid). By year end 2023 the number of homes delivered was 390 homes. During 2022-2023 a total of 172 homes were delivered including 100 with Registered Providers via S106 agreements, 42 via 100 Homes & Acquisitions, 20 Council new build and 10 First Homes (the government's new Home Ownership product).
Prevent households from experiencing homelessness.	During 2022-23, homelessness was prevented for 209 households and 77 households were assisted into accommodation under the relief duty. The

	Rough Sleeper Team provided support and assistance to 137 rough sleepers and accommodated 53, whilst 29 rough sleepers were reconnected.
	Help and support, with community and voluntary groups, to integrate Ukrainian and other refugees into our communities was also provided, increasing work with Refugee Action and Colchester Borough Homes to manage and minimise any homelessness issues; increasing rematching activities as original arrangements end.
Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs.	A new Local Plan was adopted, which allocates sites for housing, employment and associated infrastructure.

5.5 Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth.	Support and grants have been provided to businesses to support them through the pandemic. As well as providing direct grants, we have worked with partners in North Essex Economic Board to jointly fund business support using Government funding, also providing specialist support to businesses including on cost reduction and decarbonising.
Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town.	Our bid for City Status was successful and we are engaging partners to agree how to capitalise on this.
	Work with Essex County Council and partners to develop a Masterplan for the Town Centre is well underway with strong engagement with partners and stakeholders. We are also working with the Business Improvement District to support businesses through their Leisure Recovery Strategy and on projects such as to install new gateway signage to promote use of local city centre retail.
Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish.	Government approved all our £18.2m Town Deal business cases and so projects are starting delivery work on improved public spaces, easier transport, better digital connection, and new community facilities.
	Our £20m bid to the Government's Levelling Up funding for the Town Centre was successful and so we are carrying out the necessary preparatory work.

5.6 Celebrating our heritage and culture

<p>Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets.</p>	<p>The Shared Prosperity Fund will support three projects to be delivered by Creative Colchester; business support for the cultural sector and creative industries in Colchester; a new monthly cultural offer in the City Centre bridging the gap between the day and night economies and a project working with local schools to encourage young residents to pursue careers in our local cultural industries.</p>
	<p>Funding has been allocated across 29 projects under Year 2 of the Cultural and Creative Events Fund as per the recommendation in the Cultural Strategy to provide micro grants to arts, cultural and heritage activity.</p>
<p>Strengthen Colchester’s tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year</p>	<p>To help build back awareness of and confidence in Colchester as a visitor destination with the group travel industry and mitigate costs and other issues which can deter groups from visiting, a coach and group tourism incentive scheme supported by a targeted promotional campaign including free bookable city centre coach parking (previously pay and display and not reservable), refreshment/shopping vouchers for drivers/couriers and a discount to the Castle was launched. In the first year of the scheme 50 groups registered bringing nearly 2,000 additional visitors to the city centre between May and Dec 2022.</p>
<p>Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester’s unique heritage.</p>	<p>Visitor numbers for 2022-23 at the Castle exceeded pre-pandemic levels with total admissions and school groups reaching 89,634 people – a figure only previously reached in the years immediately after the castle’s redevelopment in 2014.</p>
	<p>The Castle welcomed the King and Consort as part of the celebration of city status.</p>

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 Consideration has been given to equality and diversity issues in respect of any decisions to implement the priorities set out in this report in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The priorities in this report support all the core themes of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan and helped set a direction of travel for the preparation of the new Strategic Plan from April 2023 onwards.

8. Consultation

8.1 Consultation to inform and underpin a new Strategic Plan for 2023-26 was undertaken and the results reported to Cabinet when the proposed new plan was considered.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 A communications plan was developed to publicise the support available to residents to help manage the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.

10. Financial implications

10.1 The delivery of the priorities in this report have been managed within existing budgets.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

11.1 Delivery against several of the priorities detailed in this report have had a positive direct and indirect impact on, health, wellbeing, and community safety.

12. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

12.1 Delivery against several of the priorities detailed in this report have also had a positive impact on environmental sustainability of both the Council and the City.

13. Health and Safety Implications

13.1 There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report.

14. Risk Management Implications

14.1 The progress reported in this report has helped to mitigate the risks facing the Council in delivering its strategic priorities for the borough.

Appendices

Appendix A – Spending Priorities Monitoring Report – April 2023

[2023-2024 Report 9 Alliance Administration Spending Priorities Monitoring Report.docx](#)

Appendix B – Strategic Plan Action Plan Year End Report 2022-23

[2022-2023 SPAP Year End Report.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix C - Strategic Plan Action Plan Year End Report 2021-22

[2021 - 2022 Cabinet SPAP Year End Performance Report.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendix D - Strategic Plan Action Plan Year End Report 2020-21

[2020 - 2021 Cabinet SPAP Year End Performance Report.docx](#)

Background Papers

None

Report No 9: Completed activity covering April 2023

Helping those who help others					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Help feed and or support those most in vulnerable.	Michelle Tarbun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current activity including many outreach events now live and shared with partners for staff, residents & patients Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners Review of outreach success underway to help manage the limited resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current activity including many outreach events now live and shared with partners for staff, residents & patients Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners Review of outreach success underway to help manage the limited resource Review of 22/23 data dashboard showing the COL support given by CCC 	GREEN	Green

A Colchester Emergency Fund					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Targeted help for those in extreme difficulty, whether with food or warmth or other essential needs, as a supplement to	Michelle Tarbun Sam Preston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current activity including many outreach events System wide video of support is now live and shared with partners for staff, residents & patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue current activity including many outreach events System wide video of support is now live and shared with partners for staff, residents & patients 	GREEN	GREEN

national schemes and other support, working through our community partners.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners • Continuing work on the CBH SLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners • Continuing work on the CBH SLA • Review of 22/23 data dashboard showing the COL support given by CCC 		
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A Crisis Reaction Service					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Drawing on our high performing benefits team but strengthening them, acknowledging rising demand. So that they can continue to connect residents to sources of support and to otherwise alleviate hardship, at pace, with partners.	Sam Preston	The discretionary LCTS support scheme will launch, offering up to £100 council tax support to the most vulnerable residents.	Continue implementation of energy and council tax support schemes.	GREEN	GREEN

Sustain and strengthen our town centre					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status

Working with the Business Improvement District to respond to the loss of iconic past brands and ensure Colchester remains an attractive destination, in which to invest, to work, live, study, shop, visit and do business.	Matt Sterling	Finalising permissions for St Nicholas' Square Repair work to Holy Trinity Church started Continuation of Safer Streets Projects	Building work for St Nicholas Square underway Consultation for Holy Trinity Square starts	GREEN	AMBER
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Strengthen and develop our partnerships					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Through One Colchester, Community 360, and other government, charitable or voluntary partners. To maximise our collective support for those most vulnerable and in need and to help us deliver our priorities.	Michelle Tarbun and Tom Tayler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued activity from previous month Cost of living and Winter Resilience work are now merged to provide complete holistic wraparound support System wide video of support is now live and shared with partners for staff, residents & patients Maximise the impact of all energy efficiency funding & initiatives using the dedicated externally funded post Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners Outreach advice activities have increased in the community, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued activity from previous month Cost of living is now business as usual Maximise the impact of all energy efficiency funding & initiatives using the dedicated externally funded post Ongoing comms and social media campaign to residents and partners Outreach advice activities continue Be Well funding now allocated and notifications have been sent out to all bidders. 	GREEN	GREEN

		including Supermarkets since Jan 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Well funding panel met on 4 April to assess applications and make funding decision. Projects to be notified later in April 			
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Improve our Quality of Life - in consultation with partners, volunteers, and residents					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Make this a beautiful town: adding to the work of the BID and voluntary groups by urban tree planting scheme, bee friendly shrubs and flowers.	Nick Christo Jane Thompson	Pruning sessions to take place with Friends of Castle Park to assist with Rose bed maintenance. Idverde commencing grass cutting season.	Wildflower planting has been carried out with Level Best Enterprises. Liaison is ongoing with Colchester in Bloom, the Nepalese Community Group, and Friends of Castle Park to assist with the planting of annual bedding in some locations. Due to investment in equipment the Park Rangers will be cleaning the ponds themselves this month	GREEN	GREEN
Open Up Our River: by clearing up and cutting back, to improve access and walks along the River Colne.	Nick Christo	Ongoing scheduled maintenance work through Grounds Maintenance Contract.	Replaced 2 bench tops in Cymbeline Riverside Meadows. Received permission from the Environment Agency to install 2 benches at Hythe Lagoons.	AMBER	AMBER

<p>Cherish Our Parks: to improve their condition, with yet more tree and wildflower planting and path improvements.</p>	<p>Nick Christo</p>	<p>Continued implementation of path improvements to be carried out.</p> <p>Continued review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract incorporating additional wildflower planting where budget allow.</p> <p>Commencement of grass cutting season incorporating changes to areas which will be left longer (wildflower).</p> <p>Continued monitoring of Stanway wildflower plug and seed planting.</p>	<p>It is not currently tree planting season, so little activity in this regard. However, continued review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract incorporating additional wildflower planting where budget allow.</p> <p>Second grass cut of the year has started and due to be complete by the end of the month, with wildflowers and naturalised areas left.</p> <p>Cattle have arrived back at High Woods Country Park to help maintain our wildflower meadows. More goats should be arriving soon to graze the scrub.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Deliver new Cymbeline Meadows Nature Area: that encourages biodiversity and 'wilding' and places for all to walk and enjoy in consultation with nearby residents and users.</p>	<p>Nick Christo</p>	<p>Working group formed and meeting schedule agreed – additional attendees to be invited where appropriate - ONGOING</p> <p>Initiation of Comms and sharing of invites / Save the Dates etc to start in preparation for the event</p> <p>PFH update due on 20 March</p>	<p>A site meeting with the Woodland Trust and Essex Forest Partnership has been undertaken to prepare a joint funding application to provide the tree whips, stakes and guards for potential community tree planting in February 2024 and winter 2024/25.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Celebrating Our Communities: with new Volunteering Awards and continued help and support, to honour those that</p>	<p>Michelle Tarbun Tom Tayler</p>	<p>Continued work and planning for event on 7 June 2023</p> <p>Working group formed and meeting schedule agreed – additional attendees to be invited where appropriate - ONGOING</p>	<p>Event date has changed to Tuesday 6 June due to clashes with Council meetings.</p> <p>Working group formed and meeting schedule agreed – additional</p>	<p>AMBER</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

<p>help others, from Litter Warriors to the volunteers of the Foodbank, C360 and many more. To thank, encourage and celebrate all our volunteers.</p>		<p>Initiation of Comms and sharing of invites / Save the Dates etc to start in preparation for the event – this is now a priority for March to ensure that appropriate notice is given to all parties required.</p> <p>C360 supporting with volunteer Admin & Comms support.</p> <p>PFH update due on 20 March</p>	<p>attendees to be invited where appropriate - ONGOING</p> <p>Save The Date Information – distributed 28 May 2023 through CCC & C360</p> <p>Ongoing logistics planning with support from working group and C360 volunteers.</p> <p>Event to include a tribute to Lawrence Walker</p>		
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Keeping our streets safe and clean					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
<p>With continuing action keep our streets as Safe and Clean as we can with partner patrols, lighting, and or CCTV, waste bins, litter enforcement and encouragement.</p>	<p>Michael Adamson Mel Rundle Lisa Hobson</p>	<p>Continuation of Safer Streets projects.</p> <p>Operation Henderson (tackling child exploitation) event planned for 17/4/23.</p> <p>Operation Mercedes (tackling exploitation) event planned for 26/4/23.</p> <p>Improved lighting to Vinyard Street Car Park to be funded by Safer Colchester Partnership to increase feeling of safety at night.</p> <p>Colchester Against Modern Slavery (CAMS) - Anti-Slavery Partnership launch 26/4/23 (via Community Safety Team)</p>	<p>Continuation of Safer Streets projects.</p> <p>Joint patrols with Essex Police and BID Ambassadors continue.</p> <p>“Neat Streets” initiative continues.</p> <p>Partnership working with police to enforce moving traffic offences by delivery drivers and others around ignoring signage/bollards.</p> <p>Night of Action planned for 27th May. Multi-Agency enforcement activity involving Essex Police, WISE, NHS etc.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>GREEN</p>

		<p>Joint patrols with Essex Police and BID Ambassadors continue.</p> <p>“Neat Streets” initiative continues</p> <p>Partnership working with police to enforce moving traffic offences by delivery drivers and others around ignoring signage/bollards.</p> <p>Partnership with WISE begins in April, focusing on enforcement on litter and dog fouling offences.</p> <p>Child Exploitation training for Wardens, WISE staff and Operatives.</p>	<p>Coronation event on 6th May in Castle Park.</p> <p>Working with BID and WISE in clearance of Painters Yard in preparation for Women’s cycle race (Ride London) in June.</p> <p>Working in partnership with WISE re litter and dog fouling enforcement.</p> <p>Art project in St. Botolphs Street progressing in partnership with 6th Form college.</p>		
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Investing in our futures					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Continuing with existing capital and housing programmes.	Paul Cook			N/A	N/A
Action on the Hythe: joint work with ECC and other partners.	Rory Doyle	<p>Fieldgate Quay – CCC Led Project</p> <p>Finalising detail and design of scheme and preparing planning application for whole quayside (due for submission mid May)</p>	<p>Fieldgate Quay – CCC Led Project</p> <p>Engineering phase - Contractor and designer finalising methodology – delay due to complex nature of groundworks id’d through most</p>	AMBER	AMBER

		<p>Site meeting with Exo Env, Anglian Water and Hestur (contractor undertaking piling design) Mar/Apr</p> <p>Repair of fault site on track for completion summer 2023 subject to finalisation of scheme and costs.</p> <p>Update to Members re scheme design.</p> <p>Hythe Flooding - ECC/AW led Project</p> <p>Awaiting confirmation from AW to design scheme and confirm costs for new inspection chamber and valve installation.</p> <p>This scheme will increase system capacity and reduce flood occurrences. Results will be monitored by task force members. Alongside action to reduce flow from distillery pond during high tide events. Group have agreed this to be the best control mechanism without need for pump option.</p>	<p>recent intrusive surveys. All licences re prepared and ready.</p> <p>Updated report on costs due back by w/c 22 May.</p> <p>Hythe Flooding - ECC/AW led Project</p> <p>Awaiting update from ECC & AW</p>		
<p>Eudo Rd: to secure LTA and other investment if available, but to reopen discussions with the NHS on medical and dental care facilities, taking further the recent consultation on tennis facilities.</p>	<p>Richard Block / Emma Lamond / Tunde Williams / Adam Britton</p>	<p>Padel have the draft lease and we are waiting to hear from their solicitors. It is unlikely that it will be completed by the end of April now, there is a risk that it could stretch over a few more months.</p> <p>Installation of Premium Smart Access Gate with Floodlighting Controls, Recolouring, Painting & Binding of 6 hard courts, alongside New Fencing (43m).</p>	<p>Lease still awaiting sign off.</p> <p>To be signed in next few weeks LTA funding, and SMART access now approved</p>	<p>GREEN</p>	<p>AMBER</p>

