

Cabinet Meeting

**Online Meeting, Virtual Meeting Platform
Wednesday, 14 October 2020 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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Occasionally certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual have to be considered in private. When this is the case an announcement will be made, the live broadcast will end and the meeting will be moved to consider in private.

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COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Cabinet
Wednesday, 14 October 2020 at 18:00

The Cabinet Members are:

Leader and Chairman	Councillor Mark Cory (Liberal Democrats)
	Councillor Adam Fox (Labour and Co-operative)
	Councillor Martin Goss (Liberal Democrats)
	Councillor Theresa Higgins (Liberal Democrats)
	Councillor David King (Liberal Democrats)
	Councillor Mike Lilley (Labour and Co-operative)
	Councillor Julie Young (Labour)

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

Please note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally dealt with briefly.

Live Broadcast

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

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ColchesterCBC>

1 Welcome and Announcements (Virtual Meetings)

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors to the meeting and remind those participating to mute their microphones when not talking. The Chairman will invite all Councillors and Officers participating in the meeting to introduce themselves. The Chairman will, at regular intervals, ask Councillors to indicate if they wish to speak or ask a question and Councillors will be invited to speak in turn by the Chairman. A vote on each item of business will be taken by roll call of each Councillor and the outcome of each vote will be confirmed by the Democratic Services Officer.

2 Urgent Items

The Chairman 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 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 pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Cabinet will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2020 are a correct record.

02-09-20

7 - 20

5 Have Your Say! (Virtual Meetings)

Members of the public may make representations to the meeting. Each representation may be no longer than three minutes (500 words). Members of the public may register their wish to address the meeting by registering online by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting date. In addition a written copy of the representation will need to be supplied for use in the event of unforeseen technical difficulties preventing participation at the meeting itself.

6 Decisions Reviewed by the Scrutiny Panel

The Councillors 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 Business and Resources

7(i) Colchester Town Deal

21 - 34

Cabinet will consider a report seeking approval for the submission of Colchester's Town Investment Plan which forms a key element of the Town Deal programme; to Government on 29th October 2020 for and on behalf of Colchester's 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board. The report presents the ambition and vision for Colchester which has been developed by Colchester's 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board, the process to develop this further to form the basis of the Town Investment Plan, sets out the requirements on the Council in its ongoing role as facilitator and secretariat to the 'We are Colchester' board, and its role as Accountable Body for delivery of a £25m capital programme if Colchester's bid is successful

7(ii) Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Forecast

35 - 48

Cabinet will consider a report setting out the current position on the 2021/22 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2021/22 to 2024/25.

7(iii) **Covid 19 Recovery - Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation** 49 - 108

Cabinet will consider a report inviting it to approve the business case for Council Efficiency and Transformation

7(iv) **2019-20 Year End Review of Risk Management** 109 - 132

Cabinet will consider a report providing members an overview of the Council's risk management activity undertaken during the financial year from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

8 **Waste, Environment and Transportation**

8(i) **Recommendations from the Environment and Sustainability Panel** 133 - 184

Cabinet will consider recommendations made by the Environment and Sustainability Panel at its meeting on 17 September 2020.

8(ii) **Contract Award for Liquid Fuels** 185 - 188

Cabinet will consider a report inviting it To award a contract for the supply of liquid fuels (diesel, gas, oil and 'adblue' diesel) to be supplied to Shrub End Depot for use by the range of vehicles that make up the Council's fleet, across a range of services, for the period 1 November 2020 –t31 October 2023.

8(iii) **Request for Delegated Authority for the Procurement of Fleet: Caged Tipping Vehicles** 189 - 196

Cabinet will consider a report inviting it to agree the options for the purchase or contract hiring of twenty-one 3.5 tonne caged tipping vehicles and to delegate authority to purchase/contract hire the vehicles depending on the outcome of the procurement process and provided that costs are met within existing budgets.

9 **Customers**

9(i) **Report of Urgent Decision taken under Cabinet Procedure Rule 22 Test and Trace Support Payments** 197 - 234

Cabinet will receive a report giving details of an urgent decision taken by the Leader of the Council under Rule 22 of the Cabinet Procedure Rules in respect of the policies to implement Test and Trace Support Payments.

10 **General**

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

235 -
236

Cabinet will consider a report summarising the details of submissions made to meetings of Cabinet and Council under the Have Your Say! provisions.

11 **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)

<p style="text-align: center;">CABINET 2 September 2020</p>

Present: - Councillor Cory (Chairman)
Councillors Fox, Goss, Higgins, King, Lilley and J. Young.

Also in attendance: - Councillors Barber, G. Oxford, Scordis, Scott-Boutell and T. Young

492. Minutes

Councillor G. Oxford attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet to seek clarification of paragraph (ii) of the resolution in minute 490 and whether it meant that wheeled bins would be introduced regardless of the views of ward councillors. Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that it was an in principle decision and that there would further consultation with ward councillors prior to any further roll out of wheeled bins.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 August 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

493. Have Your Say

Councillor Scordis attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet about the recent white paper on changes to the planning system. This had been subject to full discussions at the Local Plan Committee. There had been cross party consensus and it had resolved that the Chair should write to the three MPs representing Colchester to urge them to lobby against the proposals. He urged Cabinet to do the same. There were serious concerns about a number of aspects including proposed housing numbers, the provision of affordable housing, permitted development, the allocation of growth areas and the loss of democratic accountability.

Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, responded and indicated he shared the concerns and would be bringing forward a motion on this issue to the meeting of Full Council in October, which would seek the support of the MPs representing the borough for the Council's views. This fitted in with the timescale for the responses to the consultation on the white paper.

Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety and Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Housing, expressed their support for the views of Councillor Scordis. They stated their concern about the proposals in the white paper and their hope that the MPs representing the borough would take appropriate action and lobby against the

proposals.

494. Better Colchester Strategic Plan 2020-23

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

Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, introduced the Better Colchester Strategic Plan 2020-23. As a consequence of the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic the Council needed to review its strategic priorities to ensure they remained relevant focused on the needs of the borough's residents. It remained ambitious and inspiring. There were five key themes:-

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

Tackling the climate challenge remained the biggest challenge and sustainability ran through all the other priorities. The focus on safe, healthy and active communities would help tackle inequalities, whilst prioritising the economy would ensure that the borough was well placed to bounce back from the impact of Covid 19. The value of arts and heritage had been demonstrated during the Covid 19 pandemic where arts organisations had helped communities stay safe and entertained.

Councillor Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services, highlighted the work the Council was undertaking in conjunction with partners to improve cycling and walking provision within the borough. Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, stressed that the Council would help arts organisations with their national portfolio funding applications for funding. Continued support and investment in the arts was vital for the local economy, as the arts and heritage sector supported 7000 jobs and attracted tourism into the borough.

Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, stressed the importance of growing the economy and ensuring all residents benefitted from the resulting growth. The impact of the pandemic on the local economy must not be underestimated and the full effects had not yet been felt. Support for the economy would encourage investment in Colchester. The borough needed to be confident and be prepared to adapt to the new environment.

Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Housing, stressed that the Council was using its powers to borrow to invest in housing, particularly affordable housing. He was proud of the Council's work in providing new Council housing and improving sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The Council was working to provide sustainable communities at Northern Gateway and through the Tendring/Colchester Garden Community.

Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, highlighted how well Colchester's communities had reacted to the Covid 19 pandemic. Volunteer groups and third sector organisations such as Community360 had worked together with the Council to support communities and minimise the impact on the vulnerable. In terms of public safety, significant improvements to the CCTV network were planned.

Councillor Cory thanked Pam Donnelly, Strategic Director, Customer and Relations, and Lucie Breadman, Assistant Director, Communities, for their work with One Colchester through the pandemic, which had helped support residents, particularly the most vulnerable. The Council would be able to build on this work as it delivered its strategic priorities.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Plan 2020-23 be agreed.

RECOMMENDED to *COUNCIL* that the Strategic Plan 2020-23 be adopted and included in the Policy Framework

REASONS

To enable the Strategic Plan to be adopted and included in the Policy Framework.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The current Strategic Plan expires at the end of 2020-21 but does not reflect significant new priorities agreed by the Council as part of setting its budget strategy and Medium-Term Financial Forecast. Crucially the current Strategic Plan does not reflect the unanimous decision by Full Council to declare a Climate Emergency or the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

A new plan is required and needs to be adopted by the Council. The absence of a relevant Strategic Plan would create a significant risk of the Council failing to identify and deliver on its core priorities.

495. Council Recovery Programme and Plan (Covid 19)

The Assistant Director, Place and Client Services, submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, introduced the report. The Council Recovery Programme and Plan had been subject to robust and thorough scrutiny at the meeting of the Scrutiny Panel on 18 August. The fact that it had not been subject to major change despite this challenge showed the quality of the work by officers. The Plan would complement the Strategic Plan priorities.

A huge amount of work had been done on recovery from Covid 19. This did not focus solely on the economy. The development of new housing at Northern Gateway was also a

symbol of a strong recovery. The Plan would lead to investment in the public realm in the town centre which would help generate footfall in the town centre, The Council had also invested £100,000, which was a symbol of its commitment to the town centre. Whilst these were first steps, there were signs of better prospects in the future.

Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, stressed that that Covid 19 pandemic had exacerbated existing inequalities and the Council had worked hard to address these. The Council had ambitious plans for the town centre and it would pursue funding opportunities to support the town centre. Whilst it was important to be realistic on the budget constraints faced by the Council, officers had an excellent track record in seeking inward investment.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The progress made to date on the Council's Covid-19 Recovery Programme be noted.
- (b) The Covid-19 Recovery Plan as outlined in the Assistant Director's report (and at Appendix A) be approved.

REASONS

- (a) To endorse the approach to recovery from Coronavirus as represented by the development of the Recovery Programme summarised in the Assistant Director's report.
- (b) To approve and endorse the objectives and activity outlined in the Covid-19 Recovery Plan itself (Appendix A of the Assistant Director's report), acknowledging that the plan needs to be flexible and evolve in response to future uncertainties in the economy and society as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

A number of options were considered in relation to development of the 'cell' areas, with the option described being favoured as it was felt to reflect the broad areas of work needed to sustain recovery and aligned to existing Council priorities. The approach, framework and plan structure are outlined in detail in the report to Cabinet of 3 June 2020: Council Recovery Programme (Covid-19) and summarised in item 5 of the Assistant Director's report.

496. Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing

The Assistant Director of Place and Client Services submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Housing, introduced the report and made a presentation to Cabinet on the proposal to invest £2 million to acquire approximately 100 former Council homes. These would be refurbished and let at affordable social rents.

The housing would be managed by Colchester Borough Homes and would largely be in areas in which they already worked, which would help keep maintenance costs low. The houses would be brought up to a good standard and made energy efficient, in line with Council's climate emergency commitment. The homes would be let through the Council's choice based system, Gateway to Homechoice, and would be reserved for Colchester households. It was anticipated that 100 households would benefit and 220 children would be able to live in safe, decent and affordable homes as a consequence. Some homes would have the potential to be adapted for wheelchair users. The scheme would also help provide work for contractors and estate agents and would stimulate the Colchester housing market and therefore help contribute to the recovery programme. It was anticipated that more than one contract would be needed to manage the work of bringing the housing up to standard so the decision at 2.6 of the Assistant Director's report would need to be amended accordingly.

Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety and Councillor Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services, all expressed their support for the project, in particular the environmental and accessibility aspects.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The addition to the HRA capital programme for the acquisition of approximately 100 local homes at market rates be approved.
- (b) The granting of up to £2million of retained right to buy receipts to use towards the acquisition of the 100 homes be approved.
- (c) Financial provision be made in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme for 2020/21 and 2021/22, up to £22 million to enable the purchase of the 100 homes. The £22 million will include the £2 million approved at Cabinet in July 2020.
- (d) Financial provision be made in the HRA revenue estimates for 2020/21 and 2021/22 up to £150k for the associated revenue costs of purchasing the 100 homes.
- (e) The General Fund capital programme be amended to reflect that these acquisitions are now being undertaken in the HRA.
- (f) Authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing for the award of the contracts to carry out work to bring the properties up to a lettable standard and carry out the energy efficiency work.

REASONS

There are currently just under 3,000 households on the Council's Housing Register seeking affordable housing. There are also 170 households who have experienced homelessness in temporary accommodation waiting for a permanent home to become available. The Council continues to seek new and innovative ways to increase the supply of affordable housing and provide good quality, affordable and stable homes for

Colchester's residents who are in housing need.

In January 2020 Cabinet approved a new innovative approach to increasing the supply of affordable housing. Due to the acute financial pressures that the Council is experiencing as a result of the global health pandemic, the Council has had to review all of its operations and planned projects. Having carefully considered the benefits, risks and financial implications of the 100 Homes Project in the context of the Council's overall strategic priorities, Colchester Borough Council's Cabinet did not feel it could proceed with this project at this time in the General Fund.

With the reduction in the interest rate charged on Council borrowing in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) by the Public Works Loan Board, the HRA can afford to undertake the 100 acquisitions through use of Right-to-Buy (RTB) receipts and prudential borrowing.

The timeline for purchasing the 100 homes is ambitious. Once acquired the properties will be repaired, brought up to a good standard and have significant investment in environmental and sustainability improvements to ensure that the Council responds to its Climate emergency commitments. So that the project can be delivered on time and properties repaired and let as quickly as possible, delegated authority to award the contract for this work is requested, in the event that Cabinet meeting timetables would lead to a delay in the award and jeopardise the delivery of the project..

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The Council could do nothing, however as detailed in Section 5 of the Assistant Director's report, with rising homelessness pressures resulting in reduced lifetime outcomes for the affected households and the financial impact for the Council, this is not considered a realistic option.

Councillor King (in respect of being a director of North Essex Garden Communities Ltd) and Councillor J. Young (in respect of being a substitute director of North Essex Garden Communities Ltd) declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

497. North Essex Garden Communities Project and NEGC Ltd Update and Financial Information

The resolution from the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 17 August 2020 was submitted to the Cabinet a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Barber attended and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed Cabinet in his capacity as the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel on 17 August 2020. He indicated that recommendation (ii) had received unanimous cross party support. The Panel had felt that it had reached the limits of the work it could do on scrutinising the North Essex Garden Communities project and that it would benefit from an independent review, which would allow lessons to be learnt, particularly in regard to future delivery vehicles and as moves toward unitary authorities were explored. It was accepted that there would be a cost to

this, and the extent of this was not known, but if recommendation (I) was accepted this would create a saving. The recommendations were sensible and prudent

Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, responded. It was not the case that the Council had saved money as a result of the Council votes on 5 December 2019 and 15 July 2020. The Council was had commitments through the Shareholder Agreement and it was damaging to the Council's reputation not to meet these. This was particularly the case when discussions on unitary authorities would be needed with the other authorities who were parties to the Shareholder Agreement.

Insufficient consideration had been to what had been achieved through the NEGC project.. The delivery of the Tendring/Colchester garden community would be a huge prize. There was also a continuing misrepresentation of the costs and there needed to be an emphasis on looking forward. Colchester was a well run and well managed authority and the continued emphasis on this issue and failure to meet the Council's commitments put this at risk.

In respect of recommendation (i) the Cabinet would follow proper accounting procedures in line with advice from the section 151 officer. If the Council did not pay its 2019/20 contribution in accordance with the shareholder agreement his view was that it is appropriate that the NEGC project accounts exclude the 2019/20 Colchester Borough Council carrying costs. These are at an equivalent level to the outstanding Colchester Borough Council contribution. The final NEGC project balance is being determined, with distribution an issue that must be jointly decided with Colchester's fellow Shareholders, Essex County Council, and Braintree and Tendring District Councils. Therefore Cabinet could not agree to the proposals in recommendation (i).

In respect of recommendation (ii) Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, indicated that the Cabinet would approach the partners on North Essex Garden Communities project to consider taking part in a Local Government Peer Review of the project. This could allow for learning from the project and could stop the issue being used as a political football.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) Recommendation (i) from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 17 August 2020 be rejected.
- (b) Cabinet agrees that this Council will follow accounting proper practice as confirmed by the Council's Section 151 Officer. As Colchester Borough Council did not pay its 2019/20 contribution in accordance with the shareholder agreement his view is that it is appropriate that the NEGC project accounts exclude the 2019/20 Colchester Borough Council carrying costs. These are at an equivalent level to the outstanding Colchester Borough Council contribution. The final NEGC project balance is being determined, with distribution an issue that must be jointly decided with Colchester's fellow Shareholders, Essex County Council, and Braintree and Tendring District Councils.
- (c) Cabinet will invite the Colchester's garden community partners, Government, Homes England, Essex County Council and the Braintree and Tendring District Councils

to consider a Local Government Peer Review of the NEGC Project, to terms they must find acceptable, on which the views of the Scrutiny Panel will be sought if Shareholders and Government are so minded to proceed.

REASONS

As set out in the minute.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to Cabinet to agree with the Scrutiny Panel recommendations.

498. Stanway Western Approaches Community Facility

The Assistant Director, Communities submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Scott-Boutell attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet and sought clarification on a number of points in the Assistant Director's report:-

- In respect of paragraph 2.2, all ward councillors should be involved in future discussions on the ownership and management of the facility, and the meaning of "management and ownership" should be clarified. In particular would the Council retain control of the land and what would happen if the building fell into disrepair and was worthless at the end of the lease? What safeguards were in place if either Colchester Borough Council or Stanway Parish Council ceased to exist during the course of the lease?
- In respect of paragraph 4, what were the implications of paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2, and in 4.3 who would form a not for profit organisation? Did the freehold mean the land, or the land and building?
- In respect of paragraph 5.6 what safeguards were in place to ensure the facility delivered what the community expected?
- Could clarification be provided on paragraph 5.9 on when discussions on the Parish Council owning the building started? The proposal was that the building be leased on a long term basis, rather than the Parish Council owning it.
- The information about accessibility in paragraph 6.1 was welcomed. Reassurance was sought that this would be written into a covenant and what action would be taken if the agreement was not met.
- In respect of paragraph 11.2 who would agree what support services would be charged for booking part of the building and could this be included in the lease?
- A funding application had been made to the Local Highway Panel for a crossing point, which had been archived by Essex County Council. The Portfolio Holder should seek to resurrect the application.

Councillor Dundas had provided a written submission which was read to the Cabinet in which he expressed his support for the recommendation in the report, as a ward councillor for Stanway and a member of Stanway Parish Council. In respect of the alternative

options in the report he considered that regarding paragraph 4.1, he would not expect the Parish Council to accept a short tenancy or one which did allow full responsibility for the building, In respect of paragraph 4.2, this seemed to offer little tangible benefit to what the recommended decision. In respect of paragraph 4.3 it needed to be noted that the facility was likely to require some ongoing financial support, particularly in the early years of operation. As regards paragraph 4.4 there was unlikely to be any organisation with sufficient financial resources to take on the facility, particularly give the impacts of Covid 19, unless significantly underwritten by Colchester Borough Council.

Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, thanked Councillor Scott-Boutell for her comments. The recommendation was in line with the Council's policy of giving communities control of their assets. He was sure that the Parish Council would continue to involve ward councillors going forward.

Councillor Cory, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, and Councillor Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services, also commented. A written response would be sent to Councillor Scott-Boutell on her detailed queries and it was likely that a number of these points would be addressed in the detailed negotiations on the terms of the lease. However, the points raised did not prevent the Cabinet agreeing the recommendation before them.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) On completion of the new Community Facility, the Borough Council will work with Stanway Parish Council to secure a sustainable and community led future for this facility within the terms of the section 106 agreement.
- (b) The Assistant Director for Communities be granted delegated authority in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety and Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, to work with Stanway Parish Council to agree the future arrangements for the management and ownership of this important facility for Stanway residents.
- (c) The Borough Council's preferred approach of retaining ownership of the land but granting the potential lessee (Stanway Parish Council) a 150-year ground lease at a peppercorn rent be confirmed. Granting a long-term lease to the Parish Council would be very similar to that of a freehold arrangement. The Parish Council, as lessee, will have full responsibility for the building, surrounding land associated with the site and full repairing and insurance liabilities, but to retain some flexibility for the Assistant Director for Communities to consider other viable alternatives as set out in section 4.0 of her report, should it be necessary.

REASONS

Stanway Parish Council would like to have responsibility for this important community asset on behalf of the local Community. This approach is in line with the Councils Community Enabling Policy and its emerging Asset Based Approach. It provides a sustainable future that ensures the local community can gain maximum value from the

facility, which is aimed at mitigating the impact of local developments and improving the health and wellbeing of residents.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Offer Stanway Parish Council a Shorter Tenancy Agreement without long term responsibility of the building.

Offer Stanway Parish Council the Freehold of the new Community Facility with restrictions on the title using the content of the S106 agreement.

Form a Not for Profit Community Interest Company or charity to hold the freehold in the interests of the local community of Stanway.

Carry out another expression of interest exercise to find an alternative tenant.

499. Year End April 2019 – March 2020 Performance Report Including Strategic Plan Action Plan

The Assistant Director, Corporate and Improvement Services, submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, introduced the report and highlighted the excellent standard of performance shown in the report. It highlighted some exceptional levels of performance. Only three indicators were at red, and performance on a number which had previously been red had now improved, such as staff sickness levels. Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, highlighted the awards and accreditations at Appendix C which demonstrated how well the Council worked for the residents of the borough.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The satisfactory performance against Key Performance Indicators be confirmed and where Key Performance Indicators have not been met it be confirmed that appropriate corrective action has been taken.

(b) The satisfactory delivery against the Strategic Plan Action Plan and that the Council has made satisfactory progress in meeting its strategic goals be confirmed.

REASONS

To review year end performance for 2019 - 2020.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

500. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter 2019-2020

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

RESOLVED that the contents of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2019/2020 be noted.

REASONS

To inform the Cabinet of the contents of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter relating to Colchester Borough Council for 2019/2020.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

501. `Recommendations from the Policy Panel

The recommendations in minutes 2,3, 4 and 5 of the Policy Panel meeting of 5 August 2020 were submitted to Cabinet, a copy of which had been circulated to each member.

In respect of the recommendation on the purchase and use of the thermal camera, Councillor Fox indicated that this was a sensible suggestion which he would examine further.

As regards the recommendations on results and data collected in recent surveys, Councillor Fox, Portfolio Holder for Housing, indicated that work was already underway with partners looking at issues relating to deprivation and the impact of Covid 19 and these were included in the strategic priorities. Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Performance, indicated that issues on the promotion of heritage assets had been looked at in detail by the Heritage and Tourism Task and Finish Group and did not consider that it was an effective use of resources for this issue to be looked at again. Considerable work was being done to promote heritage assets.

Councillor King, Portfolio Holder for Business and Resources, thanked the Panel for highlighting issues around small traders and independents. However, the Council was aware of the issue and was taking action, through supporting the BID, improving the environment of the town centre and looking at how a distinctive and welcoming local identity could be created. As the Council moved forward with the Town Deal issues around the public realm and the marketing of the town centre would be addressed further.

In respect of the recommendations relating to the anti-social use of fireworks, Councillor Lilley, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Wellbeing and Public Safety, indicated that the Council already undertook a lot of work around this. A lot of work was done with the police, but their resources were limited. Councillor Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Commercial Services, highlight the impact of anti-social use of fireworks. Councillor Lilley

indicated that he was content to look at how messages on fireworks could be promoted more effectively and to lobby MPs to encourage the restriction of fireworks to public displays.

As regards the recommendations around the work programme, Councillor Cory indicated that these issues were both being looked by other Committees. In respect of the changes to the planning system white paper, the Panel could look at this once the Local Plan Committee had looked at the issue in detail, and the motion on the issue had been considered by Full Council. In respect of the issues relating to local government reorganisation, the Panel could look at this issue once the relevant white paper was published

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Consideration be given to the purchase and use of a thermal camera for loan to residents to ascertain the insulation of their homes be recommended, by Cabinet, to the Essex Association of Local Councils [EALC] and that Cabinet write to EALC to suggest that the Association provide such a service as an addition to their existing energy efficiency promotion scheme.
- (b) The issues highlight in the recommendations on results and data in recent surveys and consultations were already being addressed by Portfolio Holders and Cabinet and did not need further consideration by the Policy Panel at this stage.
- (c) In respect of the recommendations on the anti-social use of fireworks;
 - (i) The Council more heavily promote how the public can safely and considerately use fireworks, including health and safety considerations and use of quieter fireworks; and
 - (ii) Officers of the Council work with Essex Police to find ways to make it easier for residents to report antisocial or illegal uses of fireworks; and
 - (iii) The Council lobby local Members of Parliament to raise this issue in central government.
- (d) The Policy Panel be given leave to consider:
 - (i) The potential effects of the coming proposals for local government reorganization, once the relevant White Paper has been published; and
 - (ii) The ramifications of the proposals for changes to the current planning system, the likely impacts on how the Council currently operates and how this might further change should the Council form part of a larger unitary authority in the future, once the Local Plan Committee had first considered changes to the planning system and Council had considered the motion on the issue at its meeting on October 2020.

502. Nomination of Deputy Mayor

Consideration was given to the nomination for the appointment of the Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Colchester for the period from 16 October 2020 to the end of the 2021-22 Municipal Year.

Councillor G. Oxford proposed Councillor T. Young as Deputy Mayor. Nominations for the Mayoralty were based on length of service and Councillor T. Young had served on the Council since his election in 1992 and was the second longest serving Councillor on the Council.

Councillor T. Young returned thanks for his nomination, it was a great privilege to be nominated. He thanked Councillor G. Oxford for the nomination and all Councillors who indicated they would support him. It was also an honour for Greenstead for one of their ward councillors to be nominated. He would respect the traditions of the Mayoralty and looked forward to supporting Councillor Davidson in his Mayoralty.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL (FOUR voted FOR and THREE ABSTAINED from voting) that Councillor Tim Young be nominated for appointment as Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Colchester for the period from 16 October 2020 to the end of the 2020-21 Municipal Year.

503. Progress of |Responses to the Public

The Assistant Director, Policy and Corporate submitted a progress sheet a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Progress Sheet be noted.

REASONS

The progress sheet was a mechanism by which the Cabinet could ensure that public statements and questions were responded to appropriately and promptly.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

Wednesday 14th October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director Place and Client Services	Author	Matthew Brown
Title	Colchester Town Deal		☎ 507348
Wards affected	All wards affected		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the submission of Colchester's Town Investment Plan which forms a key element of the Town Deal programme; to Government on 29th October 2020 for and on behalf of Colchester's 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board.

The report presents the ambition and vision for Colchester which has been developed by Colchester's 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board, the incredible and once-in-a generation opportunity this scale of investment would represent for Colchester, and the process to develop the basis of the Town Investment Plan. It sets out the requirements on CBC in its ongoing role as facilitator and secretariat to the 'We are Colchester' board, and its role as Accountable Body for delivery of a £25m capital programme if Colchester's bid is successful.

- 1.2 The Town Investment Plan has been developed through a partnership of Colchester Borough and Essex County, with further facilitation and support provided and resourced by Government. The 'We are Colchester' board was established in January 2020 and comprises of 12 board members representing a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in Colchester.
- 1.3 The partners within the 'We Are Colchester' board recognise that the challenges and opportunities facing Colchester will best be addressed through a collaborative approach to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
- 1.4 The Town Investment Plan provides a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which will achieve transformation in the overall economic prosperity of Colchester and compliments wider economic stimulation for example the Government's Local Industrial Strategy, the emerging North Essex Economic Strategy, Colchester's own Economic Growth Strategy refresh, partners strategic plans including Essex County Council (ECC), SE LEP, Health, Education providers and Business. It supports several wider government policy drivers including climate change and green growth, health & wellbeing and recovery from Covid-19.
- 1.5 The Town Investment Plan has been articulated through an overall vision and statements explained in detail in section 5 of this report. The Town Investment Plan (TIP) includes a strategy, a suite of related Strategic Investment Programmes. A prioritised set of projects contained within each Strategic Investment Programme will be agreed by Town Deal Board; these are summarised within this report. No material changes will be made to these from the point of this report being endorsed by CBC's cabinet.
- 1.6 The accountability for preparing the Town Investment Plan rests with the board, however CBC and its partner local authority ECC have facilitated this work which is outlined later in this

report. However; CBC is required to formally agree to undertake this role of Accountable Body (under the oversight of the Town Deal Board) on an ongoing basis beyond the submission of the TIP in late October 2020. This will include developing business cases to support the projects proposed and interventions identified, then if the MHCLG funding is awarded, the management and delivery of a £25m capital programme in line with CBC's existing and established governance models.

- 1.7 To summarise the current status of this work and subsequent actions; the Town Investment Plan and Strategy are currently being finalised for approval by Town Deal Board. The key next steps will be:
- Finalisation of bid / Town Investment Plan and approval to submit (CBC, ECC and Town Deal Board): October 2020.
 - Agree heads of terms CBC and MHCLG: November/December 2020.
 - Development of business cases, further engagement, review and update governance and TOR for board, develop and deliver detailed Communications and Engagement Plan; for the programme as a whole and within specific projects and programmes: throughout 2021.
 - Final approval of Town Deal and release of <£24m funding (if successful): anticipated late 2021.
 - Delivery and implementation phase: projects funded by Town Deal: 2021-2026.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Agrees the principles of the 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) Vision, Strategy and Strategic Investment Programmes, and the illustrative examples of projects; which together form Colchester's Town Investment Plan;
- b) Agree to delegate the submission of the final bid to Government 29th October 2020 to the Strategic Director; Policy & Place in the light of the 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board's final decision.
- c) Agrees to CBC's ongoing commitment to the Town Deal Programme, including developing business cases that build on the project concepts submitted within the Town Investment Plan; throughout 2021;
- d) Agrees to CBC's role as accountable body to the resultant £25m capital programme (if the bid is successful) including S151 approval in the programme delivery timeframe of 2021-2026; and CBC's ongoing role as secretariat to Town Deal Board;
- e) notes that as part of the next stages work of developing full business cases; full consideration will be given to the ongoing revenue implications of for example the maintenance and management of physical assets created through this programme, notably enhanced public realm and green infrastructure.
- f) notes that the Town Investment Plan will contribute to delivery of several of CBC's New Strategic Priorities and several of the objectives and actions contained in the Council recovery programme (Covid-19) agreed at Cabinet 3rd June 2020;
- g) notes the partnership structures which are in place and planned in order to facilitate the development of next stages of work (Business Case);
- h) notes that development of Business Cases (throughout 2021) will include significant and on-going engagement and consultation.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 Approval of this programme and CBC's role as accountable body will enable CBC as lead LA to proceed and submit the bid on behalf of 'We are Colchester' board. By presenting a strong and coherent place-making vision and strategy, this programme will significantly enhance the profile of partners in 'We Are Colchester' including the two Local Authorities CBC with Essex County Council. It will substantially boost their capacity and capability to influence levels of national government and private sector investment in Colchester Town. As such, it will greatly boost Colchester's opportunities to realise its economic development, place-making, inward investment and regeneration ambitions now and on a long-term basis, whilst providing a framework which will guide the development of a specific programme of targeted interventions at a local level, ensuring these are strategically linked and have the highest possible impact.

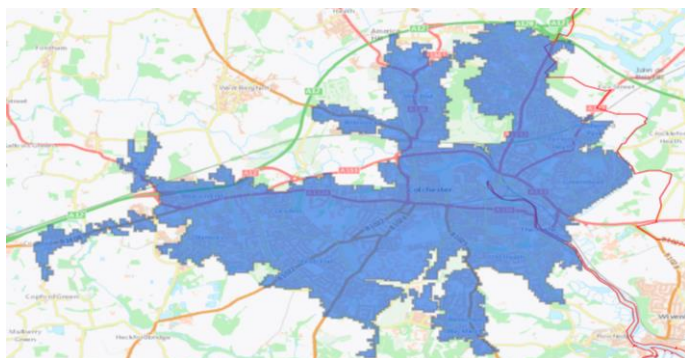
4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options have been presented to Cabinet. Town Deal is recognised as a once in a generation opportunity for Colchester, and there are no other current or anticipated sources of funding and investment of comparable size and scope. Some of the interventions proposed in the Town Investment Plan see Town Deal as the funder of last resort as they are unlikely to attract suitable investment from other sources; and cannot be funded within the council's resources, particularly in the light of the current financial situation arising from Covid-19.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 In November 2019 Government launched its Town Deal Programme; see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-prospectus> and invited Colchester as one of 101 English towns to prepare and submit a Town Investment Plan and bid for upto £25m. In response, Colchester Borough Council (CBC) as the lead local authority in partnership with Essex County Council and others has developed a 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) programme. The partnership is now preparing a Town Investment Plan (TIP) for Colchester which we will submit to Government on 29th October 2020. The TIP covers just the wider urban area of Colchester; population 136,300 (with a focus on the town centre) as area shaded in blue;

Figure 1: The Colchester Town Deal Map



- 5.2 The Town Deal Programme is based on a set of six specific intervention themes. These, themes and illustrative examples of the associated outputs and outcomes are included in guidance provided by MHCLG:

Figure 2: MHCLG Prospectus – Interventions in scope for investment

Intervention Theme	Outputs	Target Outcomes
Local transport	Increase in the number of bus services; new or upgraded cycle and walking routes; new or upgraded road infrastructure; pedestrianised streets	Improved affordability, convenience, reliability, and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work
		Improved affordability, convenience, reliability, and sustainability of travel options to and from places of interest (especially shops and amenities)
		Reduced congestion within the town
		Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians
Digital connectivity	Provision of full fibre infrastructure with local authority as anchor tenant	Increased utilisation of digital channels, by businesses, to access and/or supply goods and services
		Increased ability for individuals to work remotely/flexibly
		Encouraging further investment from network operators
Urban regeneration, planning and land use	Remediation and/or development of previously abandoned or dilapidated sites	Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
Arts, culture and heritage	New or upgraded museums, theatres, community spaces, etc	Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access
Skills infrastructure	Increase in the capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities	Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
Enterprise infrastructure	Increase in the amount of high-quality and affordable commercial floorspace; increase in the number of shared workspaces or innovation facilities	Increased number of enterprises utilising high-quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces
		Increased number of start-ups and/or scaleups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces

- 5.3 In response to the MHCLG prospectus, 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) programme was established and formally launched in January 2020. It comprises of a board; chaired by an independent person and representing key organisations and stakeholders, supported by an Advisory Group and Assemblies, with further key organisations and interests represented.

