# Appendix B - Better Colchester Strategic Plan Action Plan (SPAP) 2020 – 2023 Half Year Report covering April – September 2020

**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 |
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| Reduce carbon emissions to help achieve a net zero Carbon footprint for Council Services by 2030. | New Sustainability & Climate Change manager started on 28 September 2020. Several potential projects have been identified and proposals are being developed for phase one actions. |

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| | Next steps meeting held with the Carbon Trust to advance plans. |
| Environment and sustainability embedded within all Council decision making and the adaptation and recovery from Covid-19. | Several projects have been identified for the next steps with the Carbon Trust to help CBC advance plans.<br><br>A staff survey is currently being developed to assess the level of capacity and resources for carbon reduction and sustainability.<br><br>Updating the Strategic Performance Review Climate Change Checklist and roll out by January 2021.<br><br>A Climate Challenge and Sustainability Project Board with members across the organisation has been assembled. This board is chaired by an Assistant Director meets monthly.<br><br>The Environment and Sustainability Member Panel has been launched. This is chaired by the Leader of the Council and meets bimonthly. |
| Air quality across Colchester is improved. | Public engagement complete and summary report produced.<br><br>No idling campaign launched on the 8 October 2020. CAReless pollution to coincide with National Clean Air Day.<br><br>Subject to planning permission being granted, Roadside signage is to be introduced in Brook Street, East Street and Eastgates.<br><br>Partnership working with Anglian Ruskin University and Essex County Council to explore how Bikeability can be enhanced. |

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| | A Feasibility study into Countdown timers at traffic lights is being carried out. |
| Continue to support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste. | Despite the impact of Covid-19 on resources and operations, the amount of waste material that residents chose to reuse, recycle and compost remains positive. The Councils aims to achieve 53% of all material to be reused, recycled and composted and it is forecasted that this will be achieved.<br><br>The priorities and objectives of the Waste and Recycling NSP have been reviewed and several work streams have been identified.<br><br>Strong marketing and communications campaigns undertaken, including Recycling Week 2020; Compost at home communication campaign; autumn recycling messages on social media e.g. recycling windfall fruit in food waste (rather than garden waste) and leaves; @LoveFoodHateWaste campaign messages; supported @Love Essex's #ZeroWasteWeek social media campaign. |
| **Conserve and enhance biodiversity** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Minimise the environmental impact of our activities. | A number CBC assets and ways of working have been identified, with the top 3 being Leisure World, fleet, and affordable housing.<br><br>Project proposals being developed (HRA housing improvements, Rowan House) to reduce emissions.<br><br>Further proposals being considered and updating of checklist for projects. |

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| | Scoping guidance for environmentally smart procurement and organising meeting to update procurement guidelines as needed. |
| Enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive through greening and natural seeding. | Year 2 of the Woodland Project and the core aims, and objectives have been reviewed, and sets out the following principles:<br><br>• We will enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive<br>• We strive to make our borough even greener<br>• We are committed to planting trees and to helping them and wider biodiversity to flourish<br>• We will plant and manage our sites and spaces without harming existing habitats<br><br>Activities initiated:<br><br>• Self-generating sites (rewilding) - 14 potential sites identified<br>• Areas across the Borough have also been identified for non-mowing<br>• A weed control policy, including the timeline for the reduced use of Glyphosate weedkiller and been presented to the Environment and Sustainability Panel and has been approved<br><br>Green flag award achieved at Castle Park, High Woods Country Park and Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium. |
| Discover, nurture and enable the work led by communities that promotes biodiversity. | Year 2 of the Woodland Project and the core aims, and objectives have been reviewed, and sets out the following principles:<br><br>• We will enhance environments to create more space for nature to grow and thrive<br>• We strive to make our borough even greener<br>• We are committed to planting trees and to helping them and wider biodiversity to flourish |

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| | • We will plant and manage our sites and spaces without harming existing habitats<br><br>Activities initiated:<br><br>• Re-engaged with Together We Grow CIC<br>• Developed a stakeholder advisory group, and through their feedback, the programme has been renamed and rebranded to the “Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project”<br>• Healthy walk event at High Woods Country Park<br>• Seed gathering marketing campaign and activity packs provided at High Woods Country Park<br>• Social media campaigns have been promoted in light of the difficulties of undertaking events. These have included: “Love your trees”<br><br>A social media campaign and supported through school activity pack will promote the no-mow and rewilding areas, including the creation of signs for the locations by the schools local to the sites.<br><br>Sub-group of One Colchester to be created to share best practices on tackling climate change and sustainability across organisations in the borough (including biodiversity), and to increase community engagement around the Council's Climate Emergency declaration. |
| Plant native species and manage our woodlands, meadows and greenspace whilst sustaining existing habitats. | Planting sites for the current year have been identified, across 9 sites (8,210 native trees, fruit trees and hedges) and programmed. Native species have been specified and plastic. This will |