		Improvements and relationship increases: safety, attraction, appeal, coaching association, market exposure, revenue, and revenue retention.			
<p>A Better Deal for our Young People, by exploring options for a Youth Zone, to consider what extra capital investment in the Town House might be needed, to investigate improved youth facilities across the Borough, and to repair, replace or modernise child play and exercise equipment across Colchester.</p>	Rory Doyle	<p>Transformed Youth - ECC Infrastructure Delivery Team managing.</p> <p>Weekly meetings with EYS project team working on procurement, tender bidding days being facilitated to show sites (Stanway, Highwoods, Town House). Timeline to award contract end of May.</p> <p>Design contractor will begin prelim work incl engagement with young people and site users.</p> <p>HoG Team liaising with Leasehold owner and working through questions associated with a proposed bid to Youth Investment Fund.</p> <p>Completion of Buffett Way Playground refurbishment (£30k) modernising this play space after years of deprivation.</p> <p>Decision to be made regarding High Woods Country Park Play Areas refurbishment – local Cllrs and community will assist in picking their favourite design out of 3 that have been provided by play companies. Once a design has been picked, the order will be placed and both play</p>	<p>Transformed Youth – Townhouse, Stanway & Highwoods facilities improvement and refurb - Direct contract award approach likely avoiding need for protracted procurement process. ECC IDT project managing.</p> <p>Aim to complete Townhouse by Feb 2024, Highwoods in Aug 2023 and Stanway Sept 2023.</p> <p>New accessible playground at Lakelands Centre Stanway opened.</p> <p>Planning and consultation for other major playground works continues.</p>	GREEN	GREEN

		spaces will be open for the start of summer holidays. Work to commence to prioritise the 'Priority 1' play areas to invest in using the additional £150k playground funding that has been made available to upgrade play areas that are in desperate need.			
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Live our values to be a welcoming destination for all and to live up to our declaration that we are a 'Borough of Sanctuary'					
Goal	Lead	Completed activity for April	Planned Activity for May	Previous month RAG Status	Current RAG Status
Provide help and support, with community and voluntary groups, are as ready as can be to integrate Ukrainian and other refugees into our communities.	Tom Tayler Yovone Cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of current work Increase work with Refugee Action and CBH to manage and minimise any homelessness issues Increase rematching activities as original arrangements end Ensure Refugee Action are funded appropriately to continue their essential support Ongoing comms and social media of good news stories to residents and partners Ongoing work with local system partners to support the potential expansion of bridging hotels within Colchester – discussions ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of current work Increase work with Refugee Action and CBH to manage and minimise any homelessness issues Increase rematching activities as original arrangements end Ensure Refugee Action are funded appropriately to continue their essential support Ongoing comms and social media of good news stories to residents and partners Ongoing work with local system partners to support the potential expansion of bridging hotels within Colchester – discussions ongoing 	AMBER	AMBER

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurovision Event being held in Moot Hall for Sponsors, Guest, Families and System Partners. • Ongoing focus and coordination across multiple workstreams covering resettlement of Asylum Seekers and refugees – this included collaborative working with our partners, system colleagues and national organisations to ensure that wraparound support is provided to an appropriate level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurovision Event being held in Moot Hall for Sponsors, Guest, Families and System Partners. • Ongoing focus and coordination across multiple workstreams covering resettlement of Asylum Seekers and refugees – this included collaborative working with our partners, system colleagues and national organisations to ensure that wraparound support is provided to an appropriate level. • Additional focus now on the changing Sudan situation and GB Nationals landing at Stanstead Airport 		
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Assigning a RAG Status



Time



Cost



Resource



Risk



Issue



Overall

So what?



Delays against Timebox Plan

Overspend against Budget

Key Resource unavailable

Risks cannot be mitigated

Issues cannot be mitigated

Red/Amber Time and Cost will affect Features

Project Owner cannot resolve (Escalate to PDB)



Potential Delays against Timebox Plan

Budget Under/Over spend against Forecast

Key Resource unavailable during key milestones

Risks are being Flagged

Issues are being Flagged

Red/Amber Time and Cost may affect Features

Project Manager cannot resolve (Speak to Project Owner)



Timebox Plan available

Within Budget and spend on track against Forecast

Fully Resourced

Risks Register Available

Issues Log Available

Features will be delivered

Project Manager demonstrating Full Control

Better Colchester Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) 2020 – 2023 Year End Report covering April 2022 - March 2023

Themes:

- Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability (Place and Client/Environment)
- Creating safe, healthy, and active communities (Communities)
- Delivering homes for people who need them (Place and Client)
- Growing a better economy so everyone benefits (Place and Client)
- Celebrating our heritage and culture (Communities)

- **Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability: (Andrew Tyrrell/Rosa Tanfield)**
- Respond to the Climate Emergency (Place and Client)
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity (Environment)
- Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester (Place and Client)
- Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Environment)

Respond to the Climate Emergency (Andrew Tyrrell)

- The Council's carbon emissions have been reduced by 10.1% since 2019/20 and the current "pathway to net zero" shows a remaining gap forecast of circa 2,700 tonnes of carbon to be achieved by 2030 at present; with new works planned to reduce this to 2,500 tonnes, and further offsetting work to be explored to address this gap over coming years.
- The renewable heating and ventilation system at Rowan House was successfully installed after the Climate Change Team secured £500k of Salix grant funding for this project to replace 30-year old gas boilers, significantly reducing carbon from the building.

Respond to the Climate Emergency (Andrew Tyrrell)

- The Council agreed to develop a 17.5 Hectare Solar Park and Microgrid at the Northern Gateway and has completed RIBA stage 1 and 2 feasibility/viability work, now proceeding onto the planning application stage. Meanwhile the Council has completed the detailed design work for the Energy Centre and Heat Network connections at the Northern Gateway ready to proceed to construction.
- Work started on a new Carbon Management Plan for 2023-2028 and seven (7) properties had Heat Decarbonisation Plans completed; to understand further carbon reduction possibilities and costing for our assets. One of these will be progressed into a funding bid in 2023/24.

Conserve and enhance biodiversity (Rosa Tanfield/Nick Christo)

- Officers have continued to develop plans to transform Cymbeline Meadow into a Nature Reserve, by replacing agricultural land and enhancing existing areas to deliver a diverse and rich mosaic of habitats across the whole site. Concept plans have been drawn up detailing areas of hedge planting, pond and wetland creation, areas of nectar rich grassland, scrubland, bird seed rich crop areas and tree planting, including areas for future coppice woodland. Officers will be working collaboratively with the current Tenant Farmer and are seeking advice and guidance from a variety of organisations such as Natural England, Essex Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and others.
- A funding bid to plant 125 large street trees was submitted via the Essex Woodland Partnership to the Forestry Commission in June 2022. The bid resulted in the Council being awarded grant aid of £28,375 in September 2022 and the 125 trees have now been planted at various locations around the City, many sites being suggested by ward members.
- The 16th 'Trees for Years' initiative took place between 27th February and 11th March 2023. For the second year the click and collect system was used and proved very successful. All four sites operated a drive thru system which was used by approx. 95%

Conserve and enhance biodiversity (Rosa Tanfield/Nick Christo)

of customers. The average time each customer was on site was less than 5 minutes. Over the 16 events a total of 66,169 trees/shrubs have been given away across the City.

- Following many months of planning between the various stakeholders a new “Miyawaki Forest” has been planted in the grounds of the Unity Primary Academy on the Greenstead Estate. The project was sponsored by a private individual and delivered by The Conservation Volunteers aided by experts from Essex University and the Earthwatch organisation. The “Forest” is the first of its kind to be planted within a school site anywhere in the whole of Essex and will be largely maintained by the children themselves as the trees grow into maturity over the coming months and years.

Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester (Andrew Tyrrell)

- After the Sustainable Travel Team secured an unprecedented 4th consecutive round of Defra funding in 2021-22, we have secured a unique 5th bid for an overarching project to combine the previous 4 projects and targeting increased use of sustainable, healthier travel and cleaner air quality.
- Work in 2022/23 included an innovative (Defra-funded) eCargo Bike “concierge service” implemented for the city centre Christmas shoppers to have their shopping delivered to them by bike so they could travel without needing a car and be free to spend more leisure time in the centre. To help behaviour change, the award-winning CAREless pollution and ‘No idling’ campaign was completed and demonstrated positive impacts on air pollution as we worked with schools and businesses to produce a range of signage, media and events.
- The Council awarded a contract for the first E-Car Club to Enterprise, who opened this shared electric vehicle offer in Colchester in Autumn 2022 and will now provide a growing network of electric cars available for hire use over the coming years.
- The Council has supported Tier in introducing 100 E-Hire Bikes to supplement the E-Scooters and add choice for different demographics from April 2023, whilst the Council supported ECC and Tier in extending the E-Scooter trial until May 2024 to help

Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester (Andrew Tyrrell)

with over 18,500 people now subscribed, and over 8,000 regularly active riders in Colchester and more than 445,000 total rides now taken.

- The infrastructure for sustainable travel has also been boosted by a new secure cycle hub that had leases finalised and premises prepared through 2022/23 ready to open on 29 April 2023. The secure cycle hub can be accessed easier as the Levelling Up Fund bid and Town Deal projects included a number of walking and cycling improvements alongside the Fixing the Link and Active Travel Fund 2 projects that also progressing ready to deliver the Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Projects (LCWIP) with Essex County Council.

Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Rosa Tanfield)

- Worked towards the council being operationally net zero by 2030, delivering some carbon savings and with a clearer delivery plan of what may be achieved in our buildings and fleet, with the remaining offset gap needing a strategy that can start being formed.
- Continued to progress the Heat Network, Solar Park and microgrid at the Northern Gateway, which will continue to develop whilst we explore other opportunities emerging across the City.
- Improved biodiversity across all areas of the city by delivering the council's Woodland and Biodiversity Plan. This includes transforming Cymbeline Meadows into a nature reserve.
- Simplified waste and recycling services and progress towards government recycling collection targets of 70%.

• Creating safe, healthy and active communities: (Communities)

- Build on community strengths and assets (Communities)
- Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people (Communities)
- Provide opportunities for young people (Communities)

- Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Communities)

Build on community strengths and assets (Michelle Tarbun)

- Embedding Communities Can with the system, partners and communities including training and awareness, learning from best practice, capacity building and outcomes focus, enabling an Asset Based Community Development Approach, funding is being sourced for a dedicated post to sit in C360.
- Continual review, promotion and support of Community Assets already in place to maximise their benefit to our residents including maximising the S106 development contributions available to support this, including mapping warm spaces for the cost of living support
- Collaborate and influence outcomes through the Alliance Review, Neighbourhood Model / Live Well domain way of working across NEE with all system partners.
- Work with Communities to maximise and deliver community infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of development (Community S106 programme).

Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people (Michelle Tarbun)

- Improve the advice, support and signposting to grants to reduce the impact of increasing fuel prices and improve energy efficiency in homes
- Work to address the housing issues that exacerbate inequalities and impact on the most vulnerable, including supply, healthier homes, being able to remain in your home and tackling criminal landlords.
- Using NEE ICB funding to build capacity and improve outcomes which tackle inequalities across Colchester and Tendring
- Influence and work with partners to leverage external funding aimed at improving outcomes for those suffering from Domestic Violence & our Refugee and Asylum Seeker Communities.
- Programme of system support, advice, communications and signposting in place to assist resident with the cost of living crisis

Provide opportunities for young people (Michelle Tarbun)

- Maximising the Youth facilities and Heart of Greenstead Town Deal projects funding with other monies to provide the best youth provision possible in Colchester.
- Using the Local Delivery Pilot to invest in projects to encourage physical activity in our young people.
- Working with the Alliance partners in the Start Well domain to ensure that all young people have the best possible start in life.

Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Michelle Tarbun)

- Communities Can approach embedded across the System with well trained staff, supportive Members and a community led or co-produced approach that realises the potential and delivers tangible outcomes that reduce the inequalities faced by many.
- Maximising the value of significant investment made by the NEE ICB, aimed at reducing inequalities across Colchester.
- Implementing the cost of living action plan to help residents through the current cost of living crisis, both short and long term. Maximise the effectiveness of our outreach interaction with our communities and residents.
- Programme of system support, advice, communications and signposting in place to assist resident with the cost of living crisis.

Delivering homes for people who need them: (Place and Client)

- Increase the number, quality and types of homes (Place and Client)
- Prevent households from experiencing homelessness (Place and Client)
- Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs (Place and Client)
- Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Place and Client)

Increase the number, quality and types of homes (Andrew Tyrrell and Matt Sterling)

- The Strategic Plan target for 2020 to 2023 is to deliver 380 affordable homes (set pre Covid). By year end 2023 the number of homes delivered was 390 homes.
- During 2022-2023 a total of 172 homes were delivered including 100 with Registered Providers via S106 agreements, 42 via 100 Homes & Acquisitions, 20 Council new build and 10 First Homes (the governments' new Home Ownership product).
- Colchester's new Housing Strategy 2022-25 was developed by the Council and its partner organisations and adopted by Cabinet in July. The Strategy sets out our ambition for housing over the next 5 years including increasing the supply of affordable homes that are energy efficient.
- Military Road was completed, providing 8 new affordable homes owned by the Council and now occupied by tenants from the housing needs register.
- The "Phase 2" Garage Sites were all completed and occupied, bringing new build Council homes into benefit, whilst all 5 sites for the "Phase 3 Garage Sites" obtained planning permission to deliver more new Council-owned affordable homes in 2023/24.
- The tender of the contract to build Cross Cottages, a garage site in Boxted, was issued in order to progress into a construction phase for this site.
- The "Accessible Homes" Project was agreed, and initiated, to seek sites to deliver 10 new affordable homes specifically targeting and unmet need for fully adapted properties.
- The Council has progressed several deals, the first of which should complete in early 23/24 year, to diversify the methods in which new build social homes are provided by the Council; and is starting to explore the use of Modern Methods of Construction to help unlock sites in the existing estate.