Figure 3: We Are Colchester – governance and approach



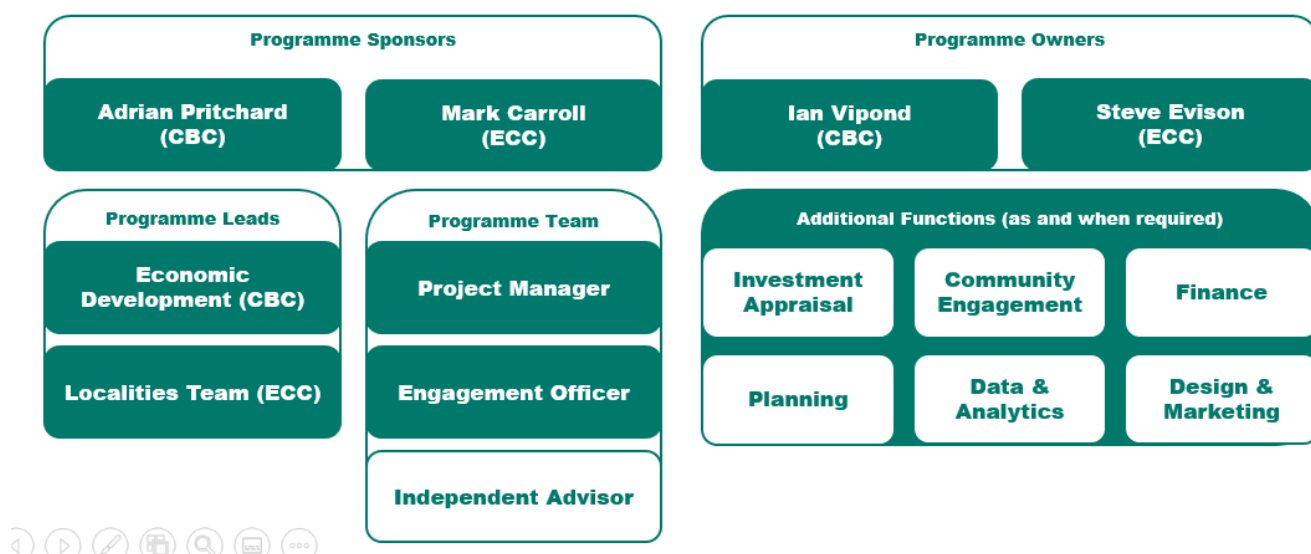
Figure 4: We Are Colchester board – organisations represented

Colchester Borough Council: Leader and Chief Executive	CHAIR Our Colchester (Business Improvement District):	Essex County Council: Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Executive Director	Homes England
South East Local Enterprise Partnership	North Essex Health Alliance	Colchester 360 (representing the community and voluntary sector)	Colchester Business and Enterprise Agency (representing small businesses)
University of Essex	Hiscox (representing larger businesses)		

Town Investment Plan (TIP) Approach

- 5.4 The TIP has been developed through a partnership of Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council. Given the ambition of the Town Deal, and the timescale set by central government, a Programme Office was established to ensure that the programme is delivered, and the vision set by the Board is met. The Programme Office is largely run on a matrix management basis, with established full-time and dedicated posts supplemented by further specialisms as needed. This multi-disciplinary and flexible team is managed by the two programme leads, with requests for additional resources escalated to the local authority sponsors. The Programme Office also provides the secretariat function to the 'We are Colchester' board and any subgroups and activities deriving from it.

Figure 5: We are Colchester Programme Office



The Vision

- 5.5 The Vision drives forward the aspirations of the 'We are Colchester' board, including the political leaders of the partner Local Authorities to come together and drive forward a collective long-term ambition for economic prosperity and chance for Colchester. The vision provides a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which will achieve transformation, whilst complimenting local economic and place-making activity which the partners deliver.

The Vision was prepared through consultation with the general public via a Town Assembly, and online engagement, and finally shaped and finalised by the board in the spring of 2020. It sets out three themes and a suite of sub-statements:

'How we Grow':

- Destination of choice for business
- Creative, digital & knowledge sectors
- World class education system
- Dynamic skills system
- Attract larger firms.

'How we Live':

- Children & Young People have the best start in life
- Thriving cultural, heritage and arts scene
- Unforgettable visitor experience
- Celebrating our history
- Independent retailers and businesses inc. retail.

- How we Connect':
- Prioritises active & sustainable travel
- Make the town Carbon neutral
- Digital & mobile technology
- High-quality natural environment
- Access to nature improves wellbeing.

5.6 The programme was paused in March 2020 as the councils and partners prioritised their responses to the Covid 19 pandemic. The programme was relaunched in June 2020 when MHCLG issued an updated guidance note on Towns Fund; essentially the purpose and scope of the Towns Fund remained broadly the same; but towns were required to demonstrate how investment plans support the place in its recovery from Covid-19. Towns were given three submission options; July 2020, October 2020 and January 2021; Colchester's Town Deal board selected the October 2020 cohort.

Thereafter, in the period June-September 2020 activity has focussed on undertaking broader community consultation, preparing and submitting an 'accelerated' bid for £1m for capital projects that can be delivered by March 2021 and which align clearly to the final Town Investment Plan, and finally preparing the Town Investment Plan for agreement by the board, prior to submission to MHCLG.

Engagement with stakeholders, partners and the wider community is vital to a successful bid. Although time has been very short, and CV-19 has severely limited the nature and extent of outward-facing engagement; we have consulted both online and face-to-face with as many people as we can. The issues that have emerged as most important to local people are (in no particular order):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Making Colchester more attractive | • The "green" agenda |
| • Cycling | • Traffic |
| • Infrastructure | • More to do (particularly for children and young people) |
| • Schools | • Public transport/ buses |
| • Engagement with young people | • Jobs |
| | • Culture/ tourism |

Some of these issues do not meet the criteria of the Town Deal as set out at figure 2 above (e.g. school places), but those that do have been considered in the development of the vision, strategic investment programmes, and potential projects.

Town Investment Plan

5.7 The Town Investment Plan is in two parts; Part 1 strategy, and Part 2 specific investment propositions (projects). The Strategy (Part 1) sets out a wide context analysis including a full SWOT, an investment strategy, an engagement strategy and a delivery strategy. Crucially it establishes a suite of 6 'success conditions' or factors that are essential to ensure effective delivery of the vision set out at 5.5 above; noting the Town Deal is intentionally a collective long-term ambition which delivers a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which will achieve transformation. The strategy takes a long-term (25-year) view, then sets out the specific priorities broken down within three

windows of time; focusing the TIP on actions set out within the shorter term time-frame of the £25m Town Deal investment to 2026. However, it also enables a longer-term view setting out what we might want Colchester to be like in 2040.

Strategic Investment Programmes

- 5.8 The 'We are Colchester' board has endorsed the vision and the basis of a suite of 3 Strategic Investment Programmes; these forming the intermediate layer between the success conditions (strategy) and specific projects and interventions (actions). The relationship between the vision, MHCLG prospectus priorities, success conditions and Strategic Investment Programmes is as described below:

Figure 6- The Strategic Investment Programmes in context:

Colchester Town Strategic Vision	MHCLG Towns Fund Prospectus priorities	Town Investment Plan Part 1: Strategy: Success Conditions	Town Investment Plan Part 2: Strategic Investment Programmes (individual projects sit within each)
How We Grow	Skills Infrastructure Enterprise Infrastructure	Condition B: Skills and Enterprise	A: Our Town, Your Future Potential (Youth, Skills & Enterprise)
How We Live	Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use Arts, Culture and Heritage	Condition A: Land Assembly and Development Condition F: Public and Market Confidence (Coronavirus Recovery) Condition C: Built Environment	B: Building A Better Town (Sustainable Travel, Public Realm & Green Infrastructure)
How We Connect	Local Transport Digital Connectivity	Condition D: Transport Provision and Infrastructure Condition E: Digital and Communications Infrastructure	C: Connecting Ahead (Gigabit Broadband & 5G, along with digital skills development, digital working hubs)

Projects

- 5.9 In response to a request from Town Deal board, a suite of individual specific projects has been prepared by the member organisations represented within Town Deal board with support from officers and facilitators. These are framed within the three strategic investment programmes set out above.

Due to the timescales to prepare and submit this cabinet report; the specific projects which will be included in the final Town Investment Plan are now undergoing final stages of development. The following table illustrates the types of projects which are being considered for inclusion;

Figure 7- Proposed projects

Town Investment Plan Part 2: Strategic Investment Programmes	Example projects	Indicative values*
A: Our Town, Your Future Potential (Youth, Skills & Enterprise)	Projects that deliver new high-quality working spaces reflecting CV-19 and new patterns of working, for individuals in the knowledge economy and key economic sectors with potential growth and delivery of higher paid and skilled jobs.	Value of Town Deal request approx. c. £4m
	Projects which transform services for young people.	
	Projects which raise skills levels particularly digital skills levels in key locations (Young and Working Age People).	
B: Building A Better Town (Sustainable Travel, Public Realm & Green Infrastructure)	Projects using planned housing development to secure investment in high-quality public space and heritage interpretation.	Value of Town Deal request approx. c. £13m
	Projects which make the town centre greener and more attractive including high-quality public realm and design of features such as parklets.	
	Projects that bring forward investment and regeneration to transform key urban hubs outside the town centre. Possibly including provision of bikes to those in need.	
	Projects that make attractive and sustainable uses of empty historic buildings.	
C: Connecting Ahead (Gigabit Broadband & 5G, along with digital skills development, digital working hubs)	Targeted investment in 5G provision where it will bring significant opportunities that cannot be realised commercially.	Value of Town Deal request approx. £8m
	Projects which boost broadband connectivity at sites and buildings boosting digital skills levels.	
	Projects that make neighbourhoods more liveable with high-quality and strategic walking & cycling networks including linking residential areas, education establishments and the town centre.	

* The precise weighting and value of specific projects and the breakdown across the three strategic investment programmes will form the basis of the £25m request to government. This is subject to finalisation and endorsement of the projects by 'We are Colchester' board which will be completed in late October 2020 after this report has been published and advised in the final Town Investment Programme which will be published in prospectus form in late 2020.

It should further be noted that projects may additionally be seeking funding and investment from other sources beyond Town Deal; which will add to the funding package available to deliver the projects, and/or reduce the demand on the Town Deal request. The detailed content (projects and programmes) of the Town Investment Plan will be

agreed and approved by the 'We are Colchester' board prior to submission at the end of October. Thereafter the Town Investment Plan will be published via the 'We are Colchester' website.

An important part of the narrative to be presented clearly in the Town Investment Plan is the leverage or further funding that will be attracted in the initial window of Town Deal investment (to 2026) as a direct result of the Town Deal investment; estimated to be 2-3 the size of the Town Deal itself. Our Town Deal will hugely help as we open conversations and gain wider influence with other government departments and take future actions on attracting internal investment for example agencies and companies seeking to re-locate away from Central London.

Many of the projects are scaleable and phasable; if additional funding were to be brought forward from another source within the period of their design and delivery they could be expanded beyond the baseline level; for example specific walking and cycling infrastructure improvements could be rolled out to further communities in the town.

The Role of CBC as the Accountable Body:

- 5.10 In endorsing the submission of the Town Investment Plan to government by 'We are Colchester' board, CBC is agreeing to several commitments and principles which will apply on a medium to long term basis. These are:
- Commitment to manage the secretariat function to Town Deal board, including member and senior officer leadership and involvement in the board and its advisory group;
 - Commitment to managing external relationships including with the members of the partnership, local MPs, and other key stakeholders;
 - Commitment to help to develop the role of Town Deal board into the next phase and provide wider leadership including for example developing our strategic relationships with BID, University, Health and Business – to drive investment in Colchester in a strong, coherent and visible 'whole place' manner;
 - Commitment of CBC officer time and capacity to progress to the next stage (business case development), noting there will be no further provision of capacity funding from government;
 - Committing to CBC ultimately holding responsibility for financial management, audit and delivery assurance to a £25m capital programme; in line with and using existing CBC models of governance for capital projects and programmes.

The Town Deal process – actions completed to date and next steps planned:

- 5.11 To recap; the key activities completed to date and planned are:

- Confirmation of Colchester's intent to bid; completion of 'readiness' assessment: November 2019.
- Formation and inception of 'We are Colchester' (Town Deal) board: January 2020.
- Establishment of related Advisory Group and Town Assembly: February/March 2020.
- Re-launch of programme (following pause due to Covid-19): June 2020.
- Submission of £1m 'accelerated' bid' for 2x Public Realm schemes: August 2020 (*outcome Sep 2020*)
- Preparation of draft Town Investment Plan (TIP) strategic investment programmes & specific projects: August/September 2020
- *Finalisation of bid, approval to submit (CBC, ECC and Town Deal Board): October 2020*
- *Agree heads of terms CBC and MHCLG: November/December 2020.*
- *Development of business cases, further engagement etc: Throughout 2021.*
- *Final approval of Town Deal and release of <£24m funding (if successful): anticipated late 2021*
- *Delivery and implementation phase: projects funded by Town Deal: 2021-2026*

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of individual schemes, initiatives and projects that contribute to the delivery of the Town Investment Plan through the development of the specific business cases (projects and programmes).
- 6.2 CBC will prepare an Equality Impact Assessment for the Town Investment Plan as a whole and this will be included as an appendix within the document. Further more specific Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as part of developing and implementing specific project activities within the programme when these are developed, and the Council will have due regard to its Public Sector Duty continuing to work to tackle discrimination and inequality and help to create a fairer society, improve housing choice and social mobility (including for protected groups).

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The following Strategic Plan References are relevant to the Town Investment Plan:

Growth:

- Ensuring all residents benefit from the growth of the borough
- Help make sure Colchester is a welcoming place for all residents and visitors
- Ensure residents benefit from Colchester's economic growth with skills, jobs and improving infrastructure
- Promote inward investment in the borough
- Develop jobs, homes, infrastructure and communities to meet the borough's future needs
- Work with partners to create a shared vision for a vibrant town centre.

Opportunity:

- Promote and enhance Colchester borough's heritage and visitor attractions to increase visitor numbers and to support job creation
- Encourage green technologies through initiatives such as SMART Cities
- Help business to flourish by supporting infrastructure for start-up businesses and facilitating a Business Improvement District.

Wellbeing:

- Target support to the most disadvantaged residents and communities.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Town Investment Plan has been developed following full consultation with each of the Councils at both Member and officer level, with the board, and its advisory group. In parallel, a series of wider consultations took place. These included a physical assembly with over 100 attendees in March 2020, specific online surveys and focus groups, discussions with businesses, discussion with BID board, local authority and further and higher education representatives.
- 8.2 Where specific initiatives and interventions are developed that facilitate the delivery of the Town Investment Plan, consultation will be considered for these projects as appropriate as part of the development of the Programme Plan.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 None specific to this report. The Town Deal programme is subject to a communications and engagement plan which includes publicity, branding, etc.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The programme leverages substantial further funding and investment within the 5-year window of delivery; over twice the value of the grant and potentially much more. To date, the costs of developing the Town Investment Plan, providing the secretariat function to Town Deal Board, engagement/communications and wider work undertaken have been bourn through a combination of: £173k 'capacity funding' awarded by MHCLG to CBC; to fund Project Manager & Engagement Officer fixed-term posts, external consultant inputs including support with independent facilitation and strategy development, capacity within existing staff establishment resources, notably CBC Economic Development Team and ECC Localities Team; equivalent to at least 1FTE each over the past 12 months. Further support has been provided (at no cost to CBC) by consultants allocated to MHCLG's Town Deal programme.

Similarly, the next and planned steps (developing projects to business case) will be funded within existing resources. Specific projects will be developed such that business cases consider development management fees and costs at approx. 10% of total project costs. Full consideration will be given to the ongoing revenue implications of the maintenance and management of the physical assets that will be created through this programme, for example enhanced public realm and green infrastructure.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no specific implications but generally the proposal aims to promote positive health and well-being for our residents, and this policy theme features prominently in several the programme interventions being developed. The 'We are Colchester' board, advisory group and groups preparing specific projects include representation from the Health Sector, 'One Colchester' Partnership, CBC's communities team and a number of other bodies with responsibility and focus on health and wellbeing including links to the Sport England funded Local Delivery Pilot.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no specific concerns at this stage of the development of the Town Investment Plan. Risk will be identified and assessed at individual project level and addressed at that stage.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 No implications are identified at this stage. Risk will be assessed at individual project level and addressed at that stage.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 Environmental and sustainability considerations are considered of paramount importance and are a cross-cutting theme within the Town Investment Plan. As specific projects and interventions within this programme are developed, each will be considered in relation to the Climate Emergency Action Plan to ensure that the Council's climate change, environmental and sustainability ambitions and policies are actively addressed and promoted throughout the development of specific projects and programmes.

Appendices: None.

Background Papers: None.

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	Author	Paul Cook <input type="checkbox"/> 505861 Darren Brown <input type="checkbox"/> 282891
Title	Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Forecast		
Wards affected	All		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out the current position on the 2021/22 budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast 2021/22 to 2024/25.

2 Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the revised Medium Term Financial Forecast and MTFF assumptions 2021/22 to 2024/25 as set out in the Appendix to this report.
- 2.2 To grant delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Resources in liaison with the Head of Finance to determine the most advantageous business rate pooling arrangements for 2021/22 as set out in Section 11 of this report.
- 2.3 To approve up to £100k matched funding from the 2020/21 Capital Programme for MHCLG Rough Sleepers Capital Grant as set out in Section 22 of this report, subject to liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

3 Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To balance the 2021/22 budget and revise the Medium Term Financial Forecast.

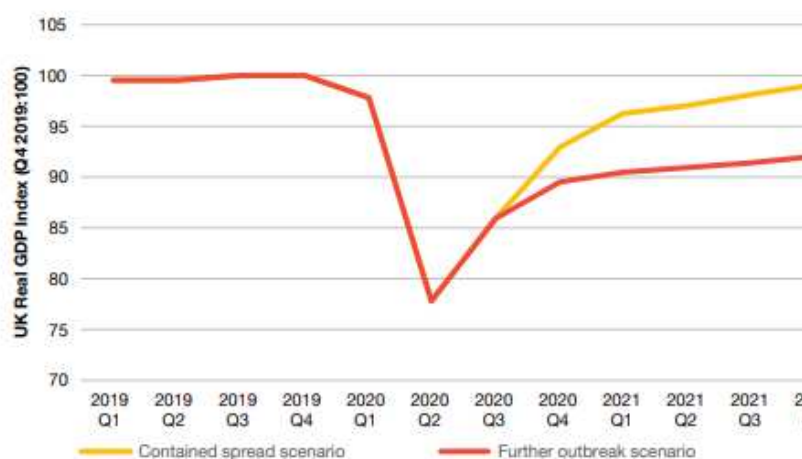
4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council is obliged to balance its budget on an annual basis. There are no alternatives.

5 Overview

- 5.1 The Council's budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast address the impact of Covid-19. The budget and MTFF reshape Council services so that long term financial sustainability is achieved.
- 5.2 In June 2020 Cabinet approved the use of £6.692m reserves and £0.500m use of New Homes Bonus in 2020/21 to address the forecast cost of Covid-19. The Cabinet also agreed the Budget Strategy for 2021/22.
- 5.3 In July 2020 Cabinet approved progress made since June 2020 on the Budget Strategy.
- 5.4 Budget savings have now been identified and these are summarised in Section 8 of the report and more fully in the separate report on this Cabinet agenda. This is the maximum level of savings expected to be generated in 2021/22.
- 5.5 Approval of the savings is against a background of risks, and uncertainty created by the pandemic. That could continue to materially impact national and local economic activity, wealth and income as illustrated by this PwC forecast

Figure 1.4: Projections of the UK economic growth by scenario



- 5.6 The Council is therefore facing an unprecedented health and economic crisis, a deep recession and much reduced income requiring extraordinary efforts by the Council to ensure the books are balanced over the short and medium term.
- 5.7 National and local current and future restrictions and their economic and income impacts will be closely monitored and any amendment to income and savings recommendations will be reported to Council in February 2021.
- 5.8 The use of reserves totals £6.209m across 2020/22. Replenishment of reserves begins at a level of £0.250m in 2022/23, increasing to £0.500m in subsequent financial years.
- 5.9 The budget gap for 2022/23 is currently forecast at £2.574m.
- 5.10 The MTFF is now also revised to reflect more up to date assumptions. The revised MTFF and assumptions are set out in the Appendix to this report.

- 5.11 Forecast economic impact in 2021/22 is £2.900m. We now expect a second wave in Autumn and Winter 2020. This and later waves could impact on 2021/22 income prospects, despite our cautious approach and modelling. The position will need to be watched carefully up to finalising the budget at January 2021 Cabinet.

6 MTFF Consultation

- 6.1 The budget strategy and timetable have ensured that information is available for scrutiny and input from all Members.
- 6.2 The Task and Finish Group reviewed the introduction of green waste collection charges and its recommendations were considered at 19 August 2020 Cabinet.
- 6.3 Budget workshops were held on 4 August 2020; 26 August 2020 and 5 October 2020 so that all members could share in the task of meeting the budget challenge.
- 6.4 The Leader of the Opposition is able at any stage of the budget process to meet with officers to assist with consideration of any alternative budget proposals.
- 6.5 The normal statutory consultation with business ratepayers and parish councils will take place.

7 Risk Management Implications

- 7.1 Extensive modelling work has been undertaken to understand the impacts and variables arising from the crisis. Staff and support costs reflect current assumptions but will be subject to the progress of our transformation work.
- 7.2 Further government support should be provided to meet 100% of councils' additional costs. Increased support will be sought by lobbying and by discussions with MHCLG. The prospects for increased funding remain uncertain.
- 7.3 Leisure and commercial income are very dependent on factors beyond the Council's control, on lock-down, the return of consumer confidence, and impacts due to the severity and duration of the macro-economic downturn and recovery.
- 7.4 Modelling has been undertaken with service managers to assess the potential range of impacts before adopting the assumptions described within the report.
- 7.5 All the above and other significant uncertainties and risks will have to be managed. Further material change is likely to the current budget assumptions and the actions needed to ensure a balanced budget.

8 Savings progress

- 8.1 The Budget Strategy has led to the successful identification of a significant level of savings for 2021/22 and later years. These are summarised in the table below allocated to the strategic themes agreed by Cabinet in June 2020. The details of the savings are set out in the separate report on this agenda.

Row Labels	Sum of 2021-22	Sum of 2022-23	Sum of 2023-24	Sum of 2024-25
Commercial	436	5	70	
Efficiency	445	25		
Service Provision	804	150	115	
Communities	64			
Grand Total	1749	180	185	

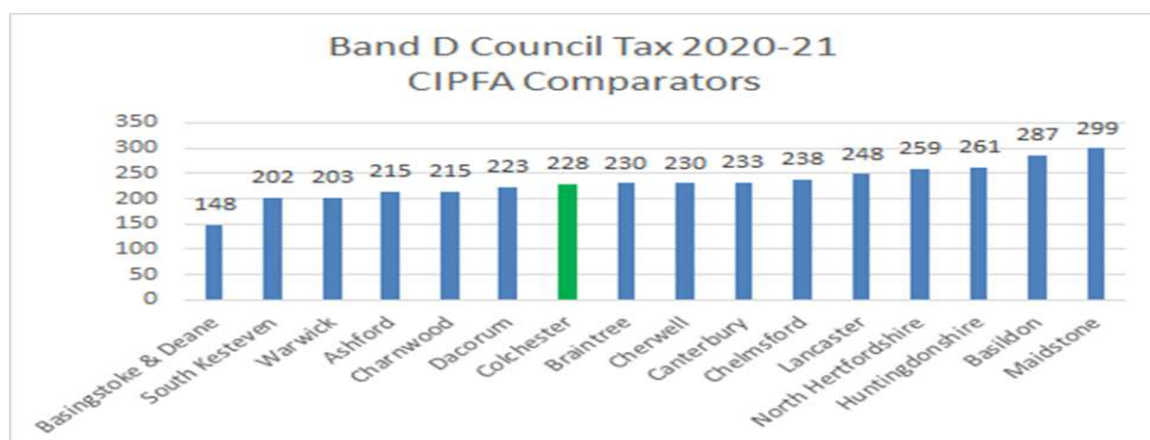
- 8.2 Considerable progress has been made in identifying savings, nonetheless the challenge for 2022/23 at £2.564m is considerable. As such, the strategic themes in the budget strategy will continue to be developed to achieve a sustainable medium term budget position.
- 8.3 Numerous additional opportunities have been identified already that require further feasibility work, business case development and due diligence before they can be realised, and benefits built into the MTFF. Further work, reflecting the Council's strategic priorities and the longer-term relationship between the Council, its partners in the public and voluntary sectors and the relationship with communities and businesses, is also underway.

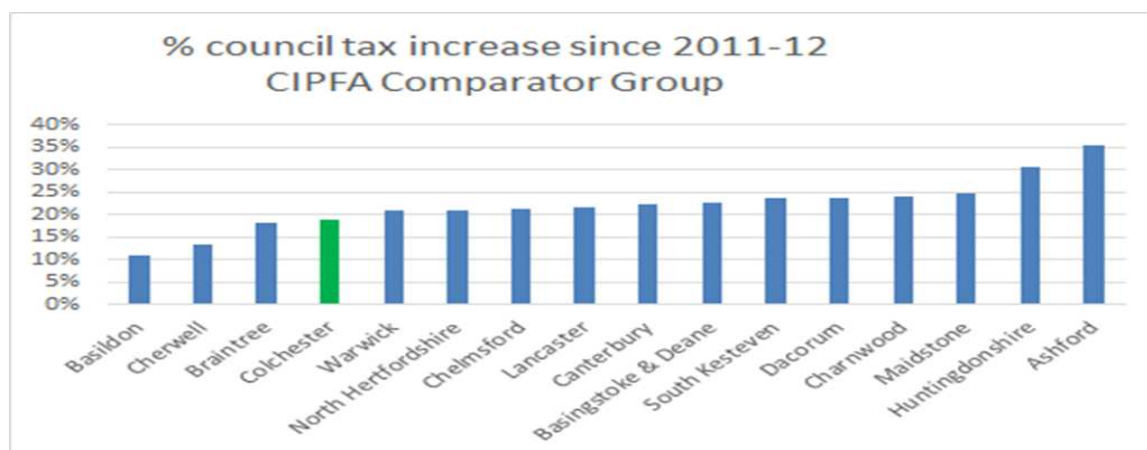
9 Budget pressures 2021/22 onwards

- 9.1 The MTFF allows £1.000m for new cost pressures in 2021/22 and £500k steps up from 2022/23 to 2024/25. It is expected one of the main calls on the 2021/22 allocation will be to cover variations in capital financing costs. This reflects capital programme variations due to Covid-19.
- 9.2 Services will therefore need to contain most pressures other than basic pay inflation and contract inflation in 2021/22. The MTFF allocation will be required for Councilwide pressures.

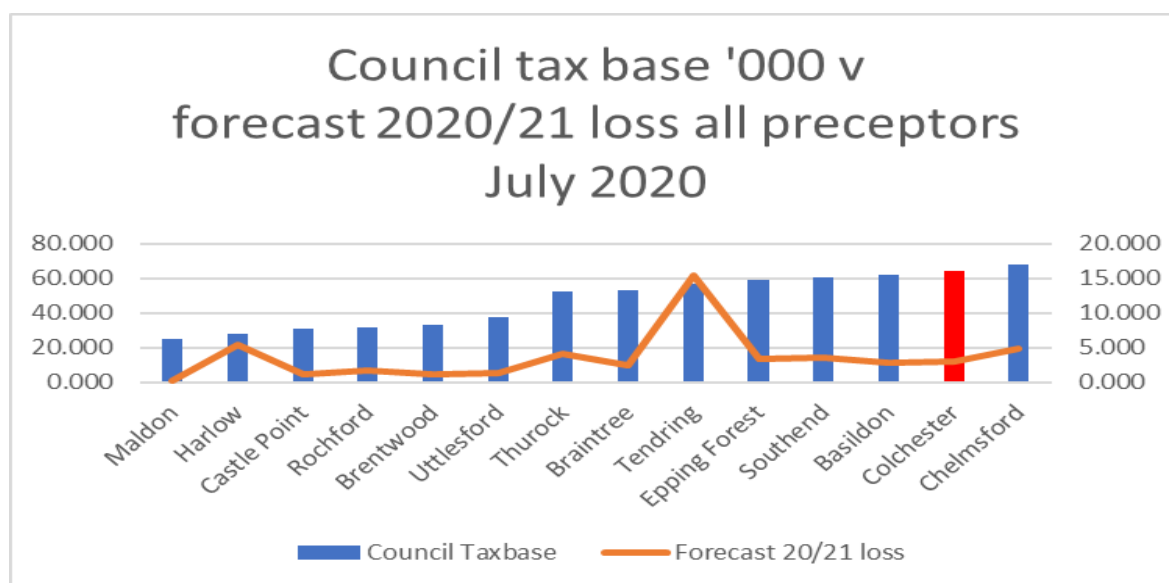
10 Council Tax

- 10.1 The 2020/21 limit for district council tax increases without a referendum was 2.5% or £5 (whichever is the larger). The MTFF assumes the same regime and that a £5 increase is made in each financial year. These remain low council tax rates compared to other district councils as set out in the charts below.





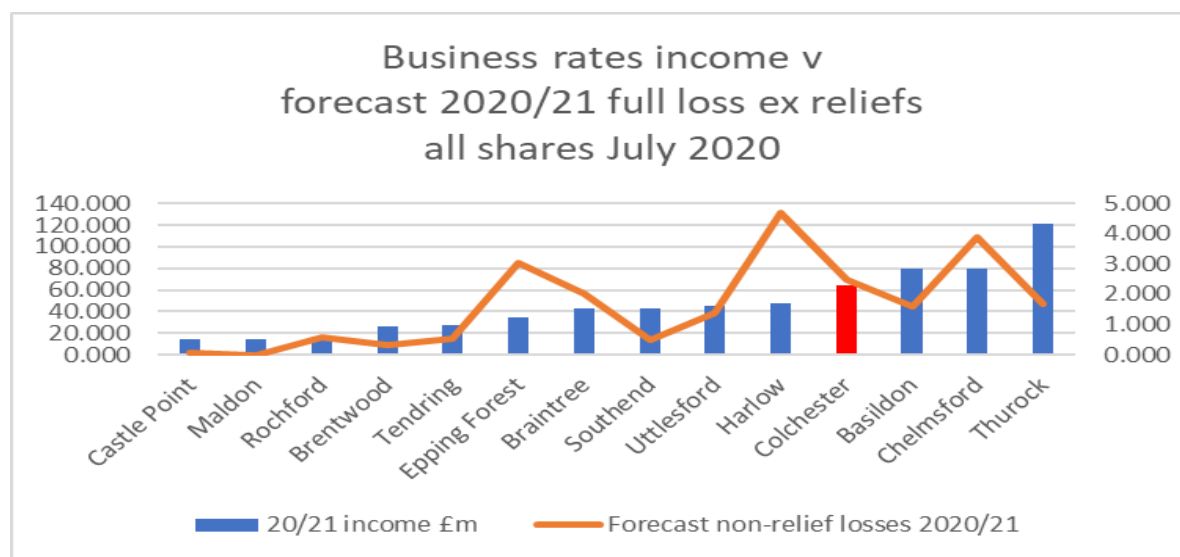
- 10.2 MTFF assumptions on collection rates and LCTS take-up from 2021/22 onwards are set out in the Appendix.
- 10.3 The impact of Covid-19 will result in a collection fund deficit in 2020/21. Council tax collection rates in 2020/21 have currently fallen by around 1% and LCTS additional costs to the collection fund are currently forecast at £400k. However, the position may deteriorate with the end of furlough arrangements. The MTFF assumption is a 95% collection rate.
- 10.4 The Council's share of 2020/21 council tax losses is estimated at £500k in the MTFF. This is spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements. Full details of the deferral rules have yet to be released.



11 Business rates

- 11.1 MHCLG requires groups of authorities that wish to pool business rates in 2021/22 to express an interest by 23 October 2020. After that date any pool applicant's withdrawal will collapse the proposed pooling arrangement for all applicants.
- 11.2 The MTFF assumes £200k gain to Colchester from pooling and to continue the current pool is the favoured option.

- 11.3 Subject to ongoing technical discussion still in progress, a less likely option is to form a pool with a subset of the existing membership, excluding the authorities with the highest prospective business rate losses.
- 11.4 The most unlikely option is that there would be no pooling arrangement for 2021/22.
- 11.5 The Government has previously suggested it would implement 75% business rates retention in 2021/22. It is uncertain now whether implementation will go ahead. If implementation goes ahead in 2021/22 it is unclear how this will impact CBC.
- 11.6 MTFF assumptions on business rate collection rates are set out in the Appendix.
- 11.7 In 2020/21 business rate collection losses are limited by the various new discounts and reliefs set nationally by MHCLG. These arrangements result in business rates income that previously had a collection risk being paid instead to the Council as government grants. The 2020/21 business rates collection fund loss is forecast at £2.5m, with the Council's 40% share being £1m. This loss is spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements. Full details of the deferral rules have yet to be released.
- 11.8 It is unclear what reliefs will be supported by MHCLG in 2021/22. It is likely the full impact of Covid-19 on the economy will manifest itself with the end of various temporary government support schemes to businesses and an economic recession. The 2021/22 business rates collection fund loss is forecast at £5m, with the Council's 40% share being £2m. This is again spread over three financial years in accordance with proposed MHCLG arrangements.
- 11.9 Collection fund losses reported by Essex authorities in July Covid-19 returns are shown in the chart. These demonstrate that Colchester is making provision at a commensurate level for council tax and business rate losses.



12 Income

- 12.1 Income performance and future forecasts are comprehensively reviewed in monthly financial monitoring. The Appendix sets out current income forecasts.

