

Report of	Assistant Director Environment	Author	Richard Block ☎ 506825
Title	Environment and Communities Futures Business Case		
Wards affected	All wards		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines proposed service changes and financial savings following a review of the services that make up Environment and Communities.

## 2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel should:

- Consider the proposed changes and whether they will result in services that are fit for the future
- and
- Scrutinise the financial savings proposed.

## 3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 To ensure services are designed so they are fit for the future and that adequate financial savings in relation to the services being reviewed are achieved.

## 4. Background Information

### Introduction

- 4.1 The senior management restructure which came into effect on 1 July 2017 included a clear intention to commence a series of service reviews to be known as “Service Futures”. These aim to drive out inefficiencies, progress further cultural change and take full advantage of our investment in Information Technology and more flexible ways of working.
- 4.2 A review of several services under the theme of “Environment and Communities” was commenced in January 2018. These services are currently led in different Group Management Teams by the Assistant Director - Communities and Assistant Director – Environment. Numerous links and potential benefits of bringing the services closer together had previously been recognised which is why the areas were reviewed together.

### Services Reviewed

- 4.3 A range of services were in scope for this review and these are shown in the table below:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget/FTE's</b>
Community Enabling	Work on a range of projects and activities often linked to supporting the most vulnerable residents (Warm Homes, Health and Wellbeing, Startwell, Older and Younger resident initiatives). Also linked to behaviour change, enabling and managing demand. Administer a range of grants and funding.	Gross and Net Budget £471,000  FTE 6.02
Community Safety	Support and co-ordinate the Community Safety Partnership. Deliver initiatives such as Crucial Crew for Younger and Older People; Community Days of Action; Domestic Homicide Review Co-ordination.	Gross and Net Budget £64,000  FTE 1.65
Lion Walk Activity Centre	Activity Centre for older people in the town centre which provides a range of activities aimed at increasing health and well-being and reducing social isolation. Also provides	Gross Budget £118,700  Net Budget £67,700  FTE

	meals and snacks throughout the day Monday to Friday.	2.54
Animal Services	Operate a statutory dog warden service to collect stray dogs & undertake proactive initiatives to promote responsible dog ownership (microchipping). Provide a pest control service for residential and commercial premises.	Gross Budget £64,900  Net Budget £22,700  FTE 2
Environmental Protection	Undertake statutory duties under various Acts to deal with public health concerns, district sanitation, statutory nuisance, infectious disease, accumulations, filthy & verminous premises, waste, water quality, atmospheric pollution, contaminated land, drainage issues and antisocial behaviour. Also deliver a responsive 'out of hours' regulatory service to respond to issues such as noise, statutory nuisance, premises licensing and health & safety.	Gross Budget £346,200  Net Budget £330,400  FTE 5.6
Private Sector Housing	Review housing conditions, undertake risk assessments and take appropriate enforcement action. Also undertake statutory duty to licence all mandatory Houses in Multiple Occupation. Provide financial assistance through Disabled Facility Grants to support vulnerable people to live independently and stay healthy, warm and safe in their own homes.	Gross Budget £297,400  Net Budget £252,600  FTE 9
Public Health	Coordinate activity to deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Colchester. Support Essex County Council and	Gross and Net Budget £30,500  FTE

	Colchester Borough Council in delivering their shared public health ambitions including working to embed public health practice and collaboration to reduce health inequalities.	1
Licensing	Monitor and enforce the provision of alcohol, entertainment, late night refreshment and sex entertainment venues, gambling, personal licenses to ensure public safety. Also licence and enforce taxi and private hire drivers, riding establishments, pleasure boats, animal boarding, dog breeding, tattoo parlours and pet shops.	Gross Budget £186,100  Net Budget (£267,800)  FTE 3.7
Food Safety and Health and Safety	Register and regularly inspect food premises and caravan parks. Investigate food complaints, infectious diseases, undertake food sampling and provide food hygiene courses. Investigate health and safety complaints and accidents.	Gross Budget £276,600  Net Budget £256,800  FTE 5.4
Building Control	Administer and enforce building regulations by working co-operatively with building owners, home owners, architects and developers to ensure buildings are safe, healthy and efficient to meet the standards set by the regulations. Respond to general building enquiries, notifications of unauthorised works, demolitions, and dangerous structures.	Gross Budget £393,072  Net Budget (£1928)  FTE 7
Land Charges	Maintain an accurate and up to date Local Land Charges Register. Provision of statutory land and property search service to solicitors, home	Gross Budget £137,300  Net Budget (£206,600)

	owners and personal searchers on specific parcels of land or properties.	FTE 2.6
--	--	------------

- 4.4 These services have total gross revenue budgets of £2.38 Million. They are managed by 3 separate group managers. 2 of them report to the Assistant Director for Environment and 1 reports to the Assistant Director for Communities. The current structures of these services are shown at appendix 1.