Prevent households from experiencing homelessness (Matt Sterling)

- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Delivery Plan actions have been reviewed for 2022-23 and an updated Delivery Plan and Progress Report has been published.
- During 2022-23, homelessness was prevented for 209 households and 77 households were assisted into accommodation under the relief duty.
- During 2022-23, the Rough Sleeper Team provided support and assistance to 137 rough sleepers and accommodated 53, whilst 29 rough sleepers were reconnected.
- The Council secured £811,599 funding under the governments “Rough Sleeper Initiative” (RSI) for 3 years (2022-25), to continue to provide outreach, tenancy support and accommodation for rough sleepers or those at risk of sleeping rough.

Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough’s future needs (Karen Syrett)

- New Local Plan adopted, which allocates sites for housing, employment and associated infrastructure.
- Review of S106 processes undertaken to ensure infrastructure is delivered in accordance with strategic priorities.
- Infrastructure Audit commenced to inform future local plan and site allocations.
- Work progressed on Joint DPD for TCBGC. Joint Committee and Full Councils at CCC and TDC agreed to consultation and submission of the DPD for examination.

Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Karen Syrett)

- Local Plan adopted
- Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing adopted February 2023.

- Supplementary Planning Documents being prepared on Housing Standards and Specialist Housing as well as Climate Change and Sustainability and Active Travel
- Working with ECC and EPOA on new parking standards guidance.
- Submission of Joint DPD for TCBGC to provide a framework for the development of a new community. Consultation will take place in May/June and examination expected in Autumn. Further work taking place on viability and delivery of infrastructure.
- Work with the local community to review ecology evidence and secure a country park/nature reserve at Middlewick
- Infrastructure Audit has commenced, and consultants will be commissioned to provide specialist expert advice.

Growing a better economy so everyone benefits: (Place and Client)

- Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth (Place and Client)
- Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town (Place and Client)
- Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish (Place and Client)
- Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Place and Client)

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth (Matt Sterling)

- Support and grants have been provided to businesses to support them through the pandemic. As well as providing direct grants, we have worked with partners in North Essex Economic Board to jointly fund business support using Government funding.
- We are working with partners on the North Essex Economic Board to provide specialist support to businesses including on cost reduction and decarbonising.

Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town (Matt Sterling)

- Our bid for City Status was successful and we are engaging partners to agree how to capitalise on this
- Work with Essex County Council and partners to develop a Masterplan for the Town Centre is well underway with strong engagement with partners and stakeholders.
- We are working with the Business Improvement District to support businesses through their Leisure Recovery Strategy and on projects such as to install new gateway signage to promote use of local town centre retail.
- Government has approved all of our Town Deal business cases and so projects are starting delivery work on improved public spaces, easier transport, better digital connection, and new community facilities.

Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish (Matt Sterling)

- Our £20m bid to the Government's Levelling Up funding for the Town Centre was successful and so we are carrying out the necessary preparatory work.
- We have submitted Investment Plans for our £1.3m allocation of the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund and c£500k Rural England Prosperity Fund. We have been notified the former was successful and are waiting on the later.
- The new Economic Strategy has been adopted and we are developing actions to deliver priorities for supporting the Borough's economy and job creation, focus our Economic Development work, and respond to Strategies of partner agencies such as Essex County Council.
- We have an up-to-date Local Plan in place that allocates sufficient land and contains policies to encourage economic growth and we continue to approve of applications in line with policies to attract new businesses and allow existing firms to thrive.
- A new Asset Management Strategy was commissioned to be undertaken by CIPFA starting in April 2023; this new Strategy will focus on post-Covid growth and change policies, engaging with services and partners through May, June and July, so that we can

Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish (Matt Sterling)

adopt a new Strategy in September 2023 aiming for Council owned assets to maximise the benefits of the social, environmental and economic value of our operational, investment and surplus estate.

Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Matt Sterling)

- Town Deal Business Cases approved and projects starting delivery work.
- Levelling Up Funding approved, and programme mobilisation work underway with Team Colchester partners.
- Shared Prosperity Funding allocated to community projects and Rural England Prosperity Fund to be open for applications in late May,
- City Centre Masterplan drafted and consultation for Planning Policy to start in June.
- Economic Strategy Delivery Plan agreed to ensure the priorities in the Economic Strategy are achieved.

Celebrating our heritage and culture: (Communities)

- Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets (Communities)
- Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year (Communities)
- Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage (Communities)
- Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Communities)

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets (Claire Taylor)

- Delivering on the priority action in the Cultural Strategy 'Build on existing sectoral and cross sector partnership working and collaboration' by funding sector body Creative Colchester to set up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and providing organisational capacity to build on this via a grant from the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- The Shared Prosperity Fund will also support three projects to be delivered by Creative Colchester; business support for the cultural sector and creative industries in Colchester; a new monthly cultural offer in the City Centre bridging the gap between the day and night economies and a project working with local schools to encourage young residents to pursue careers in our local cultural industries.
- Funding has been allocated across 29 projects under Year 2 of the Cultural and Creative Events Fund as per the recommendation in the Cultural Strategy to provide micro grants to arts, cultural and heritage activity.
- Match funding provided to the Arts Council England sponsored Colchester LCEPP (Local Cultural Educational Partnership) based at the Mercury Theatre, including ringfenced grant to run a project with secondary schools exploring what city status means to young residents.

Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year (Claire Taylor)

- To help build back awareness of and confidence in Colchester as a visitor destination with the group travel industry and mitigate costs and other issues which can deter groups from visiting, a coach and group tourism incentive scheme supported by a targeted promotional campaign including free bookable city centre coach parking (previously pay and display and not reservable), refreshment/shopping vouchers for drivers/couriers and a discount to the Castle was launched. In the first year of the scheme 50 groups registered bringing nearly 2000 additional visitors to the city centre between May and Dec 2022.

Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage (Frank Hargrave)

- Visitor numbers for 2022/23 at the Castle exceeded pre-pandemic levels with total admissions and school groups reaching 89,634 people – a figure only previously reached in the years immediately after the castle's redevelopment in 2014.
- Income was more than £100,000 higher than in 2019/20 due to higher admissions, price increases, events and after-hours activities delivered by staff, e.g. Knightzzz at the Castle and School sleepovers. Retail across all venues also performed very strongly.
- Visitor numbers have returned to pre-pandemic levels at the Natural History Museum but are approximately 20% lower at Hollytrees, potentially as a result of a slower return of international visitors to the city and therefore the VIC.
- The recovery of the Castle has been aided by the delivery of the exhibition, 'Wicked Spirits' that sustained visitor numbers despite weather during the summer that would typically inhibit museum visits.
- Hollytrees Museum has been awarded a £230,000 grant from the DCMS MEND scheme for a number of repairs and improvements to be implemented from 2023.
- The Castle welcomed the King and consort as part of the celebration of city status.
- Colchester + Ipswich Museums Service was awarded an uplift in Arts Council funding – totalling £1.2m for the period 2023 – 2026. The increase will fund improvements in the learning programmes, digital outputs and access as well as funding annual exhibitions that will include 'Gladiators; a day at the Roman Games' at the castle in the summer of 2023.
- With the completion of a feasibility study and extensive consultation, the team is now preparing a funding application to the NLHF towards the redevelopment of the Natural History Museum.
- Re-Imagining the City Centre regeneration work includes range of heritage assets, including better access and interpretation of The Priory, Holy Trinity Church and Jumbo Water Tower.

Strategic Priorities achievements and next steps (Frank Hargrave)

- A Roman mosaic in Lion Walk, originally discovered in the 1980s was located by Colchester Archaeological Trust and a consultancy appointed to excavate and display it under glass and in situ – Test pits and sampling conducted in March '23 indicate that there are further issues due to high voltage cables running over the mosaic and officers are reviewing options.
- In collaboration with the University of Durham, geophysical surveys have been conducted of 60 hectares of farmland to the west of Gosbecks Archaeological Park. The subsequent report provides much improved data for the area and will inform future university led research as well as future plans at the park itself.
- Following scheduled monument consent, the area around Duncan's Gate was cleared of vegetation by the Parks team, the Roman drain cleared of invasive plants and 3D scanned. This will protect the monument for years to come and provide a digital record. Duncan's Gate and other sites in and around the Castle were filmed for a 'History Hit' documentary and a YouTube video that has had 100,000 views.

7 September 2022

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement	Author	Gary Reid ☎ 07874984922
Title	Year End April 2021 to March 2022 Performance Report - 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details of progress in delivering against the Council’s Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 at the end of 2021-2022.

2. Recommended Decisions

2.1 To confirm satisfactory delivery against the Strategic Plan Action Plan and that the Council has made satisfactory progress in meeting its strategic goals.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 To ensure the Council has robust performance management of delivery against key strategic goals.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 No alternative options have been presented to Cabinet.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Council has agreed a new Strategic Plan covering 2020-2023. This report provides a review of progress against the Strategic Plan covering 2021-2022.
- 5.2 Details of progress made in delivering against each theme and goals is shown in the report at Appendix 1.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

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

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Strategic Plan Action Plan demonstrates delivery of across all the current Strategic Plan priorities.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The report's contents do not have any direct implications, however, the Strategic Plan and priorities were agreed using the results of significant research and taking into account previous public consultations.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The performance report contains progress in delivering key goals of the Strategic Plan Action Plan and it is important that residents and businesses are made aware of these. Many of the achievements will have been publicised during the year but the report and related information will also be published on the Performance and Improvement section of the Council's website.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 All achievements detailed in the Strategic Plan Action Plan were delivered from within existing approved budgets and as such, there are no new financial implications associated with this report.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

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

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no direct health and safety implications associated with this report.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 There are no direct risk management implications associated with this report.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

14.1 Tackling the Climate Challenge and leading sustainability is a key theme of the Strategic Plan and the report at appendix 1 provides details of the progress in delivering the associated goals.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Strategic Plan Action Plan Year End Report.



Cabinet

Appendix
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1 September 2021

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement	Author	Richard Block ☎ 506825
Title	Year End April 2020 to March 2021 Performance Report - 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of progress in delivering against the Councils Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 at the end of 2020-2021.

2. Recommended Decisions

- 2.1 To confirm satisfactory delivery against the Strategic Plan Action Plan and that the Council has made satisfactory progress in meeting its strategic goals.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure the Council has robust performance management of delivery against key strategic goals.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options have been presented to Cabinet.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Council has agreed a new Strategic Plan covering 2020-2023. This report provides a review of progress against the Strategic Plan covering 2020-2021.
- 5.2 Details of progress made in delivering against each aim is shown in the report at Appendix 1. This shows that despite the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, significant progress has been made in delivering against each of the themes of the Strategic Plan.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

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

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14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

14.1 Tackling the Climate Challenge and leading sustainability is a key theme of the Strategic Plan and the report at appendix 1 provides details of the progress in delivering the associated goals.

Appendices

Colchester Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) 2020 – 2023 Year End Report covering April 2020 – March 2021

Themes:

- Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability
- Creating safe, healthy and active communities
- Delivering homes for people who need them
- Growing a better economy so everyone benefits
- Celebrating our heritage and culture

Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability:

- Respond to the Climate Emergency
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester
- *During 2020/21 we will*