- 12.2 There is now a risk of a second wave in Autumn and Winter 2020. Forecast income loss for 2020/21 in the MTFF has not been amended at this stage from the July Cabinet assumption of £9.092m.

13 Government Funding

- 13.1 Unringfenced government support for Covid-19 in 2020/21 is £2.265m. It is not assumed in the MTFF any unringfenced government support for Covid-19 will be paid in 2021/22 and later years.
- 13.2 Income loss support will be paid by MHCLG in 2020/21 only. This has been forecast as £3.928m for the full year. Any adverse variation against the forecast figure will be an additional call on reserves.
- 13.3 Furlough support will be paid by HMRC in 2020/21 only. This has been forecast at £1.000m. The furlough entitlement will be checked in monthly revenue monitoring.
- 13.4 Major changes to local government funding planned by MHCLG have been delayed due to Covid-19. These are set out in the table.

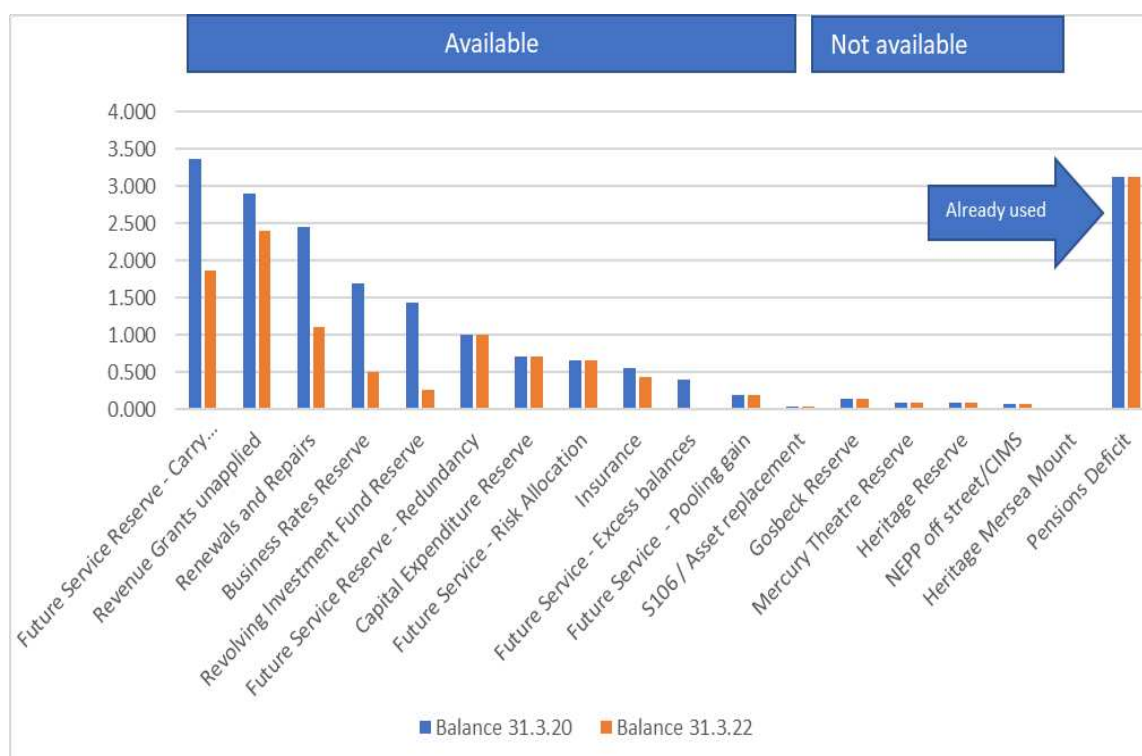
1	Devolution White Paper	The White paper may include new funding arrangements for local government? What will be the timetable for reorganisation and will this put on hold other planned funding changes set out below. There will be uncertainty as to any reorganised authority's spending need v resources position.
2	Fair Funding	Settlement Funding Assessments include assumed need to spend in the calculation. The basis is unchanged for many years. The Fair Funding review could increase or decrease Colchester's SFA. This will depend on what new basis of calculating spending needs is adopted and when it is implemented.
3	100% business rates retention	An increased business rates share will replace some government grants. A key consideration will be how changes in business rates income are to be shared between local authorities and government. How long will local authorities be able to retain growth in business rates?
4	Spending Review	How will local government's share of public spending be changed? Will the distribution between second and first tier authorities change?
5	New Homes Bonus	The Government has planned for some time to review New Homes Bonus. Colchester received £4.055m in 2020/21. The MTFF forecasts later years at £2.945m. Changes could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing or eliminating the national NHB pot • Reducing the incentive or the number of years paid • Heightening the incentive for fast growing councils

- 13.5 In view of all the uncertainties over future government funding, the MTFF provides £500k downward steps in each financial successive year.

14 Use of reserves

- 14.1 The planned use of reserves for Covid-19 is £2.870m in 2021/22. Together with £3.339m usage in 2020/21 the total Covid-19 usage is £6.209m.
- 14.2 Redundancy costs will arise in implementing savings, leading to a forecast £1.000m use of reserves.

Reserve usage reconciliation (£m)	Status	31.3.20	Use 20/1 Covid	Use 21/2 Covid	31.3.22
Future Service Reserve - Carry Forwards	Available	3.378	-1.500		1.878
Revenue Grants unapplied	Available	2.911	-0.019	-0.481	2.411
Renewals and Repairs	Available	2.455	-0.744	-0.603	1.108
Business Rates Reserve	Available	1.695	-0.540	-0.655	0.500
Revolving Investment Fund Reserve	Available	1.436	-0.536	-0.613	0.287
Future Service Reserve - Redundancy	Available	1.000			1.000
Capital Expenditure Reserve	Available	0.720			0.720
Future Service - Risk Allocation	Available	0.660			0.660
Insurance	Available	0.566		-0.121	0.445
Future Service - Excess balances	Available	0.397		-0.397	0.000
Future Service - Pooling gain	Available	0.195			0.195
S106 / Asset replacement	Available	0.050			0.050
Gosbeck Reserve	Not available	0.152			0.152
Mercury Theatre Reserve	Not available	0.100			0.100
Heritage Reserve	Not available	0.100			0.100
NEPP off street/CIMS	Not available	0.073			0.073
Heritage Mersea Mount	Not available	0.010			0.010
Pensions Deficit	Other use	3.124			3.124
		19.022	-3.339	-2.870	12.813
Total use Covid-19		-6.209			
Balance 31.3.22		12.813			
Potential use of redundancy provision		-1.000			
Revised balance 31.3.22		11.813			



- 14.3 The renewals and repairs reserve funds the replacement of plant and equipment that is essential for service delivery. The table below lists the purpose of the reserves held at 31 March 2020 where the balance exceeded £100k.

Row	Purpose	Scheme	Balance (£k)
1	Leisure World	General	326
2	Town Hall		137
3	Leisure World		131
4	Cemetery	Memorial Stability Programme	210
5	Crematorium	FBT Boiler Replacement	140
6	Crematorium	Flue replacement	120
7	Firstsite	Repair Costs	105

- 14.4 There are future risks that could also be an additional call on reserves:

- The uncertain long term economic impact of Covid-19.
- The potential impact of any second wave. The cost to the authority could be up to £1m a month, though income support grant from MHCLG might offset some of those losses.
- Reduction of MHCLG income support grant following release of the full grant details by MHCLG.
- Capital receipt losses leading to additional borrowing and capital financing costs.

15 Strategic Priorities and Recovery

- 15.1 The New Strategic Plan considered by Cabinet in September 2020 sets out three key priorities against each of five thematic areas, reflecting Covid-19 recovery priorities and financial considerations given the budget constraints outlined in this paper.
- 15.2 Post-crisis recovery, for the Council, our customers, communities and businesses, is of critical importance. This will be a key focus of activity in 2021/22 and the revised Medium Term Financial Forecast also assumes a budget of £250k is available in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to direct to new recovery programmes. This is needed to cover gaps in government help for the Covid-19 crisis and support the Borough's recovery.

16 Budget Planning Assumptions

- 16.1 The budget planning assumptions are set out in the Appendix.
- 16.2 The Council's revised Medium Term Financial Forecast is summarised below and set out in more detail in the Appendix. In this summarised table the Covid impacts are economic and income impact plus additional costs plus new funding for recovery. Use of reserves is the use originally planned in the MTFF plus the additional use for Covid-19.

Revised MTFF (£m)	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Service costs	24,377	31,020	23,394	22,836	23,176
Covid Impacts	10,129	(8,361)	(2,050)	(700)	0
Business rates	(5,885)	(5,580)	(4,457)	(4,000)	(3,876)
Council tax	(12,448)	(11,889)	(12,248)	(12,612)	(13,145)
Other funding	(10,794)	(2,945)	(2,940)	(2,944)	(2,944)
Use of reserves	(5,378)	(2,245)	875	1,250	1,250
Savings to find	0	(0)	2,574	3,830	4,461

17 2020/21 Outturn

- 17.1 It is expected the 2020/21 outturn can be covered by reserves as set out in the MTFF.

18 Financial implications

- 18.1 As set out in the report.

19 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 19.1 All budget measures are assessed for their likely environmental impact, reflecting the Council's commitment to be 'carbon neutral' by 2030. Environment and Climate Change is an essential cross-cutting theme in the Council's recovery planning and a core theme of the new Strategic Plan.

20 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 20.1 Consideration will be given to equality and diversity issues in respect of budget changes proposed as part of the budget process. This will be done in line with agreed policies and procedures including production of Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

21 Other Standard References

- 21.1 There are no direct Publicity, Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.

22 MHCLG Rough Sleepers Funding

- 22.1 In August 2020, Colchester Borough Council made a bid for funding to the Government's "Next Steps Accommodation Programme" (NSAP). This competitive bidding fund is to support local authorities, and their partners, to ensure that the current accommodation and support that has been set up to safeguard rough sleepers coming in from the streets, people previously housed in shared night shelters and people who have become at risk of rough sleeping during the Covid-19 pandemic, is able to continue for an appropriate length of time. CBC's bid for revenue funding was successful and £119,429 was awarded.
- 22.2 The NSAP has also made funding of £198k available for additional long term accommodation. Our bid for this element of the NSAP funding was made jointly with a housing association to provide 8 longer term self-contained flats to be made available, which would also provide some move-on from our Housing First Project. To give this element of the bid the best opportunity of success, we are recommending that the Council match fund the capital request by up to £100k in

2020/2021. If the bid is successful, our match funding will have contributed to attracting an additional £430k in capital and revenue funding into Colchester to alleviate rough sleeping. The Housing Association are also providing a small amount of match funding.

- 22.3** The £100k can be identified by virements from other capital programme schemes and slippage in the capital programme.

MTFF Assumptions – all annual figures	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Changes since July Cabinet for PMB discussion
Covid 19 Income loss and economic impact	9.092	2.900	1.500	0.500	0.000	Amphora dividend loss a separate line
Amphora Dividend Loss	0.300	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Additional direct Covid-19 costs	0.600	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	No change
Recovery programmes additional funding	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	Reduced from £0.333m steps 2020/21 to 2022/23
Transformation + restructuring costs	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Council tax loss 2020/21 impacting 2021-23		0.167	0.167	0.166	0.000	Was £1.200m 2021/22 – now £500k 3yr spread
Council tax base increase		+0.5%	+0.5%	+0.5%	+0.5%	No change
Council tax collection rate		+95%	+95%	+95%	+95%	No change
LCTS take-up v 2020/22 budget/ impact on District Council income		+25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	25%/-1.5%	No change
Business rates losses 2020/21 impacting 2021-23		0.333	0.333	0.334	0.000	Was £1.500m 2021/23 – now £1m 3yr spread
Business rates losses 2021/22 impacting 2022-24			0.666	0.666	0.668	New - £2m 3yr spread
Contractual inflation		0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	No change
Pay inflation	3%/0.600	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	1%/0.200	No change
Use of New Homes Bonus for Covid-19 pressures	-0.500	-1.774	-1.941	-2.341	-2.574	No change
Use of reserves for Covid-19	-3.339	-2.870	0.250	0.500	0.500	Was £6.692m 2020/21, £1.658m 2021/22. Replenishment reduced to £250k 2022/23
Government Grant Covid 19 general	-2.265	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	£317k additional
Government Grant Covid 19 income support	-3.928	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	New grant
Government Grant Covid 19 furlough	-1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Shorter duration + includes January bonus
Council Tax increase	£4.95	£5	£5	£5	£5	Was £10 in each year, now £5 in each year
Additional service income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Was £0.500m 2020/21, £1.050m 21/22 now deleted
Allowance for additional cost pressures		1.000	0.500	0.500	0.500	2021/22 allocation expected to be earmarked for capital financing
2022 Pension revaluation				0.600	0.600	No change

	2020/21 Budget	BQ	Revised Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Loss
Car parks	-3.970	-0.993	-0.135	-0.617	-0.733	-0.654	1.831
Budget			-0.993	-0.993	-0.993	-0.993	
% of budget			14%	62%	74%	66%	
Commercial Rents	-2.864	-0.716	-0.596	-0.596	-0.596	-0.596	0.480
Budget			-0.716	-0.716	-0.716	-0.716	
% of budget			83%	83%	83%	83%	
Sport & Leisure	-3.808	-0.952	0.000	-0.051	-0.250	-0.500	3.007
Budget			-0.952	-0.952	-0.952	-0.952	
% of budget			0%	5%	26%	53%	
Recycling Credits	-1.512	-0.378	-0.243	-0.243	-0.243	-0.243	0.540
Budget			-0.378	-0.378	-0.378	-0.378	
% of budget			64%	64%	64%	64%	
Bereavement Servs	-1.362	-0.340	-0.340	-0.341	-0.341	-0.341	0.000
Budget			-0.340	-0.340	-0.340	-0.340	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Planning	-1.227	-0.307	-0.307	-0.306	-0.307	-0.306	0.000
Budget			-0.307	-0.307	-0.307	-0.307	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Trade Waste	-0.512	-0.128	-0.063	-0.063	-0.063	-0.063	0.260
Budget			-0.128	-0.128	-0.128	-0.128	
% of budget			49%	49%	49%	49%	
Museums	-0.479	-0.120	0.000	-0.020	-0.049	-0.050	0.360
Budget			-0.120	-0.120	-0.120	-0.120	
% of budget			0%	17%	41%	42%	
Building Control	-0.455	-0.114	-0.074	-0.110	-0.110	-0.111	0.050
Budget			-0.114	-0.114	-0.114	-0.114	
% of budget			65%	97%	97%	98%	
HB Overpayments	-0.450	-0.113	-0.111	-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	0.000
Budget			-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	-0.113	
% of budget			99%	100%	100%	100%	
Interest Receivable	-0.300	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.300
Budget			-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	
% of budget			0%	0%	0%	0%	
Court Fees	-0.277	-0.069	0.000	0.000	-0.208	-0.070	0.000
Budget			-0.069	-0.069	-0.069	-0.069	
% of budget			0%	0%	300%	100%	
Events	-0.300	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.300
Budget			-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	-0.075	
% of budget			0%	0%	0%	0%	
Land Charges	-0.177	-0.044	-0.006	0.000	0.000	-0.014	0.157
Budget			-0.044	-0.044	-0.044	-0.044	
% of budget			14%	0%	0%	32%	
Premises Licensing	-0.158	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	0.000
Budget			-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	-0.040	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Taxi Licensing	-0.109	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	0.000
Budget			-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	-0.027	
% of budget			100%	100%	100%	100%	
Grand Total	-17.960	-4.490	-1.942	-2.527	-3.079	-3.127	7.285
Loss			-4.490	-4.490	-4.490	-4.490	
			43%	56%	69%	70%	

Revised MTFF (£m)	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Previous year's budget	20,206	34,506	22,659	21,344	22,136
Pressures	5,803	(1,200)	830	1,584	1,040
New Strategic Priorities	216	200	333	333	0
Savings	- 1,848	(2,486)	(428)	(425)	0
Covid Economy and Income	9,392	(6,392)	(1,500)	(500)	0
Covid Service Costs	600	(300)	(300)	0	0
Covid Recovery	250	0	(250)	0	0
NHB redirected Covid Impact	- 113	(1,669)	0	(200)	0
This year's budget	34,506	22,659	21,344	22,136	23,176
Business Rates	- 5,885	(5,913)	(5,456)	(5,000)	(4,544)
Council Tax	- 12,503	(12,056)	(12,415)	(12,778)	(13,145)
New Homes Bonus	- 3,602	(2,945)	(2,940)	(2,944)	(2,944)
Planned use of reserves	- 2,039	625	625	750	750
Covid 2020/21 council tax loss	55	167	167	166	0
Covid 2020/21 business rate loss	-	333	999	1,000	668
Covid MHCLG income loss	- 3,928	0	0	0	0
Covid MHCLG unringfenced	- 2,265	0	0	0	0
Covid MHCLG furlough	- 1,000	0	0	0	0
Covid use of reserves	- 3,339	(2,870)	250	500	500
Budget Gap	0	- 0	2,574	3,830	4,461

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement	Author	Richard Block ☎ 506825
Title	Covid-19 Recovery – Business Case for Council Efficiency and Transformation Programme		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of a Budget Strategy that will deliver a balanced budget in 2021/2022 and start identifying savings required by the Medium Term Financial Forecast in future years. The report explains proposals to make budget savings through improving efficiency, reviewing models of service provision, becoming more commercial and harnessing the potential of our communities.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To approve the proposals set out in the business cases at Appendix A and all actions necessary to prepare to implement them prior to final approval by Cabinet in January 2021.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure robust proposals are developed and can be implemented to deliver a balanced budget in 2020/2021 and in future years.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Although this report details wide ranging options, other opportunities to generate budget savings have been considered but were rejected due to the severity of the impact on frontline services.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Covid-19 has had a seismic impact on the Council and our finances. The scale of these impacts and details of our ongoing budget gap are detailed in the report of the Head of Finance also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting.
- 5.2 Council services have also been transformed to adapt to the new normal and this transformation will need to continue so services are fit for a post Covid-19 world and can be delivered with the finances available.
- 5.3 The size of the budget gap we face combined with the unprecedented challenges presented by Covid-19 requires a rapid response and development of budget savings proposals at a scale never previously faced by this Council.
- 5.4 To respond to these challenges a crosscutting corporate budget strategy has been developed under 5 themes with each theme being led by an Assistant Director. The themes are described below:

Theme	Description	Lead
Priorities	The Covid-19 pandemic has presented the Council with unprecedented service and financial challenges changing some of the key financial planning assumptions, and priorities upon which the previous draft Strategic Plan presented in March 2020 was based. As a result, a review and reprioritisation of priorities should be undertaken	Rory Doyle – Assistant Director Environment
Efficiency	Reviewing opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks, and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation.	Leonie Rathbone – Assistant Director Customer
Service Provision	Reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new level of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to	Richard Block – Assistant Director Corporate and Improvement

	ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”	
Commercial	Understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets	Mandy Jones – Assistant Director Place and Client
Communities	Communities have so much potential, there are skills, abilities and a desire within Communities to make change happen, own and sustain it. Local Authorities and other Service Providers are beginning to understand the need to work differently with their communities going forward and focus on their strengths not imposing solutions to perceived weaknesses.	Lucie Breadman - Assistant Director Communities

- 5.5 Officers from across the organisation have been involved in developing workstreams for each theme to ensure a budget strategy that is joined up and not siloed.
- 5.6 The detailed templates at appendix A show proposals to make budget savings of more than £1.7 Million in 2021/2022 and a cumulative total of £2.1 million by 2024. They also show the associated implications to services, residents and staff. Proposals that have the least impact on frontline service have been identified wherever possible. To protect frontline services, this does mean some increases to charges for discretionary services are proposed.
- 5.7 The proposals would result in the overall level of full time equivalent staff (FTE) employed by the Council reducing by 27 FTE. 7 of these roles are currently vacant so if these proposals were approved, 20 FTE staff would be at risk of redundancy.
- 5.8 All changes to staffing would be made in line with the Organisational Change Policy and if approved by Cabinet, formal consultation will be commenced with officers whose job is at risk of redundancy. Staff will be redeployed into other roles where possible to avoid redundancies. Provision has also been made in the Medium Term Financial Forecast for costs associated with redundancies.
- 5.9 Any staff who are eventually made redundant will be provided with a package of support including coaching, training, and support to apply for other jobs.
- 5.10 An overall summary of the savings generated by each theme is shown below along with the associated reduction in staff FTE required:

Theme	Total Savings from 2021-2024 (£000)	Number of staff reduced (FTE)
Priorities	0	0
Efficiency	469.5	13.8
Service Provision	1,069	13.6
Commercial	506	0
Communities	64	1
Total	2,108.5	28.4

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out for each of the budget strategy themes. These are at appendix B.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The Priorities theme has involved reprioritising the Council's new Strategic Priorities to ensure they can be delivered with the resources and staff capacity available. This resulted in the revised Strategic Plan that was considered by Cabinet in September and recommended to Full Council for approval in October.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Informal consultation regarding the budget strategy proposals has been undertaken with Unison and staff throughout September and the results will continue to be used to further develop proposals to bridge our budget gap.
- 8.2 If Cabinet give approval to these initial proposals a 30 day period of formal staff consultation will be undertaken in November.
- 8.3 Wider public consultation will be undertaken with residents and other stakeholders during November using Webinars and an online survey.
- 8.4 The results of formal staff and public consultation will be provided to Cabinet when the final Budget Strategy proposals are considered in January 2021.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 A significant internal and external communications campaign has been initiated to publicise the scale of our budget challenge and the reasons for these proposals. The plan will now move to a consultation phase as detailed above.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The full financial impact of these proposals is shown on each business case. As stated above, these proposals could generate savings/additional income of £2.1 million by 2024. There will be associated transformation costs including those associated with redundancy. Provision has been made for these as detailed in the report from the Head of Finance also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The full implications of each proposal are shown in the impacts section of each business case. Most of these proposals have no direct external health, wellbeing, or community

safety implications as they relate to efficiencies and changes to the way we provide support services.

- 11.2 The proposals to reduce ward member budgets in the Communities Theme could have impacts as some would previously have been used to support health, wellbeing, or community safety.
- 11.3 In the Commercial theme increases in fees and charges for activities that have a positive health/wellbeing impact e.g. allotments may have a negative impact if it discourages people from undertaking these activities.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no direct public health and safety implications.
- 12.2 In terms of the Health and Safety of Council employees, these proposals will result in concern and stress particularly for the members of staff who would be at risk of redundancy. All staff will be fully supported through a range of mechanisms including direct support from their manager/HR, our employee assistance programme and from the network of trained mental health first aiders within the organisation.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The individual risks associated with each proposal is detailed in the relevant business case.
- 13.2 If these proposals are not approved the most significant risk is that the Council is unable to deliver a balanced budget for 2021/2022 and alternative savings proposals are not identified.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 Many of the proposals in the Efficiency Theme are associated with a greater use of technology and less use of printing and paper making them more environmentally sustainable.
- 14.2 Increases in car parking fees proposed through the Commercial Theme could influence the public to consider other forms of transport which would have a positive impact on air quality and congestion in Colchester.

Appendices

Appendix A – Business Cases for Each Budget Strategy Theme

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessments

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Commercial		
Introduction to Theme	This theme is about understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets and working with the Council's Amphora trading companies.		
Workstream	Fees and charges (including new charging opportunities)		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Cremation fee increase	60	0	0
Environment fees and charge increases	47	0	0
Car parking charges increase and environmental levy	208	0	0
Pavement licence income increase	5	0	0
Income from Electrical Safety Penalties	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Cremation fee increase Increase in fees and charges predominantly in Adult Cremations by £38 to a cost of £827. When benchmarked against other LA Crematorium Adult fees this is as follows (for current year may also increase next year) – Braintree (3 Counties) £999 / Chelmsford £793 / Havering (South Essex) £955 / Ipswich £713 Nacton (Seven Hills) £775 / Southend £825 Weeley £775</p> <p>Environment fees and charges increase Environment – Fees and charges inc (Beach hut / allotment / sports pitches / bulky / special collections / HW Country park + fishing. Higher % increase to be offset with proposal to hold fees for a fixed term.</p> <p>Car parking charges increase and environmental levy Putting up the St Mary's, St John's & Priory Street Mon-Fri/Sun Tariff to the Sat Tariff (between 10p-20p per hr) would mean an increase in net income of about 7%-8% That means approximately: £58k in St Mary's £75k in St Johns (where most pay the special offer day rate) £22k in Priory Street</p>		

	<p>Carparks will require continuing investment in repairs and maintenance. Needs to tie in with wider work to promote Colchester as a destination. Need to closely monitor for customer attrition. Short – medium (21 days minimum advertising once placed, and legal notices required).</p> <p>Adding 10-30p to Vineyard Street tariffs across the board (to take over next full coin) would yield about £21k</p> <p>If the same yield were true of Britannia (need to investigate further) then net = £32k</p> <p>Upping the higher tariffs would impact fewer people, but you'd have to more than double the tariff for any effect.</p> <p>Pavement license fee increased take up</p> <p>Extension to Borough Wide and new uptake following Covid changes and Cafe Culture. More demand for outside dining following this year's trial and new requests for permits and increasing scheme across the Borough. However, trial may not work, and more businesses may cease trading after Covid-19 impacts.</p> <p>Electrical safety penalties (Private sector housing)</p> <p>Increase from new penalties around electrical safety - robust and proactive approach and campaign, new policy change and process. Fits with robust approach to enforcement and safe housing for all priority.</p> <p>Can't start until inspections re-commence realistically – difficult to predict and needs resources for a proactive approach.</p>		
Workstream Two Description	Using our assets - Markets, Car Parks and Castle Park. Extending market and using car parks and Castle park more commercially.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Market expansion	86	0	0
Car park markets and events	0	5	10
Castle park café	0	0	20
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	<p>Market expansion</p> <p>Increase in the number of pitches across the borough to 12 new sites (in addition to existing sites). This is currently under investigation and detailed Business Case being prepared. Outline proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sites within the Town Centre to create a Market trail. • Generate opportunities for new businesses and businesses looking to start afresh post-lockdown – aiding economic recovery (to be outlined in Recovery Plan). • New sites generate opportunities for new businesses and businesses looking to start afresh post-lockdown, particularly for those who are having difficulty with cost of premises. <p>Also looking outside town centre and within the borough</p> <p>Risks</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second spike • Economic downturn, will impact different traders at different times (essential items may be more prosperous) • Weather and Covid-19 could have an impact on footfall <p>Discussions held about ideas for using the park more commercially to benefit income and TC and eco recovery (more trading through pitches, possibilities for cafe lease, market).</p> <p>Car park markets and events</p> <p>Other uses of car parks to be investigated, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a small number of pitches in parking bays (regular) could produce additional income to parking (Demi Quinn and Richard Walker to investigate) • One off market in car parks (particularly those out of town in the winter where parking can be on street - West Mersea for example) • Bigger events and markets on car parks (cinema for example). • More 'permanent' use of car parks for other purposes https://secretldn.com/franks-cafe-rooftop-peckham/ <p>Bringing Amphora Events into these conversations - create further joint working opportunities to enhance income.</p> <p>Castle Park café</p> <p>Options for café involve CBC running the café or changing lease arrangements (needs Business case – Commercial resource). Initial work includes liaison with Amphora around lease arrangement and initial view on investment needed / commercial possibilities.</p>		
Workstream Three Description	Opportunities to expand Trade Waste service		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Increased income from Trade waste	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Could increase income (grow the business) or sell the operation (quick win) Options appraisal / business case to be undertaken - needs some resource to grow the business. Another one for Commercial project resource (Recovery funding).</p> <p>Depends on decision taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receipt for sale of business and reduced associated costs; or • Increased uptake from businesses who are supported to recycle and associated increased income. <p>Needs further work to analyse potential business case. Income target already increased and under-recovered against it. Would require investment and marketing. Willingness of business to enter into new</p>		

	contracts post Covid unknown. Income in future at risk if further lockdown measures introduced.		
Workstream Six Description	Smaller and longer-term income opportunities: 1. Arts Council funding increase 2. Tree planting		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Arts Council funding	0	0	40
Tree planting	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Arts Council funding increase Additional £200k per year funding to enhance service and income generating opportunities NPO Band 2 application is to Arts Council from Apr 23. Next round of NPO funding from April 2023 - apply for next band up so income moves from £200k per year to £400k per year. Allows for more exhibitions and improvements that can generate additional income. Will only be achievable IF we are successful in a Band 2 Application to ACE. Going to Band 2 requires ambition but comes with £400k annual additional income which will generate more income to CBC.		
	Tree planting Contribution towards planting a tree£3 @ 10K trees		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM COMMERCIAL THEME	436	5	70
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	Dependent on workstream but most portfolios are impacted.		
Implementation Costs –			
Not fully known at this stage – will depend on Business Case development for each workstream and project. Have identified projects and costs where known and comments			
Item / Project area	Cost	Comment	
Environment fees and charges	Potential revenue cost		
Trade waste	Needs BC		
Market expansion	Not outlined (TBC)		

Car parks, markets, events	Needs BC, potential revenue and capital		
Castle park café	Possible capital and revenue costs		
Identification of name and number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	0	0	0
Identification of name and number of new posts in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	0	0	0
Conclusion	<p>As shown above there are a number of opportunities for increasing income across the organisation.</p> <p>Some may be unpopular but easily achievable in an operational sense and will give returns in 20/21, whilst others are more difficult and longer term, will need resource and project management to undertake detailed business cases but could provide longer term opportunities.</p>		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Communities		
Introduction to Theme	<p>Communities have so much potential, there are skills, abilities and a desire within Communities to make change happen, own and sustain it. Local Authorities and other Service Providers are beginning to understand the need to work differently with their communities going forward and focus on their strengths not imposing solutions to perceived weaknesses. Inequalities are also increasing. Finding ways to redress that balance is crucial to overall health and wellbeing.</p> <p>There are a myriad of services who all need to work as a system, reduce duplication and join the effort of putting communities at the heart of what they do, focusing on what's strong, unique and possible. Encouraging people to harness and make use of their existing assets and resources. This is starting to happen in Colchester with partnerships such as The Health Alliance, One Colchester and Local Development Partnership beginning to work very differently.</p> <p>Efficiencies from this approach are unlikely in these early days and therefore savings are modest. But there is more potential going forward, not to cut resources but to use it in different ways, with new models of working and more faith and reliance on the Voluntary Sector and Communities themselves to find better outcomes and solutions.</p>		
Workstream	Reduction of Locality Budget		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Reduce Locality Budget Spend by 50% to help budget position	50	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Locality Budgets are £2k per Ward Cllr to use on local initiatives. The value of these budgets has been questioned for some years, and in many cases spend is toward the end of the year after numerous reminders. With more focus on inequalities there is a need to re-think Locality Budgets, where they go and what difference they make given the financial constraints on the Council. Reducing by half will soften any impact and help with the immediate financial pressures and going forward we need to work with Ward Cllrs to consider how this remaining funding can best address the ABCD approach and support those who need it the most.</p> <p>Risk – may not be seen in the spirit of Community Enabling / ABCD as it is actually reducing funding going directly into local communities so is likely to be met by Ward Cllrs with some criticism and realistically is a 'cut'. There is an opportunity to re-think the whole scheme for the future and make it more linked to those deprived communities to help deal with issues around inequalities.</p>		

	Future receipt could be linked to Ward Cllrs having participated in ABCD training and actively linked to promoting this approach.		
Workstream Two Description	Working differently with partners across the System to streamline and reduce duplication.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
CBC Community Team Resource reduction	14	0	0
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	Dealing with Covid response and improved understanding and closer working with partners, along with securing access to external funding streams has already led to new working models and more use of shared resources. While this approach is still in its early days it has already provided some additional capacity and the opportunity for a small efficiency saving.		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM COMMUNITIES THEME	64	0	0
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	PFH for Communities, Cllr Mike Lilley		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
n/a	n/a		
Identification of number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
	1 FTE		
Conclusion	£64,000 saving to budget in total but emphasis on this Theme is about working differently in the future and longer term opportunities across a much wider system for new approaches, improved Health and Wellbeing, Community Ownership and solutions and ultimately a need for less public resources.		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Efficiency		
Introduction to Theme	This theme describes the opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation. We will seek simplicity in every process, capture efficient new ways of working that have emerged since Covid-19 and look to automate processes where possible.		
Workstream One Description	Payments and Purchasing Due to internal role moves and the success of an interim structure we can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs. Proposals to utilise system improvements to enable purchase orders to be completed within teams, supporting the development of a more proactive purchasing team which will add value to procurement savings.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Staff resource reduction	70	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The interim arrangement have successfully tested different ways of organising the team and the allocations of tasks. Also, recent system upgrades have released opportunities to process work in a more efficient way. Ability of key system supplier to continue to deliver system changes poses some risk. There is a risk of significant redundancy costs.		
Workstream Two Description	Contact and Support - Call Handling Efficiencies (CBH) A new housing system is being implemented (Northgate) ready for 20/21. This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. This added to recent improvements in call management will allow for savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	56	0	0
Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	Currently there is vacancy within the team that can contribute toward the identified savings. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings and attainment of service KPI, however the team are currently exceeding service targets and work is ongoing to further promote the use of e-communications to CBH tenants in receipt of benefits which will again reduce telephony contact, this stream is separate to the Northgate implementation.		

