

25 January 2017

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Strategic Director, Commercial and Place</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Ian Vipond</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Annual Report 2016/17</b>		<b>☎ 282717</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	'Not applicable'		

**This report sets out the Initial Draft of Annual Report of the Trading Board for its fourth year 2016/17**

## 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To review the format and content of the initial draft of the Trading Board Annual Report for the year 2016/17

## 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The Board agreed that it would produce an Annual Report in a form similar to that of a Company with share holders. The Annual Report was intended to give both Cabinet and the wider public a record of the Board's performance.
- 2.2 The Board requested an opportunity to consider an initial draft of the Annual Report at this meeting. Any comments made by the Board at this meeting will be considered and a further draft will be submitted to the meeting in March 2017 for final approval and to agree referral to Cabinet.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Board can amend the Annual Report as required.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Trading Board was introduced as a new way to advise Cabinet on how the Council approaches commercial matters and how it may increase income. The draft text for the Annual Report 2016/17 is attached.
- 4.2 This report is very much a draft to enable Trading Board to consider the key messages. The proposed design and layout of the Annual Report will be tabled at the meeting. The KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) will be included once the financial year has closed

## 5. Proposals

- 5.1 To review the content and format of the initial draft of Annual Report for the year 2016/17.

## 6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The commercial approach which the Trading Board oversees is critical to the achievement of all outcomes in the Strategic Plan.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications of the report itself and the Annual Report contains a financial assessment of the year.

## **8. Risk Management Implications**

- 8.1 There are no specific risks that relate to the implications of the decisions on this agenda.

## **9. Standard References**

- 9.1 There are no particular references in this report that relate to the; publicity or consultation considerations; or; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; or health and safety implications. However each of these will have to be considered as individual proposals come forward.

## Review from the Chair of Trading Board

The Trading Board is in its fourth year of operation and am delighted to have been Chair the Board in a year in which we have influenced the 'direction of travel' for the Council's commercial businesses and initiatives.

In order to understand our businesses better, many of the Board members have taken time to visit the businesses and talk to the staff and management delivering exceptional products and services across the borough and beyond. From the delivery of newly created wedding services and packages at the Town Hall and Colchester Castle to our field based Helpline Mobile Response Officers, I am always impressed by the high level of customer care and the degree of product innovation – providing the very best service we can for our customers.

This can perhaps be best illustrated by highlighting some of the key performance indicators for each of the businesses – I would like to highlight some of those that tell the real story of the business we oversee;

*Our **Helpline** service has helped over \*\*\* customers recover from falls, answering over 97% of calls within 60 seconds – vulnerable people and their families in and around the Borough can rest assured that professional support is available to them 'at the touch of a button'*

*Our town centre based **CCTV Monitoring** centre has responded to over \*\*\* requests to monitor situations across the town, both day and night. The information recorded by the team has been requested \*\*\* times by the Police – assisting in prosecutions for offenses affecting public safety.*

*I have a special affection for the staff and service at **Colchester's Cemetery and Crematorium** – this year they have dealt with over \*\*\* cremations and \*\*\* burials whilst providing excellent levels of customer service at a very stressful time for family and friends of the deceased.*

*This is the first year we have centralised events management with the **Colchester Events Company** delivering events across the Council's unique venues including \*\*\* weddings and ceremonies taking place across the Town Hall and Colchester Castle. Charter Hall has seen an increased usage with the team delivering over \*\*\* events from the recording of Radio 4's 'I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue' to Robot Wars, the 1200 capacity facility is being utilised fully. Over \*\*\* events take place in our award winning parks and open spaces and we are keen to coordinate these as much as possible, promoting Colchester as an event destination.*

Last year saw us lead on the development of a shared vision for the delivery of **Building Control** services across Essex. Despite clear operational advantages to the shared service partners were unable to realise the financial benefits and we, together with the remaining partners, took the decision to suspend activities. It is perhaps a mark of the ambition of the Trading Board that we have gained a reputation for a willingness to lead on visionary projects such as this. We have been left with a legacy from the project that will see us implement new, customer focussed business systems, innovative training and apprenticeship opportunities and will look to develop working partnerships with likeminded local authorities.

As well as receiving regular reports on the above businesses the Board have also received reports and updates on;

*Public Sector Reform Commercial Opportunities  
Corporate Asset Management Strategy*

I would like to thank all members of the Trading Board for their ongoing support and advice – it is their input that has helped us achieve all we have.

Councillor Rosalind Scott  
Chair, Trading Board 2016/17

### **Review from the Strategic Director**

In 2015 The Trading Board set out its strategic ambitions through to 2018 in reviewing the last 12 months it is worth reflecting our delivery against the 'six pillars' of success;

- Customer focus
- Professional staff and systems
- Innovation and responsiveness
- Sound financial management
- Leadership and governance
- Continuous improvement

I have no doubt that our conscientious staff and management deliver a very customer focussed products and services, the businesses themselves rely upon it for new and repeat business. With guidance and input from the Trading Board members we have invested in the support structure, in terms of staff and business systems, to ensure the businesses have a strong foundation on which to build a success in a competitive market place. Our businesses are encouraged to innovate and find new ways of leading the commercial charge - product and service innovations in Helpline, Bereavement and Events Management have helped our customers access the services they want.

We have come a long way since our first Trading Board Report and have continuously pushed the businesses to improve all aspects of service and delivery.

All we have achieved is reported against a backdrop of clear financial forecasting, budgeting and monitoring which inform the business of commercial opportunities and allows the Trading Board to provide clear corporate governance.

### **Trading Board – Terms of Reference**

- a) Consider and review the activities performed by:
  - the commercial services arm of the Council
  - those services generating income of approximately £250,000 or above
  - any trading arms of the Council
  - any partly or wholly owned companies of the Council
- b) Identify and develop any new commercial agreements generating significant income for the Council for approval by Cabinet or Council.
- c) Develop the composition of any new body or bodies created wholly or in part by the Council for commercial purposes including their purpose; governance; operating model; business planning function; risk factors; and to recommend approval for such new arrangements to Cabinet or Council.
- d) Ensure any Council capital investment and/or assets that are to be transferred to or used by an outside body for commercial purposes is properly specified, protected and used by the outside body and recommended to Cabinet or Council for approval.
- e) Consider any proposed new/transfer or sale/purchase of company shares and make recommendations on these for approval by Council.

- f) Identify and recommend to Cabinet or Council major strategic opportunities for procurement of services from other companies, organisations, social enterprises and the voluntary and third sector.
- g) Receive regular reports of procurement agreements entered into including financial and service performance measures against those stated in the contract and bring any concerns or risks as recommendations to Cabinet.