Respond to the Climate Emergency

Goal	Achievements
Reduce carbon emissions to help achieve a net zero Carbon footprint for Council Services by 2030.	<p>Direct emissions were reduced by 5.4% (351.4 tonnes of CO₂e) between financial year 2018-2019 and financial year 2019-2020. An updated figure will be reported on in due course working with the Carbon Trust in 2021.</p> <p>A new role, Sustainability & Climate Change Manager, was created to drive the Sustainability and Carbon reduction commitment forwards and has been in operation since September 2020.</p> <p>A draft Sustainability and Climate strategic themes document was developed to form part of a Sustainability and Climate Challenge strategy with key staff and partners.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>An internal Climate Opportunities Working Group (COWG) was established to champion organisational change needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2030.</p> <p>The Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) has been updated for the 2021-2023 period from across services and companies with more than 50 actions, organised under 8 strategic themes approved by the Environment Sustainability Panel.</p> <p>The Carbon Trust have been commissioned to provide tailored advice to CBC and our companies' work to promote decarbonisation of assets and provide a pathway with targets/milestones identified to reach net zero by 2030.</p> <p>An off-setting strategy for local investment is starting to be considered.</p>
<p>Environment and sustainability embedded within all Council decision making and the adaptation and recovery from Covid-19.</p>	<p>Several projects have been identified for the next steps with the Carbon Trust to help advance plans for carbon reduction for our assets.</p> <p>All CBC projects have completed the new Climate Emergency Checklist implemented in late 2020. Learning from this process led to new Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Guidance with assessment process.</p> <p>This is to be rolled out across all new projects developed in CBC and in the Amphora Companies.</p> <p>In addition, all Town Deal projects will trial a new sustainability and environmental decision-making tool and evaluated upon completing Town Deal project designs.</p> <p>A planning checklist is currently being consulted upon for inclusion into the local validation list.</p> <p>Procurement colleagues are exploring when to begin to incorporate environmental and carbon reduction into their procurement policy update, but a first contract was awarded with some consideration of this amongst the introduction of "social value".</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
<p>Air quality across Colchester is improved.</p>	<p>Public engagement completed and summary report produced.</p> <p>No vehicle idling campaign CAREless pollution launched on the 8 October 2020 to coincide with National Clean Air Day.</p> <p>Planning permission granted for Roadside signage in Brook Street, East St and Eastgates and road signs installed. Psychological evaluation into the effectiveness of the road signage is being carried out.</p> <p>A Feasibility study into Countdown timers at traffic light timers has been carried out.</p> <p>Partnership working with Anglian Ruskin University and Essex County Council to explore how Bikeability in Schools can be enhanced.</p>
<p>Continue to support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.</p>	<p>Waste and recycling generated from homes</p> <p>Covid-19 has had an impact on the amount of waste material that residents generate in their homes. The Council aims to encourage residents to reuse, recycle and compost 53% of all material. However, the disruption of the pandemic on resources and operations impacted the services received at the beginning of the year. As a result there has been a slight decline in figures to approximately 52%.</p> <p>In addition, there has been an increase in all waste materials generated by residents too.</p> <p>Recycling equipment</p> <p>In response to recycling equipment stockists closing due to the pandemic, a universal doorstep delivery service for Recycling Equipment was launched utilising redeployed staff from other areas of the council. Customers can order 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. From beginning June to end February 2021 the service received and delivered almost 30,000 orders. A more sustainable solution to the provision of equipment is being explored and a new pilot 'Click and Collect' service for garden waste recycling sacks will be launching in April. Residents on sack collections will be able to order replacement garden sacks online and collect them from the</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>visitor centre at High Woods Country Park. Initially this new service will be trialled for four weeks. If successful, the council will look to continue to offer the Click and Collect service, including a wider selection of recycling containers and more pick up locations.</p> <p>Assisted and exemptions</p> <p>This year officers have completed a limited review of approximately 130 customers who were receiving the assisted service but for whom there was no record of the application. As a result of the review approximately 50% of these customers were confirmed as needing an Assisted Collection and the remainder ceased. Improvements to the processes of applications are being considered and developed into further plans.</p> <p>Calendar</p> <p>The council is launching into 2021 without a printed calendar. Over 51% of our residents have already opted into paperless billing to reduce their impact on the environment. A leaflet was included with this year's council tax bill, explaining the reason why the Council has taken this decision and it provided a quick three-step guide to downloading the calendar. The leaflet also contained information on textile recycling restarting in April, alongside a small change to the glass and cans collection. Work is ongoing to develop more personalised and improved access to refuse and recycling information for residents.</p> <p>Performance reporting</p> <p>Improvements have been made around performance reporting and monitoring. This is part of a large programme of work that will be developed and delivered more in the coming year. The first steps in cleansing and automating addresses and routes has been completed and will be the foundation for the programme.</p> <p>Communications, engagement, and website</p> <p>Strong marketing and communications campaigns undertaken, including Recycling Week 2020; Compost at home communication campaign; autumn recycling messages on social media such</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>as recycling windfall fruit in food waste (rather than garden waste) and leaves; @LoveFoodHateWaste campaign messages; supported @Love Essex's #ZeroWasteWeek social media campaign; coronavirus pandemic waste/recycling safety messages; eco-friendly Christmas tips; Be A Better Recycler focus on can/glass separation, paper/plastic and garden waste; 2021-2022 recycling calendar created in accessible online PDF format; re-launch textiles collections with Essex Textiles; eco-friendly Easter tips.</p> <p>The business waste web pages have been improved, including a sales focussed approach to creating an enquiry form, to help local businesses to recycle and dispose of their rubbish responsibly.</p> <p>The customer experience for reporting a missed bin online has been overhauled and vastly improved. The results are that there has been no negative feedback received about the online reporting tool, and when a surge of reports was made during the lockdown/COVID peak last year, all additional reports were made online rather than via the phone/email.</p> <p>A Chatbot was introduced to the Waste and Recycling web pages to help customers quickly find the 4 most used online processes. Customer engagement with the chatbot has been impressive, with an average of 60 chat interactions per day. This shows a desire and need for residents to engage with our website to receive support.</p> <p>See below regarding material collection methods.</p>
Conserve and enhance biodiversity	
Goal	Achievements
Minimise the environmental impact of our activities.	Several of our higher emission assets are identified, with the top 3 being Leisure World, fleet and affordable housing. Each of these are under consideration on how to reduce carbon emissions with some plans already in progress.

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>The fleet now has a strategy in place which includes timeframes for decarbonisation of vehicles.</p> <p>A decarbonisation plan for Leisure World is to be developed in 2021.</p> <p>A strategy for decarbonising sheltered housing is underway, and the first site is approaching redevelopment phase; this work ties in with the 2021 Asset Management Strategy and new Business Plan.</p> <p>A review of the Carbon Management Plan (CMP) 2016-2020 is complete with some actions to be rolled into the upcoming CMP for 2022-2027.</p> <p>Working with the Carbon Trust on a Carbon Management Plan for 2022-2025, which will be completed in 2021.</p> <p>Project proposals developed for housing improvements and the decarbonisation of Rowan House to reduce asset and travel emissions are well advanced and entering towards delivery phases.</p> <p>See the first goal above on the development of the new Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Guidance and process.</p> <p>Guidance for environmentally smart procurement has been developed and the policy and process will be updated this year.</p>
Enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive through greening and natural seeding.	<p>In a move away from just planting trees as approached by the team in year one, this workstream now encompasses planting of trees, shrubs and hedgerows, and other activities that aim to reduce environmental impact on green spaces, ecology, and biodiversity, such as meadows and reduced chemical use.</p> <p>Whilst public planting days could not be achieved this year, planting and tree distribution has still gone ahead in some form, and by the end of March 2021, the Council will have achieved 14,000 trees planted. With each site, assessments have been undertaken to ensure the right</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>balance and minimal impact on biodiversity, ecology, and existing use of the space. Whilst planting has been on existing public open space, the planting has ensured that these areas can continue to be used (dog walking, sports use), whilst being enhanced by tree/hedge planting and habitat creation.</p> <p>A Greening Colchester policy document has been approved and agrees a new approach for the Council with regards to verge and weed maintenance. In addition to the Council's commitment and delivery to the phased removal of the use of glyphosate-based products, this policy also set out to stop or reduce grass cutting in specific areas. The intention being that changing the management regime in this way can improve the biodiversity and visual amenity of the grass verges, whilst also enabling the Council to manage these areas to be left to re-wild and be developed as wildflower areas or left to naturalise as woodland. Across 14 open spaces approx. 1.5 ha (hectares) in total will be left to naturalise with the potential to establish 4,700 trees at 1 tree per 3m² over the next 10 years. The cutting frequency of the grass verges on some of the main routes into Colchester such as the Avenue of Remembrance, Clingo Hill and Cymbeline Way will be changed to one grass cut per year and managed as wildflower verges.</p> <p>Green flag award achieved at Castle Park, High Woods Country Park and Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium.</p>
Discover, nurture and enable the work led by communities that promotes biodiversity.	<p>Public engagement is a key part of our work. Covid-19 has had an impact on the ability to undertake this work in the current year. However, lots of work has taken place to involve and encourage our local community to love and care for the environment even with the restrictions in place. This has included changes and improvements to the Woodland and Biodiversity Project website, which is regularly updated on progress of the project and provides other information.</p> <p>Trees for Years</p> <p>Whilst the traditional Trees for Years event could not proceed this financial year owing to the Covid-19 restrictions it has been rescheduled to commence at the revised date</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>of November 2021, National Tree Week and it is intended that this will launch the new planting season for 2021-2022. The last Trees for Years event took place in 2020 and so it will still in effect be an 'annual' event.</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>Local schools have been engaged to design signage for 'no mow' areas across the borough. Activity packs with information about the project, and templates for signage were sent to schools along with guidance for seed gathering activity. Future plans include engaging schools to take part in bee and butterfly counts.</p> <p>Building a volunteer network</p> <p>Volunteers for year one of the project were recognised through a "thank you" video posted on to the Council website and social media, on International Volunteer Day on 5 December 2020. Prior to national lockdown restrictions being implemented the public were asked to sign up to volunteer for public planting days, with over 100 volunteers registered. The details of these volunteers have been retained to allow future engagement with key project initiatives and for the network of volunteers to grow and grow.</p> <p>Together We Grow</p> <p>Together we Grow is a community Interest Company based in Colchester. It aims to improve the lives of communities by helping people and nature to grow together. The organisation led on the Public Planting Events in year one of the project and was so successful at building up a team of committed volunteer tree planters that they were asked to fill the same role for Year 2. They have successfully delivered some planting days in collaboration with their work with refugees, with positive impact on health and wellbeing for those involved.</p> <p>Stakeholder group</p> <p>Considering the renewed focus of the project and to further ensure the direction and sustainability of the project, the Council has formulated an informal stakeholder group.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>The informal group has helped to challenge and therefore influence the refocusing of the project, ensuring the objectives and principles of the project are sound. It is hoped that support like this, or similar, will continue into year three from the existing and other groups, with a particular focus on greater collaboration and engagement.</p>
<p>Plant native species and manage our woodlands, meadows and greenspace whilst sustaining existing habitats.</p>	<p>The Woodland and Biodiversity Project has planted 145 standard trees on public green spaces, 12,125 tree whips in our parks and countryside sites and 1,840 whips were supplied to local Town and Parish Councils for planting on their green spaces.</p> <p>Across 14 open spaces approx. 1.5ha (hectares) in total will be left to naturalise with the potential to establish 4,700 trees at 1 tree per 3m² over the next 10 years.</p> <p>See comments above regarding Greening Colchester policy</p> <p>Fully biodegradable spiral rabbit guards have been used this year to protect the trees being planted.</p> <p>Essex Forest Initiative</p> <p>The Council is working with the Essex Forest Initiative which was created in October 2019 by Essex County Council to commit to planting £1 million worth of trees over five years to combat climate change by locking up carbon in the environment. They are looking to work with all interested Local Authorities within Essex to achieve this aim and have partnered with the Woodland Trust in providing native tree stock at a heavily subsidised cost to any Local Authority which has plans to plant woodland on their land.</p> <p>Woodland Trust</p> <p>The Project has also partnered with the Woodland Trust; the UK's largest woodland conservation charity and who have planted 47million trees since it first began in 1972. It has agreed to supply the Project with a total of 10,350 tree whips, canes, and rabbit guards completely free of charge for planting in February and March this year.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency

Goal	Achievements
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Work alongside communities to maintain clean, green neighbourhoods and urban spaces that we all look after and enjoy.

Edible Community Orchard

A small number of residents in Greenstead have planted up wooden troughs outside the community centre with fruit and vegetables. There is scope to plant fruit trees on Magnolia Fields when the volunteer group grows.

Wivenhoe Project

CBC were approached by Wivenhoe Town Council (WTC) who have been working on areas in Wivenhoe that they would like to see left to grow as wildflowers, and then cut and cleared at the end of September. Working with WTC, a template document is being produced which can enable and guide Town and Parish Councils in changing grass cutting regimes to develop wildflower areas and improve biodiversity. The document takes organisations through the various aspects of changing the grass cutting regime, identifying any potential concerns, outlines the project brief, how the changes can be monitored and recorded, and how any data collected can be documented.

Community groups

Relationships have been formed with several local community groups such as Eco-Colchester, En-form Colchester, Transition Wivenhoe and Rowhedge Going Greener to see if they wish to get involved in the Woodland Project. Site meetings have been held with the Lexden Conservation Group regarding the tree-planting for Spring Lane Park and the Keep the Green Clean group to do the same for the Greenstead Slopes planting.

The Colchester Natural History Society surveyed several of the planting sites to assess their suitability for tree planting in relation to any wildlife habitats already present on the land. Written reports have been supplied to the Council by the Society making a number of recommendations and in response to these changes were made to the exact location of some of the tree planting areas and additional areas of grassland were left to grow long in an attempt to improve the biodiversity of the open spaces.

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
Work with partners to implement strategies and develop measures to reduce traffic in the town centre.	<p>Influenced Essex County Council (ECC) on their Safer Greener Healthier bid submission to Department for Transport (DfT) on walking and cycling routes into and through the town centre to help with social distancing and enabling more people to choose to access the town via healthy and sustainable means.</p> <p>Worked with ECC and stakeholder groups on designs to implement the measures.</p> <p>Investigating opening a secure cycle parking facility in the town centre including location and operational requirements.</p> <p>Worked with and influenced Essex County Council on the Colchester Future Transport Strategy ready for consultation.</p> <p>Working with partners to promote sustainable travel behaviour change, healthier lifestyles and reduce car dependency including through Colchester Travel Plan Club network supporting encouraging and influencing employees and students to travel sustainably through the implementation of work place Travel Plans.</p> <p>Working with developers to develop Travel Plans and refresh and update existing Travel Plans through the planning process.</p> <p>Air Quality behaviour change project continuing to look at ways in which air quality can be improved in the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) including by promoting walking and cycling for short journeys.</p>
Improve facilities and routes for cyclists and walkers to enable active travel	Worked with Colchester Cycle Campaign on review of the Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy, Supplementary Planning Document, and its alignment with the ECC Colchester Cycling Action Plan.