Workstream Three Description	Contact and Support – Call Handling and Processing Efficiencies - Community & Environmental Digital development of processes within this team has recently accelerated with more development scheduled. Manual processing for fishing permits, allotments and credit claim has been reduced with automated and digital solutions. This reduction in processing has also led to a reduction in telephone enquiries. A new system for regulatory services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team Resource reduction	42	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Digitalisation of processes is well established and has gathered considerable momentum due to positive service liaison. Key dependencies being Neighbourhood Services where considerable cross service development is underway which will reduce customer contact. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings. Spikes/unplanned service demand could create greater demand in short term until digitalisation programme fully rolled out.		
Workstream Four Description	Contact and Support – Planning, Building Control, Licensing - Processing Efficiencies The impact of Covid-19 rapidly changed the way we communicated with customers and processed tasks. Agents, developers and interested parties are now routinely submitting plans and work requests digitally. Additionally, innovative solutions are being introduced to process taxi application virtually removing the need for resource heavy in-person appointments. A new system for Built Environment/Licensing Services is being implemented (Northgate). This system will deliver processing efficiencies in our management of customer enquiries. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Contact and Support Team officer Resource reduction	31	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Some services improvements are linked to the sourcing and adoption of suitable ICT equipment for officers. Further behaviour change of some customers is needed but this is in the minority. Delay on Northgate implementation could create risk to projected savings.		
Workstream Five Description	More Efficient Processing of Benefit Claims Recent development to our core systems combined with a reduction in onerous verification, through policy changes, has led to simplified and more cost effective processes. This has given a foundation for further		

	automation which can be underpinned by an effective compliance regime. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Benefits Processing Team resource reduction	35	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The team are currently processing new claims and changes very quickly and well within target - whilst maintaining quality standards. Automation of Universal Credit notifications and wider expansion of e-notifications are underway and will lead to a reduction in contact/processing. Covid-19 still present risks to this area as the fiscal landscape is directly reflected into caseload numbers however this has been factored into our thinking and assumptions on caseloads have been made. A radical shift in excess of our assumptions would create pressure in the short term.		
Workstream Six Description	Complaints/FOI Processing Efficiencies Development of SharePoint solutions (escalator / informer) has released efficiencies in the ways complaints and FOI's are allocated and processed. The next step of development is to deliver a front end to the informer site and to enhance information provided on our website which will avoid unnecessary contact. We can now review the structure of this area and deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Customer Information staff resource reduction	30	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Complaints and FOIs could rise the unlikely event of dramatic reduction in wider service delivery, but this risk is deemed low to minimal. Delivery of a customer self-serve front end to the informer process will reduce the need for manual intervention, however delay to this development could lead to short term pressure. Developments delivered in this area have resulted in a stable and effective processing which now allows for a final stage of enhancement.		
Workstream Seven Description	Electoral Services It is anticipated the annual registration process will undergo further reform allowing for more effective processing. Also, wider efficiencies in payroll processing, contract management and system development could deliver savings against salary budget costs.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Electoral Services Team resource reduction	0	25	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	Savings are dependent on further relaxation of legislative framework and efficiencies being delivered in process/contracts/system development. Savings are net of additional temporary resourced need at election period. Compliance and accuracy are paramount in holding successful elections and any error could lead to additional costs, disenfranchising of electors and loss of reputational currency. These risks will need to be judged against progress of process and task development/efficiency.		
Workstream eight Description	Finance Team Review By reviewing and revising how capital budgets are monitored we can perform this function more efficiently.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Reduction in posts to monitor Capital Budgets	45	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This proposal would result in a risk of redundancy costs. It would also reduce the overall capacity of the Finance Team and will necessitate a review of the responsibilities of all team members to mitigate this impact and ensure capital budgets are appropriately managed.		
Workstream Nine Description	People and Performance Team Efficiencies Several vacant posts have not been filled in People and Performance but the team have demonstrated through the efficient way they operate and a move to greater self-serve and through effective use of technology that they can deliver support services with less resource than previously.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Research Team Efficiency	20	0	0
Human Resources Efficiency	33	0	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	These posts are all vacant so there is no direct impact on existing staff. The teams have also shown through efficiency improvements they can deliver effective support services with these posts removed.		
Workstream Ten Description	ICT Team Efficiencies By restructuring several roles in the ICT service, this can be delivered with a reduced amount of resource.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Master Data Management Efficiencies	40	0	0
Combining existing management roles.	43	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>The LLPG and Street Naming and Numbering are statutory duties and reducing would give us enough resource to complete these statutory duties and complete essential tasks on the other elements. There could be pinch points around one off project work led by services (such as elections or planning) but we would need to look at solutions for this as needed. Back up and contingency could be provided by working more closely with other organisations.</p> <p>The proposed ICT management changes would mean less available resource to Project Manage service based work or deal with operational issues for service owned systems (like Call Centre technology) but should be sufficient to allow the overall management of the team and the programme of work.</p>		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM EFFICIENCY THEME	445	25	0

Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	Resources Customer		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
Redundancy	Not fully known	Specific details / postholders are unknown at this stage.	
Number of posts reduced in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	13.8 FTE	1 FTE	
Number of new posts in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	1FTE		
Conclusion	<p>Northgate system implementation will allow for significant redesign /digitalisation of processes across a number of teams. Also, Covid -19 has led to innovative and new ways of working which have relied on digital and virtual solutions not only making us more efficient but allowing us to meet increased demand in some areas and to question former established ways of working . These factors will build on the digital development we have already successfully implemented and add to the momentum in driving efficiencies across the organisation.</p> <p>The efficiencies detailed will result in reductions to the staff establishment and this carries some risk of some short impact on service provision and redundancy cost.</p>		

BUDGET STRATEGY BUSINESS CASE

Budget Strategy Theme	Service Provision		
Introduction to Theme	This theme involves reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new levels of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”. In addition to examining in house services, services provided through external contracts will be reviewed. New more cost effective models of service delivery will also be investigated including shared services and in-sourcing.		
Workstream One Description	Procurement Savings Over the next 12 months several external contracts are due to be retendered. By using our buying power, joint procurement and reducing specifications we will make savings against the budgeted spend for these contracts. The process can be repeated for future years based on experience gained this year.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Savings against current budgeted cost for external contracts.	150	50	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This workstream enables budget savings whilst safeguarding jobs. There are risks that procurement savings will not be generated and contract specifications and associated service standards may need to be reduced to achieve the savings.		
Workstream Two Description	Reviewing Outsourced Services We can review and consider insourcing services currently provided via external contracts and SLA's. The Grounds Maintenance Contract expires in 2023. This has an annual value of £1.7million but if we start planning now the specification and model of delivery could be reviewed. For example, we could explore options to change the service specification to reduce the environmental impact whilst also reducing cost. Other models of service delivery such as in-sourcing and a staff mutual will also be considered with the support of the Policy Panel.		
	Identified Savings		
Description of saving	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Saving against current budget for the Grounds Maintenance Contract	0	0	100
Review the current SLA with CBH for	29	0	0

managing Antisocial Behaviour			
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Positive benefits issues, risks and impacts	<p>This theme will ensure the previous recommendation to Cabinet by the Alternative Methods of Service Delivery Task and Finish Group is implemented in that co-operatives/mutual's and insourcing will be explored. Such models have benefits in terms of staff engagement/ownership of the service which can result in higher levels of service. The impact of TUPE legislation will need to be considered in any alternative model. If the Ground Maintenance Service continues to be provided by an external contractor, the specification could be revised to make it more Environmentally Sustainable and lower cost e.g. less weed removal/reduced grass cutting. There is a risk that the current service reduces in quality if the current contractor believes there is no opportunity for them to retender for the contract.</p>
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Workstream Three Description	Shared Services We are already sharing some elements of our Corporate Services. There are further opportunities to share including, insurance management, learning and development, and recruitment. We could also trade our support services including ICT.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Savings against salary budget costs by sharing the cost of staff in HR, Finance, Governance, and ICT with partner organisations.	100	100	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	<p>Sharing services can reduce the overall cost to partners whilst pooling expertise and creating greater resilience. It does require a relationship based on mutual trust and this has already developed with other Councils in HR and ICT. If the overall level of saving cannot be generated then the current resource levels for providing these services will need to be reviewed. As such, when vacant posts arise in these support services they will not be filled until proposals that will generate required savings are developed.</p>
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Workstream Four Description	Review of Operating Models This will involve a review of our operating models and organisational structures including management structures. It will also involve more immediate opportunities to reduce staffing levels as we adapt to the new normal.
	Identified Savings

Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
With revised operation of our key buildings we can review and reduce the resource to manage them.	100	0	0
Review of Communications and Marketing Team management structure	40	0	0
Demand into the Building Control Team has reduced requiring less staff resource.	35	0	0
Demand into the Licensing Team has reduced which means less staff resource is required.	15	0	0
Change museums business rate banding.	12	0	0
Change Heckworth House to incorporate a display to change business rates categorisation.	0	0	15
During our response to Covid -19 we have demonstrated that “in person” services previously provided in the Library/Community Hub can be provided as effectively digitally.	56	0	0
Rather than maintaining a permanent Customer Improvement Team the staff resource required for each service improvement project should be part of a business case made at the start of the project.	110	0	0

Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The revision to how we manage buildings will require different ways of working which will result in users of Key Buildings, including the Town Hall experiencing a different service. It is also predicated on reception arrangements at Rowan House being revised. The review of Communications and Marketing Team Management Structure will require the team to be located under a different GMT. This will result in some reduction in the team's overall capacity. When reviewing in person services provided at the library provision will need to be made to support vulnerable residents (such support has been provided during lockdown)		
Workstream Five Description	Vacant Posts Deletion and Better Establishment Control There are some vacant posts across the organisation which could be deleted and as posts become vacant they could be deleted unless there is a strong business case to fill them. This can then be supported through more effective establishment control so with a more robust approval process before new posts are agreed.		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Housing Team	7	0	0
Better establishment control	10	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	This is likely to place additional pressure on remaining team members. As such the capacity of the remaining team will need to be considered and outputs/performance levels revised appropriately. In many cases this is likely to lead to lower levels of service provision than has previously been delivered.		
Workstream Description	Reduction of posts/service in targeted areas		
	Identified Savings		
Description	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 - 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
Revise and reduce overall officer resource in the Planning Service utilising technology to further increase efficiency.	120	0	0
We could cease the night-time noise service which currently operates from 11PM to 1AM and is provided through staff overtime.	20	0	0
Positive benefits, issues, risks and impacts	The impact on performance of the planning service – enforcement and applications etc. would need to be carefully monitored and if there was a significant upturn in applications/complaints additional resources would		

	need to be reintroduced albeit the cost would be offset through additional fee income.		
	Other responsibilities can be managed by redistributing responsibilities across the team.		
	The cessation of the night-time noise service would need to be clearly communicated as there is currently a public expectation for us to provide the service. In future issues would be dealt with on the next working day.		
	Savings (£000's)		
	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM SERVICE PROVISION THEME	804	150	115
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Areas	All Cabinet Portfolio's are impacted		
Implementation Costs			
Item	Cost	Comment	
Redundancy	Not fully known	As specific posts not identified as this stage it is impossible to know what redundancy costs would be but we should assume there will be some.	
Posts reduced in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	13.6		
Identification of number of new posts in FTE	2021 – 2022	2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
TOTAL	0	0	0
Conclusion	Changes to the way services are provided and procured could deliver substantial savings whilst maintaining current service levels. There are also several opportunities to make reductions to the staff establishment accepting there will be some impact on service provision. Savings will have major impacts on some service areas if agreed that have not been fully investigated.		

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed:

Budget Strategy Theme – Commercial

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

This is a theme of the budget strategy developed in 2020/2021 to identify budget savings to deliver a balanced budget in the following years.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

This theme is about understanding and maximising income across all Council services, optimising fees and charges, finding and predicting new income opportunities and commercial projects including reviewing the use of our assets and working with the Council's Amphora trading companies.

Ensuring we maximise our fees and charges fairly and consistently

2. Working with staff to find creative ways to maximise income across the Council through new opportunities

3. Finding ways to use our assets more commercially and effectively

4. Working with the Council's Amphora trading companies

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

The theme propose a variety of changes led by a number of workstreams including increases to fees and charges across services, using our own assets more commercially and effectively and increasing our income from new commercial opportunities across service areas.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

Service users/customers would be affected.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

The theme aims to use our assets more commercially to increase income for the Council and create innovative solutions to the budget gap.

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

This is a corporate budget strategy theme so it impacts a range of services. Some proposals may also involve Amphora Trading in delivery.

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.*

A full internal and external consultation will be undertaken covering all proposals made as part of the overall budget strategy and this will be use to help understand the impact of these proposals on customers and staff.

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

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

(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.

This theme does not specifically help to meet the general duty as it details various budget savings proposals.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

-

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

-

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

-

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.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

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

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.

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

This theme does not specifically help to improve health inequalities as it details various budget savings proposals.

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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'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'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+)	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Disability	Physical	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Sensory	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Learning	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mental health issues	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Ethnicity ⁶	White	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Black	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Chinese	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Gypsies/ Travellers	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Language	English not first language	No	N/A	No	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	No	N/A	No	N/A

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, 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
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sex	Men	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Women	No	N/A	No	N/A
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	No	N/A	No	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	N/A	No	N/A

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

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

No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

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.

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 Section 2 in order to conduct a full 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 type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

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

Mandy Jones

15. Date of completion:

25/9/20

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please:(a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

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 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.

Section 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment

Where there is a negative impact which has not been minimised or removed

17. If you have identified negative impact(s) on the 'protected characteristics' that have not been minimised or removed, is this considered to be 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'¹¹? If yes, state how:

If a negative impact cannot be minimised or removed and cannot be objectively justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim', the policy should not be implemented as it could unlawfully discriminate.

Where there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement

If you identified that there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether there are any negative impacts on the 'protected characteristics', please complete the first column of the Action Plan below.

Engagement and Consultation Action Plan

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
Age	Older people (60+)			
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)			
Disability	Physical			
	Sensory			
	Learning			

¹¹ This phrase is taken from sections 15 and 19 of the Equality Act 2010. 'Positive action', benefitting one or more 'protected characteristic'(s), may result in a disproportionate negative impact upon another, but this may be justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. The need to balance a budget can constitute a "legitimate aim". Contact the Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator for more information or look at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) webpage under "objective justification".

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
	Mental health issues			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Ethnicity	White			
	Black			
	Chinese			
	Mixed Ethnic Origin			
	Gypsies/ Travellers			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Language	English not first language			
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks			
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)			
Sex	Men			
	Women			
Gender Reassignment	Transgender/ Transsexual			
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership			

If your answer to question 16 (above) is ‘no’, this policy could be unlawfully discriminatory against a ‘protected characteristic’. You should not implement this policy. Otherwise, you may implement the policy, taking care to review its impact based on planned engagement. The Review should be carried out within 6 months from the date of this Full Impact Assessment, at which point a further Review may or may not be required depending on whether you have collected sufficient evidence.

Summary and findings of Full Equality Impact Assessment

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

Findings	Action required
Likely negative impacts have been identified but are considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Further planned engagement with equality target groups will take place in order to gain sufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and review within 6 months.
Planned engagement has taken place: No likely negative impacts have been identified. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Planned engagement has taken place: Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
The policy could be unlawfully discriminatory and will not be implemented. <input type="checkbox"/>	Finish without signing off.

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

20. Date of completion:

21. Date for update or review of this screening:

If you have now signed off this full assessment, please (a) send a copy to the relevant Head of Service and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading) and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document.

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Communities Theme in the Council Budget Strategy

- 1. What is the main purpose of the changes?** The Council Budget Strategy is to ensure that we can live within our financial means. With the impact of Covid19 on our finances the Council has had to quickly review its financial position and consider expenditure and income. The approach taken has been to look at 'themed' areas of work and the Communities Theme specifically looks at how we work with our communities and if there are opportunities to reduce our spending or increase income opportunities by working in a different way in the future.
- 2. What main areas or activities does it cover?** The Specific changes relate to two key areas, one is linked to the Locality Budgets that Ward Cllrs receive each year and the other is linked to the resources within the Community Development team at the Council.
- 3. Are there changes considered in this assessment?** The main changes are that the Locality Budget is to be halved from £2,000 per Councillor to £1,000 per Councillor and we will not replace the Community Development Team Apprentice paid for from the Councils Staffing Budget from April 2021. These changes will save the Council £64,000 annually which will help towards balancing the budget following the impact of loss of income and increased expenditure from the Covid19 pandemic.
- 4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?** For the Locality Budget changes the main audience are local communities who would generally be invited to apply for this funding for a range of Community Activities from Community events through to small improvements to community facilities. The Apprentice change is unlikely to directly impact on one main audience or set of customers.
- 5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?** The key outcome is the efficiency of £64,000 to help the Council balance its finances but the change will also result in more consideration to how the remaining Locality Budget money is spent, considering with Ward Cllrs the inequalities that exist and if funding can be used in a different way in the future. In some cases, some Ward Cllrs have struggled to find ways to spend their locality budgets so the impact will be felt more by some than others.

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

Locality Budgets have generally been spend across the whole Borough and on a range of different things over the years including new benches, events, activities, blub planting, supporting community groups and to help improve community facilities.

The money is generally very small amounts, usually between £300 to £500 per grant, decided and paid by Ward Cllrs. The change will have a small impact on Communities access to funding but it is not spend on the same thing each year and Ward Cllrs still have access to £1000 so have the ability to minimise any impact on those with protected characteristics by being more selective on how they spend their grants in the future. Officers will work with Ward Cllrs to mitigate any possible impacts by considering future spend very carefully to maximise the positive outcomes for those who need the help the most.

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

- As above in relation to Locality Budgets – so better analysis of need and inequalities for each Ward Cllr to consider more focussed spending of the remaining grant within their Ward areas.
- Other funding is available for Communities to assist with some of the areas that have traditionally been funded by locality budgets and officers will work with Local Ward Cllrs and Communities to seek alternative sources of funding.
- Use of Asset Based Approaches within communities, so looking at what strengths and assets they have to help themselves and positively influence the improvements communities want to see happen.
- Working with the voluntary sector and other partners to enable and support communities into action and to find other, more sustainable sources of funding and help,.
- With regard to the Apprenticeship role, one off funding has been secured to employ an Apprentice in a different role within the team so the only negative impact, losing the opportunity to help improve the skills and employability of an individual has been mitigated by this new opportunity. The Apprentice role that will not be replaced will have ended naturally and they have also secured alternative employment.

12. Could the policy discriminate¹ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly²? (No)

¹ 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'.

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 type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed – yes	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

14. Name and job title of person completing this form: Lucie Breadman, Assistant Director for Communities

15. Date of completion: 08th September 2020

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

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

- Budget Strategy – Efficiency Theme
- [Link](#)

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown has had a significant impact on council finances. We also have an ongoing need to reduce The costs of council services and to be more efficient and modern in line with other government and local government services which are increasingly moving to online.

To address the budget gap a new budget strategy has been formulated under 5 key themes - Priorities, Commercial, Efficiency, Service Provision and Community.

The Budget Strategy – Efficiency Theme, with supporting business case, describes how the council will drive efficiency through:

- Innovation and modern thinking
- Accelerating the shift to digital
- Seeking simplicity in every process
- Reducing time and effort required by customers to report, apply and pay for services
- Reducing time and effort required by officers to process, update and complete tasks

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The following are the key activities and is not exhaustive
For customers

- Accessing CBC services online
- Using the online channel to find information and to contact us

For officers

- Receiving requests
- Inputting and verifying data
- Allocating tasks
- Plan, process and update
- Deciding criteria
- Liaison, visits and checking
- Notification to customers
- Document management

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

- Minor changes to policies may be required as we refine and change service processes.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Customers
- Officers of the council
- Members

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- The efficiency theme describes the opportunities to further optimise the efficiency of council services, tasks and processes. This can be achieved by accelerating our shift to digital and implementing innovative and modern solutions to how we manage, organise and process work within the organisation.

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

- This is cross council theme and will affect all service areas

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.

These proposals will be subject to a comprehensive consultation and governance regime – key stages below:

Commence informal staff/Unison consultation/communication on business cases and alternative staff/union suggestions on budget savings.	September 20
Update to Cabinet	2 September 20
Budget Group Consideration of business cases.	29 September 20
Initial Consideration by Scrutiny of business cases	13 October 20
Initial approval by Cabinet of Business Cases	14 October 20
Formal consultation with Staff	21 October - 27 November
Full Council – update	3 December 20
Consideration by SMT of feedback from formal consultation and any changes to business case	7 December 20
Feedback to Leadership results of formal consultation	10 December 20
Feedback to staff results of formal consultation	11-14 December 20
Update to Scrutiny Panel on results of formal consultation and any resulting changes	15 December 20
Final approval by Cabinet	27 January 21

In addition, Colchester Borough Council launched to a survey during September 2020 to gather feedback on the provision of in-person going forward. The survey aims to be a mechanism for consulting with the public on their preferences for where in-person services need to be in the future, who we should operate with, and how we should provide this service. It can be completed in-person at Colchester Library or online by visiting www.colchester.gov.uk/customersurvey

8. The ‘general duty’ states that we must have “due regard” to the need to:

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.

- (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. The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- The proposal within the efficiency theme have been devised to support residents in Colchester whilst balancing the available funding and assumed fiscal pressures in future years. Consideration has been given to ensure that the proposals do not unlawfully discriminate. The proposals are fundamentally reliant on using digital solutions to improve the way we process and manage task and accounts. This will allow us to modernise and become more in line with other government and local government ways of processing customer requests which are increasingly moving to online. These developments will allow us to provide a more convenient and easier service to many residents whilst allowing us to efficiently administer task, accounts and enquiries.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- Standardisation and automation of process is based on set criteria, workflow and conditionality all of which will ensure that all customers are considered in a fair and consistent way.

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- Modernisation of processes will allow for greater access to services which is not limited to traditional working patterns, will remove reliance on visits to public offices, travel costs and offer greater confidentiality in contact.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations in the following way(s):

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.

- The proposals intended to be tested, refined and adapted through a comprehensive consultation and governance regime. Furthermore, the council has fostered a high degree of community resilience and has helped to develop a wider network of advice and support for residents.

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.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

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

- Proposals will remove the need for unnecessary visits to public offices, reduce travel costs and create an equality of access to services.

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'.

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

'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+)	Y	<p>Convenience of accessing information and services 24/7 and at a time that suits the customer, in addition to the popular and well used telephony channels</p> <p>Reduced in person appointments, burdensome verification and necessity to travel to a public office</p> <p>Removal of reliance on paper applications</p> <p>The council offers alternative way of contact and additional support for those that need it.</p>	Y	Transformational change can sometimes cause the need for temporary additional support
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	Y	As above	N	
Disability	Physical	Y	As above	N	
	Sensory	Y	As above	N	
	Learning		As above	Y	Additional support maybe needed accessing certain services
	Mental health issues	Y	As above	N	
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White	Y	As above	N	
	Black	Y	As above	N	
	Chinese	Y	As above	N	
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	Y	As above	N	
	Gypsies/ Travellers	Y	As above	N	
	Other – <i>specify</i>				

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, 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
Language	English not first language	Y	As above	Y	Where English is not the first language a translation service may be required
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	Y	As above	N	
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	Y	As above	N	
Sex	Men	Y	As above	N	
	Women	Y	As above	N	
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	Y	As above	N	
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	Y	As above	N	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	Y	As above	N	

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

- Transformational change can sometimes cause the need for temporary additional support – telephony and Digital Access Support Team offer a free digital support service that helps residents gain skills and confidence using today's technology. Furthermore, the council works with a wide range of community partners which can also help and support our residents within their own communities.
- Instant telephone translation services may be accessed for customers via language line. Customers who wish to use on online services can use free online translation tools, such as google translate.

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?

No – It is held that identified negative impacts have been mitigated as detailed above.

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
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed ✓	Sign off screening and finish.

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

- Leonie Rathbone – Assistant Director Customer

15. Date of completion:

- 21 September 2020

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

- 7 December 2020

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 Section 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 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.

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed:

Budget Strategy Theme – Service Provision

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

This is a theme of the budget strategy developed in 2020/2021 to identify budget savings to deliver a balanced budget in the following years.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

This theme involves reviewing levels and models of service provision. This includes reviewing current service standards to identify the optimum standard for the new levels of resources available. It also involves reviewing services and organisational structures to ensure they are fit for purpose for our “new normal”.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

The theme involves various workstreams which propose a variety of changes including procurement savings, reviewing outsourced support services, reviewing operating models and organisational structures, deleting vacant posts and reviewing and reducing service levels in line with the resources available.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

CBC staff would be impacted and service users/customers would also be affected.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

The theme aims to reduce the overall cost of service provision whilst maintaining frontline service levels as much as possible.

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

This is a corporate budget strategy theme so it impacts a range of services. Some proposals also impact on partner agencies i.e. reviewing outsourced services and ceasing the night-time noise service.

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.*

A full internal and external consultation will be undertaken covering all proposals made as part of the overall budget strategy and this will be use to help understand the impact of these proposals on customers and staff.

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.

This theme does not specifically help to meet the general duty as it details various budget savings proposals.

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

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.

-

The policy helps us to ‘advance equality of opportunity...’ in the following way(s):

-

The policy helps us to ‘foster good relations...’ in the following way(s):

-

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.

“Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people’s health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are.”

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

This theme does not specifically help to improve health inequalities as it details various budget savings proposals.

-

-

-

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'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'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+)	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	No	N/A	Yes	The proposals to reduce apprentice roles is likely to have a greater impact on younger people.
Disability	Physical	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Sensory	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Learning	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mental health issues	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Ethnicity ⁶	White	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Black	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Chinese	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Gypsies/ Travellers	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Other – <i>specify</i>	No	N/A	No	N/A
Language	English not first language	No	N/A	No	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	No	N/A	No	N/A

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, 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
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sex	Men	No	N/A	No	N/A
	Women	No	N/A	Yes	The job roles that would be removed by these proposals currently have a greater proportion (57%) of female employees in post than male. The overall gender balance for Council Employees is 50/50 male/female.
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual	No	N/A	No	N/A
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian	No	N/A	No	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership	No	N/A	No	N/A

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

The impact on younger people is a potential impact rather than actually impacting on individuals as the 2 apprentice posts that are proposed to be reduced are currently vacant.

The impact on Women highlighted above is difficult to mitigate as a greater number of our back-office support roles are undertaken by female members of staff. The most significant proportion of male staff work in frontline services such as Neighbourhood Services and these have been protected through these proposals.

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 type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

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

Richard Block

15. Date of completion:

18/9/2020

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 Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please:(a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

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 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.

Section 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment

Where there is a negative impact which has not been minimised or removed

17. If you have identified negative impact(s) on the 'protected characteristics' that have not been minimised or removed, is this considered to be 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'¹¹? If yes, state how:

If a negative impact cannot be minimised or removed and cannot be objectively justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim', the policy should not be implemented as it could unlawfully discriminate.

Where there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement

If you identified that there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on whether there are any negative impacts on the 'protected characteristics', please complete the first column of the Action Plan below.

Engagement and Consultation Action Plan

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
Age	Older people (60+)			
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)			
Disability	Physical			
	Sensory			
	Learning			

¹¹ This phrase is taken from sections 15 and 19 of the Equality Act 2010. 'Positive action', benefitting one or more 'protected characteristic'(s), may result in a disproportionate negative impact upon another, but this may be justified as being 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. The need to balance a budget can constitute a "legitimate aim". Contact the Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator for more information or look at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) webpage under "objective justification".

		Details of Planned Engagement	Date for Review	Summary of findings
	Mental health issues			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Ethnicity	White			
	Black			
	Chinese			
	Mixed Ethnic Origin			
	Gypsies/ Travellers			
	Other – <i>specify</i>			
Language	English not first language			
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks			
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)			
Sex	Men			
	Women			
Gender Reassignment	Transgender/ Transsexual			
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership			

If your answer to question 16 (above) is ‘no’, this policy could be unlawfully discriminatory against a ‘protected characteristic’. You should not implement this policy. Otherwise, you may implement the policy, taking care to review its impact based on planned engagement. The Review should be carried out within 6 months from the date of this Full Impact Assessment, at which point a further Review may or may not be required depending on whether you have collected sufficient evidence.

Summary and findings of Full Equality Impact Assessment

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

Findings	Action required
Likely negative impacts have been identified but are considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Further planned engagement with equality target groups will take place in order to gain sufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and review within 6 months.
Planned engagement has taken place: No likely negative impacts have been identified. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Planned engagement has taken place: Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
The policy could be unlawfully discriminatory and will not be implemented. <input type="checkbox"/>	Finish without signing off.

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

20. Date of completion:

21. Date for update or review of this screening:

If you have now signed off this full assessment, please (a) send a copy to the relevant Head of Service and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading) and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document.

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Corporate & Improvement Services	Author	Hayley McGrath ☎ 508902
Title	2019/20 Year End Review of Risk Management		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides members with an overview of the Council's risk management activity undertaken during the financial year from 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.
- 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 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 management team), 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 Towards the end of the 2019/20 financial year the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic began to be managed by the Council with its partners and this situation has prompted a further review of the strategic risk register (Appendix 1).
- 1.5 The key strategic risks are:
 - Budget Strategy
 - Covid-19 Pandemic
 - Spending Power
 - Compliance
 - Staff Resources
 - EU Transition
 - Data Protection
 - Cyber Security
 -

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 Note the Council's progress and performance in managing risk during the period April 2019 to March 2020.
- 2.2 Consider and comment on the current strategic risk register.
- 2.3 Approve the proposed risk management strategy for 2020/21 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 & Audit Committee, detailing work undertaken and current issues. This report was presented to the Governance & Audit Committee on 08 September 2020, 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 period

- 6.1 There were no fundamental changes to the risk management function, or the processes used to identify and control risk, during 2019/20.
- 6.2 The review of risk processes, reported to the Governance and Audit committee in January 2020, has continued. The review is concentrating on how the risk registers are compiled, how mitigation actions are reflected in scores and potentially moving to more interactive on-line registers. The revised format for the risk registers has been used for the strategic register attached to this report, and it can be seen that both pre action and post mitigation (residual) ratings are given for each risk.

- 6.3 Work has continued to develop the insurance and risk programmes for Colchester Commercial (Holdings) Limited, to ensure that emerging commercial risks are appropriately managed.
- 6.4 Support continues to be provided, reviewing the risk elements of event plans, to both the Colchester, and the Community Stadium, Safety Advisory Groups.
- 6.5 The risk registers for the 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 2020/21 the strategic risk register was reviewed by the senior management team every quarter and reported to the Governance & Audit Committee every six months. The current register is shown at appendix 1. These risks have been mapped onto a risk chart as shown at appendix 2, this charts the risks both pre action and post mitigation.
- 7.2 The Corporate Governance Manager reviewed the strategic risks with the Senior Management Team in June 2020 to ensure that the identified risks were still appropriate.
- 7.3 For the majority of 2019/20 the Council's strategic risks were consistent. The United Kingdoms' exit from the European Union, security of data and Council finances being key areas of concern.
- 7.4 A review of strategic risks during the year identified several areas where risks could be removed or substantially reduced, as there had been no indication of this risk materialising in the near future, to ensure the risk register was focussed on priority risks.
- 7.5 During January and February the Senior Management Team reviewed the Council's business continuity plans and Flu Pandemic plan in light of emerging information about Coronavirus (Covid-19).
- 7.6 Many of the mitigating activities identified, and implemented, as a direct result of the Council's risk strategy and Strategic Risk Register have helped the organisation, with its partners, to cope with the impacts of Covid-19 . For example, strong partnership working, effective communications and prudent financial management.
- 7.7 At the very end of the financial year the Council responded promptly to the combined impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, associated economic lockdown and sector-specific guidance affecting operational activities. Consequently, several of the Council's strategic risks became live issues and the likelihood of lower rated risks materialising increased. Whilst the pandemic is itself now a clear ongoing risk to the Council, our customers, communities and businesses, it has also increased risks associated with income generation and service delivery.
- 7.8 The strategic risk register (Appendix 1) has been revised to reflect the key areas of concern, and the Council's recovery strands, along with the addition of a specific Covid-19 risk.
- 7.9 However, it is felt that the risk register will need to be further refined over the coming months, as the long-term impacts of the pandemic become clearer. The Council's Internal Auditors have been asked to assist with this process and they will be working with the Corporate Governance Manager to carry out a fundamental review of the risk management framework. The results of the review will be reported to the Governance and Audit committee later in the year.

8. Risk Management Strategy for 2020/21

- 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 2020/21. 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 external guidance references.

