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Chief Executive

A **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** of the Borough of Castle Point will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley, on **WEDNESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2018 at 7.30 p.m.**, and all Members of the Council, listed below, are hereby summoned to attend to transact the undermentioned business.

Councillors, A.C.Walter, (The Worshipful the Mayor), C.G. Riley, (Deputy Mayor), A.J. Acott, J. Anderson, D.A. Blackwell, Mrs.J.A Blissett, B. Campagna, S. Cole, D.T. Cross, W.J.C. Dick, Ms.N.B.Drogman, Mrs B. Egan, E. Egan, Mrs W. Goodwin, P.C. Greig, S.Hart, N.R. Harvey, Mrs P. Haunts, R.C. Howard, G.I. Isaacs, W.Johnson, N.E.Ladzrie, C.A. MacLean, P.J. May, C.E. Mumford, B.A. Palmer, A. Partridge, Mrs. J. Payne, J.A.Payne, Mrs C.J Sach, W.K.Sharp, A.G. Sheldon, T.F. Skipp, N.G. Smith, J.A. Stanley, A. Taylor, P.E.Varker, Mrs L. Wass, Mrs G. Watson, N. Watson and B.S. Wood.

Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

(Business to be taken in public)

Before commencing the business of the meeting, prayers will be offered by the Chaplain.

1. Apologies for absence

2. Members' Interests

3. Minutes

To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Ordinary Council held on 30th July 2018.

4. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor will report at the meeting.

5. Questions from members of the public of which Notice has been received

There are none.

- 6. Questions from Members of the Council of which Notice has been received**
There are none.
- 7. To deal with any business from the last Council Meeting**
There is none.
- 8. Any explanations for urgent decisions taken by Cabinet**
There are none.
- 9. Consideration of recommendations from Cabinet:**
The Cabinet meeting on 19.9.2018 is to refer a recommendation concerning the Corporate Plan on which a report is attached.
- 10. Any References from the Scrutiny/Policy and Scrutiny or Regulatory Committees**
There are none.
- 11. Report from the Leader of the Council/Cabinet Member**
The Leader is to report at the meeting.
- 12. Notices of Motion**
Councillor Dick has given notice of the following:

‘This Council welcomes the present use of the Council owned allotments. These facilities provide Health & Wellbeing for all the allotment users, by the provision of exercise and healthy eating, the resulting organic provisions they provide gives further healthy eating.

This Council will promote the use of the present allotment sites by clearly monitoring the land usage more effectively. To encourage full use of the available land, thus consolidating the present sites, protected under the new NPPF.

To accommodate waiting lists, this Council will look towards extending the present allotment sites, where possible, to create further adjoining plots within the area of the present sites.’
- 13. Petitions submitted by Members of the Council of which Notice has been given.**
No Notice has been received.



ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES

30TH JULY 2018

MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Borough of Castle Point held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley on 30th July 2018.

PRESENT:

Councillors, A.C.Walter, (The Worshipful the Mayor), C.G. Riley, (Deputy Mayor), A.J. Acott, Mrs J. Blissett, B. Campagna, S. Cole, D.T. Cross, W.J.C. Dick, Ms.N.B.Drogman, Mrs B. Egan, E. Egan, S.Hart, N.R. Harvey, Mrs P. Haunts, R.C. Howard G.I. Isaacs, W. Johnson, C.A. MacLean, P.J. May, C.E. Mumford, B.A. Palmer, J.A.Payne, Mrs. J. Payne, Mrs C.J Sach, A.G. Sheldon, T.F. Skipp, N.G. Smith, P.E.Varker, Mrs L. Wass and B.S. Wood.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Anderson, D.A. Blackwell, Mrs W. Goodwin, P.C. Greig, N.E.Ladzrie, A. Partridge, W.K.Sharp, J.A. Stanley, A. Taylor, Mrs G. Watson and N. Watson.

16. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Ordinary Council held on 28th March 2018, the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 16th May 2018 and the Minutes of the Special Council held on 6th June 2018 were taken as read and approved as a correct record. The Mayor signed the Minutes.

18. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor:

- Was enjoying his first few months in office as Mayor and was extremely impressed by the valuable work being undertaken by community groups across the Borough; the enthusiasm of our schools; those engaged in the Borough's performing arts and their contribution not only to the culture of the area but also their valuable support for charities
- Was encouraged to see so much activity involving healthy exercise and keeping fit in so many forms; scouting, guiding, sports for the less able and school swimming competitions to name but a few.

- Was extremely pleased to see that the Yellow Door Youth Project had an excellent new home.
- With the Mayoress had toured Coast Watch on Canvey and were impressed with the work and the professionalism of their staff.
- Was honoured to preside over the Armed Forces event which took place at the Council Offices on Monday 25th June and was delighted to attend the very successful Armed Forces Day event held on Canvey Island on Saturday 30th June.
- Thanked the organisers of the Canvey Carnival for a very enjoyable and memorable time on 7th July.
- Enjoyed the Castle Point Show held on 22nd July and thanked all involved in this very successful day.

19. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OF WHICH NOTICE HAD BEEN RECEIVED

There were none.

20. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF WHICH NOTICE HAD BEEN RECEIVED

There were none

21. TO DEAL WITH ANY BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

There was none.

22. ANY EXPLANATIONS FOR URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET

There were none.

23. CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET:

There were none.

24. ANY REFERENCES FROM THE SCRUTINY, POLICY & SCRUTINY OR REGULATORY COMMITTEES

There were none.

25. FINANCIAL RESULTS AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2017/18

The Council considered a report containing the financial out-turn results and audited Statement of Accounts for approval by Council.

The Statement of Accounts must be prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and proper accounting requirements, as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2017/18, and the associated Guidance notes for Practitioners.

The accounts had been available for public inspection, the Council's External Auditors Ernst and Young commenced their audit of the Statement of Accounts earlier in July which was almost complete.

In order to ensure that the accounts were subject to robust scrutiny additional guidance had been produced. Annexe A contained a summary of the 2017/18 financial results for the Council's three main funds: the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme. Annexe B contained supporting information for the benefit of Members including explanations of changes to the format of the financial statements and an analysis of figures and disclosures presented in the accounts. A summary of the Accounts was also before the Council. A separate report to Audit Committee in June 2018 had summarised the Council's Treasury Management activity for 2017/18 and was also to be reported to Cabinet in September 2018.

The Strategic Director (Resources) Section 151 Officer presented the accounts and informed the Council that the External Auditors had advised that they were confident that an unqualified opinion on the Council's financial statements would be issued on the imminent conclusion of the audit of the Statement of Accounts. The recommendation before the Council was amended accordingly.

The Council examined the accounts. The Council concurred with the view that the overall financial results for 2017/18 generally indicated sound budgeting and good budgetary control. Councillors acknowledged and thanked the Strategic Director (Resources) and officers for their work.

Resolved:

That following scrutiny:

1. The financial results for 2017/18 and explanations of budget variances and significant items are noted.
2. Subject to the conclusion of the audit of accounts and receipt of an unqualified opinion the audited Statement of Accounts is formally approved.

(Note: An unqualified opinion was issued by the Council's External Auditors Ernst and Young and the Mayor signed the Accounts subsequently.)

26. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL/CABINET MEMBER

The Leader of the Council following on the custom of previous Leaders of the Council reported to Council on key issues facing the Council; highlighted recent Cabinet business and activities of Cabinet Members and looked forward.

New Local Plan

The Leader was to write to the Secretary of State's Office seeking an update on the final report on intervention which had been expected at the end of June. The Leader informed the Council that the Council's progress was being closely monitored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Regular enquiries continued to be received on the progress being made so it was of paramount importance that the Council did not deviate from the programme approved by Special Council in June.

The Leader reminded Council of the decision made at the Special meeting on 6.6.2018 to agree a new Local Development Scheme with an accelerated programme to deliver a new local plan for Castle Point. Formal commencement of the plan preparation began with the Regulation 18 consultation on 4th July which was to run until 15th August. Key stages of the technical work to be undertaken over the next two months included site evaluation; preparation of the draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the evidence base was to be reviewed to reflect the draft SHLAA.

Member engagement had commenced with the first of four briefings taking place earlier in the month. The second briefing was to be held in mid-August to update Councillors on evidence. Two more sessions were scheduled in September and October. The work of the brown field register working group was also to commence in September.