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
behaviours, healthier lifestyles and reduce car use.	<p>Working with colleagues and developers to ensure walking and cycling measures are delivered through the planning process and via S106 contributions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Rowhedge Trail including improvements to path surface (S106 funded); • Commissioning and installing Colchester Town Station signage • Worked on Fixing the Link alternative plans to enhance the walking route from Colchester station to the town centre • Worked with ECC and Stanway Parish Council on improving the walking and cycling links from Stanway to Tollgate <p>Wayfinding study from and to University accommodations, the university and town centre delivered (S106 funded).</p> <p>Study completed on provision of secure cycle parking facility in the town centre and in residential areas.</p> <p>ParkActive being set up for 'last mile' active travel alternative (repurposing long stay car parks as park and walk).</p> <p>New Parking Strategy in final stages of completion, with a focus on environmental car park charges rather than hourly space rental.</p>
Ensure major regeneration projects put physical activity, cycling and walking at the forefront of development.	<p>Colchester Northern Gateway (CNG) Sports Park construction was completed in November 2020 and will open as Covid restriction lift, on 26 April 2021.</p> <p>New cycleways and pedestrian links are constructed on approach to the Sports park, along Boxted Lane, Severalls Lane and over Junction 28 of the A12.</p> <p>The Walk "Phase 1" was completed in October 2020, with Phase 2 scheduled for start in April 2021 once the rugby club have moved.</p> <p>Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) have been embedded with sections on sustainability.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>Cycling has been included in several projects in the town centre, including “Grow On Space” in Queen Street, Vineyard Gate and Britannia concepts,</p> <p>Plan being prepared to engage and embed behavioural change.</p>
<i>During 2020/21 we will</i>	
Goal	Achievements
Establish a new Environment and Sustainability Panel to oversee our work to tackle the climate emergency.	<p>A new Environment and Sustainability Panel was established and ran throughout 2020-2021 so that their work programme completed.</p> <p>A draft Forward Plan will be developed when the panel resumes after elections.</p>
Complete the phasing out of Glyphosate herbicide in Council operations.	<p>The agreed action plan has now been delivered to stop the general use of Glyphosate weedkiller in Council operations. Since April 2020, the Council has stopped spraying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In all children’s play parks (74 sites) • In around West Mersea beach huts (384 huts) • On the Recreation Ground, off Old Heath Road
Embed environment and sustainability impact assessment and prioritisation in all recovery, project and programme management.	<p>Climate Emergency is now embedded in all three core project management documents in the new project management environment.</p> <p>Monthly project progress reports now include a Climate Emergency (CE) Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status with supporting narrative.</p> <p>Review of Climate Checklist completed with a new Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Assessment Form and Guidance being rolled out to CBC staff and Amphora companies to demonstrate move towards monitoring of environmental impact and reduction of carbon emissions of major development work along with clear messaging of benefits/positive outcomes of these actions for residents.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	New projects will trial the new sustainability and carbon assessment form and guidance through 2021.
Roll out use of eCargo bikes with Council teams, local businesses and partners.	<p>£136k funding received in May 2020 following a successful bid to the Energy Savings Trust to trial 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers with local businesses and organisations.</p> <p>Procurement exercise undertaken and all eCargo bikes and eTrailers received by December 2020.</p> <p>55 members of staff and the community trained to Bikeability level 3, a requirement of the grant for all eCargo bike users.</p> <p>13 eCargo bikes and etrailers handed over to 10 local eCargo Bike Champions on long term loan for carrying out their business/operations by November 2020. In exchange they provide CBC with monthly monitoring feedback and assistance with marketing and publicity.</p> <p>6 eCargo bikes and 3 eTrailers available for use by CBC staff.</p> <p>An eCargo bike and trailer is available at both Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park. Volunteers and staff at Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park were inducted in use of their eCargo Bike and eTrailer but regular usage of the bikes has been low due to the pandemic restrictions limiting volunteer work.</p> <p>Climate, Transport and Sustainability team have been using the other eCargo bikes and discussing with other CBC teams how the bikes could be used in their work.</p> <p>Preparations completed for enabling short term loans to local businesses of the 6 'general pool' eCargo bikes. Launched in November 2020 but actual loan outs delayed due to Covid lockdown as Bikeability training was put on hold.</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>Project with the Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) is being progressed to have two eCargo bikes available for town centre businesses and CBC staff to use on an as and when needed basis.</p> <p>3428 miles have been completed by CBC staff and our project Champions by eCargo Bike/Trailer in Colchester to end of March 2021.</p>
<p>Model the Council's carbon footprint in detail and develop a detailed Carbon Management Plan to 2030.</p>	<p>Scope 1, 2 and 3 footprint analysis undertaken in collaboration with the Carbon Trust.</p> <p>The carbon footprint has been identified and yearly monitoring of direct emissions in place with a current downward trend.</p> <p>Identification of key 'step change' projects awaiting project development and funding, whilst other projects are rolling out across the capital programme.</p> <p>Detailed Carbon Management Plan for 2022-2027 brief to be developed.</p>
<p>Implement sustainable changes to waste and recycling collections that support improved staff wellbeing.</p>	<p>Material collection methods</p> <p>Textile collections were paused because of the pandemic and to enable the council's Recycling and Refuse service to focus its resources, time and capacity on collecting primary materials, such as residual and food waste. It also enabled us to review the textiles service and explore other opportunities. A new partnership has been developed with Essex Textiles, ensuring that we are best matching the service before the pandemic, the expectations of residents and demonstrates good value for money. Residents will experience little or no change from the pre-pandemic service, except for using additional blue bags, which will be collected every blue week. These blue bags will be delivered with the annual clear bag deliveries made in April, before Essex Textiles recommences the service with its own crews.</p> <p>As collection crews continue to keep up with the extra recycling that is being produced while everyone is at home more, residents are being asked to help the council's collections run smoothly by separating glass and cans into different boxes. This will be required from 1 June</p>

Respond to the Climate Emergency	
Goal	Achievements
	2021. Residents can use a second green box or a similar sized box of their own, as long as it's not cardboard. A communication and engagement campaign is underway.
Commence construction of the Northern Gateway Heat Network.	<p>The 5 Boreholes were completed and successfully tested in 2020.</p> <p>Heat network pipes and chambers linking the boreholes was constructed from July to October 2020 and more will be completed in 2021.</p> <p>Planning permission was obtained for the energy centre.</p> <p>The procurement exercise for the Energy Centre was opened and bids will be evaluated in 2021 to start construction of the Energy Centre.</p>
Creating safe, healthy and active communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on community strengths and assets • Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people • Provide opportunities for young people • <i>During 2020/21 we will</i> 	
Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
Take an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach and work alongside communities to build a borough where people are more empowered, self-sufficient, healthy,	<p>Covid19 response included community led approaches across the borough supporting most vulnerable with food deliveries, medicines and befriending schemes.</p> <p>Successful 'One Colchester' approach to Winter Resilience through coldest months.</p> <p>New 'One Colchester' Community Hub being finalised.</p>

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
active, happy and doing what they enjoy.	<p>'One Colchester' partnership working together across all sectors including voluntary and community sector to support and keep people safe.</p> <p>A range of initiatives and community led activities underway across the borough featured in priorities linked to climate change and biodiversity.</p> <p>Stanway Parish Council taking ownership of new Community Facility and agreed land transfer of open spaces.</p> <p>One Colchester, Communities Can, approach going through governance Spring 2021 and planned launch in summer to link to ABCD awareness and training rolled out across Council and partners.</p>
Encourage belonging, involvement and responsibility in all Colchester's communities and neighbourhoods.	<p>One Colchester Commissioned Asset Mapping completed, and refresh planned for every 6 months. Data will be used to inform the systems work.</p> <p>Phase 2 of the Anglian Ruskin University qualitative research is underway to follow up and understand impacts of Covid19 on Community Assets and their members.</p> <p>Awareness and training of ABCD delivered across system and more planned.</p> <p>New strategic approach agreed through 'One Colchester' in development to encourage ABDC across the whole system.'</p> <p>A huge range of initiatives and asset transfers underway to support more local control and ownership.</p>
Work with our partners to make volunteering and community involvement as easy as possible.	<p>Thousands of additional volunteers engaged and supporting communities throughout the last 12 months, many specifically supporting the most vulnerable during Covid19 pandemic.</p> <p>'One Colchester' approach led by Community 360 (C360) to recruit and support volunteers across the Borough. This has created new opportunities and simple mechanisms for recruitment.</p>

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
Maximise developer contributions (such as Section 106) and other funding mechanisms to help fund community infrastructure.	Active engagement carried out with community groups, voluntary groups and Town and Parish Councils, to agree a S106 project plan for each ward, in preparation for receipt of S106 developer contributions.
Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people	
Goal	Achievements
Work alongside Public Health to take steps that mitigate Covid-19 infection risks and control outbreaks across the population.	<p>'One Colchester' system approach to outbreak control led to successful and joined up approach maximising the resources. This included working with Colchester Business Improvement District, University, Parish and Town Councils, Police, Health Colleagues, Voluntary Sector and many others.</p> <p>Clear Guidance uploaded to Council Website. Legislation and interpretation shared with businesses. New outbreak plan to be released in April 2021</p> <p>Letters updating all businesses with legislation changes sent 8 times since March in relation to government control.</p> <p>Over 2,900 complaints in relation to non-compliance, resulting in nearly 800 investigations.</p> <p>Over 1,000 requests for advice responded to.</p> <p>Night-time and daytime visits undertaken weekly and over weekends. Including all sites. Renewed focus from 29 March 2021.</p> <p>Full Enforcement taken against 12 pub/restaurant. Including one business losing their licence</p>
Support residents to do the things they enjoy doing to stay healthy, happy and physically active.	Community Response continues to support the most vulnerable and 'Community Response' Pack remains updated to share relevant information, advice and contacts.

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>Use of the Local Development Pilot (LDP) and system partners at identify key areas of actions and invest in activity area to encourage inactive residents in the most deprived areas to become more active.</p> <p>Work with 'One Colchester' and continue to lead the 'Alliance Be Well' domain so issue is covered by a system solution.</p> <p>Regular collaboration with Town and Parish Clerks.</p> <p>Provision of beautiful, safe open spaces and play areas across the Borough.</p> <p>Encourage active lifestyles and continued working with communities and partners to improve access to walking, cycling and open spaces.</p>
<p>Enable access and involvement in community green space, countryside sites, sport, and leisure facilities.</p>	<p>Preparation has been taking place to open the new Northern Gateway Sports Park for opening on 26 April at a reduced capacity, should government guidelines allow. Residents and visitors will be able to purchase memberships, explore the site, breath in the open green spaces and enjoy a take-away coffee.</p> <p>Our 'soft launch' marketing campaign is underway and we're encouraging residents to follow our social media accounts. Growing our social media following will underpin future marketing plans. Paid for advertisement will be complimenting the social media pages, including digital and radio. Two press releases are scheduled ahead of opening. Should government guidelines allow, we hope to fully open the Northern Gateway Sports Park in June. This will be celebrated with an open day and a 'full launch' commercially driven marketing campaign.</p> <p>All green and open spaces have remained open. However, due to restrictions imposed, play parks and other outdoor activity areas were required to be closed during Covid lockdown. On the lifting of these restrictions, officers have put in place careful measures to ensure that these could be opened safely.</p>

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>Arrangements with volunteer and 'Friends' groups have been reviewed to ensure that they too have been Covid safe after the lifting of restrictions and these activities have now restarted.</p>
<p>Support people to live in healthy homes that meet their needs.</p>	<p>Continuation of the Senior Occupational Therapist in Housing Project in to 2020-2021.</p> <p>Introduction of the Fast-Track Disabled Facilities Grant to support Hospital Discharge and Admission Avoidance.</p> <p>A process & form review is underway as part of the migration to the Assure system. Our go live for the new system has been delayed but is now currently planned for August/September 2021 and we hope to see efficiencies at this point.</p> <p>Process applications for licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). 61 licences issued in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021. Total of 133 licences for HMOs issued in 2020-2021.</p> <p>Take a robust enforcement approach against owners of unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation. 2 Civil Penalty Final Notices issued in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021 against landlords of an unlicensed HMO totalling £40K. Total of 3 CPN Final Notices issued to value of £60K Civil Penalty Notices issued in 2020-2021 against landlords operating unlicensed HMOs. In addition, 4 Notices of Intent to issue a CPN served in 2020-2021 to the value of £48K, likely to be issued with Final Notices in 2021-2022.</p> <p>Investigate complaints of housing conditions and take appropriate enforcement action to remove serious housing hazards. 134 visits/inspections/assessments completed in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021. Total of 344 visits/inspections and assessments completed in 2020-2021 reduced from previous years due to different ways of working due to pandemic.</p> <p>94 dwellings improved in Q1 and Q2. Total of 179 dwellings improved by the work of the Private Sector Housing Team in 2020-2021</p> <p>63 serious housing hazards removed in Q1 and Q2. Total of 220 serious housing hazards removed by the work of the Private Sector Housing Team in 2020-2021</p>

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>2 Prohibition Orders served in 2020-2021 for homes/parts of homes unsuitable to be lived in.</p> <p>5 Improvement Notices served under Housing Act 2004 in 2020-2021</p> <p>2 Abatement Notices served under Environmental Protection Act 1990 in 2021-2021 with works carried out in default of owner on 1 property.</p> <p>Unfortunately, 3 prosecution cases withdrawn as no longer appropriate to pursue, due to delays with court system caused by pandemic. But 1 simple caution issued.</p> <p>Promote awareness and collaborative working with partners across the wider system to ensure residents are supported and to ensure that housing is considered as a wider determinant of health. Training session arranged with Citizens' Advice for Q3. Meeting arranged with ECC Social Care Q3.</p> <p>Awareness sessions held with wide range of organisations including Essex University Law Clinic, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Community 360 (C360) various teams, Green Doctor Service, CBC and CBH teams including Benefits and Development Control.</p> <p>To seek out opportunities for alternative funding to increase resource within the team. Where resources allow, take a proactive enforcement approach to legislation that safeguards people living in the private rented sector. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requirement to belong to a property management redress scheme. 3 Notices of Intent and 2 Final Notices served in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021 Total of 7 Notices of Intent issued in 2020-2021 with 1 Final Notice being cancelled as company liquidated and one upheld at Appeal. £5K income • Electrical Safety Regulations No progress to date in this area, but planned for Q1 of 2021-2022 • A project to tackle excess cold in rented homes Unable to undertake this project in 2020-21 due to lack of resources

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project with Essex Fire Service to ensure the safety of dwellings above high risk commercial units <p>Project in planning stage - looking at potential funding opportunities to provide additional staff resource for this.</p>
Supporting the most vulnerable residents through our One Colchester partnership.	<p>Collaborating with 'One Colchester' partners such as Community360, Colchester Borough Homes, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Age Concern, to co-design and co-produce projects to support our most vulnerable residents such as winter warmth project 2020-2021</p> <p>Building trusted, open and transparent relationships with community leaders from diverse communities such as our black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) and Faith communities. Engaging with these community groups through listening events and regular dialogue. Co-production of initiatives to support those most in need (1) Older persons activity packs - encouraging activities in the home and providing awareness around falls prevention (2) Activity packs and food parcels for younger people - encouraging physical activity and healthy eating during the school holidays.</p> <p>The use of external funding to support our most vulnerable residents – through the Local Delivery Pilot (LDP), North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)</p> <p>Safer Colchester website updated to include information on Covid-19 related issues, alongside information on staying safe, hidden harms (such as domestic abuse), hate crime and anti-social behaviour.</p>
Provide opportunities for young people	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
Provide positive opportunities for young people to engage with their local community and do things that interests	Youth Zone has been included in the Towns Fund programme which has awarded the Borough £18.2m for a range of projects.