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 – The strategic risk register

Appendix 3 – Risk Management Strategy for 2020/21

Colchester Borough Council Strategic Risk Register
JULY 2020

				Initial Score							Residual Score		
Ref	Risk Title	Description	Strategic / Recovery Strand	P	I	O	RATING	Consequences	Mitigation	Lead	P	I	O
PR1	Budget Strategy	Inability to deliver the budget strategy as planned.	Priorities	4	5	20	Very High	Service delivery failure Financial and reputational loss by the Authority .Personal liability of Officers and Members Legal actions against the Council. Loss of stakeholder confidence in the Borough. Inability to sustain costs. Failure to deliver balanced budget as planned. A need to use balances / reserves or to adapt financial plans to deal with impact of changes. Required to use Reserves & Resources to fund capital priorities. Severe impact on cash-flow leading to negative effect on performance targets.	Ensure effective use of the controls built into the annual budget strategy, to enable the organisation 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 organisation 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 and thematic approach to 20/21 budget process to identify savings and achieve a sustainable position. Further lobbying of central government to cover all losses as promised.	Chief Operating Officer	3	5	15
ST4	Covid-19 Pandemic	Ongoing, and recovery , impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the council, the communities, our customers and the economy.	Strategic	5	4	20	Very High	The ongoing and future impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic including service and staff resilience and shortages, additional service pressures, short term changes in policy and alert status disrupting delivery of strategic priorities, impacts on service delivery with additional cost pressures and potentially reduced income levels alongside additional work to support recovery.	Implementation of the Covid-19 recovery programme, monitored and shared with staff, members and partners.This covers Council, Community, Customer and Economic response and recovery and the actions/resources required to enable the Council to respond to them. Delivery of the revised Strategic Plan which incorporate recovery objectives and additional burdens (e.g. outbreak controls). Specific recovery actions, including Reopening of the High Street, being monitored through the project management process.	Chief Operating Officer	5	3	15
ST2	Spending Power	The government changes following the General Election, and impacts of Covid19, are likely to result in a comprehensive spending review impacting on public funding, including that of our partners e.g. Fair Funding Review, Business Rates Retention.	Strategic	4	4	16	Very High	If not properly managed then either the Council could lose the opportunity to develop further or may have enforced changes to service delivery. 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 withdrawal of services.	Maintain a constant review of the budget situation, incl impact of decisions from central government. Identify additional actions and areas for spending as necessary.	Chief Operating Officer	4	3	12
SP4	Compliance	Failure to protect public funds and resources – ineffective probity / monitoring systems/legislative breaches. Especially as a result of the rapid changes in service delivery required to respond to the impacts of Covid-19	Service Provision	4	4	16	Very High	Service delivery failure. Financial and reputational loss by the Authority. Personal liability of Officers and Members. Legal actions against the Council. Loss of stakeholder confidence in the Borough. Inability to sustain costs. Failure to deliver balanced budget as planned. A need to use balances / reserves or to adapt financial plans to deal with impact of changes. Required to use Reserves & Resources to fund capital priorities. Severe impact on cash-flow leading to negative effect on performance	Ensure the outcomes of the assurance systems that form the internal control environment, (including Internal Audit, Risk Management, Budget process, Corporate Governance and performance management) are appropriately reported so that issues and concerns are managed, and variances are spotted at an early stage. Horizon scanning upcoming legislative / policy changes	Chief Operating Officer	3	4	12

				Initial Score							Residual Score		
Ref	Risk Title	Description	Strategic / Recovery Strand	P	I	O	RATING	Consequences	Mitigation	Lead	P	I	O
SP2	Staff Resources	Staff shortages due to an inability to recruit and / or staff sickness.	Service Provision	5	3	15	Very High	Decline in service performance. Disengaged and demotivated staff. Efficiency and productivity reduction Inability to meet changing requirements and needs Customer perceptions decline as we deliver less. Loss of key staff	Communicate job opportunities and benefits of working at CBC clearly and imaginatively. Review opportunities to do things differently for key posts including considering the value of trading companies.	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	4	3	12
CO3	Universal Credit	Impact of the implementation of Universal Credit in Colchester could lead to additional work for CBC to help customers apply for the new single benefit. There will be a transition period whereby residents move to the new application which could be difficult for some of our more vulnerable customers. The future impacts of Covid-19 are likely to increase the number of vulnerable residents and claimants.	Community	3	4	12	High	The Council fails to support our most vulnerable residents leading to an increase in crisis intervention.	Regularly monitor the impact of the resources allocated to the welfare reform project, to ensure that customers are supported with signposting to appropriate providers/partners. A+24:31T THE CURRENT TIME, DUE TO THE UNKNOWN IMPACTS OF COVID-19, MITIGATION DOESN'T REDUCE THE SCORE.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	3	4	12
SP1	Data Protection	Sensitive data, in any format, is not correctly managed, processed or protected from loss or theft in line with GDPR and Data Protection Act requirements.	Service Provision	4	5	20	Very High	Potentially severe disruption to core services and/or data theft, with financial, legal and reputational impacts for the Council, and potentially significant harm caused to residents from any breach, potential financial losses, directly or indirectly e.g. ICO fines.	Ongoing review of data security policies and protocols to ensure that they are fit for purpose and implement a training program for all staff.	Chief Operating Officer	2	5	10
SP3	Cyber Security	The Council suffers a successful cyber attack on it's computer systems.	Service Provision	3	5	15	Very High	Potentially severe disruption to core services, with financial, legal and reputational impacts for the Council, and potentially significant harm caused to residents.	Ongoing review of IT policies and protocols to ensure that they are fit for purpose and implement a training program for all staff.	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	2	5	10
ST1	EU Exit	The agreement to the UK Withdrawal Agreement by both the EU and the UK parliament potentially provides a managed withdrawal from the European Union but a large number of uncertainties remain. A 'no deal exit' could still happen at the end of 2020, following the end of the transition period, if no new trade deal is agreed between the UK and the EU. There are different potential risks depending on the agreed exit arrangements.	Strategic	4	4	16	Very High	The impacts of any EU exit will depend on a number of factors over time and the immediate implications of the withdrawal agreement. A 'No Deal' or disorderly EU Exit could impact on the macro and local economy including CBC commercial income and local businesses. There may be disruption to the Council's supply chains, legal uncertainty, and a negative impact on community wellbeing.	Continue to monitor the Government's announcements on the implications of the exit from the EU, including the potential implications of a 'no deal' Brexit. Participate fully in Essex Resilience Forum activity and exercises, complete all reporting to ERF and MHCLG, support communications to residents and businesses	Chief Operating Officer	3	3	9

				Initial Score							Residual Score		
Ref	Risk Title	Description	Strategic / Recovery Strand	P	I	O	RATING	Consequences	Mitigation	Lead	P	I	O
CO1	Partnership Delivery	Failure or inappropriate performance management of one or more strategic partnerships or key contracts E.g. Haven Gateway, LEP, ICS, CBH, Emergency Services	Community	4	4	16	Very High	The cost of service delivery is increased however quality decreases. Failure to deliver key priorities. Reputational and financial loss by the Authority. Failure to deliver expected outcomes through partnerships. Requirement to repay external funding granted to partnership – taking on the liabilities of the ‘withdrawn’ partner. External assessment of the Councils partnerships are critical and score poorly.	Review the assessment process for proposed strategic partnerships (to ensure that they will satisfy the Council’s objectives) that needs to be signed off by EMT before commitment to new partnerships is made.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	3	3	9
ST3	Partnership Commitment	Change of direction / policy within key partner organisation and they revise input / withdraw from projects. Increased risk due to partners having to review service provision in response to the impacts of Covid-19 on their business.	Strategic	4	3	12	High	The cost of service delivery is increased however quality decreases. Failure to deliver key priorities. Reputational and financial loss by the Authority. Failure to deliver expected outcomes through partnerships. Requirement to repay external funding granted to partnership – taking on the liabilities of the ‘withdrawn’ partner. External assessment of the Councils partnerships are critical and score poorly.	Set a formal relationship / performance review process to be used by all partnerships and ensure results are reported to senior management. Ensure that Exec Board and Leadership review partnerships on a regular basis. Embed Scrutiny Cttee process for key partnerships including CBH and the Safer Colchester Partnership.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations & Strategic Director, Policy & Place	3	3	9
CO2	CBC Function	The expectation remains that the Council will step in to deliver services when other providers either fail or reduce service provision	Community	4	3	12	High	The Council suffers from a loss of reputation as customers’ expectations are not met. There is increased demand on existing services leading to a reduction in standards of delivery.	Ensure that Cabinet set a clear and consistent message about the role of CBC for customers and partners.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	3	3	9
CM1	Service Innovation	Not taking or creating opportunities to maximise the efficient delivery of services through shared provision, partnerships or commercial delivery	Commercial	4	3	12	High	If not properly managed then either the Council could lose the opportunity to develop further or may have enforced changes to service delivery. 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 withdrawal of services.	Identify and maintain skill set required to meet future challenges, maintain partnership relationships	Strategic Director, Policy & Place	3	3	9
OP1	ICT	Major system failure causing significant service disruption	Operational	3	5	15	Very High	The rapid change in the use of technology in the first half of the year, and increasing reliance on IT to continue normal business leaves the Council vulnerable to	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.	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	2	4	8
CO4	Partnership Performance	Potential inability to agree shared outcomes/ agendas with partners and the Council’s ability to influence partner’s performance.	Communities	3	4	12	High	The cost of service delivery is increased however quality decreases. Failure to deliver key priorities. Reputational and financial loss by the Authority. Failure to deliver expected outcomes through partnerships. Requirement to repay external funding granted to partnership – taking on the liabilities of the ‘withdrawn’ partner. External assessment of the Councils partnerships are critical and score poorly.	Review the assessment process for proposed strategic partnerships (to ensure that they will satisfy the Council’s objectives) that needs to be signed off by EMT before commitment to new partnerships is made.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	2	4	8

				Initial Score							Residual Score		
Ref	Risk Title	Description	Strategic / Recovery Strand	P	I	O	RATING	Consequences	Mitigation	Lead	P	I	O
SP5	Staff Wellbeing	Staff wellbeing or motivation declines with an impact on service delivery and resilience.	Service Provision	3	4	12	High	Decline in service performance. Disengaged and demotivated staff. Efficiency and productivity reduction Inability to meet changing requirements and needs Customer perceptions decline as we deliver less. Loss of key staff	Monitor staff morale and trends using staff surveys and by monitoring the People Dashboard; and ensure good communications with staff, exploiting new technologies such as Yammer. 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	Assistant Director, Corporate & Improvement	2	3	6
SP6	Customer Confrontation	There is an increase in challenging behaviour from customers, towards officers, when the Council cannot meet the customer's expectations. Alongside partners being unable to provide support or having incorrectly signposted the customer to the Council.	Service Provision	3	3	9	Medium	Officers suffer potential mental and physical issues as a result of confrontations. The ability to assist the customer is reduced. Service delivery declines	Ensure that the Health & Safety reporting process is used to record instances of violence and aggression, with regular reporting to senior management. Develop an on-line training tool for staff, for managing difficult situations. Liaise with partners, such as Police and health, about expectations for vulnerable customers. Both in terms of emergency response to issues and services that the Council can, and cannot, provide	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	3	2	6
EF1	Capacity	Over reliance on a limited number of people limits ability to deliver our ambition.	Efficiency	3	3	9	Medium	The Borough Council loses its status and influencing ability at sub-regional, regional and national levels.	Manage the recruitment and development processes to ensure that the organisation has the appropriate skills and expertise.	Chief Executive	3	2	6
CO5	Equality & Diversity	The Council fails to effectively engage with all sectors of the community.	Community	3	3	9	Medium	Service delivery does not meet the needs of all sectors and minority groups are not reflected in the workforce leading to a lack of challenge and change. A failure to demonstrate diversity in the workforce, and effective cross sector engagement, can have a negative impact on external assessment processes, including grant funding, as assessors are placing increasing importance on equality and diversity.	Implementation of a clear commitment to providing opportunities to all sectors of the community. That includes internal processes, such as using best practice for encouraging more diverse applications to all vacancies and identifying external opportunities to encourage minority and diverse sectors to engage with the Council.	Strategic Director, Customers and Relations	2	3	6

SCORE DEFINITIONS	1	2	3
Impact	<p>Very Low</p> <p>Insignificant effect on delivery of services or achievement of Strategic Vision & Corporate Objectives.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Minor interruption to service delivery or minimal effect on Corporate Objectives.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Moderate interruption to overall service delivery/effect on Corporate Objectives or failure of an individual service.</p>
Probability	<p>10%</p> <p>May happen – unlikely</p>	<p>10 -25%</p> <p>Possible</p>	<p>26 – 50%</p> <p>Could easily happen</p>

4	5
<p>High</p> <p>Major interruption to overall service delivery or severe effect on Corporate Objectives.</p>	<p>Very High</p> <p>Inability to provide services or failure to meet Corporate Objectives</p>
<p>51 – 75%</p> <p>Very likely to happen</p>	<p>Over 75%</p> <p>Consider as certain</p>

RISK MATRIX
September 2020

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			SP2	ST4	
	4 High			CM1 CO2 ST3	CO1 SP4 ST1 ST2	PR1 SP1
	3 Medium			CO5 EF1 SP6	CO3 CO4 SP5	OP1 SP3
	2 Low					
	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			ST4		
	4 High			SP2 ST2		
	3 Medium		EF1 SP6	CM1 ST3 CO1 CO2 ST1	CO3 SP4	PR1
	2 Low			CO5 SP5	CO4 OP1	SP1 SP3
	1 Very Low					
		1 Very Low	2 Low	3 Medium	4 High	5 Very high
Severity of Impact						



Risk Management Strategy 2020/21

A guide to the Council's approach to managing risk. Draft for Council approval 21 October 2020.

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

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 Management Team 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 fully 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 Adrian Pritchard, Chief Executive

“Colchester Borough 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 Borough Council expects all officers and members to have due regard for risk when carrying out their duties.”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. R. Pritchard." The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.**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 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.’

BACKGROUND

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 Borough 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 actually 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 2018/19 internal audit of risk management gave a substantial assurance opinion. Six recommendations were raised during the audit relating to embedding the risk management process in Colchester Commercial Holdings Company Ltd, development of e-learning and reporting of operational risk 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 Business and Resources – 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.

Performance Management Board (PMB) – Ownership of the strategic risks and overview of the operational risks. Actively support the Risk Management Strategy and framework.

Chief Operating Officer – Lead officer for the risk management process, demonstrating commitment to manage risk.

Assistant Director Policy & Corporate – Responsible for co-ordination of the risk management process, co-ordinating and preparing reports and providing advice and support.

All Assistant Directors – 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 Borough 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 Management Team, 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 Management Team and committee on an annual basis. High risks and the success in controlling them will be reported to Senior Management Team 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 PBM, 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.
- Service managers 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 Service Managers
- Compliance with the use of resources criteria and 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 practise.

The three appendices attached give greater detail 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 Assistant Director 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 Risk & Resilience 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 PMB, with interim reports quarterly as required.
- Six monthly review of the operational risk registers and a summary report of these reviews to PMB
- 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 PMB
- 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 PMB, Governance & Audit and Cabinet.
- Ad-hoc reports need to be provided to PMB when new, significant risk issues arise.

The reports can be summarised as follows:

	Services	P.M.B.	Governance & Audit	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 cttee on R.M.	Endorsement of annual progress report on R.M.	Summary of past years work on R.M.

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.
Risk Management Team	Providing advice And support to the executive Management Team and 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 Management Team	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.
Assistant Director Policy & Corporate	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 executive management team and members	Preparing draft reports for the corporate management team and members to issue.
Service Managers / G.M.T's		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 service manager.	

Recommendations from the Conservation and Environmental Sustainability Panel

Cabinet is invited to consider the following recommendations made by the Environment and Sustainability Panel meeting of 17 September 2020:-

Terms of Reference

RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the Panel's terms of reference be amended to

- 1. To acknowledge our "Climate Emergency" and translate aspirations into actions.*
- 2. To explore methods of conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity, whether through adapting existing practices and places or creating new ecologically diverse environments with sustainable practices built in.*
- 3. To engage, communicate and collaborate with strategic partners, external bodies, Parish Councils and local communities, to encourage biodiversity enhancement and sustainable practices through their work.*
- 4. To encourage environmental stewardship focusing on carbon footprint reduction by improving air quality, water quality, plastic and waste reduction and renewable energy generation in both public and private spheres across the Borough*
- 5. To be a leading voice for environmental sustainability, promoting innovative environmental practices, having influence across the borough and beyond, including public and private sector policy, at regional and national levels.*
- 6. To promote, monitor and regularly report to Cabinet and Full Council upon progress and implementation of the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan and it's goal to be net carbon neutral by 2030.*

Greening Colchester Policy

- (a) RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that it approve the phasing out of the use of glyphosate based chemicals (herbicides) in grounds maintenance operations*

on CBC owned land and trial alternative methods of weed control as set out in this report and appendices.

- (b) RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that it approve a change in grass cutting frequency on selected grass verges and areas of open space to be managed as areas to encouraged wildflower or naturalisation as set out in this report and appendices.*
- (c) RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that it delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Environment to make minor changes to the Greening Colchester Policy should it be necessary. Any changes considered by the Assistant Director for Environment to be significant will be reported back to the Environment and Sustainability Panel.*

The report to the Environment and Sustainability Panel on Greening Colchester Policy is attached by way of background.

17 September 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Environment	Author	Rosa Tanfield David Carter
Title	Greening Colchester Policy		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 It is the aim of Colchester Borough Council to stop using glyphosate-based products by a phased reduction of use on its land and land owned by partner organisations, Colchester Borough Homes and Amphora.
- 1.2 With the ever increasing awareness of the environment and undesirable effects of glyphosate based herbicides, both to the staff concerned with applying them, the general public and the environment as a whole, alternative methods are being identified and researched at all times, and strict controls are being made by Colchester Borough Council on those herbicides that are still being applied on our sites.
- 1.3 This policy sets out how the Council proposes to reduce, monitor and control the use of glyphosate-based products and how it will use alternative methods for the control of unwanted vegetative growth on Council owned land. As there continues to be emerging new methods, learning and understanding, this document will be frequently reviewed, updated and changed to align to the latest and most appropriate approaches.
- 1.4 This policy relates to glyphosate-based products used by Colchester Borough Council and appointed Council contractors carrying out all grounds maintenance operations for the Council on Borough owned land. Where possible Colchester Borough Council will encourage glyphosate free/reduced use across the Borough including advice to internal and external partners, Town and Parish Councils, businesses, schools and other organisations who may use glyphosate-based products for the control of weeds, moss and lichens.
- 1.5 As part of the council's commitment to the phased removal of the use of glyphosate-based products this policy is also to stop or reduce grass cutting in specific areas. Changing the management regime can improve the biodiversity and visual amenity of the grass verges. These areas will be left to re-wild and be managed as wildflower areas or left to naturalise as woodland. Each location will be assessed on a site by site basis for suitability and health and safety.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To recommend to Cabinet to approve the phasing out of the use of glyphosate-based chemicals (herbicides) in grounds maintenance operations on CBC owned land and trial alternative methods of weed control as set out in this report and appendices.
- 2.2 To recommend to Cabinet to approve a change in grass cutting frequency on selected grass verges and areas of open space to be managed as areas to encouraged wildflower or naturalisation as set out in this report and appendices.
- 2.3 To recommend to Cabinet to delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Environment to make minor changes to the Greening Colchester Policy should it be necessary. Any changes considered by the Assistant Director for Environment to be significant will be reported back to the Environment and Sustainability Panel.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 One of the key priorities of the strategic plan for 2020 – 2023 is tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability, a key element of which is to conserve and enhance biodiversity across Colchester.
- 3.2 The decision supports the Council's commitment to encouraging biodiversity and reducing environmental impact across the Borough.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options. The Council made a commitment in 2019 to phase out the use of glyphosate-based products used in grounds maintenance.
- 4.2 All products containing glyphosate are registered and approved by the European Pesticides Commission. The licence for the use of glyphosate expires in 2022.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Colchester Borough Council aims to provide a high standard of grounds maintenance for all of its sites within the Borough. These sites include parks, recreation grounds, countryside sites, sports fields, open spaces, cemetery and crematorium, play areas, beachfronts, highway verges and Colchester Borough Homes housing areas. To achieve these high standards, a high reliance has been made on the use of glyphosate-based herbicides to control or eradicate unwanted vegetation. For example, spraying obstacles in the grass and fence lines.
- 5.2 On 17 July 2019, Colchester Borough Council declared a climate emergency, acknowledging that urgent action was required to limit the environmental impacts produced by the climate crisis. One of the main actions from the declaration was the formation of the Conservation and Environmental Sustainability Task and Finish Group.
- 5.3 In November 2019, the Council's Cabinet committed the Council to end the use of potentially harmful glyphosate weed killer. The decision followed a recommendation from the Council's Environmental Sustainability Task and Finish Group, who advised Cabinet that the change would encourage biodiversity and reduce environmental impact.
- 5.5 Due to large scale habitat loss in the countryside, and large-scale pesticide uses in agriculture, wildlife such as birds, insects and bees are seeking refuge in our towns. This makes it very important that within our areas, we create safe, glyphosate reduced, or ideally free, areas. More information on glyphosate pesticide is provided in Appendix 1 (Appendix A of the policy).
- 5.6 Unwanted vegetation control (or weed control) measures are currently in place for the following areas across the Borough (Appendix 1 (Appendix C of the policy provides images of typical areas where weed control measures are in place):
- Shrub Borders
 - Cultivated mowing margins
 - Fence lines (adjacent to footways, parks, play areas, etc)
 - Grass obstacles (bollards, post and rail fencing, etc)
 - Hard surfaces (e.g. car parks and footways)
 - Hedge lines and tree bases
 - Around beach huts
- 5.7 Several sites to stop or reduce grass cutting have been identified for a trial and shown in Appendix 1 (Appendix E of the policy). These sites will be monitored to identify the impact of reduced grass cutting on the existing habitat and local area.

Alternatives to using glyphosate-based products

- 5.8 Non-glyphosate-based methods of vegetation control will be used as a first choice wherever possible. The number of alternatives is currently limited but with the current concerns over the use of glyphosate-based products it is likely that the range and number of alternative methods will increase significantly in the future.
- 5.9 Currently there is no like for like replacement for glyphosate which can be used on all areas currently sprayed. It is proposed that a range of alternative methods will be used to control weed growth and unwanted vegetation. Alternative methods of weed control is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Alternative methods of weed control

Method	Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
Hot Foam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces Moss on hard surfaces and play area safety surfacing, Grass growth around trees, non-chemical graffiti removal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foam holds hot water against plant. Pesticide free. Can be used in all weather. Kills 95% of targeted weeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New technology – needs refinement. Expensive to purchase Additional cost of plant oil extract, diesel consumption and pollution. Amount of water used. Noise from diesel generator, foam left on pathways after application. Hose cannot be left on grass when being used as heat will mark the grass, addition cost for a hose guard.
Hot Water / Steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces, play area surfacing, non-chemical graffiti removal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower initial purchase cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more treatments as heat is not held onto the plant. Diesel consumption and pollution. Amount of water used.
Propane / Flame gun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds on hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively cheap to purchase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Risks. Not particularly effective.
Manual Weeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective if done well. Low set up costs (excluding labour). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very time consuming. Requires large amount of labour which adds to the cost.
Mulching – bark and or membrane.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weed control within shrub borders, under trees etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves appearance of the site and retains moisture in the soil to aid plant growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be labour intensive. May be expensive depending on supply of material.
Mowing and hand pulling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undesirable weeds in sensitive natural habitats and on farmland Weed control around fence lines, bollards and obstructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No licence required and no damage to the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be labour intensive to carry out and expensive for disposal of specific species. It can be difficult to cut close to fence lines, bollards and obstructions.
Intensive grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undesirable weeds in sensitive natural habitats and on farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife friendly with sufficient control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not suitable for all ground conditions and can damage sensitive soils.
Vinegar based solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No licence required for application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been trialled but has not been effective. Strong smell can give operator headache.
Non glyphosate chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective, natural fatty acid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher cost per m2 than glyphosate. Different non glyphosate chemicals will need to be used as no one product can be used on all surfaces.

Approach to reducing glyphosate-based weed killer 2020/21

Glyphosate free parks and open spaces

- 5.10 The aim of creating glyphosate free sites is to create areas which are safe for children, adults and wildlife. These sites and parks will be signposted as glyphosate free so that everyone knows that they can use the parks safely and only environmentally friendly solutions will be used.
- 5.11 All these sites will become safe havens for wildlife. Wherever possible we will also promote the creation of wildlife friendly habitats and pollinator plants.
- 5.12 Colchester Borough Council will phase out the use of glyphosate-based products from April 2020 to end March 2021 on the following sites:
- Castle Park
 - Castle Park Sports Ground
 - The Recreation Ground, Old Heath
 - Mile End Sports Ground
 - Lexden King George
 - West End Sports Ground
 - Shrub End Sports Ground
 - Mill Road Sports Ground
 - All children play parks maintained (74 sites)
 - All Parkland (23 sites)
 - Open Spaces (these include small areas of land in housing estates approx. 189 sites)
 - Non HRA 190 (former Housing land which is now public open space)
 - West Mersea Beach huts (384)
 - Closed Churchyards (16)
- 5.13 Appendix1 (Appendix B of the policy) sets out the individual sites maintained by Colchester Council and identifies possible alternative methods for weed control using non-glyphosate-based methods.

Glyphosate free beach huts

- 5.14 The Council will consult with Beach Hut owners during 2020/21 and explore options on stopping the use of weed killer around the perimeter of Beach Huts, allowing native plants to grow and naturalise, and/or exploring options for owners to plant and maintain their own areas.

Obstructions in verges

- 5.15 The location of post and fence rails, posts and bollards within grass verges mean that close cutting with mowers is difficult to achieve. Spraying is usually therefore undertaken. Removing the items will enable full mowing and negates the need for spraying or weed treatment. Therefore, when items are broken or removed, Officers will assess whether items should be replaced based on need

for health and safety, inconsiderate/illegal/unsafe parking or where there is another clear need.

Grounds maintenance specifications

- 5.16 To ensure that Council's contractors comply fully with the Council's requirements, all grounds maintenance specifications will include detailed information of the Council's Greening Colchester policy, the requirements for glyphosate free /reduced areas and conditions for the use of glyphosate-based herbicides where essential. The use of glyphosate-based herbicides will not be permitted in any contract unless no other suitable alternative is available.

Community enabling

- 5.17 The Council will engage and educate the community in helping to create a greener environment to live and work by reducing the use of glyphosate used in the home and garden. A number of home and garden weed killers are now available glyphosate free.
- 5.18 The Council will work with existing community and volunteer groups, in addition to supporting new groups and networks in order to build community capacity to support the maintenance of green spaces and play areas, to reduce the use of glyphosate to control weeds in areas where children play.

A combined approach with chemical based products

- 5.19 Although every effort will be made to use non-glyphosate-based methods of control, there will still be some areas where alternative methods are not currently available or effective. Wherever this is the case, integrated control will be practised wherever possible i.e. a combination of cultural and herbicide use to resolve a problem with the least impact on the environment.

Fine turf areas

- 5.20 One of the main areas where chemicals will still be used will be for maintaining fine turf areas such as bowling greens, cricket squares and tennis courts. These areas are maintained to a high standard to allow the games to be played to a good standard and to meet the expectations of the customer. The use of chemicals will be minimised to only be used where necessary and no alternative method is available.
- 5.21 Selective herbicides will be permitted for use on fine turf and sports pitches to control broadleaf weeds. Selective weed killing will only take place where there is weed growth affecting the use of the area of play and will not be applied where there is not a weed problem. Hand weeding where possible will always be encouraged as the preferred method.

Tree stump regrowth

- 5.22 The use of herbicides will be permitted for the control of tree stump regrowth to restore and maintain valuable ecological grassland habitats and to stop the spread of invasive non-native trees. This may also be carried out for areas

where stump grinding is not viable. Eco-plug is currently used to control tree stump regrowth on Council land. Eco-plug contains 204mg of glyphosate and is driven into a drilled hole in the tree stump. Once the plug is inserted the opening is sealed so that no substance can escape resulting in only the selected tree coming into contact with the chemical.

Fungal attacks

- 5.23 Fungicides will be permitted to be used to prevent and remove fungal attacks on grass. Where practical grounds maintenance improvements such as increased aeration/brushing have and will continue to be increased in grounds maintenance specifications to reduce the occurrence of fungal attack and therefore reduce the need for fungicide application.

Inaccessible or difficult to reach locations

- 5.24 The maintenance of hard surfaces such as paths, garage blocks, on a large scale may still require the use of herbicides where other methods cannot be used i.e. inaccessible to Foamstream machines. However, where this operation is carried out, weeds will be individually targeted by applicator reducing the amount of herbicide used and preventing any excess herbicide being lost into the environment.

Invasive and destructive weeds

- 5.25 The only other occasion where glyphosate-based herbicides will be applied is for one off operation to control the spread of invasive weeds such as Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed. On all these occasions a glyphosate-based pesticide will only be used if no alternative method is suitable.

Timeline to phase out the use of glyphosate-based products 2020-21

- 5.26 Colchester Borough Council will phase out the use of glyphosate-based products from use in grounds maintenance operations from April 2020 over a 12 month period until end March 2021 where an alternative method of weed control can be identified.

Site **2020**

All children play parks maintained (74 sites)
West Mersea Beach huts (384)
The Recreation Ground, Old Heath
All Parkland (23 sites)
Open Spaces (these include small areas of land
in housing estates approx. 189 sites)
Castle Park
Castle Park Sports Ground
Mill Road Sports Ground

Glyphosate free from

April 2020
April 2020
April 2020
September 2020
September 2020
September 2020
September 2020
October 2020

2021

Mile End Sports Ground	March 2021
Lexden King George Sports Ground	March 2021
West End Sports Ground	March 2021
Shrub End Sports Ground	March 2021
Non HRA 190 (former Housing land)	March 2021
Closed Churchyards (16)	March 2021
Highway verges	March 2021

CBH Owned Land	TBC
Estates (Amphora) Owned Land	TBC

5.27 Officers are currently working with partners Colchester Borough Homes and Amphora to identify a way that phases out the use of glyphosate on these areas of land but still maintains the grounds maintenance expectations and requirements of their customers.

5.28 It is estimated that by the end of March 2021 the use of glyphosate-based products in grounds maintenance activities carried out by CBC will be reduced by 95-98%. This will be constantly reviewed and monitored as alternative methods to control weed growth are trialled.

Currently the use of glyphosate-based products has reduced by 100% on the following areas:

- Play Areas
- Castle Park
- The Recreation Ground, Old Heath.
- Parkland and Open Spaces
- West Mersea Beach Huts

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan, and is Attached to this report as Appendix 2.

7. Strategic Plan References

7.1 The Strategic Plan is relevant, in particular in contributing towards priorities under the themes of Responsibility (encouraging everyone to do their bit towards making our borough even better) and Opportunity (promoting and improving Colchester and its environment)

8. Consultation

8.1 There are no consultation implications.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Greening Policy is new to Colchester and may/will warrant press attention. Communications will be prepared to inform relevant parties.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 Alternative methods of weed control may increase the cost of the ground's maintenance contract after the trial even though the aim is to work within agreed budgets.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no Community Safety Implications.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no Health and Safety Implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 There are no Risk Management Implications.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The use of glyphosate-based herbicides can have a devastating effect on our environment and its biodiversity. When used on hard surfaces, such as pavements, there is a possibility of run off or residues which can contaminate water courses and contaminate aquatic wildlife. They may kill plants which are beneficial and relied upon by birds, insects and other wildlife. When used on soft surfaces, such as vegetation or grass swards, there is a possibility of spray drift and contamination of adjacent areas.
- 14.2 This report sets out the Council's aims and plans to reduce the use of glyphosate-based herbicides, whilst also considering the permitting of long grass to encourage biodiversity and reduce environmental impact.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Greening Colchester Policy – The use of Glyphosate based products for Grounds Maintenance.

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 1 - Greening Colchester Policy – The use of Glyphosate based products for Grounds Maintenance

**Colchester Borough Council
Neighbourhood Services**

**Greening Colchester Policy – The use of
Glyphosate based products for Grounds
Maintenance**

17th September 2020

Wards affected - All

Document Version

Date	Revisions/Amendments	Officer
05/03/2020	Draft 1	David Carter
12/03/2020	Draft 2	Rosa Tanfield
11/06/2020	Draft 3	David Carter
3/8/2020	Draft 4	David Carter
28/8/20	Draft 5	David Carter

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4. Approach to reducing glyphosate-based weed killer 2020/21
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6. Policy statements

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Appendix B – Methods of weed control on individual sites

Appendix C – Typical weed control areas

Appendix D – Management of grass areas

Appendix E – Re-wilding locations and timeline

1. Introduction

Colchester Borough Council aims to provide a high standard of grounds maintenance for all of its sites within the Borough.

These sites include parks, recreation grounds, countryside sites, sports fields, open spaces, cemetery and crematorium, play areas, beachfronts, highway verges and Colchester Borough Homes housing areas.

To achieve these high standards, a high reliance has been made on the use of glyphosate-based herbicides to control or eradicate unwanted vegetation. For example, spraying obstacles in the grass and fence lines.

With the ever increasing awareness of the environment and undesirable effects of glyphosate based herbicides, both to the staff concerned with applying them, the general public and the environment as a whole, alternative methods are being identified and researched at all times, and strict controls are being made by Colchester Borough Council on those herbicides that are still being applied on our sites.

It is the aim of Colchester Borough Council to stop using glyphosate-based products by a phased reduction of use on its land and land owned by partner organisations, Colchester Borough Homes and Amphora. At present it may not always be possible to cut out the use of glyphosate-based products altogether.

This policy sets out how the Council proposes to reduce, monitor and control the use of glyphosate-based products and how it will use alternative methods for the control of unwanted vegetative growth on Council owned land. As there continues to be emerging new methods, learning and understanding, this document will be frequently reviewed, updated and changed to align to the latest and most appropriate approaches.

This policy relates to glyphosate-based products used by Colchester Borough Council and appointed Council contractors carrying out all grounds maintenance operations for the Council on Borough owned land. Where possible Colchester Borough Council will encourage glyphosate free/reduced use across the Borough including advice to internal and external partners, Town and Parish Councils, businesses, schools and other organisations who may use glyphosate-based products for the control of weeds, moss and lichens.

2. Environmental considerations

One of the key priorities of the strategic plan for 2020 – 2023 is tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability, a key element of which is to conserve and enhance biodiversity across Colchester.

The use of glyphosate-based herbicides can have a devastating effect on our environment and its biodiversity.

When used on hard surfaces, such as pavements, there is a possibility of run off or residues which can contaminate water courses and contaminate aquatic wildlife. They may kill plants which are beneficial and relied upon by birds, insects and other wildlife.

When used on soft surfaces, such as vegetation or grass swards, there is a possibility of spray drift and contamination of adjacent areas.

Due to large scale habitat loss in the countryside, and large-scale pesticide uses in agriculture, wildlife such as birds, insects and bees are seeking refuge in our towns. This makes it very important that within our areas, we create safe, glyphosate reduced, or ideally free, areas.

More information on glyphosate pesticide is provided in Appendix A.

Unwanted vegetation control (or weed control) measures are currently in place for the following areas across the Borough (Appendix C provide images of typical areas where weed control measures are in place):

- Borders
- Cultivated margins
- Fence lines (adjacent to footways, parks, play areas, etc)
- Grass obstacles (bollards, post and rail fencing, etc)
- Hard surfaces (e.g. car parks and footways)
- Hedge lines and tree bases
- Around beach huts

As part of the council's commitment to the phased removal of the use of glyphosate-based products is also to stop or reduce grass cutting in specific areas. Changing the management regime can improve the biodiversity and visual amenity of the grass verges. These areas will be left to re-wild and be manage as wildflower areas or left to naturalise as woodland. Each location will be assessed on a site by site basis for suitability and health and safety. Several sites to stop or reduce grass cutting have been identified for a trial and shown in Appendix E. These sites will be monitored to identify the impact of reduced grass cutting on the existing habitat and local area.