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| | be fully funded by the Woodland Trust. A further 6 sites (4,1050 native trees) have been identified by Parish Councils (this may increase further as discussions remain underway).<br><br>Plans are now underway to create a tree seed nursery within the Big Garden at High Woods Country Park allowing the Council to grow its own trees from seed in the Borough for use in future years of the Project.<br><br>Fully biodegradable spiral rabbit guards will be used this year to protect the trees being planted.<br><br>In partnership with the Woodland Trust, the project will look at activities that support “Action for Insects”. |
| Work alongside communities to maintain clean, green neighbourhoods and urban spaces that we all look after and enjoy. | Contact has been made 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 to explain the tree-planting plans for Spring Lane Park and the Keep the Green Clean group to do the same for the Greenstead Slopes planting and they expressed a wish to be involved in the planting event on the day.<br><br>Several of the Year 2 planting sites have now been surveyed by members of the Colchester Natural History Society 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 have been made to the exact location of some of the tree planting areas and additional areas of grassland will now be left to grow long in an attempt to improve the biodiversity of the open spaces. |

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| | Officers are now planning how planting may be carried out in a Covid-safe way.<br><br>Sub-group of One Colchester to be created to share best practices on tackling climate change and sustainability across organisations in the borough, and to increase community engagement around the Council's Climate Emergency declaration. |
| **Enable more opportunity for walking and cycling around Colchester** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Work with partners to implement strategies and develop measures to reduce traffic in the town centre. | Influenced 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.<br><br>Worked with Essex County Council on the Colchester Future Transport Strategy.<br><br>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 workplace Travel Plans.<br><br>Working with developers to develop new robust Travel Plans and refresh and update existing Travel Plans through the planning process. |

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| | Air Quality behaviour change project continuing to look at ways in which air quality can be improved in the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) including by promoting walking and cycling for short journeys. |
| Improve facilities and routes for cyclists and walkers to enable active travel behaviours, healthier lifestyles and reduce car use. | Worked with Colchester Cycle Campaign on review of the Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and its alignment with the ECC Colchester Cycling Action Plan.<br><br>Working with colleagues and developers to ensure walking and cycling measures are delivered through the planning process and via S106 contributions including:<br><br>• Improvements to Rowhedge Trail including improvements to path surface (S106 funded)<br>• Commissioning and installing Colchester Town Station signage<br>• Worked on Fixing the Link alternative plans to enhance the walking route from Colchester station to the town centre<br>• Improving the walking and cycling links from Stanway to Tollgate<br><br>Wayfinding study from and to University accommodations, the university and town centre delivered (S106 funded).<br><br>Study completed on provision of secure cycle parking facility in the town centre and in residential areas.<br><br>ParkActive being set up for ‘last mile’ active travel alternative (repurposing long stay car parks as park & walk). |

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| | Also new Parking Strategy in final stages of completion, e.g. with a focus on environmental car park charges rather than hourly space rental. |
| Ensure major regeneration projects put physical activity, cycling and walking at the forefront of development. | Sustainable Transport Team brought under same line management as Client Team to align major capital projects with Amphora.<br><br>Sports Park construction completes in November 2020. The Cycleways and pedestrian's links are under construction and will be delivered prior to opening.<br><br>"The Walk" commenced at the Northern Gateway as part of the infrastructure first approach with a central and dedicated walking/cycling route.<br><br>Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) have been embedded with sections on sustainability.<br><br>Plan being prepared to engage and embed behavioural change. |
| ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Establish a new Environment and Sustainability Panel to oversee our work to tackle the climate emergency. | New Environment and Sustainability Panel established, and Forward Plan agreed. |
| Complete the phasing out of Glyphosate herbicide in Council operations. | An action plan has now been agreed and published to stop the general use of Glyphosate weedkiller in Council operations. Since April 2020, the Council has stopped spraying:<br><br>• In all children's play parks (74 sites) |

