

Report of	Mandy Jones, Assistant Director, Place & Client	Author	Karen Turnbull ☎ 282915
Title	Colchester's Bid for City Status		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In 2022 the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee and there is an open call for Local Authorities to submit bids for city status for their towns. The Administration has asked for Colchester to bid for city status to recognise its historic, economic and cultural importance.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to note the process to deliver Colchester's bid for city status, the plan for engagement and the timescale required.
- 2.2 To recommend to Full Council that it endorses and supports Colchester's bid for City Status.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to agree the final wording of Colchester's application for City Status to the Portfolio Holder for Economy, Business and Heritage.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 City status will enhance Colchester's image and reputation and provide support for a more confident recovery from the economic impact of the pandemic. However, there is a strict deadline for submission of the bid and there is an opportunity to engage with a variety of groups and individuals to seek their support, both for the bid and for the key messages about Colchester it contains.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 City status is an honour conferred by Her Majesty the Queen. In the last 20 years there have been four opportunities to apply: the Millennium, 2002 Queen's Golden Jubilee, the 2012 Queen's Diamond Jubilee and next year Her Majesty will confer city status to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee. There are no alternative options.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Colchester has applied for City Status on three previous occasions, the last being 10 years ago to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.
- 5.2 The Government requirement is as follows:
- a) A summary of the application comprising no more than one A4 page.

- b) An introduction comprising no more than eight A4 pages of text, highlighting why the area deserves city status / Lord Mayor or Provost status, with particular reference to the area's:
- Distinct identity;
 - Civic pride;
 - Cultural infrastructure, interesting heritage, history and traditions
 - Vibrant and welcoming community;
 - Record of innovation;
 - Sound governance and administration;
 - Associations with Royalty; and
 - Other particularly distinctive features, age, residents or communities who have made widely recognised significant contributions to society and cultural infrastructure.
- c) A profile of the area, including statistics, to assist understanding of the area and its bid in comparison to the bids of other applicants. Information which it would be helpful to include would be:
- The resident population of the area;
 - Economic activity, including the number of people who work (but do not reside) in the area;
 - Information on public green spaces, sport and leisure facilities, and shopping centres; and
 - Information on local authority support (of any kind) for the voluntary sector.

The profile should comprise no more than ten A4 pages (including numbers, any tables and graphics).

- d) Up to 50 photographs of permanent features of the area

Deadline

The absolute deadline for submission is 8th December 2021.

Key Messages

- Britain's First Roman City with a 2000-year heritage
- Fastest growing town
- Ultrafast digital connectivity
- Inward investment hot-spot
- Strong Royal links throughout medieval and modern times
- Regional creative and cultural destination
- Partnership work transforming community health and wellbeing services
- Internationally important and relevant
- Environmentally important and sustainable
- A place of opportunity

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 City status would support the Council's aim of improving Colchester's economic competitiveness so that everyone benefits

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 City status would support the aims of the Strategic Plan, particularly the aspirations around growing a better economy so that everyone benefits and celebrating our heritage and culture.

8. Engagement

8.1 A draft plan to engage people and organisations with Colchester's bid is based around:

- Endorsement – seeking the support of stakeholders to support the bid. Using their networks and meetings to spread the word of ambition and boldness, sending a fresh message out about Colchester and its aspirations, whether or not the bid is successful.
- Testimonials – seeking support from organisations and individuals around why Colchester should attain city status.

These responses will be included in the bid document. They may also be published in other media for PR purposes.

9. Publicity Considerations

9.1 City status would bring national and international media attention to Colchester as the UK's newest, and also first, city.

10. Financial implications

10.1 The bid for city status will be delivered within existing budgets.

10.2 Should city status be conferred, a plan would be developed to communicate the transition from town to city over an agreed period of time.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

11.1 There are no health, wellbeing or 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 There are no environmental and sustainability implications.