The Leader made very clear to the Council that the most important issue and challenge facing the Council was to deliver a new Local Plan for Castle Point to avoid direct intervention by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and avoid a plan being forced on us and ensure the Council was in control of its destiny and the future of our wonderful Borough.

ASELA

The Leader reported on his attendance at meetings of the Association of South Essex Local Councils (ASELA). All south Essex councils had approved the Statement of Common Ground to guide the preparation of a joint Strategic Plan for South Essex. Together with the Cabinet member for Regeneration and Business Liaison the Leader was attending the South Essex Planning meetings which involved planning portfolio leads in progressing strategic planning in south Essex.

Cabinet Business

The Leader highlighted two recent decisions. In June Cabinet had approved of the Councils' commercial principles and work was being undertaken on a commercial strategy and action plan to embed the principles.

Earlier in July Cabinet had agreed to accept a match funding offer of up to £100k from Essex County Council subject to the funding being used for highway improvements and not routine maintenance and agreeing to roll forward its funding contribution to future years until such time that all the highway improvements schemes funded by this agreement had been completed. The Leader was determined to progress the alteration of the dangerous junction outside Castle View School and reported he had requested a costing.

The Leader asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure to thank all those involved in achieving for the 6th year running the Green flag mark of excellence for Wood side Park ,Benfleet.

The Leader also congratulated the Castle Point's Building Control service who in partnership with Morgan Sindall have won the 'Best Inclusive Building Category at the regional heats of the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) building awards, in recognition of the work at Glenwood SEN School.

In looking forward the Leader reported that work was continuing on the Paddocks business case. A report would be brought forward in the Autumn after recess. The Leader confirmed that consultation would take place with Canvey residents before any final decision was made. Work was also continuing taking forward the regeneration of Hadleigh Town Centre.

The Leader reported on progress of his intention to improve the look of the Borough. Councillors had reported back to Cllr Varker the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure who was collating the information with a view to delivering the requests. The Leader thanked Councillors for their time and requested that the work should be ongoing.

27. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were none.

28. PETITIONS

There were none.

Mayor

ORDINARY COUNCIL

26th September 2018

Subject: Corporate Plan

1. Purpose of Report

To seek Council approval for the proposed draft Corporate Plan.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

The Corporate Plan is explicitly linked to all of the Council's priorities.

3. Recommendations

That Council considers and adopts the Corporate Plan set out in Appendix 1.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan is an important document for the Council. It sets out the strategic direction for the organisation as well as how the Council will achieve its aims and priorities through appropriate action planning.
- 4.2 The Corporate Plan has been subject to significant development. This includes a number of Policy and Scrutiny sessions during 2017 and in early 2018. It has also been subject to public consultation and has been circulated to partner organisations. Service planning with managers and staff was developed to ensure it underpins the new Corporate Plan.
- 4.3 Cabinet on 19th September 2019 is to consider and recommend the Corporate Plan for approval and adoption by Council.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan is attached as Appendix 1 and sets out the medium term priorities for the Council which are:

Environment
Housing and Regeneration
Health and Community Safety
Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

- 5.2 These priorities are based on an analysis of needs and issues for the Borough as well as consultation results which are set out in Chapter 3. The plan also considers partner priorities and recent legislation which impacts on the direction the Council needs to take. The plan details both medium term priorities and annual objectives with a range of targets and actions. One of the most important targets being the submission of a legally and technically compliant Local Plan to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April 2019.
- 5.4 The Corporate Plan also includes an annual report, which starts on page 42 Annexe 1 detailing the Council's achievements over the last year. Finally a financial report is set out in Annexe 2 page 45. The progress in achieving the actions set out in the plan will be monitored throughout the year through reports to Cabinet and highlight reporting to the Corporate Management Team.