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| | • In around West Mersea beach huts (384 huts)<br>• On the Recreation Ground, off Old Heath Road |
| Embed environment and sustainability impact assessment and prioritisation in all recovery, project and programme management. | Climate Emergency (CE) now embedded in all three core project management documents in the new project management environment.<br><br>Monthly project progress reports now include a CE RAG status with supporting narrative.<br><br>Review of Climate Checklist is underway to improve the checklist and demonstrate move towards monitoring carbon emissions. |
| Roll out use of eCargo bikes with Council teams, local businesses and partners. | £136k successful bid to Energy Savings Trust to trial 25 eCargo bikes and 5 eTrailers with local businesses and organisations.<br><br>Procurement exercise undertaken and fleet ordered.<br><br>21 eCargo bikes received to date and 5 eTrailers.<br><br>Legal agreement developed and 8 eCargo bikes/trailers handed over to 7 local Champions for long term loan.<br><br>6 eCargo bikes and 3 eTrailers will be used by CBC staff and volunteers at Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park, Ipswich Museums and the zones team. 1 eCargo bike will be available as a pool for any member of staff to use.<br><br>5 eCargo Bikes and 1 eTrailer will be part of a pool for local businesses/organisations to try out for short term trials. It is envisaged that this will be initially for one month subject to reasonable usage, with an option to extend for several months to allow time for a business/organisations to |

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| | fully assess how an eCargo bike could work for/benefit their operations. A contract agreement is being developed, along with exploration on the best approach to covering insurance.<br><br>All staff, volunteers and champions who will use the eCargo bikes have received level 3 Bikeability training through Safer Essex Roads Partnership. Several portfolio holders and the Leader of the Council have already or are due to undertake Bikeability training shortly, so they too can use the eCargo bikes both for business use and promotional purposes.<br><br>Conversations already taking place with several local organisations and internal CBC teams who are interested in using the eCargo bikes.<br><br>Official projects launch due late October, early November 2020. |
| Model the Council's carbon footprint in detail and develop a detailed Carbon Management Plan to 2030. | Scope 1, 2 and 3 footprint analysis undertaken in collaboration with the Carbon Trust.<br><br>Modelling of footprint and identification of key 'step change' projects complete.<br><br>Detailed Carbon Management Plan development underway in conjunction with the Carbon Trust. |
| Implement sustainable changes to waste and recycling collections that support improved staff wellbeing. | Although proposals for chargeable garden waste with associated wheeled bin introduction is not progressing, the review across the service is well underway and proposals will be presented shortly.<br><br>Several work streams have been identified. |

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| Commence construction of the Northern Gateway Heat Network. | The 5 Boreholes were completed and successfully tested.<br><br>Planning permission was obtained for the energy centre.<br><br>Heat network pipes and chambers linking the boreholes is being constructed from July 2020 and will be completed in 2021.<br><br>The procurement exercise for the Energy Centre will take place over the Winter 2020-2021. |

## Creating safe, healthy and active communities:

- Build on community strengths and assets
- Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people
- Provide opportunities for young people
- ***During 2020/21 we will***

**Build on community strengths and assets**

| Goal | Achievements |
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| Take an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach and work alongside communities to build a borough where people are more empowered, self-sufficient, healthy, active, happy and doing what they enjoy. | Workshop training completed for Leadership and Senior Managers in September 2020.<br><br>Full training plan for CBC employees and One Colchester being finalised at present. Some external funding secured. |

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| Encourage belonging, involvement and responsibility in all Colchester's communities and neighbourhoods. | Follows on from the ABCD training and launch of a new Community Strategy in early 2021. |
| Work with our partners to make volunteering and community involvement as easy as possible. | Continued close working with C360 and other key partners. |
| 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 & 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. | Clear Guidance uploaded to website Legislation and interpretation shared with businesses.<br><br>Letters updating all businesses with legislation changes sent 4 times since March in relation to government control.<br><br>Investigated over 250 complaints cases of non-compliance.<br><br>Over 500 incidents where advice given, over the phone, email and visits.<br><br>Update fed to comms on a weekly basis SMT kept up to date. |

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| | Night-time and daytime visits undertaken weekly and over weekends.<br><br>Advice also given to Cllrs and the general Public.<br><br>Full Enforcement taken against 8 pubs/restaurants. |
| Support residents to do the things they enjoy doing to stay healthy, happy and physically active. | 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.<br><br>Work with One Colchester and continue to lead the Alliance “Be Well” domain so issue is covered by a system solution. |
| Enable access and involvement in community green space, countryside sites, sport, and leisure facilities. | 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.<br><br>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. |
| Support people to live in healthy homes that meet their needs. | Continuation of the Senior Occupational Therapist in Housing Project in to 2020-2021.<br><br>Introduction of the Fast-Track Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to support Hospital Discharge and Admission Avoidance.<br><br>Redesign of the grant delivery process in readiness for the new Northgate IT system. |