3. Alternatives to using glyphosate-based products

Non-glyphosate-based methods of vegetation control will be used as a first choice wherever possible. The number of alternatives is currently limited but with the current concerns over the use of glyphosate-based products it is likely that the range and number of alternative methods will increase significantly in the future.

Alternative methods of weed control is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Alternative methods of weed control

Method	Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
Hot Foam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces Moss on hard surfaces and play area safety surfacing, Grass growth around trees, non-chemical graffiti removal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foam holds hot water against plant. Pesticide free. Can be used in all weather. Kills 95% of targeted weeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New technology – needs refinement. Expensive to purchase Additional cost of plant oil extract, diesel consumption and pollution. Amount of water used. Noise from diesel generator, foam left on pathways after application. Hose cannot be left on grass when being used as heat will mark the grass, addition cost for a hose guard.
Hot Water / Steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces, play area surfacing, non-chemical graffiti removal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower initial purchase cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more treatments as heat is not held onto the plant. Diesel consumption and pollution. Amount of water used.
Propane / Flame gun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds on hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively cheap to purchase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Risks. Not particularly effective.
Manual Weeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective if done well. Low set up costs (excluding labour). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very time consuming. Requires large amount of labour which adds to the cost.
Mulching – bark and or membrane.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weed control within shrub borders, under trees etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves appearance of the site and retains moisture in the soil to aid plant growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be labour intensive. May be expensive depending on supply of material.
Mowing and hand pulling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undesirable weeds in sensitive natural habitats and on farmland Weed control around fence lines, bollards and obstructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No licence required and no damage to the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be labour intensive to carry out and expensive for disposal of specific species. It can be difficult to cut close to fence lines, bollards and obstructions.
Intensive grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undesirable weeds in sensitive natural habitats and on farmland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildlife friendly with sufficient control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not suitable for all ground conditions and can damage sensitive soils.
Vinegar based solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No licence required for application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been trialled but has not been effective. Strong smell can give operator headache.
Non glyphosate chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weeds in general 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very effective, natural fatty acid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher cost per m2 than glyphosate. Different non glyphosate chemicals will need to be used as no one product can be used on all surfaces.

4. Approach to reducing glyphosate-based weed killer 2020/21

Glyphosate free parks and open spaces

The aim of creating glyphosate free sites is to create areas which are safe for children, adults and wildlife. These sites and parks will be signposted as glyphosate free so that everyone knows that they can use the parks safely and only environmentally friendly solutions will be used.

All these sites will become safe havens for wildlife. Wherever possible we will also promote the creation of wildlife friendly habitats and pollinator plants.

Colchester Borough Council will phase out the use of glyphosate-based products from April 2020 on the following sites.

- Castle Park
- Castle Park Sports Ground
- The Recreation Ground, Old Heath
- Mile End Sports Ground
- Lexden King George
- West End Sports Ground
- Shrub End Sports Ground
- Mill Road Sports Ground
- All children play parks maintained (74 sites)
- All Parkland (23 sites)
- Open Spaces (these include small areas of land in housing estates approx. 189 sites)
- Non HRA 190 (former Housing land which is now public open space)
- West Mersea Beach huts (384)
- Closed Churchyards (16)

Appendix B sets out the individual sites maintained by Colchester Council and identifies possible alternative methods for weed control using non-glyphosate-based methods.

Glyphosate free beach huts

The Council will consult with Beach Hut owners during 2020/21 and explore options on stopping the use of weed killer around the perimeter of Beach Huts, allowing native plants to grow and naturalise, and/or exploring options for owners to plant and maintain their own areas.

Obstructions in verges

The location of post and fence rails, posts and bollards within grass verges mean that close cutting with mowers is difficult to achieve. Spraying is usually therefore undertaken. Removing the items will enable full mowing and negates the need for spraying or weed treatment. Therefore, when items are broken or removed, Officers will assess whether items should be replaced based on need for health and safety, inconsiderate/illegal/unsafe parking or where there is another clear need.

Grounds maintenance specifications

To ensure that Council's contractors comply fully with the Council's requirements, all grounds maintenance specifications will include detailed information of the Council's weed control policy, the requirements for glyphosate free /reduced areas and conditions for the use of glyphosate-based herbicides where essential. The use of glyphosate-based herbicides will not be permitted in any contract unless no other suitable alternative is available.

Community enabling

The Council will engage and educate the community in helping to create a greener environment to live and work by reducing the use of glyphosate used in the home and garden. The Council will work with existing community and volunteer groups, in addition to supporting new groups and networks in order to build community capacity to support the maintenance of green spaces and play areas, to reduce the use of glyphosate to control weeds in areas where children play.

5. A combined approach with chemical based products

Although every effort will be made to use non-glyphosate-based methods of control, there will still be some areas where alternative methods are not currently available or effective. Wherever this is the case, integrated control will be practised wherever possible i.e. a combination of cultural and herbicide use to resolve a problem with the least impact on the environment.

Fine turf areas

One of the main areas where chemicals will still be used will be for maintaining fine turf areas such as bowling greens, cricket squares and tennis courts. These areas are maintained to a high standard to allow the games to be played to a good standard and to meet the expectations of the customer. The use of chemicals will be minimised to only be used where necessary and no alternative method is available.

Selective herbicides will be permitted for use on fine turf and sports pitches to control broadleaf weeds. Selective weed killing will only take place where there is weed growth affecting the use of the area of play and will not be applied where there is not a weed problem. Hand weeding where possible will always be encouraged as the preferred method.

Tree stump regrowth

The use of herbicides will be permitted for the control of tree stump regrowth to restore and maintain valuable ecological grassland habitats and to stop the spread of invasive non-native trees. This may also be carried out for areas where stump grinding is not viable. Eco-plug is currently used to control tree stump regrowth on Council land. Eco-plug contains 204mg of glyphosate and is driven into a drilled hole in the tree stump. Once the plug is inserted the opening is sealed so that no substance can escape resulting in only the selected tree coming into contact with the chemical.

Fungal attacks

Fungicides will be permitted to be used to prevent and remove fungal attacks on grass. Where practical grounds maintenance improvements such as increased aeration/brushing have and will continue to be increased in grounds maintenance specifications to reduce the occurrence of fungal attack and therefore reduce the need for fungicide application.

Inaccessible or difficult to reach locations

The maintenance of hard surfaces such as paths, garage blocks, on a large scale may still require the use of herbicides where other methods cannot be used i.e. inaccessible to Foamstream machines. However, where this operation is carried out, weeds will be individually targeted by

applicator reducing the amount of herbicide used and preventing any excess herbicide being lost into the environment.

Invasive and destructive weeds

The only other occasion where glyphosate-based herbicides will be applied is for one off operation to control the spread of invasive weeds such as Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed. On all these occasions a glyphosate-based pesticide will only be used if no alternative method is suitable.

Timeline to phase out the use of glyphosate-based products 2020-21

Colchester Borough Council will phase out the use of glyphosate-based products from use in grounds maintenance operations from April 2020 over a 12 month period until end March 2021 where an alternative method of weed control can be identified.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Glyphosate free from</u>
<u>2020</u>	
All children play parks maintained (74 sites)	April 2020
West Mersea Beach huts (384)	April 2020
The Recreation Ground, Old Heath	April 2020
All Parkland (23 sites)	September 2020
Open Spaces (these include small areas of land in housing estates approx. 189 sites)	September 2020
Castle Park	September 2020
Castle Park Sports Ground	September 2020
Mill Road Sports Ground	October 2020
<u>2021</u>	
Mile End Sports Ground	March 2021
Lexden King George Sports Ground	March 2021
West End Sports Ground	March 2021
Shrub End Sports Ground	March 2021
Non HRA 190 (former Housing land)	March 2021
Closed Churchyards (16)	March 2021
Highway verges	March 2021
CBH Owned Land	TBC
Estates (Amphora) Owned Land	TBC

Officers are currently working with partners Colchester Borough Homes and Amphora to identify a way that phases out the use of glyphosate on these areas of land but still maintains the grounds maintenance expectations and requirements of their customers.

6. Policy statements

The following statements set out the clear direction and principles for the management of weed control in the Borough of Colchester from April 2020.

Policy Statement 1

Before permission is given for any herbicide application on land under our management, we will consider the below points:

- Consider whether any action is required, i.e. do we need to control the weed etc?
- Ensure that the weed, fungus has been correctly identified.
- Identify any non-glyphosate-based control options and use these as a first choice.
- Look at whether any integrated control measures are available as a second choice.
- Look at using an approved glyphosate herbicide ONLY if the above options are not suitable.
- Look at what alternative weed control methods are available.
- Look at what would be the most “environmentally friendly” way to control weed growth.
- Consider whether it is an appropriate time of year to control the problem.
- Look at whether the risks of using a glyphosate herbicide are greater than the problem itself?
- Consult the product data to ensure there is no specific environmental risk? e.g., a risk to bees, water courses.
- Ensure that there are no other environmental considerations? i.e., adjacent water course, wildlife (Environmental Assessment).
- Consider whether, after any one-off application of a glyphosate-based product, there are there any other long-term non-glyphosate solutions for the problem.
- Obtain any higher-level permission required such as that from the Environment Agency or Natural England.

Policy Statement 2

Nonchemical weed control will always be used as a “first choice”.

Before any permission is given for a herbicide application, full consideration will be given to the surrounding environment, and the effect that any herbicide would have on wildlife and the public.

We will not use residual herbicides designed to stay in the ground and control weed regrowth.

We will not use growth restricting regulators on grass areas.

We will look to remove obstructions and bollards in verges and grassed areas wherever possible, to reduce the need to weed control and improve methods for grass cutting

Policy Statement 3

We will continuously review new methods of non-chemical weed control as they become available, with a view to adopting these as appropriate.

Policy Statement 4

We will continue to accelerate the development of “glyphosate free parks” in the Borough of Colchester.

We will promote glyphosate free parks through signage and publicity

Policy Statement 5

The Councils will permit the use of approved herbicides, where no suitable or viable alternative has yet been found. However, priority will always be given to the use of non-chemical solutions.

Policy Statement 6

Wherever possible, we will phase out the use of glyphosate-based weed killers and we will continue to monitor the legal issues regarding it.

Policy Statement 7

We will ensure that, where all weed control options must be used, they are only applied by trained and competent operatives.

Policy Statement 9

We will ensure that all future contracts, and where possible existing ones, will have detailed information on the council's requirements for the control of weeds. These requirements will not be optional.

We will monitor these contracts to ensure that they are confirming to these requirements and that nonchemical weed control methods are used as the first choice wherever specified.

We will ensure that all herbicides are applied by trained and certified staff, using the best method that is the least harmful to the environment.

We will ensure that flexibility is built into the contracts to ensure that new improved weed control methods can be introduced as and when they are developed.

Policy Statement 10

Before permission is given for any change in grass cutting frequency on land under our management, we will consider the below points.

Is the current grass species suitable for reduced grass cutting activity and can be left to grow?

Are there any Health and Safety concerns which need to be considered? E.G. is the grass verge part of a highway sightline or footpath, increase in litter and/or dog fouling.

Increase of pollen near residential properties, businesses or Schools.

Will additional costs be incurred to managed as a wildflower area.

A minimum of a 1m strip will be cut around the area of grass to prevent long grass obstructing footpaths, roads and signs where required.

All long grass areas will be cut either none, one or two times per year depending on location and grass/wildflower species.

Appendix A – Glyphosate pesticide

There is currently particular concern regarding Glyphosate weed killers, which are widely used on hard surfaces and to clear vegetative sites.

In April 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organisation, concluded that Glyphosate based weed killer was “probably carcinogenic to humans”. Other studies have linked glyphosate to birth defects and a rise in antibiotic resistance.

Glyphosate is a broad spectrum (non-selective) weed killer that is an organophosphorus compound. It is supplied in many different forms, usually with other chemicals, such as spreaders, drift reducers, wetting agents etc added.

Glyphosate is absorbed through the plants leaf and is absorbed into plant roots.

All products containing Glyphosate must be registered and approved by the European Pesticides Commission.

Glyphosate was re-registered and approved in June 2016, but for a limited period of 18 months (until the end of 2017). It has since had a further 5-year extension which expires in December 2022. It is unknown if the licence for glyphosate will be renewed after 2022 as there are concerns that the chemical could be harmful to animals, bees and biodiversity.

By removing vegetation so effectively, the herbicide indirectly affects biodiversity through changes to ecosystems and food sources. Where Glyphosate, and other pesticides, are used, there are fewer food sources for insects, birds and animals in the urban environment.

As part of this approval extension, the Commission also presented some recommendations to be considered by member states. One of these recommendations was to *“minimise the use of the substance (glyphosate) in public parks, public playgrounds and gardens”*

The Pesticide Action Network (PAN) UK have a “precautionary principle” that states that *“When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some of the cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically”*. In other words, although some evidence against the use of pesticides appears inconclusive, it is far better to work towards using less or ideally no pesticides.

In August 2018, a landmark case in the USA agreed with a groundsman’s claim that his rare form of cancer was caused by exposure to a glyphosate-based weed killer and the company was fined a significant sum of money. This may well lead to future claims, and potentially, an increased effort in finding more environmentally friendly products to market. This case is currently under appeal (April 2019) by the manufacturer.

The Environmental Protection Agency is an independent agency of the United States federal government for environmental protection, has finished a regulatory review that found glyphosate, the most widely used weed killer in the United States, is not a carcinogen and does not cause cancer. (January 2020)

Appendix B – Methods of weed control on individual sites

Site	Glyphosate free from March 2020	Contractor hand weeding	Leave to rewild/ grow long	Foam stream	Volunteer and Community engagement to carry out hand weeding	Wildflower planting	Spray with Katoun Gold non glyphosate weed killer	Strim grass only
Castle Park	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Highwoods Country Park	Yes	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Sports Grounds								
Mile End	Yes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Mill Road	Yes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Shrub End	Yes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Lexden King George	Yes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Old Heath Recreation Ground	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Baden Powell OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hickory Avenue	Yes							
Holt Drive OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Magnolia Drive OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mill Road OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Monkwick OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pondfield OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Tile House Farm OS	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Beach huts								
West Mersea Beach huts	Yes	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
All open spaces								
All Open Spaces	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Estates/Amphora								
Estates/Amphora	No	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Crematorium and Churchyards								
Cemetery	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Closed Churchyards	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Play Areas								
Play Areas	Yes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Colchester Borough Homes								
CBH Communal Grounds	No	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CBH Sheltered Schemes	No	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Car parks								
NEPP Car Parks	No	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Highways								
Highway Verges	No	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y

Appendix C – Typical weed control areas



Play areas



Hard surfaces



Fence lines



Obstructions in verges



Obstructions in verges



Borders



Fences and hard surfaces



Obstructions

Appendix D – Management of grass areas

Current Position

Public Open Spaces / Countryside Areas

- These can be large areas of grass and trees of a number of hectares
- Small areas of land between houses on housing estates of a couple of hundred m²
- On some of the large areas of open space there are different frequencies of grass cutting from: -
 - Regular grass cutting which is every 3-4 weeks
 - Areas left which are cut at the end of the summer in September / October
- On the Public Open Space, the boundaries and obstacles are currently sprayed with Glyphosate

Highway Verges

- The verges are cut on a Performance specification, when the grass cannot exceed a certain length, on average the verges are cut on fourteen occasions a year.
- Cutting is from mid-March to the end of October.
- The boundaries and obstacles are currently sprayed with Glyphosate
- On some areas of the town have prestige cutting, these are the roundabouts which are cut 14 occasions.

Colchester Borough Homes

- The general grass on Housing sites are cut on fourteen occasions a year
- Cutting is from mid-March to the end of October.
- Sheltered Accommodation Sites are prestige grass cut, and these are cut on twenty four occasions.
- CBH residents pay a fee in their rent for grounds maintenance, they will inform the Council if they don't receive what is on the programme of work

Considerations To Be Taken Into Account On Verges That To Be Left To Grow

- Idverde Contract
 - At the start of the Idverde Contract the Highways verges were cut less often than the Colchester Borough Homes and Open Spaces
 - The Highway verges were cut on twelve occasions
 - The result on some roads, some verges were not cut when others were
 - This resulted in phone calls regarding missed cutting of verges
 - Idverde had to have different teams cutting different verges, which was not good division of labour
 - Resulted in Idverde cutting all grass at fourteen times a year

- **Residents Grass Cutting**

- Residents will cut the Highway verges at the front of their properties, to make their area of the road tidier.
- If verges are left to grow there will be quite a mosaic of grass cutting in some area.
- If the Housing Market is tough at present, by not cutting the verges will we get complaints about the impact of long grass lowering of house prices
- In some locations Residents do use weed killer along fence lines to stop grass weeds growing into their properties this is also on public open spaces at the rear of people properties.

- **The Way Forward For Rewilding Verges**

- Each road and verge would need to be looked at individually to see if it appropriate to left to grow longer
- If verges are left to grow, some grass cutting will be needed on site lines and junctions
- There needs to be a balance between rewilding verges and formal verges
- The maintenance needs to be undertaken in such a way that it does not make the area look like the area has been abandoned, but still makes the area look loved
- Do not want to put people of for visiting the Borough, for there could be a knock-on effect for retail and tourism
- Not all residents will agree with cutting less
- The Highway grass seed mixture is amenity grass, that is designed to be short mown
- If the grass is left long, we could get complaints about more pollen and Hay Fever

- **Verges That Still Will Be Cut**

- Where areas that will still have fourteen cuts, how are the obstacles and fence lines going to be managed.
- Currently they are sprayed with Glyphosate
- Alternatives they can be left and tided up at the end of the growing season
- We strim on every occasion, strimming if not undertaken correctly can damage bark on trees
- Use another chemical which is more environmentally friendly

- **New Grass Cutting Consideration**

- What is the criteria for letting the verge grow?
- What is the criteria for keeping the grass short?
- Leave areas to grow / how often should other area to be cut, still keep to fourteen cuts?
- On areas cut fourteen times what do we do with long grass around obstacles, fence lines and trees
 - Strim
 - Leave to end of year and cut back
 - Leave to naturally die back
 - Spray non Glyphosate

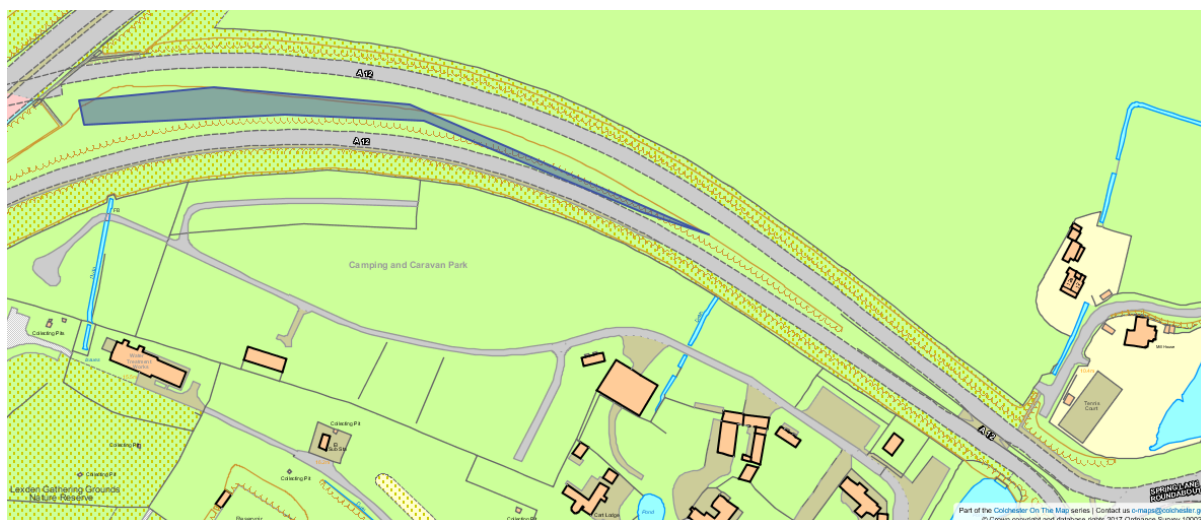
These are items that we need to consider what maintenance is required.

Appendix E – Re-wilding/wildflower locations

Stanway Bypass

Leave the centre reservation uncut, highlighted below, but still cut a mowers width along the edge of the roadway side.



Clingoe Hill

Leave areas in Blue but still cut a mowers width by the roadside and the rear of the properties

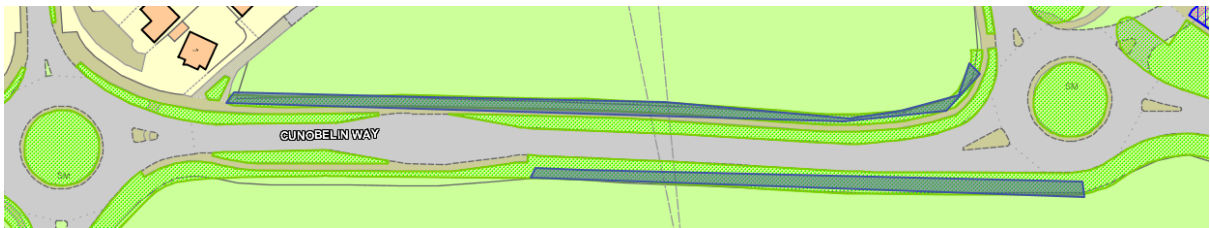


Cunobelin Way

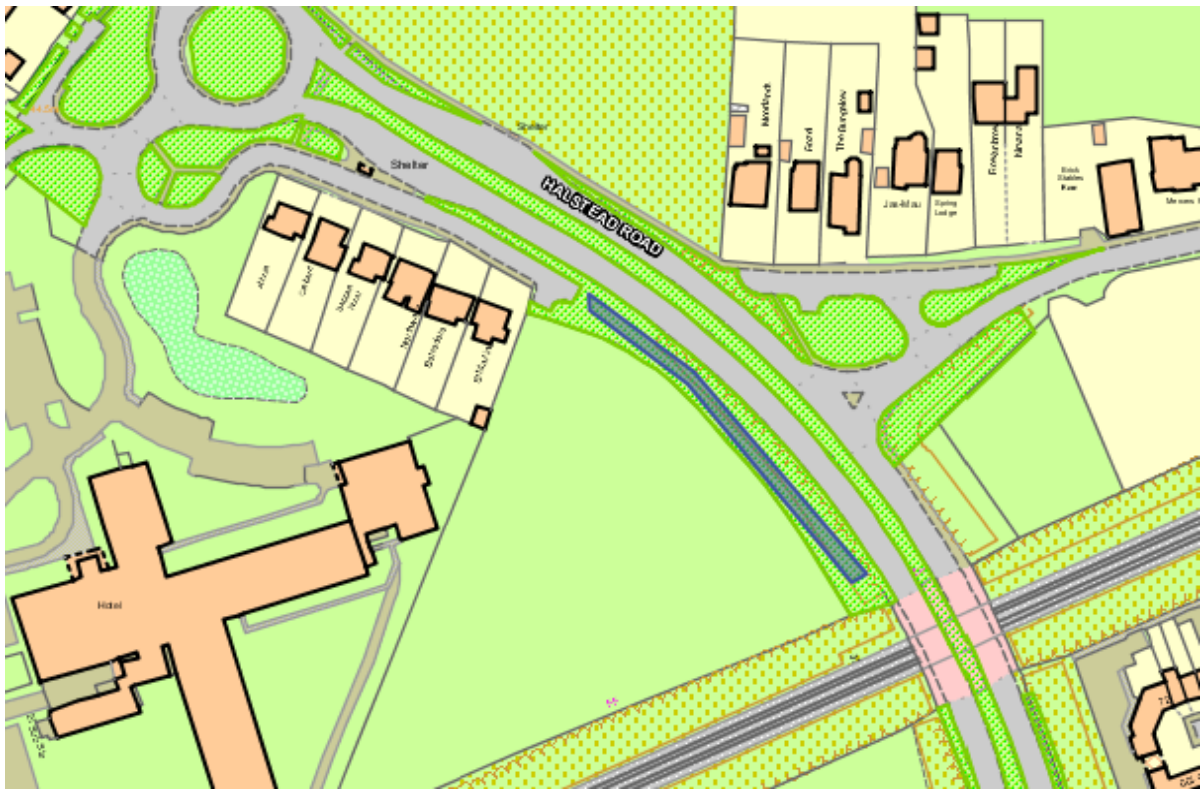
The grass will be left uncut along the footpath and at the rear of the block of houses.



Cunobelin Way Continued

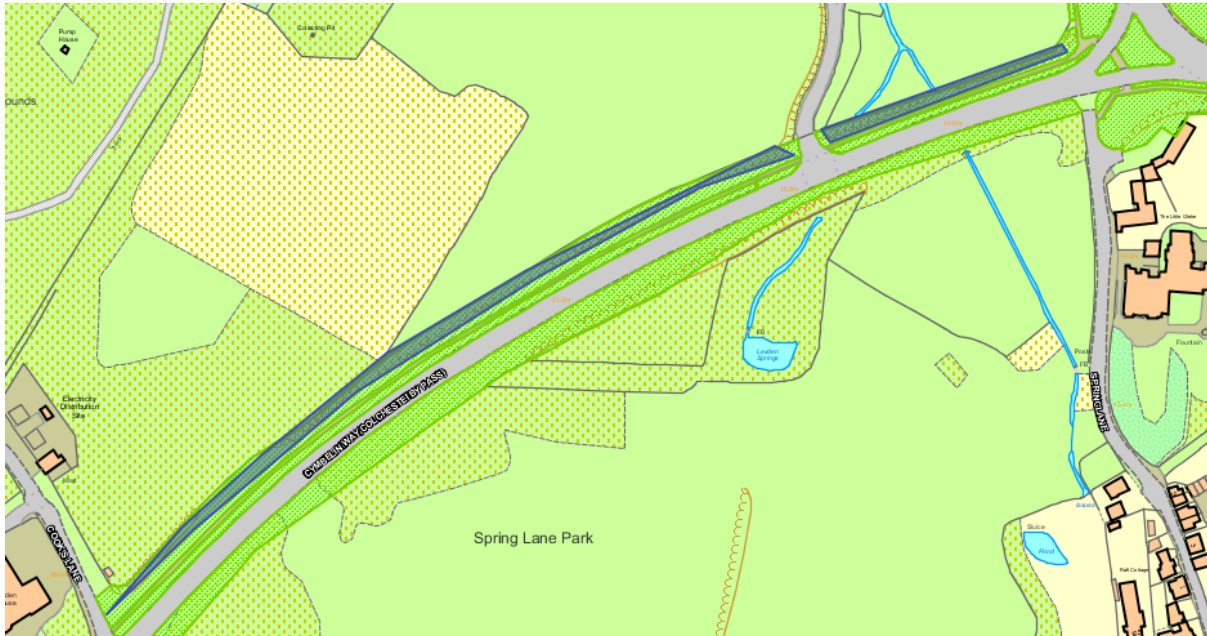


Halstead Road to A12



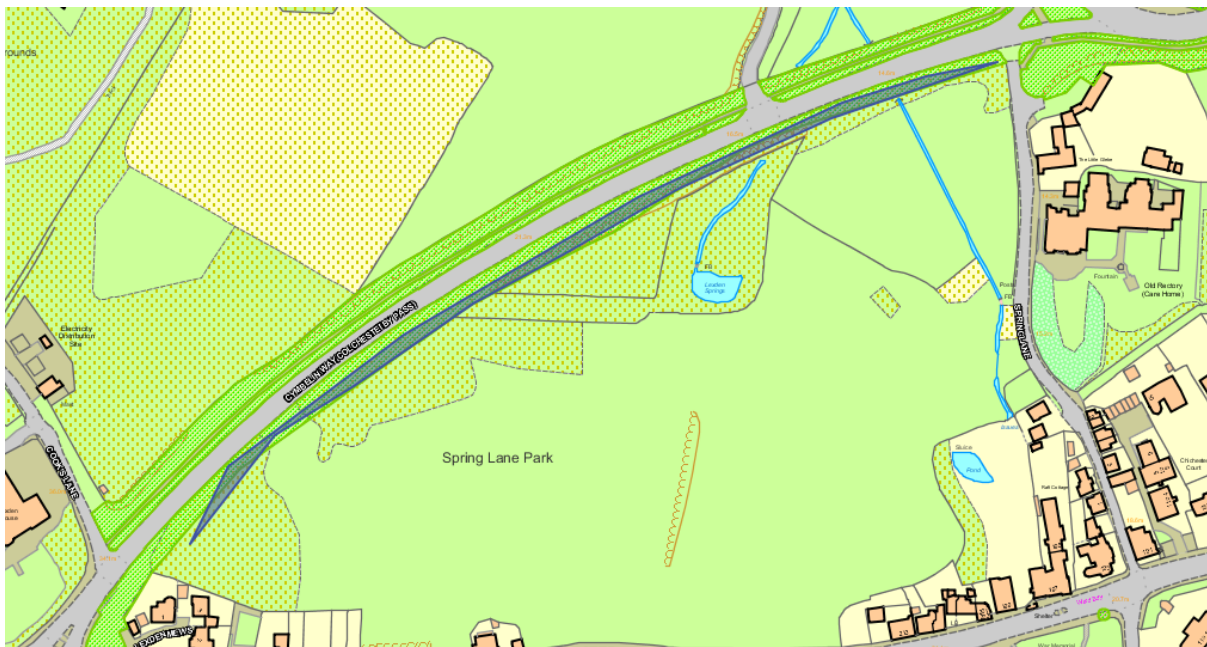
Cymbeline Way Colchester Bypass (Spring Lane roundabout to London Road junction)

Mow a strip along the footpath, so vegetation does not fall onto the footpath



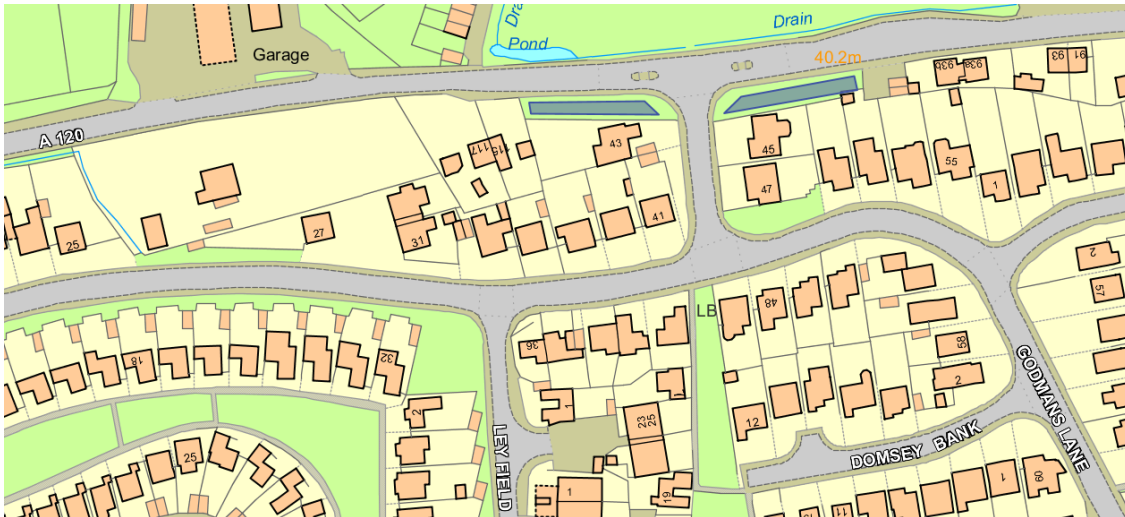
Cymbeline Way Colchester Bypass (Spring Lane roundabout to London Road junction)

Mow a strip between the road and the long grass.



A120/Godmans Lane West

A strip would be cut along the edge of the footpath.



A120/Godmans Lane East

A strip would be cut along the edge of the footpath



Avenue of Remembrance (Spring Lane roundabout to Sheepen Road)



Avenue of Remembrance continued (Spring Lane roundabout to Sheepen Road)



Changes to grass cutting around Castle Park, Riverside Walk and Land Lane

Please see the below recommendations for areas that should be left uncut for the development of wildflowers. Wildflower meadows have decreased by 97% in the last 70 years and we as a Council can have a positive impact on the numbers we find around Colchester and take a lead on encouraging people to do more for wildflowers and the species they support. Lots of what we find around the park is valuable in supporting specific species of insect so allowing it to develop is important in reducing the loss of biodiversity in recent decades.

Some signage is already being developed by the Council to promote the reasons and benefits of managing the grass-covered spaces in this way.

All areas that are being left to grow that border a path should have a mown buffer of one unit width to avoid growth onto the path and as an obvious sign to visitors that the area is being deliberately managed in this way.

All the sites should be left and cut once during the autumn unless there are issues with certain areas that may need addressing. If this is necessary, advice will be sought amongst all parties (CBC, CNHS, EWT, Idverde).

Land Lane

The bank on the north side of the Roman wall and folly footpath was strimmed in early spring. With some supplementary seeding of wildflowers to encourage heterogeneity we can leave this to be cut **once a year**.