6. Corporate Implications

a. Financial implications

The Corporate Plan has significant resource implications including the need to secure significant financial savings.

b. Legal implications

Some of the actions set out in the Corporate Plan are subject to legal requirements following national legislation such as the Localism Act.

c. Human resources and equality

The plan has significant human resource and equality implications which are further considered in service and project planning.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and there is a potential for a positive impact on the following groups of people:

- Development and agreement of Local Plan – positive impact on various groups with development of new sustainable housing, development of community infrastructure etc.
- Development and acquisition of social housing: Positive impact on elderly population (New sheltered housing) Disabled people (New housing that is fully disabled accessible), pregnancy and maternal – new housing.
- Continue to support the Community Safety Partnership in meeting its strategic priorities of reducing anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, acquisitive crime and re-offending. Positive impact for younger people.
- Reducing the fear of crime – positive impact for elderly people.
- Construction or acquisition of 25 new units for homeless people – to help meet needs of vulnerable groups.

Full details are shown in the Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

This is set out in the Corporate Plan.

8. Background Papers

Briefings to Policy and Scrutiny Committees
Consultation Results
Equality Impact Assessment

Report Author: Craig Watts, Head of Housing and Communities

Corporate Plan 2018 - 2021



castlepoint

benfleet | canvey | hadleigh | thundersley

Castle Point Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018 – 2021

Foreword

Welcome to our new Corporate Plan, which has been carefully developed through a joint policy and scrutiny committee during 2017 and 2018.

In developing this plan, we have consulted our community and recognise that some of the key issues that are important to our residents include a high-quality environment, with accessible open spaces and good quality parks, play areas, footpaths and highways. Town centre improvements remain an issue, particularly for Canvey and Hadleigh and there is a need to meet the demand for housing in a sustainable way that includes market housing as well as affordable housing. We also realise there are further challenges facing the borough, and these are set out in more detail within this plan.

The Council recognises that the ongoing impact of austerity means that we continue to face acute challenges with the need to find efficiencies and cost savings in a climate where good public services for our community must continue to be our priority. The Council has a good track record of making savings whilst maintaining services and important achievements over the last year include the successful implementation of our green wheelie bin garden recycling service, and the further construction of new council homes, with two new bungalows at Lawns Court. We have also recently extended our leisure facilities at Runnymede, Benfleet to include a new gym facility which will provide access to state of the art equipment for our residents at very competitive prices. This new facility also helps to provide greater opportunities for exercise and promote a healthier lifestyle.

Whilst the Council's local plan did not progress as expected, we are working hard to complete its development and have set an ambitious target to submit a sound local plan to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April 2019.

We are also working closely with partners as part of a wider South Essex 2050 strategic partnership, which will see all Councils in the South Essex area working closely to achieve a strategic planning framework that will complement the development of our Local Plan.

Our priorities are set out in more detail in this document and we are committed to working closely with our community to achieve our vision of 'A community where everyone can prosper, be safe and live in a high quality environment'

Councillor Norman Smith
Leader of the Council
September 2018

David Marchant
Chief Executive
September 2018

Our Medium-Term Priorities and Targets

This plan details how we have identified four medium term priorities, which include:

- **Environment**
- **Housing and Regeneration**
- **Health and Community Safety**
- **A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council**

A brief overview of the targets for each priority is set out below:

Priority: Environment

Our Targets:

Percentage of households using the chargeable wheelie bin garden waste recycling service - 10% by March 2018, 20% by March 2019 and 30% by March 2020

Maintain high satisfaction (over 90%) with the waste collection service

Rationale: To maintain a good quality refuse collection and recycling service.

At least 80% satisfaction with parks and open spaces (March 2021)

Rationale: To improve satisfaction with parks and open spaces and encourage greater participation in physical activity.

At least 80% satisfaction with Council's efforts to keep public land clear of litter and refuse (March 2021)

Rationale: To ensure a high-quality grounds maintenance and street cleansing service.

Priority: Housing and Regeneration

Our Targets:

Construction of homes in accordance with the local housing target, as set out in the national guidance and the new local plan.

Construction or acquisition of a total of 40 new affordable or social rented homes by the Housing Service by March 2021. (Baseline March 2014).

Construction or acquisition of 25 new units for homeless people by March 2021 (Baseline March 2015).

Rationale: There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in the Borough and temporary accommodation for homeless people. New homes are urgently needed.

Progress the development of the Local Plan in accordance with the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme

Rationale: It is important for any development in the Borough to be undertaken in a planned way to protect the green belt as well as allow for appropriate development in our town centres and in the construction of housing.

Encouraging the regeneration of Hadleigh and Canvey Town centres through the planning process (March 2021).