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| | Process applications for licences for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). 61 licences issued in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021.<br><br>Take a robust enforcement approach against owners of unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation. 2 x Civil Penalty Final Notices issued in Q1 and Q2 of 2020/21 against landlords of an unlicensed HMO totalling £40K.<br><br>Investigate complaints of housing conditions and take appropriate enforcement action to remove serious housing hazards. 133 visits/inspections/assessments completed in Q1 and Q2 of 2020/21. 94 dwellings improved and 63 serious housing hazards removed.8 statutory notices served in Q1 and Q2.<br><br>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.<br><br>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:<br><br>• The requirement to belong to a property management redress scheme. 3 x Notices of Intent and 2 x Final Notices served in Q1 and Q2 of 2020-2021<br>• Electrical Safety Regulations<br>• A project to tackle excess cold in rented homes |

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| | A project with Essex Fire Service to ensure the safety of dwellings above high risk commercial units. |
| Supporting the most vulnerable residents through our One Colchester partnership. | Collaborating with One Colchester partners such as Community360, Colchester Borough Homes, CCG, Age Concern, to co-design and co-produce projects to support our most vulnerable residents. e.g. winter warmth project 2020=2021Building trusted, open and transparent relationships with community leaders from diverse communities such as our 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.<br><br>The use of external funding to support our most vulnerable residents – through the Local Delivery Pilot (LDP), North East Essex Health & Wellbeing Alliance and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – (DEFRA) 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. |
| **Provide opportunities for young people** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Provide positive opportunities for young people to engage with their local community and do things that interests | This will not be delivered by end of 2020-2021 given the climate is not right to commission work because of Covid19. Likely to commission in spring and deliver in 2021-2022. |

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| them, keeps them safe, makes them happy and supports improved mental wellbeing. | |
| Support the creation of strong, safe, and friendly communities that care about each other. | Design and production of the Community Response Pack and Residents Contact Pack.<br><br>Ensuring Town and Parish Councils are engaged and supported through regular engagement, contact and involvement in local decision-making processes.<br><br>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.<br><br>Re-launch of Keep Safe for Colchester; a free scheme helping vulnerable residents to feel safer and more confident out in the town. For 2020 considering 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 to launch a revised scheme for 2021. |
| Work with Essex Police, Colchester Borough Homes, Essex Youth Service and other partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and tackle serious crime. | 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.<br><br>Closures/partial closures have been conducted by CBH to tackle drugs and anti-social behaviour. |

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| | 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.<br><br>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. |
| Work alongside our partners to improve cleanliness and community safety in the town centre. | 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.<br><br>Joint working with the Police and the Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) to help businesses safely re-open within Covid-19 guidelines. |
| Upgrade and extend the CCTV network to reach more places. | CCTV infrastructure is being installed on site between July 2020 and April 2021.<br><br>The project currently on time and in budget, with over 100km of cable installed so far, expanding the coverage.<br><br>The current cameras are soon to be replace by new cameras on properties around the town, with the first cameras being in place during October 2020 (St. Marys Car Park). |
| ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |

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| 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. | Clear Guidance uploaded to website. Legislation and interpretation shared with businesses.<br><br>Letters updating all businesses with legislation changes sent 4 times since March in relation to government control<br><br>Investigated over 250 complaints cases of non-compliance.<br><br>Over 500 incidents where advice given, over the phone, email and visits.<br><br>Update fed to comms on a weekly basis SMT kept up to date.<br><br>Night-time and daytime visits undertaken weekly and over weekends.<br><br>Advice also give to Cllrs and the public.<br><br>Full Enforcement taken against eight pubs and restaurants. |
| Facilitate ABCD sessions and awareness within communities, system leaders and members to discover and connect the assets that exist and are mobilised within neighbourhoods. | Follows on from the ABCD training and launch of a new Community Strategy in early 2021. |
| Coproduce investment proposals and deliver interventions that support our vulnerable residents to be more | Continue to support community groups with applications for funding and identify possible opportunities for improvement in the most deprived areas. |

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| physically active through the Essex Local Delivery Pilot. | |
| 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 MHCLG to support Recovery Refuge, Community based support and Resettlement programme, specialist support for children/young people affected by domestic abuse, and review/implement new housing interventions for the period April 2020 – March 2021.<br><br>Both CBC and Safer Colchester Partnership websites Domestic Abuse information updated on a regular basis.<br><br>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).<br><br>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. |
| Work in partnership with Essex County Council to support vulnerable people to live in homes that promote independence and wellbeing. | Continued engagement with Essex Well Homes Group to share good practice.<br><br>Developing the Senior Occupational Therapist in Housing role. |