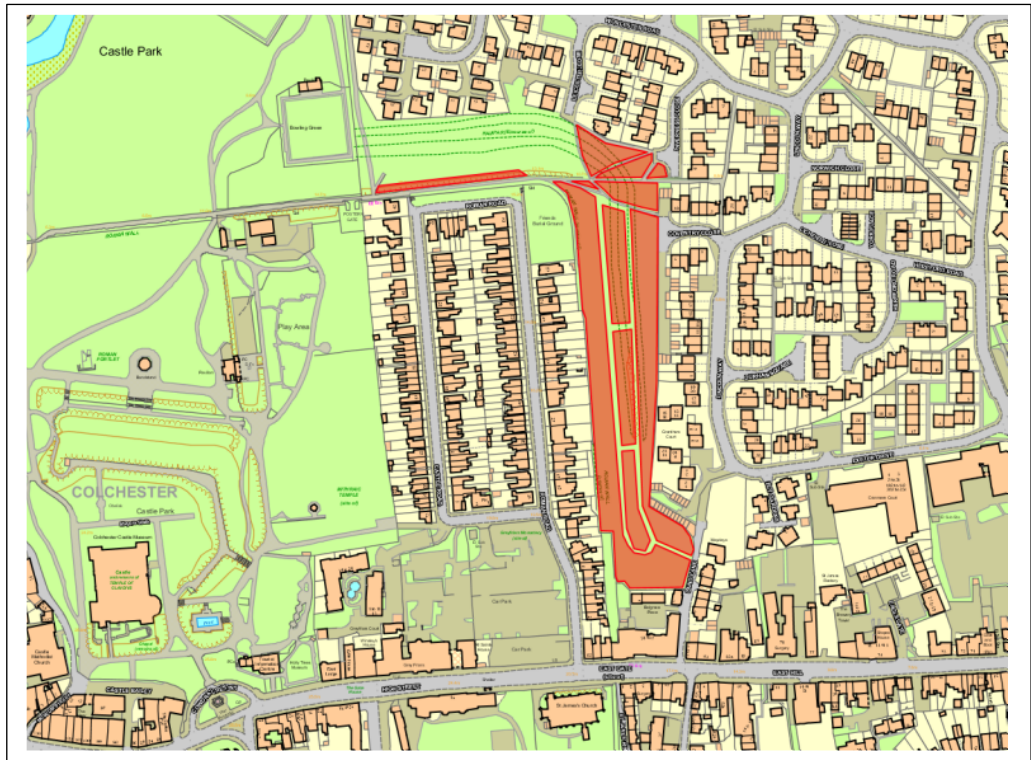
Land Lane, May 2020

Where this bank turns to head south there are grassy areas intersected with footpaths (shown on accompanying map below). These can also be left to grow.

Areas along the strip that heads southwards along the backs of the gardens on Roman Road can be cut less frequently. **A mower-width footpath** following the circuitous desire lines made by pedestrians can be regularly cut, leaving the rest to grow. A large meadow

can then be encouraged with species such as: alkanet, cuckoo flowers, daisies, buttercups, dandelions, cow parsley, nettles, forget me nots, clover, dovesfoot cranesbill and germander speedwell, greater celandine and common columbine already present.

Pictures below showing the views and natural pathways of Land Lane, May 2020.



Map of Land Lane showing the areas of grass to be left uncut hatched in red.

Riverside Estate wet grassland

This area has been uncut this season due to standing water coming from an unknown/natural source. This has led to a great array of buttercups and cuckoo flowers and a fine habitat for invertebrates and amphibians. The standing water is drying but the flora can be still be encouraged by not cutting.

Below: The wet areas of Riverside Estate without grass cutting in 2020.



Map showing Riverside Estate Wet Grassland hatched in red.

Riverside path

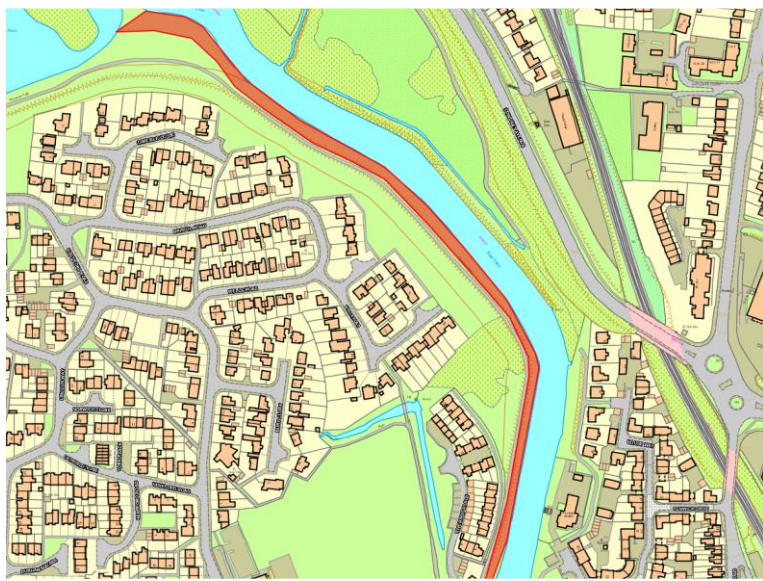
From the east edge of the lake along the entire length of the riverside path to the bridge above the East Bay weir to Riverside Place can be left uncut on the river side of the footpath. Mow a meandering path to allow people to walk closer to the river although there is already a strong desire line from regular footfall.

This area should encompass the ring of poplars and the area surrounding the willows. This is a good wet grassland and shows buttercups, cuckoo flowers and cow parsley in good numbers.

Below: Photos showing the area through Riverside Pathway including the ring of Poplars below.



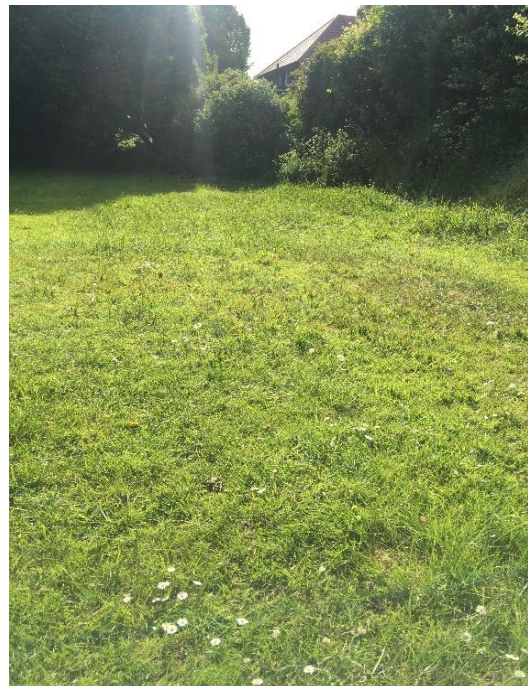
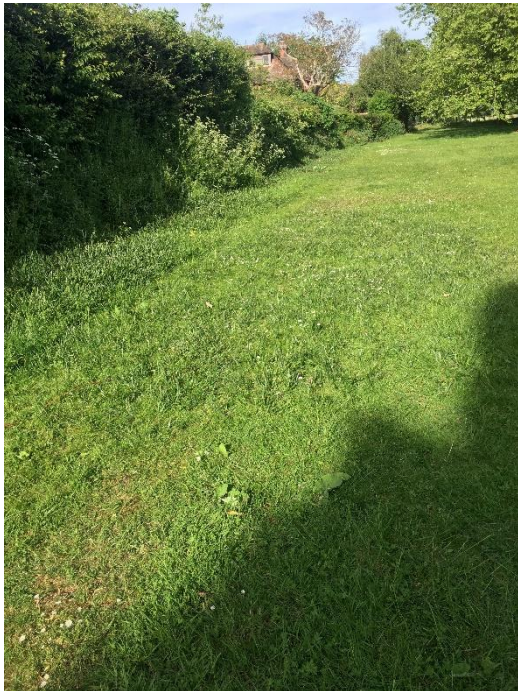
The poplars in the ring are due to be halved in height for safety reasons, this is a good opportunity to create a large hibernaculum in the centre of this ring of trees. We would simply need to lay the cut logs in the area, and they will provide a habitat for beetles, insects and amphibians to feed and hibernate – this will be especially appealing for them seeing as it is wet ground. These cut logs could also be used to make a feature of the Mayor’s Wood which is planned for planting this autumn.



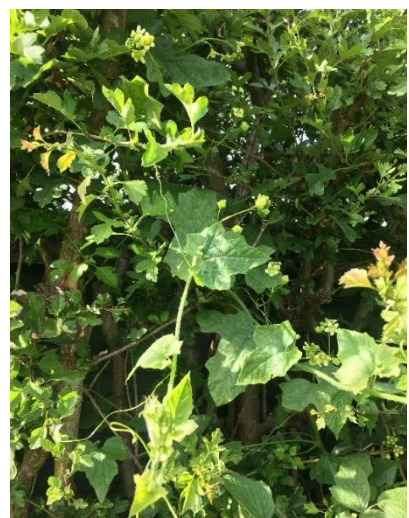
Location of the long grass areas along Riverside Walk hatched in red.

King's Head Meadow

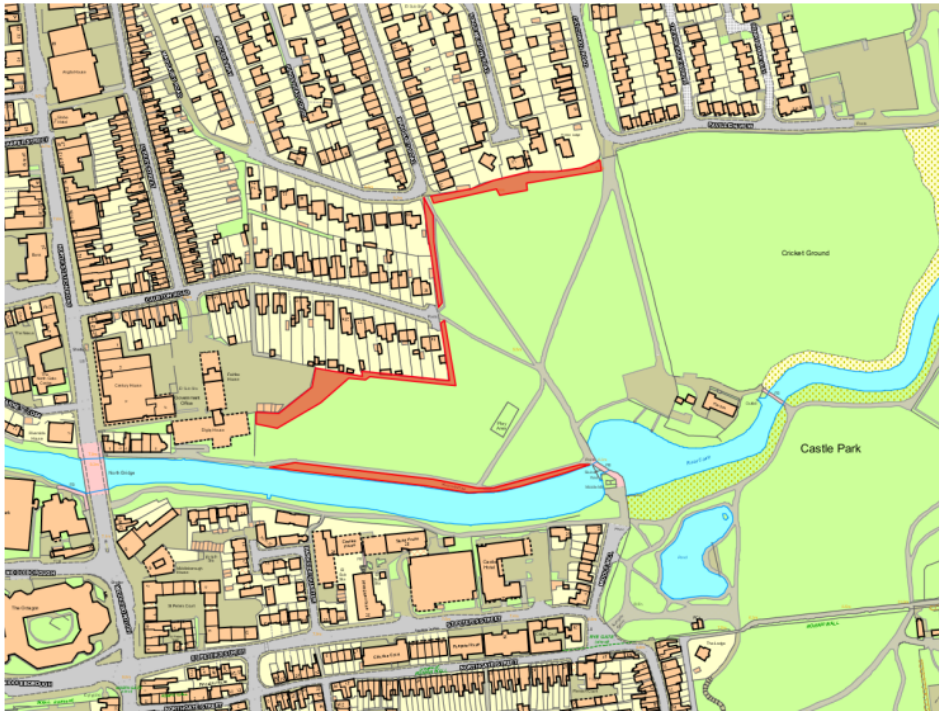
A mower's width should be left uncut along the hedged borders (along the north most edges – see map). The northernmost hedgerow that connects Margaret Road and Catchpool Road also has an area of sedge is growing which should be left uncut.



The hedge line that runs east from the Woodland Project planting should, as well as having a mower's width border left uncut, be left untrimmed until autumn owing to the white bryony growing in it. See pictures below.



The woodland project planting at the far west corner King's Head Meadow cannot be cut by the mower so should be **strimmed by Rangers** meaning we can leave any flowers and encourage biodiversity.



Locations of the long grass areas and hedges in Kings Head Meadow.

Proposed Timeline to implement changes to grass cutting

Week	Items
17 May to 23 May	Areas left in Riverside Walk Open Space near Castle Park to Rewild.
24 May to 27 June	N/A
28 June to 4 July	Conformation that CBC will undertake some rewilding of verges
5 July to 11 July	CBC to look through data to look at proposals, and to see if the proposals could be worked
12 July to 18 July	CBC to look through data to look at proposals, and to see if the proposals could be worked
19 July to 25 July	<p>Confirm other areas of Rewilding: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of Clingoe Hill • Parts of St Andrews Avenue • Parts of Stanway Bypass • Parts of Avenue of Remembrance from Colne Bank Avenue Roundabout to Spring Lane Roundabout • Cunobelin Way • Halstead Road to A12 • Cymbeline Way Colchester Bypass (Spring Lane roundabout to London Road junction)
26 July to 1 August	Speak with Idverde about the rewilding, produce schedule of verges that will be maintained differently
2 August to 8 August	Speak with Idverde about the rewilding, produce schedule of verges that will be maintained differently
9 August to 15 August	Joint Press Release about the trial
16 August to 22 August	Trial Starts

End.

Appendix 2

Colchester Borough Council

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

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy* to be assessed: Greening Colchester Policy – The use of Glyphosate based products for Grounds Maintenance.

(*Please note that the term 'policy' is used broadly to include a service, strategy or key decision.)

Where published, please provide a link here – and remove this advice.

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- To set out how the Council proposes to reduce, monitor and control the use of glyphosate - based products used in grounds maintenance.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- To phase out the use of glyphosate-based products used in grounds maintenance.
- To set out alternatives to using glyphosate-based products.
- Management of grass verges for wildflowers and/or re-wilding.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?

- None

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- All users within the Borough of Colchester.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- To phase out the use of glyphosate-based products used in grounds maintenance by end March 2021.
- To work with partners, contractors and the community to reduce the use of glyphosate-based products.

- To provide information and advice on alternative methods to control unwanted vegetation.
- To work with partners, businesses, Town & Parish Councils to identify grass verges which could be managed as wildflower areas.

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

- Colchester Borough Homes
- Estates/Amphora
- Idverde
- ECC

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.*

- Greening Colchester Policy is to be discussed at the Environment and Sustainability Panel on 17 September 2020.

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.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the 'general duty':

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.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- CBC parks and open spaces are free and assessable to all. Phasing out the use of glyphosate throughout the borough and creating wildflower verges will provide a greener and healthier environment.

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.

"Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population. They come from the unequal distribution of income, wealth and power and influence the wider determinants of health such as work, education, social support and housing. Currently, in England people living in the least deprived areas will live around 20 years longer in good health than those in the most deprived areas. Reducing health inequalities means giving everyone the same opportunities to lead a healthy life, no matter where they live or who they are."

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

- This policy reduces the use of a chemical which can have a devastating effect on the environment and biodiversity. It will help to provide a safe and greener borough for all.

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'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'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+)				
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)				
Disability	Physical				
	Sensory				
	Learning				
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁶	White				
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Language	English not first language				
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks				

⁶ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, 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
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)				
Sex	Men				
	Women				
Gender Reassignment ⁷	Transgender/ Transsexual				
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership				

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

- No negative impacts have been identified.

12. Could the policy discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁹?

- No

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.

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 Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

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"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
B. Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
C. Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
D. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

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

- David Carter, Parks, Contracts and Volunteering Specialist.

15. Date of completion:

- 27 August 2020

16. Date for update or review of this screening¹⁰:

- 1 September 2023

If you have selected A or B (above), you have completed the assessment and can remove this paragraph and everything that appears below. In this case please:(a) send a copy to the relevant Assistant Director and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer; (b) arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) (under the relevant service area heading); and (c) update the Corporate Spreadsheet by clicking [here](#) and selecting and updating the first document. If you have selected C or D (above), you must complete Section Two (below).

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 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.

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Environment	Author	Tracy Allen
Title	Contract Award for Liquid Fuels		<input type="checkbox"/> 2256
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To award a contract for the supply of liquid fuels (diesel, gas, oil and 'adblue' diesel) to be supplied to Shrub End Depot for use by the range of vehicles that make up the Council's fleet, across a range of services, for the period 1 November 2020 – 31 October 2023.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 It is proposed to award the contract for the supply of liquid fuels at the Shrub End Depot for use by the Council's fleet vehicles for the period 1 November 2020 – 31 October 2023, to Certas under the National ESPO Liquid Fuels Framework (Ref: 301-20).

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The current contract for the supply of fuel to the Shrub End Depot for use by the Council's fleet vehicles is due to expire on 1 November 2020 and therefore a new contractual arrangement needs to be put in place. The supply of fuel is critical to the day to day operation of the Council Services in particular, frontline services.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could issue a tender via the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) to achieve a compliant contract if this framework agreement is not utilised, however based on volumes this option would likely be more expensive.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The requirement for liquid fuels over a 3-year term (1 November 2020 to 31 October 2023) has an estimated value in the region of £2 million. Current annual spend is approximately £630,000 per year, however this can fluctuate along with global oil prices. Therefore, any contracts to be awarded by the Council must comply with the appropriate legislation.
- 5.2 The contract will be awarded under the ESPO Liquid Fuels Framework (ref: 301-20) which the Council is entitled to use as a Local Government Authority and is compliant under the Public Contract Regulations. This framework provides the Council with the best value and necessary flexibility to meet its requirements.
- 5.3 Within the framework, there is a single supplier for this region which allows for direct award without the need for any further competition.
- 5.4 The framework agreement has pre-agreed terms and conditions of contract with established clear quality standards and pricing competitiveness.

6. Procurement

- 6.1 The National ESPO Liquid Fuels Framework (Ref: 301-20) will be used for the fuel procurement, due to the expertise and knowledge provided by the team and this will also ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

7. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 7.1 The relevant Equality Impact Assessment for the Council's Procurement Strategy can be found [HERE](#)
- 7.2 Through the Council's procurement strategy, staff ensure that all future procurement and purchasing documentation recognises, understands and supports the Council's policies with regards to equal opportunities, diversity and human rights.

9. Strategic Plan References

- 9.1 Fleet operations are key element of the way the Council delivers its services to residents and businesses and therefore underpins much of the activity that will deliver against the strategic priorities. Fleet operations within the context of climate challenge and sustainability are considered within section 16 of this report.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 There are no further direct consultation requirements over and above the process of publishing procurement awards.

11. Publicity Considerations

- 11.1 The decision will be communicated through an OJEU-compliant (Official Journal of the European Union) contract award notice that will be published in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. In addition, relevant details will be included within the Council's Contracts Register that is published through Datashare.

12. Financial implications

- 12.1 The fuel budget for 2020/21 is £630,000 for all services across the Council. The fuel budget will remain as is and there should be no further increase unless global oil prices were to fluctuate. This will be carefully monitored.
- 12.2 The current cost per litre is 92p. Fuel prices could increase by approximately 4% before the fuel budget would be exceeded.

13. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 13.1 There are no health, wellbeing or community safety implications.

14. Health and Safety Implications

- 14.1 The Council has a corporate responsibility to ensure that all fleet and transport operations comply with national standards.

15. Risk Management Implications

- 15.1 With regards to Brexit and to mitigate the risk of a 'no deal' exit impacting on the availability of fuel and the impact of this on service delivery, an additional 9,500 litre fuel tank was purchased for the Shrub End Depot in 2019/20 which provides an additional 7-8 working days' resilience.
- 15.2 There could be budget pressure resulting from the impact of EU transition on oil prices and supply chain interruption, this would result in fuel price increases. The price of fuel will be carefully monitored.
- 15.3 The Council will seek to mitigate against any potential risks by following the compliant procurement process and ensure contingency plans are in place for any failure of vehicles or fuelling issues that may impact on core services.

16. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 16.1 Alternative fuels such as renewable fuels have been considered, however currently these fuels are at least 5% more expensive than diesel, rising to nearly 20% for some fuels. This would result in an annual budget pressure of up to £126,000 at a time when the Council's budget is under exceptional pressure already due to Covid-19 additional costs and reduced income.
- 16.2 The Council is working with the Carbon Trust to develop a detailed Carbon Management Plan to 2030. This includes a strategy to transition to a fully Electric Vehicle (EV) Fleet and the Council is working with experts at the Energy Savings Trust to develop this programme.
- 16.3 The first phase of this transition will include the procurement of light fleet EVs later this year with a separate report to be presented to Cabinet.
- 16.4 Having considered the Energy Savings Trust recommendations, a large investment in an alternative fuel contract is not considered to be the most effective option from a budget and sustainability perspective, particularly as the Council is committed to a primary option to reduce fleet-related carbon emissions through a transition to electric vehicles, with zero 'tailpipe' emissions, as technology and options in this market develop.

- 16.5 Whilst the producers of alternative fuels may claim significant reductions in CO₂ compared to standard diesel, such fuels still create pollutants which reduce air quality when used. Furthermore, these fuels have not been extensively tried and tested, and their sources are uncertain. Gas to liquid fuel (GTL) is a fossil fuel, for example. Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) often includes palm oil as a key ingredient and the Carbon Trust has reported that biofuels can cause knock-on impacts and increased emissions due to land use changes (that may also conflict with the Council's commitment to improving biodiversity). There are further limitations in the extent to which any claimed carbon reduction would be net-additional in the UK context and therefore contribute the Council's target.
- 16.6 The Energy Savings Trust have independently recommended an investment in alternative actions that will bring confirmed and affordable carbon reductions. Those that are already being progressed include:
- Driver training for fuel efficiency
 - Better use of fleet telematics to improve driving efficiencies (e.g. reducing idling)
 - Focussing on changing small fleet to EVs – including preparing Rowan House for electric charge points for small fleet – continued work with UK Power Networks
 - Preparing the depot for electrification of heavy fleet (such as RCVs) in future – getting cabling and other necessary trunking set up
 - Ecargo bikes and how these could be used – Considering wider emissions savings in borough by helping businesses to reduce emissions and not just the Council
 - Infrastructure – looking into developing solar canopies/roofs to charge the EVs to bring further reductions in emissions beyond those from the Grid greening.
 - Plan efficient route to reduce emissions from fleet
- 16.7 All options, including alternative fuels, will be kept under review and as the market develops, including the emergence of further, independently verifiable, evidence to support viability assessments, this will be incorporated into the Council's fleet transition strategy. A report detailing the proposed conversion of the Council's fleet to electric, and the development of a transition strategy based on a review commissioned by the Energy Savings Trust, is due to be presented to the Council's Environment and Sustainability Panel in December 2020.
- 16.8 The Council will continue to investigate and identify alternative options to improve the environmental impacts of the Council's fleet and will continue to identify and action any opportunities to trial new technology in line with the net-zero Carbon target.

14 October 2020

Report of	Assistant Director of Environment	Author	Robert Doran ☎ 282612
Title	Request for delegated authority for the Procurement of Fleet: Caged Tipping Vehicles		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is to agree the options for the purchase or contract hiring of twenty-one 3.5 tonne caged tipping vehicles for the reasons set out in this report and to delegate authority to purchase/contract hire the vehicles depending on the outcome of the procurement process and provided that costs are met within existing budgets.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To give authority to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Waste, Environment and Transportation to purchase or contract hire twenty-one caged tipping vehicles for the reasons set out in this report and providing the costs can be met from within existing budgets.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The current fleet of caged tipping vehicles are coming to the end of their contract hire over the next ten months: thirteen in September 2020, one in October 2020, four in April 2021 and three remain on spot hire (these can be replaced at any time), so for operational reasons the Council will need to purchase/contract hire replacement vehicles.
- 3.2 Due to the types of vehicles and stages within the timescale for procurement in 2020 it is recommended to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Waste, Environment and Transport, to purchase/contract hire the caged tipping vehicles, to ensure that there is no risk to the delivery of core Council services.
- 3.3 The Council will carry out a procurement exercise through a specialised framework to determine whether the option to purchase or contract hire is the most cost-effective option.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could try to extend the lease hire for the existing vehicles, but due to the age and wear and tear on these vehicles, the current contractor will put clauses into the extended hire agreement stating the Council will be liable for any damage/failure of any major components, including engines and gear boxes. This would significantly increase hire charges, future maintenance costs and risk operational service delivery.

- 4.2 Low emission /electric caged tipping vehicles have been considered with the expert opinion of the Energy Saving Trust who are supporting local authorities like Colchester to transition to a more sustainable fleet. At this time the market for these vehicles in an electric format is restricted, making it operationally unviable and cost prohibitive compared to the Euro VI diesel engine equivalent. At this time, the Council is better served by investing in other measures to mitigate environmental impact across its operations. The Energy Savings Trust recommend the Council undertake one more procurement of Euro VI engines for this section of fleet (it is proposed to introduce other EV light fleet in 2021) and at the end of that period, electric vehicle technology, cost and viability will have improved. This timeframe aligns to the Council's developing Carbon Management Action Plan to be net zero by 2030. See Appendix A for an extract from the Energy Saving Trust report regarding the 3.5 tonne caged vehicles.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Council operates caged tipping vehicles, a critical element of its fleet operations is to empty litter bins, collect 'missed bins', undertake exemption collections, remove fly tipping, general street cleansing and maintenance, all of which relate to fulfilment of statutory duties. They are also provided for the Highway Ranger service delivered by the Council on behalf of Essex County Council.
- 5.2 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that all fleet complies with national standards, is adequate in terms of capacity, reliable and is fit for purpose to deliver against the agreed outcomes for the service.
- 5.3 Without a regime of vehicle replacement, the Council will not be able to deliver a satisfactory service to residents' visitors and businesses. The investment will promote financial, social and environmental benefits and support the Council's strategic aims.
- 5.4 The current caged vehicle fleet is coming to the end of the contract hire agreement over the next ten months; thirteen in September 2020, one in October 2020, four in April 2021 and three remain on spot hire (these can be replaced at any time). As such the Council will need to purchase/contract hire replacement vehicles.
- 5.5 Although the Council has a repair and maintenance contract with an existing provider, the level of wear and tear on these vehicles means that they are unavailable, due to repairs, for increasing periods of time. This means there are times when the Council does not have a full complement of vehicles available which in turn impacts negatively on services for residents and businesses.
- 5.6 Lead time for the delivery of new vehicles is uncertain considering the Covid-19 pandemic. With this in mind, and in order to allow time for vehicles to be delivered, a full procurement process and subsequent order needs to be progressed as soon as possible. The Council has agreed a short extension period for the existing cage tipping vehicles with our current provider to ensure services are unaffected throughout this transitional period.
- 5.7 The Council is working with the Carbon Trust to develop a detailed Carbon Management Plan to 2030. This includes a strategy to transition to a fully Electric Vehicle (EV) Fleet and the Council is working with experts at the Energy Savings Trust to develop this programme. In line with this strategic approach, the procurement of low emission /electric caged tipping vehicles has been considered but ruled out at this stage in consultation with the Energy Saving Trust. At this time the market for these types of vehicles in an electric format is restricted. This will impact negatively on operational

viability, and the costs associated with these vehicles are 200% higher compared to a Euro VI diesel engine equivalent resulting in a £95,000 annual budget pressure.

- 5.8 The Council is investing capital funding into a project to make improvements to the Shrub End Depot. It is proposed that this will include future proofing the site for electric fleet, including heavy goods vehicles. However, to develop the site to support a fully electric fleet requires a power supply with enough capacity to charge the entire fleet. The current power supply at Shrub End would not facilitate this and so it is advised that a substation may need to be built and installed at Shrub End or nearby. The cost and time frame for this is currently being explored.
- 5.9 In pursuit of the best practicable environmental option with the caged vehicles, any replacements at the current time will have the latest Euro VI engines. This will ensure cleaner fuel technology and will reduce CO² emissions, which falls under the Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy Efficient Road Transport Vehicles.

6. Procurement

- 6.1 The Procurement Partnership Limited (TPPL) Framework will be used for the caged tipping vehicles, due to the expertise and knowledge provided by the team and this will also ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

7. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

- 7.1 The relevant Equality Impact Assessment for the Council's Procurement Strategy can be found [HERE](#)
- 7.2 Through the Council's procurement strategy, staff will ensure that all procurement and purchasing documentation recognises, understands, and supports the Council's policies with regards to equal opportunities, diversity and human rights.

9. Strategic Plan References

- 9.1 Fleet operations are key element of the way the Council delivers its services to residents and businesses and therefore underpins much of the activity that will deliver against the strategic priorities. Fleet operations within the context of climate challenge and sustainability are considered within section 16 of this report.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 The Council have been in consultation with the Energy Savings Trust regarding the implementation of electric vehicles and the infrastructure required to charge these vehicles.
- 10.2 Frontline staff and service managers involved in the operational management of core services that require these fleet vehicles will be involved at all stages of the procurement and selection process to ensure that the vehicles are fit for purpose and appropriate.
- 10.3 There are no further direct consultation requirements over and above the process of publishing procurement awards.

11. Publicity Considerations

- 11.1 The vehicle fleet underpins many of the Council's core frontline services and this will have a potential impact on the perception of the Council if conducted well and there continues to be a good provision of services.

12. Financial implications

- 12.1 As part of the waste review, the Council agreed in 2018 to investigate the options of purchasing the waste fleet once the current leasing arrangements expired. It is proposed that the purchase of these vehicles is funded via prudential borrowing financed over a period of 7 years. The Council has already purchased the large fleet vehicles generating a saving of approximately £150,000 in 2019/20 with the additional £100,000 coming from the existing fleet vehicles in 2020/21.
- 12.2 Currently the Council leases 18 vehicles on a 7-year contract and 3 on spot hire at a cost of £151,500 a year. Soft market testing has taken place and the proposed option of purchasing these vehicles would require £520,000 of capital budget financed by borrowing.
- 12.3 Based on the cost of borrowing and maintenance, the total revenue implications of purchasing these vehicles amounts to £144,455 a year resulting in a saving of £7,045 a year towards the £100,000 target. The table below provides a breakdown of costs:

	Amount per year
Capital Financing Costs	87,465
Revenue Costs inc Maintenance	56,990
Total Cost	144,455

13. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 13.1 These new vehicles should contribute to crew wellbeing as the vehicles will be more reliable meaning less downtime in fulfilling daily duties.
- 13.2 The new caged tipping vehicles will come with a Euro VI diesel engine meaning a reduction in CO² emissions from the old Euro V engines. This will improve air quality which in turn is a positive move for the wellbeing of our staff and communities.

14. Health and Safety Implications

- 14.1 The Council has a corporate responsibility to ensure that all fleet and transport operations comply with national standards. These new vehicles will come with safety beacons and rear door chevrons to meet legal requirements while working on Highways.

15. Risk Management Implications

- 15.1 By not undertaking a procurement process, we would be contravening the contract procedure rules of the Council, therefore making any award decision challengeable by other potential suppliers.
- 15.2 This procurement exercise has been undertaken to ensure the Council can demonstrate that a robust process has been followed and is contracting with a supplier to provide best value and to ensure continuity of service.
- 15.3 The Council will seek to mitigate against any potential risks by following the compliant procurement process and ensure contingency plans are in place for any failure of vehicles that may impact on core services.

- 15.4 Without these vehicles it would make it difficult for the Council to undertake its duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

16. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 16.1 As set out in this report, the electric caged tipping vehicles have limited scope and range which would affect service delivery. The additional costs associated with procuring EV's/hybrids are shown within the Energy Savings Trust report in Appendix A. In addition, the time factor required to build the infrastructure at Shrub End would need to be considered along with the additional cost implications.
- 16.2 The decommissioning of the existing caged tipping vehicles, which contain Euro V engines and replacing with new vehicles and Euro VI engines, will produce less hydrocarbons plus nitrogen oxides, bringing benefits to public health and the environment. This will ensure cleaner fuel technology and will reduce CO² emissions, which falls under the Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy Efficient Road Transport Vehicles. The Council should also see an improved fuel efficiency gain.
- 16.3 Replacing the small and medium vans (up to two tonnes) with an electric/hybrid version is a more viable option and a proposal for a 'phase 2' light fleet procurement exercise will be taken to Cabinet before the end of the year.
- 16.4 The fleet contract will include obligations on the contractor to ensure that the Council is kept informed about the latest environmental technology innovations.
- 16.5 The Council will constantly investigate and identify alternative options to improve the environmental impacts of the Council's fleet and will seek opportunities to trial new technology in line with the net-zero Carbon target.
- 16.6 A report about the conversion of the Council's fleet to electric, and the development of a transition strategy based on a review commissioned by the Energy Savings Trust is due to be presented to the Council's Environment and Sustainability Panel in December.

Vehicle Type	Vehicle Count	Electric Alternative	Annual Cost / Saving if all vehicles electrified	Estimated annual CO ₂ e reduction if all vehicles electrified
Supermini	18	Peugeot e-208	£166	25.4
Lower medium hatch	7	Hyundai Ioniq	-£3,394	7.2
Small SUV	1	MG ZS	-£426	0.8
Small panel van	10	Renault Kangoo	£1,434	9.4
Medium panel van	8	Nissan e-NV200	-£1,944	6
Large panel van	4	Mercedes Benz e-Vito	-£2,490	4.5
Tipper	20	LDV EV80	-£94,717	41.8

In the van sector the small and medium Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) vans (up to two tonnes) already offer a lifetime cost-saving alternative to Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) equivalents but the larger 3.5 tonne electric vans are currently expensive, have a limited range and a limited carrying capacity. This will change and between 2022 and 2025 we expect that 3.5 tonne vans (4.25 tonnes with a weight derogation) will become available with a single-charge range of at least 150 miles under full load and with a good towing capacity. They will have a whole life costs (WLC) comparable to or better than ICE models.

The CBC fleet except has an average age of 5.7 years whilst the oldest vehicle is 13.1 years old. It is important to maintain a rolling fleet renewal programme especially when a fleet is almost 100% diesel powered as is the case at CBC, (see section 5-3). Pre-Euro 6 diesel engines are significantly more polluting in terms of their air quality emissions of NO_x and PM and continuous improvements in emission technology and emission standards means that even Euro 6 vehicles will be superseded by cleaner models. We would recommend the maximum age of a diesel vehicle should be about seven to eight years as this will usually encompass at least three different Euro emission standards.

The bulk of the CBC Light commercial vehicles (LCV) fleet appear to be flatbeds with cages fitted, or tippers with cages, some additionally fitted with tail lifts. (A column tail lift capable of raising 500kg typically reduces the available payload by about 125 to 140 kgs.) Electric LCVs, especially with GVWs of 3,500 kgs, have compromised payloads (in comparison to their diesel equivalents), because of the weight of the batteries. We would caution CBC that they should consider this in any procurement decision. We have modelled a diesel Ford Transit tipper and the LDV EV80 has been modelled as a possible EV choice.

By 2025 there is likely to be much greater uptake of electric vehicles and year-on-year reductions in battery prices will result in new EVs costing less to buy than petrol or diesel alternatives and significantly less to run.

The table assumes installation of 7kW charge points throughout. This does not consider any existing infrastructure at the sites.

AC chargers capable of delivering 7.4 kW at 32 Amps are a low-cost solution with hardware costs starting at £355 per outlet and rising to over £900 per outlet if full remote management, telemetry, 3G communication and RFID card reader are required. Installation, remote management hardware, billing system, preventative maintenance and management software

can add more than £1,000 per port (based on a 10-port system). All these costs will depend on site access, the scale of groundworks and the distance to the power source. Consideration should be given to the location of parking bays and cabling costs should be minimised by using bays close to the main switch which is usually located in the principal building on the site.