The fabric of the town centres has decayed over the years and needs to be reinvigorated to meet the needs of the community and provide modern retail, residential and transport infrastructure.

Priority: Health and Community Safety

Our Targets:

Continue to support the Community Safety Partnership in meeting its strategic priorities of reducing anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, acquisitive crime and re-offending.

Promote and communicate neighbourhood watch and other schemes to help develop community resilience and reduce the fear of crime.

Reduce the proportion of people who feel unsafe after dark to 35% (March 2021)

Crime and feeling safe after dark remains a significant priority for residents and the Council is engaged in partnership work to reduce anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse acquisitive crime and re-offending by supporting key partnership initiatives and programmes.

Increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity by:

- **Promoting the new dry side facilities at Runnymede Leisure Centre and the Waterside Leisure Centre with the aim of having and retaining 3000 signed up leisure memberships by March 2019.**
- **Publishing and promote comprehensive information on our parks, open spaces, seafront and woodland walks (by March 2019)**
- **Undertaking activities to promote the use of parks, open spaces, seafront and woodland walks including working with voluntary groups to promote guided walks etc. (Programme in place by March 2020, to be measured by number of participants)**
- **Assist community and voluntary groups to fulfil their aspiration to further develop the Gunny recreational space with play and other facilities by March 2020**

Rationale: Some of the key health issues facing the Borough relate to lifestyle factors including obesity, poor eating habits and below national average physical activity. The targets above are designed to promote physical and wellbeing activities and increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity.

Priority: A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

Our Targets:

Delivery of a balanced budget in current and future years. (Ongoing).

The development and adoption of a set of commercial principles which express what commercialism means specifically to this authority

Rationale: To achieve a balanced budget through net cost reduction and more efficient working practices.

Re-develop the approach to Community Engagement with a review and implementation of a new approach to Neighbourhood Meetings and partnership with the Town Council and partner organisations including the County Council and Highways Authority, Health Services, and the Police.

Rationale: There is a perception that residents are not sufficiently involved in decision making and that the borough and county council do not provide value for money and that resident views are not listened to. There is a need to address this situation with a refresh of the approach to community engagement.

To clarify how we identified the priorities above, this plan further details the pressures faced by the Council and area, the results of public consultation as well as the impact of recent legislation.

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Chapter 1: The Strategic Framework

This corporate business plan is part of a wider and more complex strategic framework which is expressed at national levels in legislation and national strategies and regional levels as well as at a local level. The key elements will be explored in more detail within this plan, whilst the table below provides a summary:

National	Sub National	Local
Localism Act Energy Act Equality Act 2010	South East Essex 2050 Partnership	Corporate Plan
National Planning Policy Framework	Community Strategy	Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Delivery plans Corporate Plan
Health and Social Care Act	Local Enterprise Partnership	Local Plan (in development)
Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) / Welfare Reform Act	Community Strategy	Other cross cutting strategies and plans
Homelessness Reduction Act Government Budget Setting		Medium term financial forecast
National Waste Strategy		Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy
National Housing Strategy Homeless Reduction Act		Housing Strategy

Our Values

Our values influence everything that we do and how we interact and shape our community. They impact on our priorities and focus for the future and help form our key targets for improvement.

Our values demonstrate that how we work to deliver our priorities is important to us and that in everything we do - we all work to the same framework of values:

Equality: fair treatment for all

Respect: respect each other

Integrity: integrity in all of the work we do

Caring: listening and acting on staff, Councillor and customer needs

Innovation: seeking new, improved and sustainable ways of working

Teamwork: valuing everyone's contribution

Accountability: We will be open and accountable to our residents, customers, partners, Councillors and staff.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