## Findings of Review

- 4.5 A series of staff workshops were undertaken, and these identified the following key themes/issues:

Theme
There is currently duplication and a lack of knowledge across services working to solve similar issues
There is not sufficient coordination and collaboration with other agencies with shared aims
A charge could be made for some services that are currently free
More intelligent use of data and joint tasking could mean more effective interventions
Some services have greater synergies with other parts of the Council
Opportunities to bid for external funding were being missed

- 4.6 Proposed solutions to respond to these themes and to generate budget savings are shown below.

## Changes to Organisational Structure

- 4.7 It is proposed that a new management structure is created shown at appendix 2. This will bring together the services that deal with community safety and the night time economy under the same Group Manager. This will also result in overall number of Group Managers being reduced by 1 creating an estimated annual saving of £65,000.
- 4.8 It is also proposed that these services and those that play a key role in improving health and wellbeing are moved under the leadership of the Assistant Director for Communities. This is because there are many synergies and links across all these services which can be exploited by placing them in the same Group Management Team.
- 4.9 Zones would be moved under the leadership of the Assistant Director for Environment. No other changes would be made to Zones. This will balance leadership responsibilities across the Assistant Directors and allow better coordination and collaboration between Zones and Waste. The resulting structure will reduce duplication, improve co-ordination and provide greater resilience across the new Group Management Teams.
- 4.10 It is recognised that Zones also play a key role in community development and enabling. Strong and effective links need to be retained across the resulting

services to ensure this is not lost and both Assistant Directors are fully committed to ensuring this happens.

- 4.11 The new structure will assist with coordination and collaboration with other agencies by bringing both licensing and community safety together which are both key services requiring considerable external collaboration.

#### Improved targeting and tasking

- 4.12 It is proposed that a new tasking process is introduced with key staff sharing intelligence and data to effectively tackle issues. This will also involve Zones. Once more effective targeting of resources is developed, further staff savings may be generated although it is not possible to predict the levels at this stage.

#### Use of IT to free up resource

- 4.13 Because of the successful introduction of a new IT system in Land Charges, many processes have been removed. From April 2019 one post can be removed from this team contributing a saving of £14,000. This post has deliberately been filled temporarily eliminating the need for a redundancy and the associated costs. The same IT system will also facilitate a reduction in the resource required to complete Food Safety work generating a saving of £15,000 with no associated redundancy costs.

#### New/Increased Income

- 4.14 It is proposed to increase income from a range of services shown in the table below:

Service	Justification	Estimated annual income
Re-inspection of food businesses	To ensure businesses pay for the non-statutory service of an early rescoring inspection for their "score on the door"	£15,000
Increased commercial pest control contracts	Take on additional commercial pest control contracts (2 additional contracts per month) to cover a greater proportion of existing staff costs with income.	£5300
Pavement café licensing	Regulate tables and chairs placed on the highway through a licensing scheme	£3750
Licensing advice	To ensure businesses pay for non-statutory advice.	£6500
Start-up advice to Food Businesses	To provide additional regulatory advice to Food Businesses prior to start up.	£9000

<b>Total</b>		<b>£39,550</b>
--------------	--	----------------

- 4.15 All estimated annual income figures in the above table are minimum amounts and are based on conservative estimates.

## **5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 5.1 No service reductions are being proposed which means there are no implications.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The proposed structure will result in services that are far more effective in contributing to delivering the Wellbeing theme of the [Strategic Plan 2018-21](#) for the reasons outlined in this report.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 A formal consultation process is currently being undertaken with staff affected by these proposals to get their views on them. Staff workshops early on in the review also helped to inform these proposals.
- 7.2 A number of the services affected work closely in partnership with external stakeholders. These stakeholders will be consulted on the proposals once they have been adapted to take account of feedback from staff and Members.

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 There are no publicity considerations.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 Reviews carried out under the Futures Programme make a key contribution to saving identified in the medium term financial plan. The table below shows the savings that would be generated from this review:

Description	Revenue saving (Annual)	One off costs
New Group Management Structure	£65,000	£27,000
Efficiencies created by IT	£29,000	0
New or increased income	£39,550	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£133,550</b>	<b>£27,000</b>

## **10. Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 10.1 The proposed changes and structure will ensure the services that play a key role in delivering Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing are more closely

aligned. This will ensure even greater effectiveness in delivering objectives in these areas.

## **11. Health and Safety Implications**

11.1 There are no health and safety implications.

## **12. Risk Management Implications**

12.1 The proposals above will result in reduced overall management capacity but this is mitigated by the new structure creating greater synergies and alignment of services.

12.2 Some financial savings are reliant on the new Arcus IT system being delivered and operational by 2019/20 but this is mitigated through effective programme management of the project.

12.3 There is a risk that the level of new income referred to above is not achieved but estimates are minimum expected levels and based on the views of the Group Managers responsible for the Services.