



## Cabinet

Item  
**7(i)**

28 January 2015

Report of	Chief Operating Officer	Author	Ann Hedges
Title	Strategic Plan 2015 -18		 282202
Wards affected	All		

**Cabinet is asked to recommend to full Council that it adopts the strategic Plan 2015-18 at its meeting on 18 February 2015**

### 1. Decisions Required

- 1.1 To agree the draft Strategic Plan 2015-18 and recommend to full Council that it be adopted at its meeting on 18 February 2015.
- 1.2 To ask officers to prepare an action plan to achieve commitments in the Strategic Plan

### 2. Reasons for Decisions

- 2.1 The last Strategic Plan was published in February 2012 and runs to 2015. It now needs to be refreshed in light of changing circumstances and expectations
- 2.2 The Strategic Plan is one of the core statutory elements of the Council's Policy framework, as set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution. It must therefore be adopted by full Council
- 2.3 The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Council's three year Medium Term Financial Forecast and its capital Programme. Both the Plan and the Budget will be debated at the same full Council on 18 February 2015.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The current Strategic Plan expires at the end of the financial year. A new plan is required and needs to be adopted by full Council
- 3.2 The absence of a Strategic Plan would create a significant risk of the Council failing to identify and deliver on its core priorities.

### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The new Strategic Plan will replace the existing plan that expires on the 31 March 2015.
- 4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the overall vision and a set of priorities for the borough and the Council for the next three years. An action plan will be developed to support the Strategic Plan. This will set out specific actions to be taken to deliver the priorities.
- 4.3 A set of principles was adopted for the new Strategic Plan:
  - The new plan would be more about the place that just the Council

- It would demonstrate leadership and look at a long term vision
- That it would be meaningful
- That it would be ambitious for the place

4.4 The new Plan has a number of sections:

- A new vision statement “Rich heritage, ambitious future”
- A description of some of the achievements from the last Strategic Plan
- A set of four words that sum up what we want to achieve
- Broad descriptions of what we will work towards under each of these words

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 The Council undertakes significant amounts of consultation every year however it was felt that some additional information was required to help develop the this Strategic Plan. A number of consultations have been undertaken:

5.2 Qualitative consultation with the public was commissioned and a series of structured focus group were held with residents representing different ages, gender, location, demographic profiles, BME and disability. Some important messages came out of these:

- That most people liked living in Colchester
- That we need to make more of our heritage
- That there need to be more opportunities for business
- That transport and retail need to be improved
- That growth needs to be managed and housing needs to be affordable
- That we need to be ambitious for the whole Borough

5.3 A series of workshops was also carried out with staff. These sessions listened to staff views about priorities and helped to shape the plan

5.4 Key partners were also consulted. A draft of the strategic plan was shared and views sought on how this fitted with the priorities in other organisations.

## **6. Publicity Considerations**

6.1 The Strategic Plan is a key element of the Council's continued external engagement activity. The Council will continue to ensure promotion of strategic activity via new and existing communications channels including direct, in person, in the press and on social media platforms.

6.2 The Council will communicate at key milestones of strategic projects to promote a strong positive reputation as a vibrant, prosperous, thriving and welcoming borough

## **7. Financial implications**

7.1 The financial implications of the action plan to deliver the priorities are incorporated into the annual budgeting process

7.2 A sum of £547k from the New Homes Bonus for 2015/16 will be used to support actions for delivery of the Strategic Plan in areas where it is felt additional resource is needed

## **8 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 8.1 The Strategic Plan 2015-18 has a range of objectives and themes which will promote equality and diversity. This includes “Develop a strong sense of community across the Borough by enabling people and groups to take more ownership and responsibility for their quality of life” and “Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses with a friendly feel that embraces tolerance and diversity”.
- 8.2 An Equality Impact Assessment is available to view on the website [here](#), or by following this pathway from the homepage:  
Your Council>How the Council works>Equality and Diversity>Equality Impact Assessments>Corporate and Financial Management>Strategic Plan 2015-18.
- 8.3 The communication strategy for the Plan will comply with the existing Council policies for access and availability in different formats
- 8.4 The plan includes a priority about equality and diversity that meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

## **9 Community Safety Implications**

- 9.1 Community Safety remains a priority in the Strategic Plan

## **10 Health and Safety Implications**

- 10.1 There are no Health and Safety implications of the Strategic Plan.