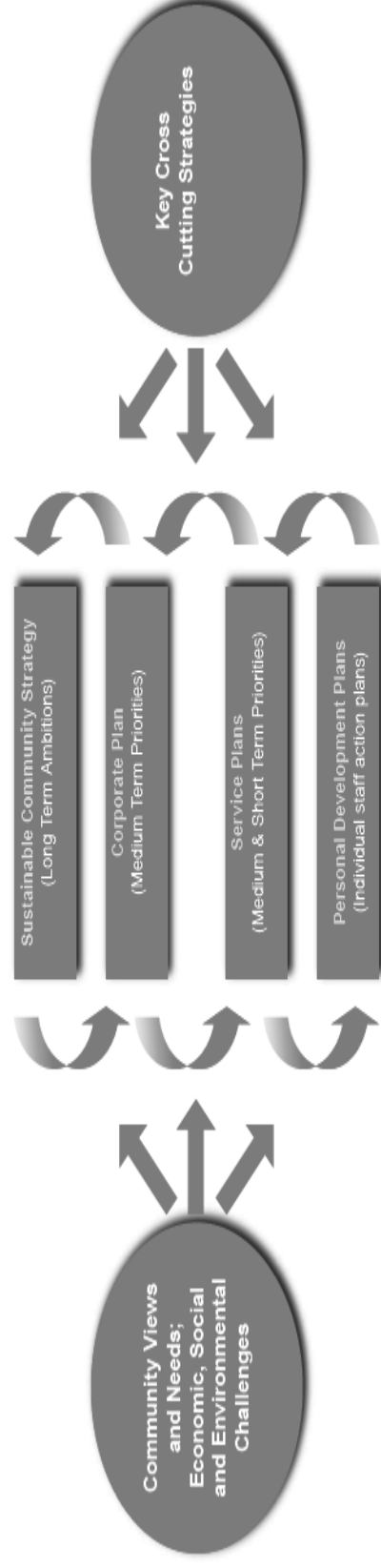
Castle Point Borough Council provides a wide range of services and facilities. The Corporate Plan supports an overarching approach to safeguarding which covers all services. Castle Point Borough Council will promote the welfare and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults within all services by:

- Respecting the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Preventing abuse by promoting good practice, creating a safe and healthy environment and avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse occur.
- Taking seriously and responding appropriately and promptly to all concerns, incidents and allegations.
- Providing training appropriate to the level of involvement with children, young people and vulnerable adults to ensure that employees understand the different forms of abuse as well as their roles and responsibilities under the Council's Codes of Conduct and the Combined Safeguarding Policy.
- Requiring organisations that the Council contracts with or that provide the Council with services, to have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- Not tolerating harassment of any Members, employees, volunteers, contracted service providers or children/vulnerable adults who raise concerns of abuse.
- Ensuring that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults through the Council's 'Safe Recruitment Procedure.'
- In order to stay at the forefront of safeguarding, Castle Point Borough Council is committed to reviewing its safeguarding policies and procedures every year.

This policy applies to all services within the scope of Castle Point Borough Council. In addition to employees and Members, it also applies to volunteers, outside hirers, outside organisations delivering services on behalf of Castle Point Borough Council, contractors and grant funded organisations.

The Castle Point ‘Golden Thread’

The strategic planning framework is an inter linked process and this Corporate Plan is a key element of the process. Our planning framework ensures everything is linked in what is known as the ‘Castle Point Golden Thread’. This is a process which ensures all our important plans consider each other. This starts with the Community Strategy, which outlines our long term ambitions that we have drawn up with our partners. These ambitions also consider the medium term priorities written into this Corporate Plan, which outline what the Council wants to achieve over the next three years. Linked to the Corporate Plan are Service Plans for approximately twenty service areas within the Council. These set out what each service aims to achieve over the next few years. Finally linked to the service plans are personal performance development plans for each employee, which set out personal targets for each employee that link with the targets in the service plan. All our plans consider the needs of residents, customers and users through consultation processes, and there are a number of other strategies that our plans also consider. The Castle Point Golden Thread process is illustrated in the following diagram:



Chapter 2

A profile of Castle Point

Welcome to Castle Point – a small Borough covering just 17.3 square miles, and an estimated population of 89,700. We are located in South Essex at the heart of the Thames Gateway South Essex sub-region, between Basildon and Southend.

Just over 55% of Castle Point's land is designated as Green Belt. As a result, most of the Borough's population live within one of four towns Benfleet (22%), Canvey Island (43%), Hadleigh (14%), and Thundersley (21%).

The Borough benefits from good links to London such as the Fenchurch Street railway line, the dual carriageways of the A13 and the A127, which link within half an hour to the M25 motorway. Castle Point as an area has a long history but is essentially modern in character, there are a few older buildings still remaining although major re-development took place mainly between the two world wars. Whilst there has been major residential re-development in the area there still remain large areas of public open space and woodland.