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| | Integration of the Health and Housing Partnership into all council services.<br><br>Scope 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. |

**Delivering homes for people who need them:**

- 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
- ***During 2020/21 we will***

**Increase the number, quality and types of homes**

| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
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| Deliver 30% affordable housing across all our mixed tenure housing sites. | Work started on site on the first housing site in July 2020 and will deliver the first homes for beneficial use in March 2021.<br><br>Contracts have been signed to retain 2 properties for affordable homes owned within the Councils HRA upon completion. |
| Deliver 380 affordable council and housing association homes by 2023. | As of 30 September 2020, a total of 44 affordable homes had been delivered. 21 homes were properties that the Council purchased and 23 were homes delivered by housing associations through the planning system and Section 106 agreements. |

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| Improve existing Council homes to keep them in good repair and improve energy efficiency. | The Housing Improvement Programme had caught up a £1.2m backlog of improvement works from 2019/2020 (which was previously £1.6m behind in 2018/19) by the start of C19 lockdown to enter this year on the planned schedule.<br><br>Since lockdown the programme stalled due to inability to enter properties safely, but quickly recommenced as soon as it was safely possible. Works have been reprogrammed in order to attempt to remain on target for year end and complete the planned 2020/21 programme, subject to ongoing restrictions and safe working practices.<br><br>Additional works contracts are being prepared to increase HRA investments over the next year and beyond that will specifically tackle our least energy efficient properties in response to climate change. |
| Deliver new low/zero carbon Council homes for our residents. | Between March 2020 and September 2020 23 homes were purchased to add the Council's housing stock using Housing Revenue Account borrowing and RTB receipts.<br><br>The first garage sites obtained planning permission and the first homes started construction in September 2020, becoming available for beneficial use in March/April 2021.<br><br>There are several other projects underway and the Council ambition to create 350 additional homes by 2024 is on course. |
| Ensure all new homes delivered by the Council are designed to a high quality across all tenures. | 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, accessibility is being prioritised too. All homes are to a high quality "Colchester standard", some being built to meet 2025 "future standards". Planning applications |

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| | have so far met with limited objections due to good design, pre-application preparations and appropriate engagement. |
| Continue to improve and modernise Council owned housing for older people. | The pathway for this is being led through Elfreda House which is being demolished and rebuilt in 2021 to provide a future-proof development. The existing tenants have been successfully rehomed through good engagement and collaboration. There is further work on the next phases of the sheltered housing review agreed by Cabinet in July 2020 and setting out a pipeline for the next decade. The Asset Management Review will take place in 2021 alongside a new HRA Business Plan reflecting the current new build and improvement programmes. |
| **Prevent households from experiencing homelessness** | |
| **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 are being implemented and an update will be available at year end. |
| Intervene early to prevent homelessness and work in partnership with other organisations to sustain people's accommodation. | From April 2020 to the end of September 2020 homelessness was prevented for 79 households and during the same period 59 households were assisted into accommodation under the relief duty. |
| Tackle rough sleeping in the borough. | From April 2020 to the end of September 2020 the Rough Sleeping Team have worked with 115 people who have been provided with support, advice and assistance. |

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| | During the same period, 72 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 the clients whilst they were living in the emergency accommodation.<br><br>CBC successfully bid and has been awarded £119,429 revenue funding from the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Pathway (NSAP):<br><br>• help fund the emergency accommodation put in place during the lockdown period<br>• provide financial support for rough sleepers to move-on into the private rented sector<br>• fund a Support Liaison Worker at Colchester Night Shelter, once it re-opens following works to make the accommodation self-contained<br><br>CBC are awaiting the outcome of the capital part of the NSAP bid which if successful, will 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 | Joint work has commenced with TDC. Initial stage will review and update evidence base. Link road progressing under HIF. |

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| carbon emissions in the community development and green procurement. | |
| 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 and initially using previously agreed project resources to progress the necessary work. Future Governance arrangements. programme and resource implications are to come to future meetings. |
| Develop the Colchester Northern Gateway as a sustainable place to live, work and play. | The Sports Park will be completed in November 2020 and will now open at Easter 2021 subject to Covid restrictions. Highway works have started on site to improve walking and cycling. The Walk commenced in July 2020 and will be completed in 2021. The Heat Network was successfully tested, and a procurement exercise is due to commence in October 2020. Turnstone have submitted their planning application, which is under consideration, as is the Council's own "CNG South" mixed use planning application. |
| 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.<br><br>Emerging Local Plan will allocate sites to provide land for housing and employment up to 2033 and beyond. |
| 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.<br><br>Planning applications have continued to be determined and will deliver new homes and infrastructure. |