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
them, keeps them safe, makes them happy and supports improved mental wellbeing.	Covid19 has brought about unexpected financial challenges for the Borough Council and while our ambition and the Towns Fund provides hope and determination to still deliver a Youth Zone finding a suitable location and securing commitment from other Public Sector partners including ECC to the annual £400k revenue commitment is critical over the next 6 months.
Support the creation of strong, safe, and friendly communities that care about each other.	<p>Design, production and updating of the Community Response Pack and Residents Contact Pack.</p> <p>Ensuring Town and Parish Councils are engaged and supported through regular engagement, contact and involvement in local decision-making processes.</p> <p>Re-launch of the Rural Crime Toolkit and Rural Community Safety Fund to provide communities with ideas, information, support and funding to make their neighbourhood a better place to live.</p> <p>Re-launch of Keep Safe for Colchester; a free scheme helping vulnerable residents to feel safer and more confident out in the town.</p> <p>For 2020 in light of COVID pandemic and home-schooling, Virtual Crew was replaced by an online support page (located on the Safer Colchester website) for children and young people. This included information and support relating to Gangs & Knife Crime, Internet Safety, Bullying / Online Grooming & Anti-Social Behaviour. There is an ongoing review of Virtual Crew in order to launch a revised scheme for 2021.</p>
Work with Essex Police, Colchester Borough Homes, Essex Youth Service and other partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and tackle serious crime.	<p>Working together through the Multi Agency Coordination Panel (MACP) partners have targeted individual criminals and used their combined powers to disrupt the criminal in addition to the criminality. This approach has seen one Organised Crime Group archived. Emerging groups are under review on a bi-monthly basis.</p> <p>Closures/partial closures have been conducted by CBH to tackle drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p>

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) to tackle anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre, including Car Parks and outlying areas such as East Bay, have all been extended in 2020 for a period of 3 years.</p> <p>Working alongside Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU) to establish projects to improve designated areas for the residents, bringing about longer-term benefits, reducing their likelihood of becoming serious violence offenders and thereby reducing serious violence.</p>
Work alongside our partners to improve cleanliness and community safety in the town centre.	<p>Town Centre Action Plan (TCAP) partnership meetings held weekly to continue to discuss individuals causing (or vulnerable to) anti-social behaviour, hotspots and problem solve issues. New Action Plan produced May 2020 to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of activity.</p> <p>Joint working with the Police and the Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) to help businesses safely re-open within Covid-19 guidelines.</p>
Upgrade and extend the CCTV network to reach more places.	<p>CCTV infrastructure was installed on site between July 2020 and April 2021, with the project closure due in June 2021.</p> <p>The project started on time and remains on budget, with over 100km of cable installed, expanding the coverage from the town other parts of urban Colchester including the new Sports Park at the Northern Gateway.</p> <p>The first arrests were made with assistance from CCTV in the early weeks of deployment, with the improved picture quality being beneficial immediately.</p> <p>A number of non-working cameras were replaced with new cameras.</p>
During 2020/21 we will	
Goal	Achievements

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
Fully support Public Health England's Covid-19 Outbreak Control Plans, specifically deploying Environmental Health Officer resources and working with Community360 to continue Shielding where necessary.	<p>Clear Guidance uploaded to website. Legislation and interpretation shared with businesses. Maintain throughout 2020 New outbreak plan to be released in April 2021</p> <p>Letters updating all businesses with legislation changes sent 8 times since March 2020.</p> <p>Over 2,900 complaints of non-compliance, resulting in nearly 800 investigations.</p> <p>Over 1,000 requests for advice responded to.</p> <p>Night-time and daytime visits undertaken weekly and over weekends. Including all sites. Renewed focus from 29 March 2021.</p> <p>Full Enforcement taken against 12 pub/restaurant. Including one business losing their licence</p>
Facilitate ABCD sessions and awareness within communities, system leaders and members to discover and connect the assets that exist and are mobilised within neighbourhoods.	As per above training and awareness has commenced at the Senior and Leadership level and will continue to roll out further in line with the new Communities Can.... approach from Summer 2021 across CBC and other system partners.
Coproduce investment proposals and deliver interventions that support our vulnerable residents to be more physically active through the Essex Local Delivery Pilot.	Continue to support community groups with the co-production of applications for funding and identify possible opportunities for improvement in the most deprived areas.
Deliver the new Stanway Community Facility for the benefit of the local community.	Long lease proposal agreed by CBC Cabinet and Stanway Parish Council. CBC Estates team drafting the terms of lease.
Work with partners to support victims of domestic violence.	£500K funding secured (by CBC as Lead Authority) from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to support Recovery Refuge, Community based support and Resettlement programme, specialist support for children/young people affected by domestic

Build on community strengths and assets	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>abuse, and review/implement new housing interventions for the period April 2020 – March 2021.</p> <p>Both CBC and Safer Colchester Partnership websites Domestic Abuse information updated on a regular basis.</p> <p>Internal front-line staff and Designated Safeguarding Officers encouraged to complete a Domestic Abuse E-learning Course (also shared with partner organisations including churches and faith groups).</p> <p>Alpha Vesta online workshops (funded by the Police Fire Crime Commissioner) promoted internally, completed by Community Safety Team and promoted to members of Community Safety Delivery Board.</p>
<p>Work in partnership with Essex County Council to support vulnerable people to live in homes that promote independence and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Continued engagement with Essex Well Homes Group to share good practice.</p> <p>Developing the Senior Occupational Therapist in Housing role.</p> <p>Integration of the Health and Housing Partnership into all council services.</p> <p>Scoping options with ECC to work collaboratively to ensure that private and social rented homes used for Supported Living Schemes and similar schemes are appropriately assessed before being used and free from serious housing hazards.</p>
<p>Delivering homes for people who need them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number, quality and types of homes • Prevent households from experiencing homelessness • Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs • <i>During 2020/21 we will</i> 	

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
Deliver 30% affordable housing across all our mixed tenure housing sites.	<p>Work started on site on the first housing site in July 2020 and will deliver the first homes for beneficial use in April/May 2021.</p> <p>Contracts have been signed to retain 2 properties for affordable homes owned within the Councils Housing Revenue Account (HRA) upon completion.</p> <p>Offers have been accepted on the first 3 private sale homes built by the companies.</p> <p>Highway issues have been resolved at the Northern Gateway South site and the 350 homes here will continue to progress in 2021-2022.</p> <p>Exploration of 2 new sites has been agreed at Cabinet in March 2021, with up to 190 homes being explored at Vineyard Gate and Britannia Car Park.</p>
Deliver 380 affordable council and housing association homes by 2023.	In 2020-2021, 101 affordable homes were delivered in Colchester, which included 59 homes purchased by the Council. The remaining 42 homes were delivered by housing associations.
Improve existing Council homes to keep them in good repair and improve energy efficiency.	<p>The Housing Improvement Programme has slowed during the pandemic due to the nature of the work (being in people's homes). Safe working practices have been put in place for various works including where tenants may be more vulnerable.</p> <p>Works are continuously reviewed and regularly reprogrammed to attempt to catch up as restrictions reduce. The programme was on track prior to lockdown 1, and will be caught up as soon as practical to do so.</p> <p>A review of the current Asset Management Strategy has commenced and will be completed by the end of summer 2021, following consultation with tenants and leaseholders. This will help to inform future viability and prioritisation of work for the Councils Housing Stock.</p>
Deliver new low/zero carbon Council homes for our residents.	Construction of 24 new Council homes started in 2020-2021 and these are being built to "Future Homes 2025" principles making them the most energy efficient homes that the Council has built to date.

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>£4.5m of “Climate Emergency Response Works” were agreed at Cabinet in July 2020 and this extra investment will increase the EPC ratings of our most inefficient, older, homes and help tackle fuel poverty and inequality.</p> <p>The “100 homes” project to acquire 100 additional council homes included work to improve the energy performance of the homes.</p>
<p>Ensure all new homes delivered by the Council are designed to a high quality across all tenures.</p>	<p>As above, the current collection of new homes will be the most energy efficient homes we have constructed as a Council and this will be furthered with the next forthcoming projects in the various programmes. The HRA Homes are built to “Future Homes 2025” principles ahead of this being mainstream practice. They have no gas boilers and are using air source heat and other energy efficiency measures.</p> <p>Accessibility is also being prioritised. There are several Part M Category 2 properties, with features such as level access showers. Fully adapted properties will be in “Phase 3” of the Garages Sites now being explored.</p>
<p>Continue to improve and modernise Council owned housing for older people.</p>	<p>Elfreda House is now empty and ready for demolition. Existing tenants were successfully moved/re-homed with good relationships and communications maintained throughout. The building was used during 2020 as part of the ‘everyone in’ scheme for housing rough sleepers during the pandemic. The contract for works, to demolish and re-build, is about to be awarded and construction will then commence with the successful contractor.</p> <p>Further work on the next phases of the sheltered housing review agreed by Cabinet in July 2020 is underway, this will prioritise a pipeline for the next decade. The Asset Management review taking place in 2021 mentioned previously, alongside a new HRA Business Plan, will reflect the current new build and improvement programmes ensuring that they are affordable and viable.</p>
Prevent households from experiencing homelessness	

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
Goal	Achievements
Work with partners to implement the 2020-2025 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy delivery plan.	The actions in the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Delivery Plan are being implemented. A review meeting with partner organisations has been set up to capture the achievements over the first year of the Strategy. The updated Delivery Plan and Progress report will be published on the Colchester Borough Council website.
Intervene early to prevent homelessness and work in partnership with other organisations to sustain people's accommodation.	From April 2020 to the end of March 2021 homelessness was prevented for 187 households and during the same period 136 households were assisted into accommodation under the relief duty.
Tackle rough sleeping in the borough.	<p>From April 2020 to the end of March 2021 the Rough Sleeping Team have worked with 161 people who have been provided with support, advice and assistance.</p> <p>During the same period, 101 rough sleepers or those at risk of sleeping rough have been accommodated in the private rented sector, supported housing, social housing or reconnected back to locations where they have a local connection and support networks. These figures include people that have been provided with emergency accommodation during the Covid 19 public health emergency. CBC and CBH were supported by partner organisations who provided additional support, health services and food for rough sleepers whilst they were living in the emergency accommodation.</p> <p>The specialist supported housing for rough sleepers, based on "Housing First" principles and funded by Colchester Borough Council, continues to provide housing and support to rough sleepers so that they do not return to the streets.</p> <p>In addition to the £119,429 revenue funding from the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Pathway (NSAP), Colchester Borough Council, in partnership with Peabody (a housing association), successfully bid and were awarded £315,192 capital and revenue funding</p>

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
	as part of the same programme, to provide longer term supported accommodation for rough sleepers.
Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs	
Goal	Achievements
Create a Development Plan Document for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community to include zero carbon emissions in the community development and green procurement.	Joint work has commenced with Tendring District Council. Initial stage will review and update evidence base. Link road progressing under Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and planning application submitted. Engagement website launched and a number of consultations have taken place with Wivenhoe Town Council and a Parish Council group.
Establish a Delivery Vehicle and investment package for the next phase of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.	Members from the three Authorities have met and confirmed their commitment to achieving the principles of Garden Communities for this particular site as well as confirming the intent to resource the work necessary. Governance arrangements, programme and resource implications continue to be developed.
Develop the Colchester Northern Gateway as a sustainable place to live, work and play.	<p>The Sports Park was completed in November 2020 and will now open on 26 April 2021 as it was subject to Covid restrictions. Highway works have improved walking and cycling with 2 new cycleways along Boxted Road and Severalls lane, as well as dedicated crossings over Junction 28 of the A12 roundabout/slip roads.</p> <p>The Walk commenced in July 2020 and "Phase 1" completed in October as planned. "Phase 2" starts in April 2021 will be completed in the summer. This provides an attractive, tree-lined, avenue dedicated to walking and cycling through the heart of the Northern Gateway connecting to existing communities.</p> <p>The Heat Network was successfully tested, with construction of the pipes and chambers well advanced. A procurement exercise also commenced to appoint a contractor to build the Energy Centre in 2021.</p>

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
	Turnstone have gained a new planning permission reflecting changing markets and agreements between the Council and Turnstone were reviewed at Cabinet in March 2021 so that this development can proceed into construction phase.
Ensure the Council has a good supply of land available for new homes and business.	Adopted Local Plan provides for housing land up to 2023 and adequate employment land. Emerging Local Plan will allocate sites to provide land for housing and employment up to 2033 and beyond Section 1 of the Local Plan adopted and Section 2 hearings scheduled for April 2021
Create great places to live through the provision of new homes with infrastructure and facilities that support sustainable living and promote health and wellbeing.	Progress is being made towards adoption of new Local Plan and several NP's have been adopted. Planning applications have continued to be determined and will deliver new homes and infrastructure.
During 2020/21 we will	
Goal	Achievements
Agree "Phase 2" sites for development by Amphora Homes and undertake feasibility and viability assessments.	Cabinet agreed to consult and engage on two chosen sites, at Vineyard Gate and Britannia Car Park, in March 2021. There has been some early feasibility work on these sites, and architects have been appointed. The 2 sites could deliver approximately 190 homes, as well as playing a key part of the recovery and transformation of the town centre through sustainable, liveable neighbourhoods.
Adopt section One of the Local Plan.	Section 1 of the Local Plan was adopted on 1 February 2021.

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
Deliver the first mixed tenure housing site built by the Council at Creffield Road.	Construction started in July 2020 and progresses has remained on time and budget with completion due in April 2021. The Council and Amphora have exchanged legal documents to secure the retention of 2 Council owned homes. Amphora have accepted three offers on the private market homes, all of which are proceeding at the end of year. This demonstrates a smooth and well managed, high quality development, that was well-received in planning and construction phases and is now proving attractive to the market as it nears completion.
Deliver 100% Council homes at Military Road (8 homes).	Planning permission was obtained, and a procurement exercise has completed. Construction started in January 2021 and completes at the start of 2022.
Deliver up to 16 new Council homes on the Council's garage sites.	<p>Work commenced on the first site at Hardings Close (Aldham) in September 2020 and these will be available at the end of May 2021.</p> <p>The other 2 sites, at Buffett Way and Scarfe Way have been tendered, a contract awarded and work commenced on site in January 2021.</p> <p>All 16 homes will be ready in 2021 to benefit families on the local housing needs register.</p>
Increase the supply of affordable housing by purchasing 100 former council owned homes by 31 March 2022.	In 2020-2021, a total of 25 properties were purchased and became part of the Council's housing stock and will be let at social rents. A further 21 homes are in the process of being purchased. We are on track to buy 100 homes by the end of March 2022.
Accelerate construction on Council projects to enable recovery from Covid-19.	<p>Following market engagement, the construction contracts for 8 construction projects were accelerated during the initial lockdown and, brought forwards steadily spaced to provide tender opportunities and protect/create local employment. This included housebuilding and broadband/CCTV, as well as "The Walk". Response rates were good, with strong local interest resulting in the award of several contracts to local businesses employing Colchester people.</p> <p>More construction contracts were then rolled out in the later lockdown period, including within the Housing Investment Programme (HIP), the Energy Centre, Poolview, and others.</p>

Increase the number, quality and types of homes	
Goal	Achievements
	A social value scoring system was introduced, which requires local economic benefits, such as labour and materials, to be included by bidders. In addition, the Council sought lists of local businesses before contracts were issued and notified them how to register interest in upcoming contracts and that opportunities would emerge so that they were aware, without prejudicing the fair and competitive bidding process.
Growing a better economy so everyone benefits:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth • Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town • Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish • <i>During 2020/21 we will</i> 	
Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
Ensure our borough becomes stronger post Covid-19 by supporting businesses to recover, adapt and build resilience.	A significant level of direct and indirect advice, support and emergency grants were provided to local businesses to support them through the pandemic. This includes an enhanced and tailored business support and advice offer, delivered by Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (Colbea), enabled through CBC funding.
Work with partners to facilitate a high skill, high wage, low carbon workforce.	CBC has maintained ongoing engagement with Partners including South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP, Colchester Institute, University of Essex, and Essex County Council to encourage and promote skills training and upskilling of the existing and new workforce. This includes for example signposting digital skills training, to help local people act to the changing economy. Several other initiatives to help local talent retention and stimulating the tech sector of the economy have moved forward this year – including additional investments (including part of the Town Deal) and work towards a business case for a new Care Tech hub in North Essex.