## **11 Risk Management Implications**

- 11.1 As action plans are developed, risks will be identified
- 11.2 The absence of a Strategic Plan would create a risk for the Council failing to deliver on its core priorities

## **Background Papers**

- Scrutiny report 27 January 2015
- Summary of the Public Consultation



**VIBRANT**  
**PROSPEROUS**  
**THRIVING**  
**WELCOMING**



**RICH HERITAGE,  
AMBITIOUS FUTURE**

Colchester's Strategic Plan 2015-18

# Achievements

**The Strategic Plan 2012–2015 set out our priorities.  
Here are some of the things we have delivered:**

## Transport

- A new junction on the A12, enabling regeneration in North Colchester
- Additional cycle routes, encouraging more people to cycle
- Park & Ride in North Colchester
- Opened the Stanway Western Bypass

## Economy

- Relocation of the Borough's Charter Market to the High Street
- Land deals for Northern Gateway creating new jobs
- Start up of Colchester Enterprise Hub to support future entrepreneurs

## Investment

- Williams & Griffin committing £30m investment in the store
- The development of the Knowledge Gateway at Essex University
- Over £1m in grants to support the Voluntary Sector
- Maintained grants to the Arts

## Housing

- The first new Council Houses built in 30 years
- Refurbishment of Worsnop House, a sheltered housing scheme
- Investment in our existing housing stock with the installation of 800 solar panels

## Leisure and heritage

- Redevelopment of Colchester Castle with £4.2m of external funding
- Embraced the Olympics by staging a leg of the Torch Relay
- Created new play areas in Castle Park
- Usage of Leisure World increased by 20% after refurbishment
- Green Flags for green spaces

## Environment

- Introduction of a food waste collection to 70,000 homes
- Undertook 11 Days of Action
- Achieved Purple Flag status for our town centre
- Met our target to reduce CO2 emissions



# Our Colchester

## The Strategic Plan 2015–2018

This plan sets out the direction and potential for our Borough. As a Council we have an ambitious range of goals to achieve that build on the successes of the last three years, working with a large number of partners to get the best for our residents. To help us decide on the priorities for the next three years we held a number of focus groups with the public, independently selected to make sure we included all sections of our communities.

### These focus groups gave us some important messages:

- Most people like living in Colchester
- We need to make more of our heritage
- There need to be more opportunities for business
- Transport and retail need to be improved
- Growth needs to be managed and housing needs to be affordable
- We need to be ambitious for the whole Borough

### These are the four words that we feel sum up what we want to achieve:



#### **Vibrant**

promoting our heritage and working hard to shape our future.



#### **Thriving**

attracting business and selling Colchester as a destination.



#### **Prosperous**

generating opportunities for growth and supporting infrastructure.



#### **Welcoming**

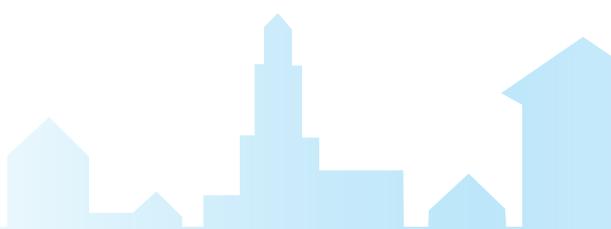
a place where people can grow and be proud to live.



# COLCHESTER VIBRANT



- Enhance the diverse retail and leisure mix supporting independent businesses valued by residents and visitors
- Develop a strong sense of community across the Borough by enabling people and groups to take more ownership and responsibility for their quality of life
- Make more of the great culture and heritage in Colchester so that visitors can enjoy the history and passion
- Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure.





- Promote Colchester to attract further inward investment and additional businesses, providing greater and more diverse employment and tourism opportunities
- Support people to develop the skills needed by employers in the future to take advantage of higher paid jobs being created
- Provide opportunities to increase the number of homes available including those that are affordable for local people and to build and refurbish our own Council houses for people in significant need
- Ensure transport infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth to keep the Borough moving.



# COLCHESTER THRIVING



- Promote Colchester's heritage and wide ranging tourism attractions to enhance our reputation as a destination
- Be recognised as a centre of learning with excellent schools and colleges and educational opportunities for young people to make the most of their potential
- Be clear about the major opportunities to work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve more for Colchester than we could on our own
- Cultivate Colchester's green spaces and opportunities for health, wellbeing and the enjoyment of all.



# COLCHESTER WELCOMING



- Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses with a friendly feel that embraces tolerance and diversity
- Improve the cleanliness and health of the place by supporting events that promote fun and wellbeing
- Create a business friendly environment, encouraging business start-ups, support to small and medium sized enterprise and offer development in the right locations
- Make Colchester confident about its own abilities, to compete with the best of the towns in the region to generate a sense of pride.





## **Vibrant**

promoting our heritage and working hard to shape our future.



## **Prosperous**

generating opportunities for growth and supporting infrastructure.



## **Thriving**

attracting business and selling Colchester as a destination.



## **Welcoming**

a place where people can grow and be proud to live.



Colchesterfuture



Colchesterfuture



To find out more about this plan visit our website  
[www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) or scan the code here.