Table 10-3- Typical EV consumption and battery sizes and range - Vans

Group	Energy Consumption (Miles/kWh)	Battery size kWh	Typical Range (miles)	Payload Kgs
Small and Medium Vans up to 2601kgs	2.16	40	112	605
Large Vans below 3,500 kilos	1.75	41	80	1,073
Large Vans 3500 kilos	1.4	56	85	983

Report of	Assistant Director of Corporate and Improvement Services	Author	Richard Clifford ☎ 507832
Title	Report of Urgent Decision taken under Cabinet Procedure Rule 22 – Test and Trace Support Payments		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides details of an decision taken by the Leader of the Council in respect of Test and Trace Support Payments. In view of the timescales involved, this decision could not await this Cabinet meeting and the decision was therefore taken by the Leader of the Council pursuant to the provisions of Cabinet Procedure Rule 22. A decision taken in these circumstances must be reported to the next meeting of Cabinet.

2. Recommended Decision

2.1 To note the decision taken by the Leader of the Council in respect of Test and Trace Support Payments under the urgency provisions in Cabinet Procedure Rule 22.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 A decision taken under Rule 22 of the Cabinet Procedure Rules must be reported to the next meeting of Cabinet.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 None

5. Background Information

5.1 The Government has announced Test and Trace Support Payment Schemes to support residents on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate due to Covid-19 and will lose income as a result. There is a main scheme and a discretionary scheme. The schemes are to be administered by Local Authorities.

5.2 Whilst the policies to implement such a scheme would normally be approved by Cabinet, there was insufficient time for this to occur before the scheme had to come into effect on 12 October 2020. Therefore the decision was taken by the Leader of the Council pursuant to Cabinet Procedure Rule 22. The decision was taken and published on 6 October 2020 and is attached to this report. In view of the urgency, the call in provisions did not apply to the decision.

5.3 As the decision was a key decision, and the normal arrangements around the publication of a key decision could not apply, the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel was consulted and indicated that, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 31 of the Access to Information Procedures Rules, he was content that in the circumstances the decision could not be deferred.

5.4 The decision is reported to Cabinet as is required by the Procedure Rules.

6. Standard References

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

Cabinet

14 October 2020

Item

Report of	Assistant Director of Customer	Author	Jason Granger ☎ 508824
Title	Test and Trace Support Payments		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Government has announced Test and Trace Support Payment Schemes to support residents on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate due to Covid-19 and will lose income as a result. There is a main scheme and a discretionary scheme.
- 1.2 The schemes are to be administer by Local Authorities and this report outlines proposals for how applications will be assessed, and payments distributed, by Colchester Borough Council.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To agree to the Test and Trace Support Payment Schemes Policies.
- 2.2 The Government has required Local authorities to have schemes ready by 12 October 2020. Considering the timeline an urgent Cabinet decision is being sought in accordance with Cabinet procedure rule 22.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To implement Test and Trace Support Payment Schemes in adherence to Government guidance.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5. Background Information

5.1 From 28 September 2020, residents will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 if they:

1. Have been asked to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for Covid-19 or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
2. Are employed or self-employed
3. Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result
4. Are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

Additionally, a discretionary scheme payment of £500 is available to those who can satisfy 1-3 above however are not in receipt of a benefit listed under 4. To be considered for a discretionary payment a resident will also need to evidence hardship due to the requirement to self-isolate.

5.2 Eligible payments can be backdated to 28 September 2020, and local authorities are required to have arrangements in place to administer them by no later than 12 October 2020. The scheme will last until 31 January 2021.

5.3 To apply, residents will complete an online form, or if support is needed, by a telephone application. Applications will be assessed and verified by the Benefits service and eligible payments will be issued via BACS to residents within three working days.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

6.1 There are no specific implications relating to equality, diversity or human rights.

7. Strategic Plan References

7.1 The Council's Strategic Plan sets out four themes, one of which being:

'Wellbeing - Making Colchester an even better place to live and supporting those who need most help'

The Test and Trace Support Payments will help residents who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate and will lose income as a result.

8. Consultation

8.1 Government guidance prescribes eligibility to the main scheme and key elements of the discretionary scheme. Considering this and the expectation schemes are operational by 12 October 2020 prevents a meaningful consultation taking place.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 A communications plan has been developed to ensure that eligible residents and relevant partners are made aware of the scheme and application process.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 The Government has confirmed that £50m is being made available nationally for Test and Trace Support Scheme payments which includes administration funding. Colchester Borough Council allocations are as follows:

Funding - Payments to Residents	Amount
Main Scheme -	£75,000
Discretionary Scheme	£45,048

- 10.2 Main scheme funding is subject to a reconciliation process, which could mean the council will need to return funding if the number of payments made is less than the allocation, similarly additional funding maybe forthcoming if applications exceed Government modelling. However, the discretionary scheme funding is fixed. Funding for administration is £31,160.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 The payments under these scheme are designed to support people on low incomes, if they will lose income as a result of self-isolating, and to encourage them to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the transmission of Covid-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no health and safety implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 Applications and supporting information will be verified against central Government systems, including Test and Trace records, which will help drive out fraud and error. This will be supplemented by a pre and post payment checking regime.
- 13.2 Data share agreement have been reviewed and agreed with Department for Health and Social Care and controls put in place to ensure security of data.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 There are no environmental and sustainability implications.

Appendices

- Test and Trace Support Payments Scheme / Discretionary Scheme Policies



Colchester Borough Council Test and Trace Support Payments Scheme

Version Control

Version	Version date	Revised by	Description
031020	September 2020	DA	INITIAL DRAFT
081020	October 2020	JG	AMENDMENTS

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Definitions

The following definitions are used within this document:

‘Applicant’; means the individual making an application for a payment under this scheme;

‘Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS)’; means the web-based system used by Public Health England to contact and trace individuals who are required to self-isolate;

‘CTAS Account ID’; means the unique number provided by Public Health England through the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS);

‘COVID-19’; means the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus;

‘Housing Benefit’; means the benefit administered by local authorities under either the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 or the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) 2006;

‘income-related Employment and Support Allowance’; means the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Welfare Reform Act 2007;

‘income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance’; means the means-tested Jobseekers Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Jobseekers Act 1995;

‘Income Support’; means the means-tested Income Support administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987;

‘NHS Test and Trace’; means the service provided to the National Health Service in England, established in May 2020 to track and help prevent the spread of COVID-19;

‘Pension Credit’; means the means-tested Guarantee or Savings Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the State Pension Credit Regulations 2002;

‘Qualifying benefit’; means any of the following benefits: Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker’s Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit;

‘Self-isolation, Self-isolate’; means the legal requirement for an individual to self-isolate when told to by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app and the legal duty to self-isolate under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 28th September 2020;

‘Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme’ (‘Standard Scheme’); means the Standard Scheme introduced by Government on 28th September and administered by Local Authorities;

‘Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme’ (‘Discretionary Scheme’); means the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which has been agreed by the Council and which *may* be available for individuals who are unable to access the ‘Standard Scheme’.

‘Universal Credit’ means the means-tested Universal Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Universal Credit Regulations 2013;

‘Working Tax Credit’; means the means-tested benefit administered by Her Majesty’s Revenues and Customs under the Working Tax Credit (Entitlement and Maximum Rate) Regulations 2002.

DRAFT

1. Background to Self-Isolation and Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme

- 1.1 From 28th September 2020, Government has changed the legislation so that certain people will have to self-isolate due to the current COVID-19 crisis.
- 1.2 A package of legislative measures has been introduced both to ensure that those who are required to self-isolate, do so and, that those on a low income, receive a payment to assist their finances and to encourage compliance with the legislation.
- 1.3 The Council, together with Government, recognises that self-isolation is one of the most powerful tools for controlling the transmission of the Covid-19 virus and this scheme document details who will be eligible and how the Test and Trace Support Payment will be made. It also outlines the approach the Council will take in determining whether a payment will be made or not.
- 1.4 This document, which covers the **Standard Scheme**, should be read alongside the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Support scheme which *may* be available to individuals who do not qualify a payment under this scheme.

2. An overview of the Test and Trace Payment scheme (the standard scheme).

- 2.1 From 28th September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 from the Council if they meet the eligibility criteria listed below:
 - (a) Make an application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide all the evidence and verification required;
 - (b) Are a resident within the Council's area;
 - (c) Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
 - (d) Are employed or self-employed;
 - (e) Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
 - (f) Are currently receiving any of the following 'qualifying benefit's':
 - Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or

- Pension Credit.
- 2.2 This particular scheme is designed for those individuals (applicants) who:
- meet the standard conditions 2.1 (a) to (e) above;
 - are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits listed in 2.1(f); and
 - comply with the self-isolation requirements laid down by Government;
- 2.3 Where individuals meet all the requirements but are **not in receipt of a qualifying benefit (2.1 (f))**, no payment can be made; however, they may be able to apply for a discretionary payment under the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which is available on the Council's website
- 2.4 Individuals will **not** be entitled to apply for both a payment under the Standard Scheme and under the Council's Discretionary Scheme.

3. Commencement of the scheme and scheme closure

Commencement

- 3.1 This scheme is available to all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and who are told to self-isolate **on or after** 28th September 2020.
- 3.2 Individuals who are required to self-isolate **before** 28th September 2020 will not be eligible for a payment.

Scheme closure

- 3.3 At the present time, Government has stated that this Standard Scheme will be available until 31st January 2021.

4. Applying for a Test and Trace Support Payment (the Standard Scheme).

- 4.1 Individuals who are resident within the Council's area will be entitled to make an application for a Test and Trace Support Payment under this scheme. In all cases, the 'applicant' will be required to answer **all** of the questions asked and provide the information required by the Council in the specified timescale.
- 4.2 In order to receive a payment, all applicants must meet the full eligibility criteria, details of which are shown within Section 6 of this scheme. The applicant will be required to self-verify certain criteria and also confirm that they will comply with the self-isolation requirements set by Government.

- 4.3 Where the applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria, they will not receive a payment and will be informed of this by the Council, either at the point of application or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 Where the applicant is successful, the Council will notify them accordingly and make payment in line with the timings and methods shown in Section 8.
- 4.5 Applications can **only** be accepted from individuals who are resident in the Council's area.
- 4.6 Applications will be accepted from a third party in respect of any individual who meets the eligibility criteria for a payment. However, the following should be noted:
- The person making the application will need to provide evidence of their identity and also the reason why they are applying on behalf of another person; and
 - That any payment **must** only be made by the Council to the person who is self-isolating. No payment will be made to a third party under any circumstance.
- 4.7 All applications shall be made online using the Council's dedicated webpage www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus/support-payment. There are no paper or other types of application processes; however, should individuals experience difficulties in making any application, they should contact the Benefits team for assistance on 01206 282600.

5. Time limits for making an application for a payment

- 5.1 No application for a payment can be made before the 28th September 2020 or for any individual who has been required to self-isolate before 28th September 2020.
- 5.2 Eligible individuals can apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment at any time up to 14 days after their period of self-isolation ended. The Council will **not** accept any applications after this point.
- 5.3 Where an individual has been required to self-isolate on or after 28th September but before the Council's scheme opened on 12th October 2020, an application for a backdated discretionary payment must be made by 26th October 2020 (14 days after commencement of scheme).

6. Multiple claims within the household and from the same applicant

- 6.1 Individuals in the same household can each make an application to receive a Test and Trace Support Payment, if they each meet the eligibility criteria in full.
- 6.2 An individual may make an application more than once but only:
- If the individual is told to self-isolate multiple times; **and**
 - they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual application; **and**
 - the periods of self-isolation do not overlap.

- 6.3 The Council is mindful that this can be confusing for applicants and it will be essential, where multiple applications are made by an individual, to ensure correct eligibility. Therefore, a new application will need to be made for each distinct period of self-isolation.

7. The eligibility criteria and evidence required for the Test and Trace Support Payment (the Standard Scheme).

- 7.1 For payment to be made under this scheme, all of the criteria **must** be met. As with the application form itself, all evidence will need to be provided electronically. The Council provides facilities for all applicants to upload documents, evidence and photographs.
- 7.2 Where documentation is only held in 'hard copy' or paper form, the Council will accept digital images or photographs provided they show all the relevant information.
- 7.3 The Council will keep all information supplied by applicants, secure and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- 7.4 As mentioned in Section 4, a valid application must be made via the Council's website www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus/support-payment. All applicants will be required to provide details sufficient to identify themselves, their address and to allow the Council to contact them including:
- Full name;
 - Address;
 - National Insurance Number;
 - Contact details
- 7.5 In addition to the above, all applicants will be required to submit a copy of their current bank statement(s) in order to:
- Verify that their income has reduced due to having to self-isolate (see later); and
 - Provide details of the bank account number and sort code of the account into which a payment would be made.

That they are a resident within the Council's area

- 7.6 The applicant will be required to verify that they have their sole or main residence in the Council's area. The Council will check other records held (and make other enquiries where appropriate) to determine this.
- 7.7 Where necessary, the Council will ask the applicant to provide additional evidence of residence.

Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

- 7.8 A key requirement of the scheme is that the applicant has been instructed by the NHS Test and Trace to stay at home and self-isolate either because:
- they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus); or
 - have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.
- 7.9 All applicants will be required to provide the 8-digit unique ID number which has been provided to them by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.10 For information, the NHS Test and Trace service uses the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to record information about people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts. The CTAS Account ID is an 8-digit identifier unique to each case (e.g. 3b1a3015c). Most individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or are a contact of someone who has had a positive test, will receive a digital invitation from the CTAS system to undertake the contact tracing journey.
- 7.11 All cases and contacts who have completed the contact tracing journey (including those who were ineligible for the digital invitation such as children or individuals with a landline number only) will receive a citizen advice message upon completion of the NHS Test and Trace questionnaire. The citizen message (sent either via a text message/email or postal service for people with no access to mobile phone or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.
- 7.12 The Council will check that the applicant has a valid Account ID produced by the Contact Tracing and Advice Service. Only this number will allow an application to be processed.
- 7.13 The Council will not make payment to anyone who does not have a valid notification (Account ID) from NHS Test and Trace. It should be noted that there is a legal duty to self-isolate which only applies to people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.14 The Council will not accept a notification from the NHS Isolation Note service. Where the applicant has provided this only, they will be given an opportunity to provide a valid NHS Test and Trace notification if they have one.
- 7.15 This scheme does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

All applicants must be currently employed or self-employed

7.16 Only those applicants who are currently employed or currently self-employed will be entitled to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment. For the sake of clarity, this scheme requires all applicants to provide sufficient evidence of their current employment or self-employment status. In the case of employed applicants, full details of their employer must be given on the application form including contact numbers.

7.17 The Council will also require applicants to provide proof such as listed below:

Employed

- Current wages or salary slips;
- Employment contract; or
- Letter from the employer confirming current employment.

Self Employed

- Self-assessment form;
- Details of HMRC registration as self-employed;
- Current accounts; or
- Current accounts and trading statements

7.18 The above list is not exhaustive.

Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result

7.19 All applicants will have to certify on the application form that they are:

- Unable to work from home; and
- Will lose income as a result.

7.20 The Council will need to be satisfied that any applicants meet these conditions in full.

Unable to work from home

7.21 The Council will require applicants to give details about the nature of their work and whether they can undertake this work from home.

7.22 Only those applicants that cannot work from home whilst self-isolating will meet the criteria and therefore, each applicant will not only be required to verify the fact, but also provide details of the reasons why this is the case, together with details of the type of work that they would normally undertake.

7.23 This criterion applies whether an applicant is either employed or self-employed and Government has provided a number of examples as follows:

- An applicant with a single job whose employer continued to pay them a full wage while they self-isolated would not meet the criteria;

- An applicant whose employer paid them a reduced wage while they self-isolated would meet the criteria (as they have lost income); and
- An applicant with two part-time jobs who continued to be paid a full wage by one employer, but whose other employer did not pay them while self-isolating, would be eligible.

Are currently receiving any of the qualifying benefits.

7.24 The final criterion is that the applicant **must be in receipt** of one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Universal Credit;
- Working Tax Credit;
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income Support;
- Housing Benefit; or
- Pension Credit.

7.25 Applicants must be **actually** in receipt of the listed benefits. Each applicant will be required to verify that they are in receipt of one of the benefits and provide evidence of that to the Council. Evidence will need to be provided electronically but typically could be copies of bank statements showing the payments, confirmation of benefit entitlement or award /payment summaries (as in the case of Universal Credit). The Council will accept 'screenshots' of any online benefit account.

7.26 Where an applicant has yet to apply for a qualifying benefit; is awaiting a decision on a benefit; is currently appealing a negative decision; or is unable to apply for a qualifying benefit, they will not be entitled to a payment under the Standard Scheme and will be directed to apply for a payment under the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payment Scheme.

7.27 The Council will verify the current receipt of a qualifying benefit with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) as appropriate.

8. How much grant will be paid, methods of payment and timings.

- 8.1 Where an applicant meets all of the eligibility criteria, a single payment of £500 shall be paid for each period of self-isolation. Payments will be made direct to the applicant's bank account within 3 working days.
- 8.2 Where further information or evidence is required from the applicant, the Council will look to make payment within 3 working days starting with the date when all of the required information is received.
- 8.3 Full details of the applicant's bank account must be supplied on the application form and this will be cross checked with the copies of the bank statements provided as part of the verification process.
- 8.4 As required by Government, payments can only be made to the applicant's bank account. No payments can be made to third parties whatsoever.
- 8.5 The Council is aware that in some cases, applicants may be overdrawn and may not be able to gain access to the payment. In these cases, the applicant should contact their bank and request a protection of payments under a 'first right of appropriation of funds order'.

9. Notification of Decisions

- 9.1 Applications will be considered by officers of the Council and all decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email.

10. Implications for other benefits and reductions

- 10.1 The Council has been advised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that the Test and Trace Support Payment will be disregarded for the purposes of all means-tested benefits.
- 10.2 The Council has decided that any payment made under this scheme shall not affect entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.

11. Review of Decisions

- 11.1 Whilst there is no statutory appeal process, the Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for an appeal of its decision by a senior officer.
- 11.2 All such requests must be made in writing to the Council, within 3 days of the Council's decision, and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the

applicant's appeal. The application will be reconsidered as soon as practicable, and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Councils website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

13. Funding of the scheme

- 13.1 Government has confirmed that it will reimburse the Council for all payments correctly made under this scheme.

14. Taxation and provision of information to HMRC

- 14.1 The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under this scheme are taxable. However, the payments will not be subject to National Insurance contributions.
- 14.2 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.
- 14.3 All applicants should note that the Council is required to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of all payments made to individuals.

15. Managing the risk of fraud

- 15.1 Colchester Borough Council will make the necessary checks to ensure payments can be verified and have been made correctly. The council will utilise a number of databases and Government systems to verify information in connection with any application submitted.

16. Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

- 16.1 If it is established that any Test and Trace Support Payment has been made incorrectly due to incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

17. Delegated Powers

- 17.1 The Council has implemented this scheme in line with Government requirements and guidance.

- 17.2 Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and reserves the right to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it continues to meet the criteria set by the Council and, in line with Central Government guidance.

18. Data Protection and use of data

- 18.1 All information and data provided by businesses shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website.

DRAFT



Colchester Borough Council

Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme

Version Control

Version	Version date	Revised by	Description
031020	September 2020	DA	INITIAL DRAFT
081020	October 2020	JG	AMENDMENTS

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Definitions

The following definitions are used within this document:

‘Additional Eligibility Criteria’; means the additional criteria decided by the Council that need to be met, in order to receive a payment under the Council’s Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme. These will be in addition to the standard criteria and are allowable under Government guidance;

‘Applicant’; means the individual making an application for a payment under this scheme;

‘Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS)’; means the web-based system used by Public Health England to contact and trace individuals who are required to self-isolate;

‘CTAS Account ID’; means the unique number provided by Public Health England through the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS);

‘COVID-19’; means the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus;

‘face financial hardship’; a key criterion of the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme is that all applicants will, if not for the payment, face financial hardship solely due to their need to self-isolate;

‘Housing Benefit’; means the benefit administered by local authorities under either the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 or the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) 2006;

‘income-related Employment and Support Allowance’; means the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Welfare Reform Act 2007;

‘income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance’; means the means-tested Jobseekers Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Jobseekers Act 1995;

Income Support’; means the means-tested Income Support administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987;

‘NHS Test and Trace’; means the service provided to the National Health Service in England, established in May 2020 to track and help prevent the spread of COVID-19;

‘Pension Credit’; means the means-tested Guarantee or Savings Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the State Pension Credit Regulations 2002;

‘Qualifying benefit’; means any of the following benefits: Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker’s Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit;

‘Self-isolation, Self-isolate’; means the legal requirement for an individual to self-isolate when told to by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app and the legal duty to self-isolate under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 28th September 2020;

‘Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme’ (‘Standard Scheme’); means the Standard Scheme introduced by Government on 28th September and administered by Local Authorities;

‘Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme’ (‘Discretionary Scheme’); means the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which has been agreed by the Council and which *may* be available for individuals who are unable to access the ‘Standard Scheme’.

‘Universal Credit’ means the means-tested Universal Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Universal Credit Regulations 2013;

‘Working Tax Credit’; means the means-tested benefit administered by Her Majesty’s Revenues and Customs under the Working Tax Credit (Entitlement and Maximum Rate) Regulations 2002.

DRAFT

1. Background to Self-Isolation and the Test and Trace Payments

- 1.1 From 28th September 2020, Government has changed the legislation so that certain people will have to self-isolate due to the current COVID-19 crisis.
- 1.2 A package of legislative measures has been introduced to ensure that those who are required to self-isolate, do so and that those on a low income receive a payment to assist their finances and to encourage compliance with the legislation.
- 1.3 The Council, together with Government, recognises that self-isolation is one of the most powerful tools for controlling the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. The Government has set down the requirements for two payment schemes to be set up by the Council as follows:
 - (a) The **Test and Trace Support Payments Scheme** (the **Standard Scheme**) for those eligible applicants who are in receipt of Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit (the qualifying benefits); and
 - (b) The **Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme** (the **Discretionary Scheme**) for those applicants who are **not** in receipt of any of the qualifying benefits but who are on a low income and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.
- 1.4 This document details who will be eligible for a payment under the **Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme**.

2. An overview of the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme (the Discretionary Scheme).

- 2.1 From 28th September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a payment of £500 from the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme if they meet the eligibility criteria listed below:
 - (a) Make an application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide all the evidence and verification required;
 - (b) Are a resident within the Council's area;
 - (c) Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
 - (d) Are employed or self-employed;
 - (e) Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result;

(f) Are **NOT** currently receiving any of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit;
- Working Tax Credit;
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income Support;
- Housing Benefit; or
- Pension Credit; **and**

(g) Meet the Council's additional criteria for a discretionary payment.

2.2 This particular scheme is designed for those individuals (applicants) who:

- meet the standard conditions 2.1 (a) to (g) above;
- are **not** receiving a benefit listed in 2.1(f); and
- comply with the self-isolation requirements laid down by Government;

2.3 Where individuals meet all the requirements but **are in receipt of a benefit stated in 2.1 (f)**, no payment can be made under the Discretionary Scheme; however, they may be able to apply for payment under the Standard Scheme which is available on the Council's website

2.4 Individuals will not be entitled to apply for both a payment under the Standard Scheme and under the Council's Discretionary Scheme.

3. Commencement of the scheme and scheme closure

Commencement

3.1 This scheme is available to all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for a discretionary payment and who are told to self-isolate **on or after** 28th September 2020.

3.2 Individuals who are required to self-isolate **before** 28th September 2020 will not be eligible for a payment.

Scheme closure

3.3 At the present time, Government has stated that this Discretionary Scheme (and the Standard Scheme) will be available until 31st January 2021.

4. Applying for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment (the Discretionary Scheme).

4.1 Individuals who are resident within the Council's area *may* make an application for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment under this scheme. In all cases, the 'applicant' will be required to answer **all** of the questions asked and provide the information required by the Council in the specified timescale.

- 4.2 In order to receive a payment, all applicants must meet the full eligibility criteria, details of which are shown within Section 6 of this scheme. The applicant will be required to self-verify certain criteria and also confirm that they will comply with the self-isolation requirements set by Government.
- 4.3 Where the applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria, they will not receive a payment and will be informed of this by the Council, either at the point of application or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 Where the applicant is successful, the Council will notify them accordingly and make payment in line with the timings and methods shown in Section 8.
- 4.5 Applications can **only** be accepted from individuals who are resident in the Council's area.
- 4.6 Applications will be accepted from a third party in respect of any individual who meets all the eligibility criteria for a payment. However, the following should be noted:
- The person making the application will need to provide evidence of their identity and also the reason why they are applying on behalf of another person; and
 - That any payment **must** only be made by the Council to the person who is self-isolating. No payment will be made to a third party under any circumstance.
- 4.7 All applications shall be made online using the Council's dedicated webpage www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus/support-payment. There are no paper or other types of application processes; however, should individuals experience difficulties in making any application, they should contact the Benefits team for assistance on 01206 282600

5. Time limits for making an application for a payment

- 5.1 No application for a discretionary payment can be made before the 28th September 2020 or for any individual who has been required to self-isolate before 28th September 2020.
- 5.2 Eligible individuals can apply for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment at any time up to 14 days after their period of self-isolation ended. The Council will **not** accept any applications after this point.
- 5.3 Where an individual has been required to self-isolate on or after 28th September but before the Council's scheme opened on 12th October 2020, an application for a backdated discretionary payment must be made by 26th October 2020 (14 days after commencement of scheme).

6. Multiple claims within the household and from the same applicant

- 6.1 Individuals in the same household can each make an application to receive a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment, if they each meet all the eligibility criteria in full.
- 6.2 An individual may make an application more than once but only:
- If the individual is told to self-isolate multiple times; **and**
 - they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual application; **and**
 - the periods of self-isolation do not overlap.
- 6.3 The Council is mindful that this can be confusing for applicants and it will be essential, where multiple applications are made by an individual, to ensure correct eligibility. Therefore, a new application will need to be made for each distinct period of self-isolation.

7. The eligibility criteria and evidence required for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment.

- 7.1 For payment to be made under this Discretionary Scheme, all of the criteria **must** be met. As with the application form itself, all evidence will need to be provided electronically. The Council provides facilities for all applicants to upload documents, evidence and photographs.
- 7.2 Where documentation is only held in 'hard copy' or paper form, the Council will accept digital images or photographs provided they show all the relevant information.
- 7.3 The Council will keep all information supplied by applicants, secure and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- 7.4 As mentioned in Section 4, a valid application must be made via the Council's website www.colchester.gov.uk/coronavirus/support-payment. All applicants will be required to provide details sufficient to identify themselves, their address and to allow the Council to contact them including:
- Full name;
 - Address;
 - National Insurance Number;
 - Contact details
- 7.5 In addition to the above, all applicants will be required to submit a copy of their current bank statement(s) in order to:
- Verify that their income has reduced due to having to self-isolate (see later); **and**
 - Provide details of the bank account number and sort code of the account into which a payment would be made.

That they are a resident within the Council's area

- 7.6 The applicant will be required to verify that they have their sole or main residence in the Council's area. The Council will check other records held (and make other enquiries where appropriate) to determine this.
- 7.7 Where necessary, the Council will ask the applicant to provide additional evidence of residence.

Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

- 7.8 A key requirement of the scheme is that the applicant has been instructed by the NHS Test and Trace to stay at home and self-isolate either because:
- they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus); or
 - have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.
- 7.9 All applicants will be required to provide the 8-digit unique ID number which has been provided to them by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.10 For information, the NHS Test and Trace service uses the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to record information about people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts. The CTAS Account ID is an 8-character identifier unique to each case (e.g. 3b1a3015c). Most individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or are a contact of someone who has had a positive test, will receive a digital invitation from the CTAS system to undertake the contact tracing journey.
- 7.11 All cases and contacts who have completed the contact tracing journey (including those who were ineligible for the digital invitation such as children or individuals with a landline number only) will receive a citizen advice message upon completion of the NHS Test and Trace questionnaire. The citizen message (sent either via a text message/email or postal service for people with no access to mobile phone or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.
- 7.12 The Council will check that the applicant has a valid Account ID produced by the Contact Tracing and Advice Service. Only this number will allow an application to be processed.
- 7.13 The Council will not make payment to anyone who does not have a valid notification (Account ID) from NHS Test and Trace. It should be noted that there is a legal duty to self-isolate which only applies to people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

- 7.14 The Council will not accept a notification from the NHS Isolation Note service. Where the applicant has provided this only, they will be given an opportunity to provide a valid NHS Test and Trace notification if they have one.
- 7.15 This scheme does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

All applicants must be currently employed or self-employed

- 7.16 Only those applicants who are currently employed or currently self-employed will be entitled to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment. For the sake of clarity, this scheme requires all applicants to provide sufficient evidence of their current employment or self-employment status. In the case of employed applicants, full details of their employer must be given on the application form including contact numbers.
- 7.17 The Council will also require applicants to provide proof such as listed below:

Employed

- Current wages or salary slips;
- Employment contract; or
- Letter from the employer confirming current employment.

Self Employed

- Self-assessment form;
- Details of HMRC registration as self-employed;
- Current accounts; or
- Current accounts and trading statements

- 7.18 The above list is not exhaustive.

Are NOT currently receiving any of the following benefits.

- 7.19 To receive a discretionary payment the applicant **must not be in receipt** of one of the following benefits:
- Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or
 - Pension Credit.
- 7.20 Where applicants are in receipt of any of the above benefits, then payments can **ONLY** be made through the Standard Scheme. The Council has designed the application process so that the same form can be used to claim either payment (Standard

Scheme or Discretionary Scheme) and applicants who fail to qualify for a Standard Scheme payment because they are not in receipt of one of those benefits, will automatically be directed to the Discretionary Scheme.

- 7.21 Where an applicant has yet to apply for one of the benefits listed; is awaiting a decision on a benefit; is currently appealing a negative decision; or is unable to apply for a qualifying benefit, they *may* make an application under this Discretionary Scheme.

Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating

- 7.22 All applicants will have to certify on the application form that they are:
- Unable to work from home;
 - Will lose income as a result; **and**
 - Will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating
- 7.23 The Council will need to be satisfied that any applicants meet these conditions in full.
- 7.24 The Council will require applicants to give details about the nature of their work and whether they can undertake this work from home.
- 7.25 Only those applicants that cannot work from home whilst self-isolating will meet the criteria and therefore, each applicant will not only be required to verify the fact, but also provide details of the reasons why this is the case, together with details of the type of work that they would normally undertake.
- 7.26 The Council will also require all applicants making an application for a discretionary payment to provide evidence of financial hardship. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that the financial hardship is **solely** due to having to self-isolate.

Meet the Council's additional criteria for discretionary payments

- 7.27 Given that the funding for the Discretionary Scheme is limited (see Section 14), Government has stated that it will be up to each Council to determine additional criteria that have to be met if a payment is to be made.
- 7.28 The Council has decided that, in order to qualify for a discretionary award, all of the criteria stated previously must be met in full **and** the applicant must not have greater than £16,000 in capital. For the sake of clarity, capital will be calculated in accordance with the rules for Housing Benefit.

8. How much discretionary payment will be paid, methods of payment and timings.

- 8.1 Where an applicant meets all of the eligibility criteria for a discretionary payment, a single payment of £500 shall be paid for each period of self-isolation. Payments will be made direct to the applicant's bank account within 3 working days.
- 8.2 Where further information or evidence is required from the applicant, the Council will look to make payment within 3 working days starting with the date when all of the required information is received.
- 8.3 Full details of the applicant's bank account must be supplied on the application form and this will be cross checked with the copies of the bank statements provided as part of the verification process.
- 8.4 As required by Government, payments can only be made to the applicant's bank account. No payments can be made to third parties whatsoever.
- 8.5 The Council is aware that in some cases, applicants may be overdrawn and may not be able to gain access to the payment. In these cases, the applicant should contact their bank and request a protection of payments under a 'first right of appropriation of funds order'.

9. Notification of Decisions

- 9.1 Applications for discretionary payments will be considered by officers of the Council and all decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email.

10. Implications for other benefits and reductions

- 10.1 The Council has been advised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that all Test and Trace Support Payments (of any type) will be disregarded for the purposes of all means-tested benefits.
- 10.2 The Council has decided that any payment made under this scheme shall not affect entitlement to Local Council Tax Support.

11. Review of Decisions

- 11.1 Whilst there is no statutory appeal process, the Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for an appeal of its decision by a senior officer.
- 11.2 All such requests must be made in writing to the Council, within 3 days of the Council's decision, and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision

of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal. The application will be reconsidered as soon as practicable, and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Councils website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

13. Funding of the Discretionary Scheme

- 13.1 The Council will receive a fixed amount of funding from Government which will be for the four months that the Discretionary Scheme is intended to last. Government has confirmed that **no** additional monies will be given to the Council. As the funding is limited the Council, therefore, reserves the right to make no further awards once Government funds are exhausted.
- 13.2 In view of this, and to ensure that discretionary payments are available throughout the period to 31st January 2021, the Council reserves the right to change the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme at any time to ensure funds go to those who face the most financial hardship.

14. Taxation and provision of information to HMRC

- 14.1 The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under this scheme are taxable. However, the payments will not be subject to National Insurance contributions.
- 14.2 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.
- 14.3 All applicants should note that the Council is required to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of all payments made to individuals.

15. Managing the risk of fraud

- 15.1 Colchester Borough Council will make the necessary checks to ensure payments can be verified and have been made correctly. The council will utilise a number of databases and Government systems to verify information in connection with any application submitted.

16. Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

- 16.1 If it is established that any Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment has been made incorrectly due to misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

17. Delegated Powers

- 17.1 The Council has implemented this Discretionary Scheme in line with Government requirements and guidance.
- 17.2 Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and reserves the right to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it continues to meet the criteria set by the Council and, in line with Central Government guidance.

18. Data Protection and use of data

- 18.1 All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website.

PETITIONS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS, QUESTIONS

(i) Have Your Say submissions

Date of Meeting	Details of Members of the Public	Subject Matter	Form of Response	Date Completed
No public Have Your Say! submissions were made at the Cabinet meeting on 2 September 2020.				

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