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
Develop opportunities to ensure the new economy is greener, sustainable and more resilient.	The Town Deal coupled with wider investment such as DfT's 'Emergency Access Travel Fund' include significant investment into Colchester for initiatives encouraging adoption of active and sustainable travel modes. These include new high-quality cycleways, liveable neighbourhoods, and new high-quality public realm, which are being planned now. New working space is being built and more explored; to help local people in the knowledge economy work locally after the pandemic, rather than out-commuting to distant offices, reducing travel and thus pollution.
Work with our partners to enable Colchester town centre to be a more vibrant, resilient and adaptable to future change.	Collaboration with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council has been strengthened through the pandemic. Town Deal accelerated £1m investment secured is enabling delivery of targeted public realm projects which will enable Colchester to be a more vibrant town centre; these are now moving into delivery phase.
Transform the Northern Gateway as a hub for improved wellbeing, physical activity, jobs, housing and renewable energy.	The Sports Park completed in November 2020 and opens on 26 April 2021. The Walk commenced in July 2020 and completes in Summer 2021. CNG South will commence construction in early 2022. Turnstone is also agreed and will move into construction phase, whilst the Energy Centre will also commence in 2021 and is currently progressing through the tender process to award a contract for this built (with the pipework and chambers already installed in 2020)
Address the inequality of access to Gigabit Broadband in communities.	Over 100km of broadband cabling has been delivered in 2020-2021. There is now a direct link from London to Colchester and the Metronet has commenced development. Broadband deployment works started in July 2020 and will complete mid-2021. The High Street works were coordinated with ECC and deployed early, before the town centre "re-opened", in order to allow the pavement repairs to follow on with minimal disruption to the re-opening town centre businesses. The Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) Project has led to over £10m of private investment being secured from VX Fiber who have also started deploying ultrafast broadband into our most

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>deprived wards using our new network and parts of Council owned sites for equipment. These areas would otherwise not be provided for by the open market for many years.</p> <p>Other opportunities are beginning to emerge as this innovative project becomes more recognised within the telecoms industry, putting Colchester on the map.</p>
Tackle local skills shortages working with businesses, University of Essex, Colchester Institute and other partners.	Engagement has continued with Partners including SELEP, Colchester Institute, University of Essex, and Essex County Council to encourage and promote skills training and upskilling of the existing and new workforce. The Town Deal includes investment in digital hub(s) which will bring significantly expanded skills provision, upskilling the local workforce and helping them adapt to change, with more roles now requiring digital skills.
Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town	
Goal	Achievements
Agree a Town Deal with partners and the Government to attract significant new investment.	<p>On behalf of We Are Colchester (Town Deal) Board, our Town Investment Plan was submitted on 31 October 2020. This culminated in an £18.2m award to Colchester as part of the 3 March 2021 budget statement, bringing hope and cause for optimism in our communities and businesses, in an otherwise very difficult year.</p> <p>Furthermore, this new board, which was established and facilitated by CBC, has provided a strong and visible platform for investment; starting with, but not limited to Town Deal. Through this mechanism, CBC and partners will seek additional / catalyst funding to support all the projects identified in the TIP where possible, which may include a 'Levelling Up Fund' (LUF) application.</p>
Collaborate with the town centre Business Improvement District (BID).	Collaboration with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council has continued. This included a considerable amount of recovery work to re-open the town centre following government restrictions including funding for a number of projects. This work supported the re-openings and provided confidence in the town centre as a destination.

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
Continue to regenerate Colchester Town Centre using Council assets, aligned private investment, the Town Deal and Town Investment Plan.	Our Town Deal application led to Colchester securing £18.2 million of additional / catalyst funding for projects identified in the TIP. Additionally, SELEP Local Growth Fund (LGF) awarded £3.77m for the new Grow-on scheme at 43 Queen Street (former bus depot site).
Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish	
Goal	Achievements
Ensure our strategy for inclusive economic growth supports the ambitions outlined in the North Essex Growth Strategy, the Local Industrial Strategy and our Town Deal.	The work on the Town Deal will inform the Colchester Economic Strategy (refresh is due later in 2021 once the new Strategic Economic Growth Manager is in post). This planned work will also respond to the growth ambitions of the North Essex Growth Strategy and the 'Economic Recovery & Renewal Strategy' (which has now superseded SELEP's Local Industrial Strategy), and adopted Local Plan Part 1.
Ensure a good supply of employment land and premises to attract new businesses and allow existing firms to expand and thrive.	Up to date local plan in place that allocates sufficient land. Up to date local plan in place that contains policies to encourage economic growth. Approval of applications in line with policies adopting a flexible approach where necessary. Temporary measures were introduced to facilitate businesses reopening in a COVID secure manner without needing permission. Flexible approach to enforcement to allow businesses to operate.
Encourage green technologies and innovative solutions to the Climate Emergency.	Council received funding for 25 electric cargo (eCargo) bikes and electric trailers from Energy Saving Trust to contribute to decarbonising the Council's fleet, as well as the fleets of ten local businesses.

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
Maximise the Social Value benefits derived from third party contracts.	From October 2020, the Council started issuing tenders using the Social Value framework developed by the SVP and tailored for Colchester. Given the time needed for submission of bids, evaluation and award of contracts before the period of work starts, it is anticipated that reporting on the delivered benefits will be available towards the end of 2021-2022.
Ensure the Council's assets continue to contribute to economic growth and opportunity. Develop a decarbonisation financial strategy and investment plan.	Work on the Asset Management Strategy is progressing. There are a number of projects that have emerged during 2020/21 and will emerge in 2021-2022 for Council-owned sites, including Rowan House, Vineyard gate, Britannia park, Leisureworld, several Northern Gateway sites, and others to follow.
<i>During 2020/21 we will</i>	
Goal	Achievements
Develop and agree the Council's Economic Recovery plan.	The Council's full Recovery Plan has been developed and implemented. It was pre-scrutinised by the Scrutiny Panel at the meeting in August where no major changes were identified. The plan was approved by Cabinet on 2 September 2020 and the plan monitored on a regular basis. Alongside many other actions that support economic recovery from Covid 19, our successful Town Deal award of £18.2M in March 2021 (plus £1M of additional accelerated funding) forms a major part of the economic 'cell' of the plan (see below).
Agree the Town Deal bid and Town Investment Plan (TIP) submission with partners.	Town Deal – Town Investment Plan was submitted 31 October 2020. This has led to Colchester securing £18.2 million of additional / catalyst funding for projects identified in the TIP.
Deliver the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) project.	As above, commenced in July 2020 and has the first customers connected. Roll out continues into mid-2021.
Work in partnership to support our Business Improvement District (BID).	More extensive and effective collaboration and engagement than before has been done this year, working with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council and SELEP to

Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth	
Goal	Achievements
	ensure effective and joined-up working on initiatives to boost business, the town centre and smaller economic centres in the Borough.
Providing enhanced support to businesses through Covid-19 working with business networks to direct appropriate interventions.	Extensive, effective, and well-targeted direct and indirect support to business has been provided by CBC to help build resilience. This includes CBC providing funding to Colbea to provide additional and tailored advice.
Commence 'The Walk' and provide the attractive main pedestrian and cycle boulevard through Northern Gateway South.	As above, commenced in July and continues on time and in budget.
Complete and open Colchester Northern Gateway Sports Park.	As above. Completed November 2020 but the opening has been delayed by national Covid restriction and will now open on 26 April 2021.
Celebrating our heritage and culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets • Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year • Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage • <i>During 2020/21 we will</i> 	
Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
Work with partners to deliver a collaboration Cultural Vision and Ambitions for the borough with Delivery of Strategy in 2021-2022.	This project was halted temporarily during the procurement phase in April 2020. The Council remained committed to the delivery of a Cultural Strategy for Colchester. However, the entire cultural and creative community in the Borough, from National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) to grassroots level, was and continues to be massively impacted by Covid, and faces ongoing challenges into the future. Therefore, the assumptions underpinning the original scope and the

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
	<p>desired outcomes needed to be revisited with key local stakeholders and Arts Council England (ACE), as the major investors in culture in the Borough.</p> <p>Consultation with major stakeholders including Ace, Creative Colchester and the Colchester based National Portfolio Organisations, took place over autumn 2020 as planned.</p> <p>A revised brief and timeline was agreed and following a competitive tender process specialist consultants Counterculture were appointed at the end of March 2021. They will work with the Council and partners on the Strategy between April - October 2021 with an estimated final delivery date of November 2021.</p>
Agree the key milestones and investment necessary to deliver the strategy.	Budget and milestones agreed. See above. Investment Strategy resulting from the work will form part of future budget setting discussions.
Continue to provide sustainable grant funding to support Mercury Theatre, Firstsite and Colchester Arts Centre (CAC) and help the sector to adapt and recover from the impact of Covid-19.	<p>Three-year grant funding commitment agreed for 2020-2023.</p> <p>2020-2021 Strategic Arts Partner grants front loaded at the beginning of year in line with Arts Council England (ACE) to support organisations through Covid.</p> <p>Additional match funding committed to unlock Cultural Recovery Fund Kick Start funding for in train capital project at CAC. CAC subsequently received grant of £128, 182 from the Fund.</p>
Identify further opportunities to improve the cultural offer for residents and visitors.	<p>Covid 19 has hugely impacted the cultural sector, severely disrupting normal operations for freelancers, organisations and businesses. At the onset of lockdown, the Creative Colchester Board and Project Group combined to meet online every two weeks (normally every 2 months), to provide additional representation and support for the sector. The relevant Director and PfHs from CBC Leadership attended to update representatives, signpost to grants, other funding and listen to concerns. Meetings reverted to bi monthly in 2021, but replacing Project Group meetings with a regular public forum open to all those working in the creative sector.</p> <p>Grants for the Creative Events Fund were awarded in February 2020 for a wide range of activity across the arts and the Borough's communities. Due to Covid restrictions the majority did not take place in 2020, and grants have been held over until summer 2021 onwards.</p>

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	However, a number of projects were repurposed and delivered either online or in a socially distanced format, providing cultural opportunities for residents and financial support to arts practitioners and organisations during this challenging time.
Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
Promote Colchester's heritage and visitor attractions to increase visitor numbers and to support jobs.	<p>2019-2020 saw the highest visitor numbers at the Castle since 2015 (a peak following the 2014) redevelopment), despite the museums closing in March due to COVID. The Castle and VIC reopened after lockdown on the 23 July (although the Natural History Museum and Hollytrees remain closed due to staffing and social distancing restrictions). They were amongst the first in the country to do so with even many nationals not reopening until late August and September. Prior to the second national lockdown, the Castle saw visitor numbers approach 70% of the previous year – far higher than the majority of like organisations that typically saw between 25% and 40% of pre-COVID visitor numbers. The display of the Turner masterpiece, 'Walton Bridges' in September helped sustain those numbers.</p> <p>The Natural History Museum reopened for October half-term thanks to funding from the Culture Recovery Fund. This grant (£84,500) has also allowed the service to develop a number of resources, notably in terms of fundraising to assist with the museums' recovery.</p> <p>School visitor numbers were very low although the service has responded by creating a digital Schools offer and 360 tour which is anticipated to be a useful legacy well into the future.</p> <p>Prior to the January lockdown, the Service was able to deliver a fully booked, and socially distanced Christmas grotto, attracting 1,227 children and parents.</p>
Expand the events programme to encourage more visitors and position	Events programmes were hugely disrupted by Covid. Most events had to be cancelled or postponed in 2020 although some were successfully managed with social distancing rules in place in more permissive summer 2020 periods. This has been managed well and now re-

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
Colchester as a destination for major events.	<p>commencement of weddings and events have had to be flexibly implemented with ever-changing safety advice.</p> <p>Events are now being booked for 2021 including Olly Murs in Castle Park, the Nearly Festival, Oktoberfest and other events all keen to return as soon as safely possible.</p> <p>The Women's Tour of Britain cycling event will take place in Colchester in October 2021 (and again in 2022). This will boost the town centre economy and provide social value, being a, internationally televised event with world and Olympic champions competing. Colchester's profile will benefit from such events.</p>
Work with partners and the Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) to improve the public realm for residents and visitors.	<p>In focusing on recovery and reopening of the town centre, the Council and Our Colchester have worked closely with many partners (such as Essex County Council) and set up working groups across organisations.</p> <p>The Council collaborated with these partners on messages of information, reassurance and support to businesses, residents and visitors to the town centre. This has included promotional activities to support the reopening of the local economy, such as the launch of "Shop Local" in Colchester, a Facebook campaign promoting businesses that have remained open and/or changed their business model due to Covid-19 restrictions; digital messaging on social media and a digital 'Welcome Back Colchester' leaflet and printed distribution of that leaflet to around 45,000 urban households, within three miles of the town centre.</p> <p>The hashtag #WelcomeBackColchester has also been used on social media to highlight the steps being taken to make the town centre safe and to reassure people it is safe to come back to the High Street.</p> <p>In addition, the highways authority for Colchester (Essex County Council) have undertaken a 'Safer, Greener, Healthier' campaign across the County to support town centre recovery. In Colchester this has seen temporary measures such as increased cycle and footway widths, reduced speed limits and restrictions on vehicles that can access the High Street.</p>