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| ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Agree “Phase 2” sites for development by Amphora Homes and undertake feasibility and viability assessments. | Early feasibility work has commenced. Several sites are being explored with a view to progressing viable schemes from 2021 onwards. |
| Adopt section One of the Local Plan. | Consultation on modifications has ended with a view to concluding examination of section one. |
| Deliver the first mixed tenure housing site built by the Council at Creffield Road. | Construction started in July 2020 and progresses on time and budget with completion due in March/April 2021. The construction phase is currently progressing well. The Council and Amphora have exchanged legal documents to secure the retention of 2 Council owned homes. |
| Deliver 100% Council homes at Military Road (8 homes). | Planning permission was obtained, and a procurement exercise has completed. Construction is due to start later in 2020 and complete in Summer 2021. |
| Deliver up to 16 new Council homes on the Council’s garage sites. | Work commenced on the first site in September 2020. The other 2 sites have been tendered and a contract awarded but will be commenced shortly following works by Anglian Water. 16 homes will be ready in 2021 to benefit families on the local housing needs register. |
| Increase the supply of affordable housing by purchasing 100 former council owned homes by 31 March 2022. | At the end of September 2020, a total of 10 properties have been located. 7 are in the legal process and 3 are under offer. |

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| Accelerate construction on Council projects to enable recovery from Covid-19. | 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. More construction will be brought forwards in 2021 and the HIP programme is being increased to provide additional works through the HRA from the start of 2021. |

**Growing a better economy so everyone benefits:**

- 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
- ***During 2020/21 we will***

**Enable Economic Recovery from Covid-19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth**

| Goal | Achievements |
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| Ensure our borough becomes stronger post Covid-19 by supporting businesses to recover, adapt and build resilience. | Economy Recovery Plan incorporates a wide range of actions, initiatives and objectives to support business through the post Covid-19 recovery period. Direct and indirect support to business provided by CBC to help build resilience including funding Colbea to provide additional tailored advice. |

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| Work with partners to facilitate a high skill, high wage, low carbon workforce. | Ongoing engagement with Partners including SELEEP, Colchester Institute, Essex University and Essex County to encourage and promote skills training and upskilling of the existing and new workforce. |
| Develop opportunities to ensure the new economy is greener, sustainable and more resilient. | Work together with partners internally and externally to encourage future growth to be greener and more sustainable. Town Deal seeks investment opportunities and initiatives to deliver enhanced opportunities to green the town centre environment, encourage sustainable travel modes and implement public realm contributing to sustainable objectives. |
| Work with our partners to enable Colchester town centre to be a more vibrant, resilient and adaptable to future change. | Continued collaboration with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council; Town Deal seeks investment opportunities and initiatives to deliver enhanced opportunities to deliver projects which will enable Colchester to be a more vibrant town centre. |
| Transform the Northern Gateway as a hub for improved wellbeing, physical activity, jobs, housing and renewable energy. | The Sports Park completes in Autumn 2020 and opens in Spring 2021. The Walk commenced in July 2020 and completes in Summer 2021. CNG South will commence construction in 2021. |
| Address the inequality of access to Gigabit Broadband in communities. | Over 100km of broadband cabling has been delivered so far. Broadband deployment works started in July 2020 and will complete in April 2021. The High Street works were coordinated with ECC and deployed early, before the town centre “re-opened”, to allow the pavement repairs to follow on with minimal disruption to the re-opening town centre businesses. The Local Broadband Full Fibre Network (LFFN) Ultrafast Broadband Project has led to over £10m of private investment being secured from VX Fibre who will be deploying ultrafast broadband into our most deprived wards that would otherwise not be provided for by the open market for |

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| | many years, this has been achieved using the Councils own housing assets as nodes for the additional VX network. Those installations are underway.<br><br>Other opportunities are beginning to emerge as this innovative project becomes more recognised within the telecoms industry, putting Colchester on the map. |
| Tackle local skills shortages working with businesses, University of Essex, Colchester Institute and other partners. | Ongoing engagement with Partners including SELEEP, Colchester Institute, Essex University and Essex County to encourage and promote skills training and upskilling of the existing and new workforce. |
| **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. | Town Deal – Town Investment Plan on behalf of We Are Colchester Board is to be submitted on 31 October 2020. This will seek to secure £25 million of additional / catalyst funding for projects identified in the TIP. |
| Collaborate with the town centre Business Improvement District (BID). | Continued collaboration with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council. This included a considerable amount of recovery work to re-open the town centre following government restrictions. Work in ongoing to support the re-opening and provide confidence in the town centre as a destination. This is supported by the work on the emerging Town Investment Plan. |