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>Funding has been provided to the BID to support the installation of parklets at 5 locations in the High Street, providing additional space to the footway and outdoor seating areas. In addition, provides the opportunity for introducing trees and planting to this urban area.</p> <p>Throughout the lockdown period, public conveniences have remained open and heightened cleaning regimes have taken place. Public enforcement has also continued to be carried out.</p> <p>In partnership with Essex County Council, a comprehensive programme of joint replacement, slab replacement, deep cleaning and surface sealing has been undertaken on the full extent of the footways extending the length of the high street.</p> <p>A competitive tender process has been undertaken and a new Christmas lighting scheme will be implemented this year.</p> <p>Officers are working with the BID and other key stakeholders to undertake a tourism signage replacement programme.</p> <p>Green Heritage award has been achieved for Castle Park.</p> <p>To support Councils to help their local high streets get safely back to business, on 24th May, central Government announced a new fund. The aim of the funding was to enable the safe reopening of High Streets and other commercial areas, and to provide a safe trading environment for staff and shoppers. The focus of the funding was on the building of resilience and adaptability of traders in the context of the economic impact of Covid-19. Officers have worked with the BID, Wivenhoe, Tiptree, Mersea and Dedham Councils to develop action plans and identify the support required to open High Streets safely using this fund. It has contributed towards a Specialist Campaign Officer to deliver the plans, installation of signage, hand sanitisers, TV and social media adverts. More work is planned, particularly following the latest announcement of the extension of the fund.</p>

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
	The Town Deal Bid / Town Investment Plan incorporates improved public realm through specific projects within the Town Deal Boundary, in both the accelerated £1m phase (now in delivery), and the main award.
Improve the information available to Visitors through the launch of a new improved Website.	New www.visitcolchester.com website launched August 2020 with improved functionality (particularly for mobile devices) and content. Design includes extensive use of video recycled from the Colchester tourism ad and newly commissioned for the project.
Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage	
Goal	Achievements
Enhance and promote our heritage by better revealing our assets by supporting projects and initiatives to increase public awareness and access to their heritage in daily life.	<p>Structural works on the Roman Church have been completed and the monument is protected. A new interpretation panel has been produced and will be installed at the Roman Church in late May.</p> <p>Heritage Manager working with Civic Society to deliver appropriate commemoration for Capt Jones and Lt Pinto. A new interpretation panel has been produced and will be installed at St Botolph's Churchyard in late May. Further interpretation is being developed, initially for Capt Jones with that for Lt Pinto dependant on the future of Holy Trinity Church. The required consents will be sought shortly (Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) and faculty).</p> <p>An interpretation panel on Priory street (Bastion 5) has been installed and the panel for the Balcerne Gate replaced</p> <p>An options appraisal of the Town to Port trail is in progress and will report shortly.</p> <p>The Heritage Manager/ Heritage officer delivered a digital programme for Heritage Open Days in 2020. 14,827 people were engaged online by 14 films (10 of which produced by the museum service) and 7 venues opened for socially distanced visits, including the Roman Circus Centre. The Castle also provided a special offer in lieu of the usual open day. Planning for HODs 2021 is well advanced, but dependant on the progress with managing Covid-19.</p>

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
Continue to deliver a major exhibition at Colchester Castle bi-annually.	<p>Decoding the dead is a project supported by Arts Council Designation funding. The exhibition in the summer of 2021 is anticipated to feature the results of scientific analyses of early Roman remains in Colchester commissioned by the museums service in partnership with the University of Reading. Due to the associated human stories and scientific investigation the exhibition and other outputs (such as a 'FutureLearn' online course) should attract significant public and media interest. The Service is collaborating with the media company, 'History Hit' to further promote the exhibition through film and podcasts.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the display will assist in the recovery of Castle admissions, income and contribute to the wider Colchester economy through tourism.</p>
Encourage and support the use of our Heritage sites for Community events, activities and theatre.	<p>The Castle team have worked hard to identify activities (new and existing) that can be hosted safely. The Escape room experience were reinstated in-between lockdowns and bespoke tours introduced including 'Dark Tours' for Halloween.</p> <p>With support from a grant from the Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) 'Culture Recovery Fund' the Natural History Museum reopened for October half-term before closing again for the November lockdown. A partnership has been established with Bernado's and Virgin Care and the Natural History Museum will now be a centre every Monday for the Essex Health and Wellbeing Service that provides an important parenting support service for the local community.</p> <p>C360 were awarded £14k from a successful grant application (in partnership with CBC) to Architectural Heritage Fund. This has enabled the first stages of feasibility work towards the development of a new Community Hub which also safeguards this Grade I listed building and opens up opportunities for heritage interpretation of the Anglo Saxon Tower, the oldest standing building in Colchester Town Centre. Town Deal will now be able to provide most, or all of the match funding needed to take this project to final delivery.</p>
<i>During 2020/21 we will</i>	

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	Achievements
Goal	Achievements
Develop and agree approach to delivering a new Cultural Strategy in collaboration with partners and commission work.	<p>Consultation with major stakeholders including Arts Council England, Creative Colchester and the Colchester based National Portfolio Organisations, took place over autumn 2020 as planned.</p> <p>A revised brief and timeline was agreed and following an open tender process specialist consultants Counterculture were appointed at the end of March 2021. They will work with the Council and partners on the Strategy between April - October 2021 with an estimated final delivery date of November 2021.</p>
Complete the Mercury Rising project.	Construction work is complete on this project, and it is processing throughout final sign off procedures, the theatre have moved back in and will re-open as soon as they can safely do so.
Deliver Decoding the Dead in Colchester.	<p>Decoding the Dead is externally funded helping to mitigate against the risk of delivering an exhibition at a time when social distancing may still be in effect. The exhibition will help to restore visitor figures and income to pre-COVID levels, subject to COVID related restrictions. Under normal circumstances a 10% increase would have been anticipated. The media friendly news stories generated by scientific analyses on ancient human remains should also have a legacy in improving the profile of the museum service. Collaborations with 'History Hit' and Dan Snow is expected to encourage physical visits as well as a digital reach of hundreds of thousands of people.</p> <p>The project will provide a blueprint for future collaborations with university partners.</p> <p>Digital outputs such as a 'Future Learn' course in partnership with the University of Reading should engage in access of 10,000 students internationally. The co-produced elements of the project will also better engage the community and assist in our objectives linked to Arts Council whose funding will continue to be critical to the service.</p>
Launch a new Visitor Website.	Website launched August 2020 supported by a Google Ad words campaign. Despite very reduced activity on the old site during the initial Covid lockdown period, and traditional drivers

Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy that supports our cultural assets	
Goal	<i>Achievements</i>
	<p>of usage such as events and accommodation being severely curtailed by the crisis, rolling year statistics initially showed a 10.9% increase in users as at end Sept 2020 (representing an additional 34K users) driven by the improvements to the site and post lock down pent up demand. Unfortunately, the subsequent lockdowns with a ban on travel, the cancellation of events and the closure of accommodation, attractions and hospitality again slowed usage of the site drastically during autumn/winter 20/21. However, as at end of March 2021 usage is beginning to climb again (up 34% on the previous March) as lockdown restrictions ease and new planned content is added. This includes two new digital walking trails with historic themes, Roman Walls and The Siege Of Colchester which together were downloaded over 1,400 times between launch in mid-March and the end of the month.</p> <p>The official Visit Britain TXGB booking platform has been added to the site with recovery funding from VB and will go live in April 2021.</p>
Work to deliver a scheme redevelopment for Vineyard Gate car park to showcase the Town Wall and provide a welcoming arrival point for visitors to the historic town with interpretation and on-site presentation of surviving archaeology and heritage assets.	Very early (RIBA Stage 1) Feasibility work has commenced on this site, with Cabinet agreeing to progress work on a housing-led scheme to create a “liveable neighbourhood. Amphora Homes are leading this project through 2021 and architects Ash Sakula hve created a well-received concept scheme that restores the historic street pattern and creates a vibrant public space adjacent the town wall, with 70 homes and active ground floor uses.
Seek grant funding and implement schemes to enhance Balkerne Square and St Nicholas Square as new public spaces to showcase the adjacent assets.	£1m accelerated Town Deal funding has been secured, with these schemes now in community engagement and final design phase.

Motion referred from Council: The Impact of Pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The motion below was approved and adopted at the Council meeting on 19 July 2023. As the subject matter relates to an executive function and the motion informs Cabinet of Council's view, it is referred to Cabinet to consider further.

The Impact of Pylons on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

This Council notes:

- 1. The pride, affection and enjoyment with which residents and visitors have towards our local beauty spots and their tranquillity.*
 - 2. National Grid are seeking to transport electricity across East Anglia via pylons which would have a dramatic impact on our residents, especially those living in Langham, Boxted, Fordham, Great Horkesley, Little Horkesley, West Bergholt, Aldham, Marks Tey and beyond.*
 - 3. Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex have some of the most beautiful landscapes in the UK, immortalised by painters such as John Constable RA, as such these 50 metre high pylons are incompatible with these landscapes and challenge our revered 'big skies'.*
 - 4. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which is a protected landscape, has been singled out as an area for power cables to be laid underground but this is only being considered on the basis of the defined area of the AONB. Topographical considerations close to the AONB appear not to have been considered and you will be able to see these pylons from within the AONB.*
- Furthermore, the setting of the AONB will be compromised with the 'sealing-end compounds' (electrical sub-stations) as well as the installation of inspection pits.*
- 5. The construction of the pylons and associated hardware will have a detrimental impact on our overburdened rural road infrastructure; including lanes with damage to verges likely where there are often no passing places.*
 - 6. Further negative consequences during the construction of these pylons could include damage to various habitats of wildlife including: trees, biodiversity, plant-life as well as also negatively impacting on regional tourist attractions and archaeology.*

7. Current rules stipulate local Planning Authorities determine if onshore wind turbines are permissible.

This Council informs Cabinet of its opinion that:

1. Robust representations should be made, during and outside of consultation periods, to the Government, given they have set the framework for these national planning issues, to oppose new pylons blighting our beautiful countryside and to look again at underground and offshore options and their relative and financial and environmental impacts.

2. Collaborative working with other local authorities and MPs should take place to support calls for an offshore grid, including for the North Falls and Five Estuaries wind farms; in order to speed up delivery of green energy, cut its cost and protect the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and surrounding countryside.

Motion referred from Council: Anti-Social Behaviour in the City Centre

The motion below was approved and adopted at the Council meeting on 19 July 2023. As the subject matter relates to an executive function, it is referred to Cabinet to consider further.

Anti-Social Behaviour in the City Centre

If our city is to continue to thrive, residents and visitors must feel safe and that policing is responsive to their concerns.

This Council notes the recent incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the historic city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods, which included:

- *damage to property;*
- *harassment and abuse of staff and customers in the retail and hospitality sectors;*
- *thefts from shops which harm businesses and which can heighten vulnerability experienced by retail staff and customers.*

We welcome recent action and successes by the police, but call on the City Council and local Community Safety Partnership:

- *to review and publish the latest evidence of the extent, nature and drivers of ASB, as well as the extent of public willingness to report incidents, to inform and develop a new Anti-Social Behaviour Plan;*
- *to seek a new collaboration with Essex Youth Services to develop and resource a new Youth Outreach Strategy to engage more effectively with those young people currently involved in ASB;*
- *to bring together adult social care, health and substance misuse services to map efforts to address the causes of ASB*
- *to work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to review policing resource for Colchester.*

PETITIONS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS

(i) Have Your Say submissions from members of the public

Date of Meeting	Details of Members of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
Cabinet, 12 July 2023	Sir Bob Russell	The legitimacy of the current administration and the advantages of the Committee system of Council governance.	Verbal response given at the meeting by Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy.	12 July 2023
Cabinet 12 July 2023	Robbie Spence	Council support to Outhouse	Verbal response given at the meeting by Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources.	12 July 2023
Council, 19 July 2023	Sir Bob Russell	The impact of the Town Deal project for Holy Trinity Church on the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on biodiversity.	Verbal response given at the meeting by Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy and written response sent on 21 July 2023.	21 July 2023
Council, 19 July 2023	Carla Hales, Robert Johnstone, Elizabeth Kelly	Charging for performing at the Castle Park Bandstand	Verbal response given at the meeting by Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste and written response sent to Carla Hales and Robert Johnstone on 14 August 2023	14 August 2023

Council, 19 July 2023	Sandy Armitage	The reasons for the cancellation of the Environment and Sustainability meeting of 20 July 2023.	Verbal response given at the meeting by Councillor Nissen, Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Panel.	19 July 2023
Scrutiny Panel, 9 August 2023	Paul T. Smith	Seeking explanation of the proposed new garden waste collection charges, and a granular review of the Council's financial business plans, to be carried out transparently for the public	Verbal response given at the meeting, by Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, and Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Waste. Additional verbal information provided by Rosa Tanfield, Head of Neighbourhood Services, and John Kellett, Business Improvement Manager [Neighbourhood Services].	9 August 2023
Local Plan Committee 7 August 2023	Sir Bob Russell	Seeking details on the proposed Ireni / Abro development proposal and how it did not meet the planning brief. Further points were raised on the animation of the river Colne and the impact on wildlife as well as issues around Holy Trinity Church biodiversity and security issues.	Verbal response given at the meeting by Karen Syrett, Head of Planning, and Simon Cairns, Development Manager.	7 August 2023
Local Plan Committee 7 August 2023	Richard Martin	Sought details on the ecological status of works on Middlewick under the local plan allocation as well as the independence or reports that would be	Verbal Response given by Karen Syrett, Head of Planning.	7 August 2023

		created as well as issues around the infrastructure and whether this breached the arrangements in the local plan. Further comments were made around flooding in the Hythe following heavy rainfall.		
Local Plan Committee 7 August 2023	David Cooper	Request for comments regarding environmentally friendly sustainable home designs be included within the Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document	Verbal Response from Shelley Blackaby, Principal Planning Policy Officer (Environment)	7 August 2023
Local Plan Committee 7 August 2023	Nick Chilvers	Sought details on the Active Travel Supplementary Planning Document and its implications.	Verbal response from Rachel Forkin, Principal Planning Policy Officer.	7 August 2023

(ii) Petitions

Date petition received	Lead Petitioner	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
No valid petitions received in this period.				