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| Continue to regenerate Colchester Town Centre using Council assets, aligned private investment, the Town Deal and Town Investment Plan. | Town Deal – Town Investment Plan (TIP) on behalf of We Are Colchester Board is to be submitted on 31October 2020. This will seek to secure £25 million of additional / catalyst funding for projects identified in the TIP. |
| **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 and it will also respond to the growth ambitions of the North Essex Growth Strategy and the Local Industrial Strategy. |
| 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.<br><br>Up to date local plan in place that allocate sites and identifies infrastructure requirements.<br><br>Approval of applications in line with policies securing appropriate infrastructure. |
| 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. |

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| | Several other environmental solutions discussed with Carbon Trust and are being researched by the team. |
| Maximise the Social Value benefits derived from third party contracts. | In late September 2020, the Procurement Team, in conjunction with the Social Value Portal, completed the work to incorporate monitorable social value measures into tender processes. There are currently several tenders in development before the first one is issued using the new method to capture the social value offer. |
| Ensure the Council's assets continue to contribute to economic growth and opportunity. Develop a decarbonisation financial strategy and investment plan. | Asset Management Strategy Plan to be finalised, building on the completed Interim Asset Management Strategy (Feb 2020) to reflect the Council's Covid Recovery Plan. To be finalised December 2021. |
| ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Develop and agree the Council's Economic Recovery plan. | The Council's full Recovery Plan has been developed and is being 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 is monitored on a regular basis. Alongside many other actions that support economic recovery from Covid 19, our bid for £25m from The Town Deal forms a major part of the economic 'cell' of the plan and will be submitted to Government at the end of October 2020 (see below). |

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| Agree the Town Deal bid and Town Investment Plan submission with partners. | Town Deal – Town Investment Plan on behalf of We Are Colchester Board is to be submitted a on 31st October 2020. This will seek to secure £25 million of additional / catalyst funding for projects identified in the TIP. |
| Deliver the Local Broadband Full Fibre (LBFF) Network project. | As above, commenced and continues, on time and in budget. |
| Work in partnership to support our Business Improvement District (BID). | Continued collaboration with the BID and other partners including Essex County Council. |
| Providing enhanced support to businesses through Covid-19 working with business networks to direct appropriate interventions. | Economy Recovery Plan incorporates a wide range of actions, initiatives, and objectives to support business through the post Covid-19 recovery period. Direct and indirect support to business provided by CBC to help build resilience including funding Colbea to provide additional 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. Completes before the end of 2020 and opens Easter 2021. |

**Celebrating our heritage and culture:**

- 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

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| • ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **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. The Council remains committed to the delivery of a Cultural Strategy for Colchester. However, the entire cultural and creative community in the Borough, from National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) to grassroots level, has been massively impacted by Covid and faces ongoing challenges. Therefore, the assumptions underpinning the original scope may no longer be valid, and different outcomes desirable. We need to test this with key local stakeholders, but also with ACE as our major investors as the intention is to align with the latter's 10-year plan, but their priorities may also be changing to suit the new situation.<br><br>Meetings with these groups are scheduled for October and November 2020 and following any revision of the scope agreed the procurement process will restart end 2020. |
| Agree the key milestones and investment necessary to deliver the strategy. | See above – this will be autumn 2021. |
| Continue to provide sustainable grant funding to support Mercury Theatre, Firstsite and Colchester Arts Centre | Three-year grant funding commitment agreed for 20/21 - 2022/2023.<br><br>20/21 Strategic Arts Partner grants front loaded at the beginning of year in line with Arts Council England (ACE) to support organisations through Covid. |

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| (CAC) and help the sector to adapt and recover from the impact of Covid-19. | Additional match funding committed to unlock Cultural Recovery Fund Kick Start funding for in train capital project at CAC. |
| Identify further opportunities to improve the cultural offer for residents and visitors. | 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 attend to update representatives, signpost to funding and listen to concerns.<br><br>Grants for the Creative Events Fund were awarded in Feb 2020 for a wide range of activity across the arts and the Borough's communities. Due to Covid restrictions the majority will not take place this year, and grants are held over until 2021. 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** | **Achievements** |
| Promote Colchester's heritage and visitor attractions to increase visitor numbers and to support jobs. | 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. Since reopening, the Castle has seen visitor figures at between 50% and 60% of |

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| | the previous year. This compares favourably to many other museum services that are reporting figures of between 25% and 40%. The display of the Turner masterpiece, 'Walton Bridges' in September has helped sustain numbers after a lull in early September. After initial interest, school figures remain very low prompting the service to develop a digital offer due for roll out in October 2020. |
| Expand the events programme to encourage more visitors and position Colchester as a destination for major events. | Several events had to be cancelled or postponed in 2020 and this has been managed well. Re-commencement of weddings and events have had to be flexibly implemented with ever-changing safety advice. Some events will still be proceeding safely in 2020 Autumn/Winter season and several events are booked for 2021 already including Olly Murs in Castle Park. A nationally significant event has also been secured for the town in June 2021 and 2022 (but currently embargoed by the promoters); this will boost the town centre economy and provide social value. |
| Work with partners and the Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) to improve the public realm for residents and visitors. | 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.<br><br>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. |

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| | 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.<br><br>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.<br><br>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.<br><br>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.<br><br>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.<br><br>A competitive tender process has been undertaken and a new Christmas lighting scheme will be implemented this year.<br><br>Officers are working with the BID and other key stakeholders to undertake a tourism signage replacement programme.<br><br>Green Heritage award achieved for Castle Park. |

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| | The Town Deal Bid / Town Investment Plan incorporates opportunities to deliver improved public realm through specific projects within the Town Deal Boundary. |
| 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.<br>• A photography project with students from the University of Essex will deliver more new images for the site |
| **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. | Structural works on the Roman Church have now been completed and the monument is protected. Designs for a new interpretation panel are complete ready for installation.<br><br>Heritage Manager working with Civic Society to deliver appropriate commemoration. Interpretation being developed and conservation plan for the graves determined for action later in the year<br><br>An interpretation panel on Priory street (Bastion 5) has been installed and the panel for the Balkerne gate replaced<br><br>The Heritage Manager/ Heritage officer delivered a digital programme for Heritage Open Days. 14,827 people were engaged online by 14 films (10 of which produced by the museum service) |

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| | 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. |
| Continue to deliver a major exhibition at Colchester Castle bi-annually. | 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 'Future Learn' online course) should attract significant public and media interest. It is also hoped that the display will come at the right time to assist in the recovery of Castle admissions, income and contribute to the wider Colchester economy through tourism. |
| Encourage and support the use of our Heritage sites for Community events, activities and theatre. | The Castle team have worked hard to identify activities (new and existing) that can be hosted safely. The Escape room experience has been reinstated and bespoke tours introduced including 'Dark Tours' for Halloween. With support from a grant from the DCMS 'Culture Recovery Fund' the Natural History Museum will reopen for October half-term. A partnership has been established with Barnardo'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. |
| ***During 2020/21 we will*** | |
| **Goal** | **Achievements** |
| Develop and agree approach to delivering a new Cultural Strategy in | Consultation with major stakeholders over timing and changes to focus/content will take place this autumn: |

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| collaboration with partners and commission work. | • Arts Council 13 November<br>• Colchester National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) 15 October<br>• Creative Colchester Board<br><br>The scope and invitation to tender will then be revised based on the feedback and the procurement process restarted end 2020. |
| Complete the Mercury Rising project. | Work on this project is the only site that managed to continue throughout the entire lockdown period under the safe operating procedures. Funding of £250k was recently secured and the project will complete shortly. |
| Deliver Decoding the Dead in Colchester. | 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. Should social distancing no longer be a factor it is anticipated that the exhibition will help to restore visitor figures and income to pre-COVID levels. 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 and help identify future new university partnerships and funding. Digital outputs such as a 'Future Learn' course in partnership with the University of Reading should engage 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. |
| Launch a new Visitor Website. | Website launched Aug 2020 supported by a Google Ad words campaign. Despite very reduced activity on the site during the Covid lockdown period and traditional drivers of usage such as |

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| | events being severely curtailed by the crisis, rolling year statistics show a 10.9% increase in users as at end Sept 2020 (representing an additional 34K users). |
| 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 and it is anticipated that proposals for a new redevelopment scheme will be prepared and consulted on during 2021. |
| Seek grant funding and implement schemes to enhance Balkerne Square and St Nicholas Square as new public spaces to showcase the adjacent assets. | £1m funding has been secured. |