The Borough has a number of challenges:

- I. **Low Skilled Economy** - The level of out-commuting both impacts on and is influenced by the quality of local employment opportunities. Jobs within the Borough are generally low skilled. There is a high dependence on public sector work and the bulk of employment for local people is outside of the Borough.
- II. **Town Centres in need of vitality** - Due to the high level of out-commuting from Castle Point, the local town centres lose a substantial proportion of the residential spend to other centres, particularly Basildon, Southend, Lakeside and Bluewater because people are more willing and used to travelling for what they need and want. As a result, the town centres in Castle Point are in need of regeneration in order to make them more attractive to existing residents and as business and housing locations in order to enhance their vitality. Regeneration is necessary to address the significant under investment in public space that has occurred within town centres in Castle Point.
- III. **Public Safety** - Two major hazardous installations (Calor and Oikos) located on Canvey Island, as well as the risk of tidal and fluvial flooding, create public safety concerns for residents, despite the management of those risks.
- IV. **Ageing Population** - The population of the Borough is ageing. The proportion of people over the age of 65 is above average and a 19% increase is expected between 2015 and 2025. By 2030 a total of 30% of the population is projected to be 65 or over. This has implications for accommodation provision and healthcare services in particular. For example, figures for the percentage of people with diabetes and for people with dementia will be higher as elderly people may be more susceptible to these illnesses.

- V. **Young People** - Young people (under 20 years) will continue to make up over 20% of the population and it is important that their educational and social needs in particular are met. Between 2015 and 2025, the 5-10 and 11-15 year old age groups will be the biggest growing age groups for children: an increase of 432 and 420 respectively. School places and services will need to be available to support these changes. There is currently a perception that young people do not have enough to occupy them, resulting in crime and anti-social behaviour. This issue needs to be addressed to achieve greater community cohesion.
- VI. **Impact of the Recession** - Economic activity and employment rates are volatile and the percentage of people claiming out of work benefits is 6.7% of the population although this is below the national average of 8.4% (as at November 2016).
- VII. **Skills and Qualifications** - Castle Point has significantly lower numbers of people qualified at NVQ levels 2, 3 and 4 or above when compared to the national average. Just 17.5% of the population has qualifications at NVQ level 4 or above compared to the average for Great Britain of 38.2%. Pupil attainment in GCSE's is also below average. The percentage of pupils obtaining 5 A-C's in 2015 was 52.2% compared to the average for Essex of 57.6%.
- VIII. **Health** – For a variety of health statistics, Castle Point is around the average or better. However, the key issues relate to lifestyle factors including obesity, poor eating habits and below average physical activity. Castle Point has the highest smoking rate in the county (26.9% of the population) and is above the national average for obesity at 64.6% of the population. Castle Point also has the second highest rate of diabetes at 7.3% significantly above the national average at 6.4%.
- IX. **Community Safety** – Whilst crime is generally average or below, the fear of crime is significantly high and is a cause for concern amongst our residents. In June 2017 the total number of crimes over a twelve month period per thousand residents was 50.03, below the Essex average of 69.01 and slightly below the average for similar districts which was 51.79. However, fear of crime is substantially higher. In 2016 the proportion of people who felt unsafe after dark was 39%, the 4th highest in Essex.
- X. **Ethnicity** - The diversity of the population in Castle Point is not extensive. Approximately 95% of the population regards themselves as white British. The next highest ethnic group is Asian at about 1.7% of the population. There are no particular concentrations of ethnic population in districts within the Borough. A Haredi Jewish population has recently relocated to Canvey Island. The community has purchased an old senior school site and established a synagogue, community centre and school. Plans for the near future include a significant increase in the number of families buying properties and moving to the Island.

Key Facts:

Area 45.08 km² (17.41 square miles)

Rural Land Area 60%

Population 88,900 (2014 Estimate)

Population Density 1,921.2/km² (4,976 / square mile)

Households 36,730 (2015)

Workforce 46,900 (2015)

Unemployment: 1% receiving out of works benefits (January 2018). A total of 3.2% of the working population are not working. The national average is 4.5% for all non-working people.

Ethnicity:

White 96%

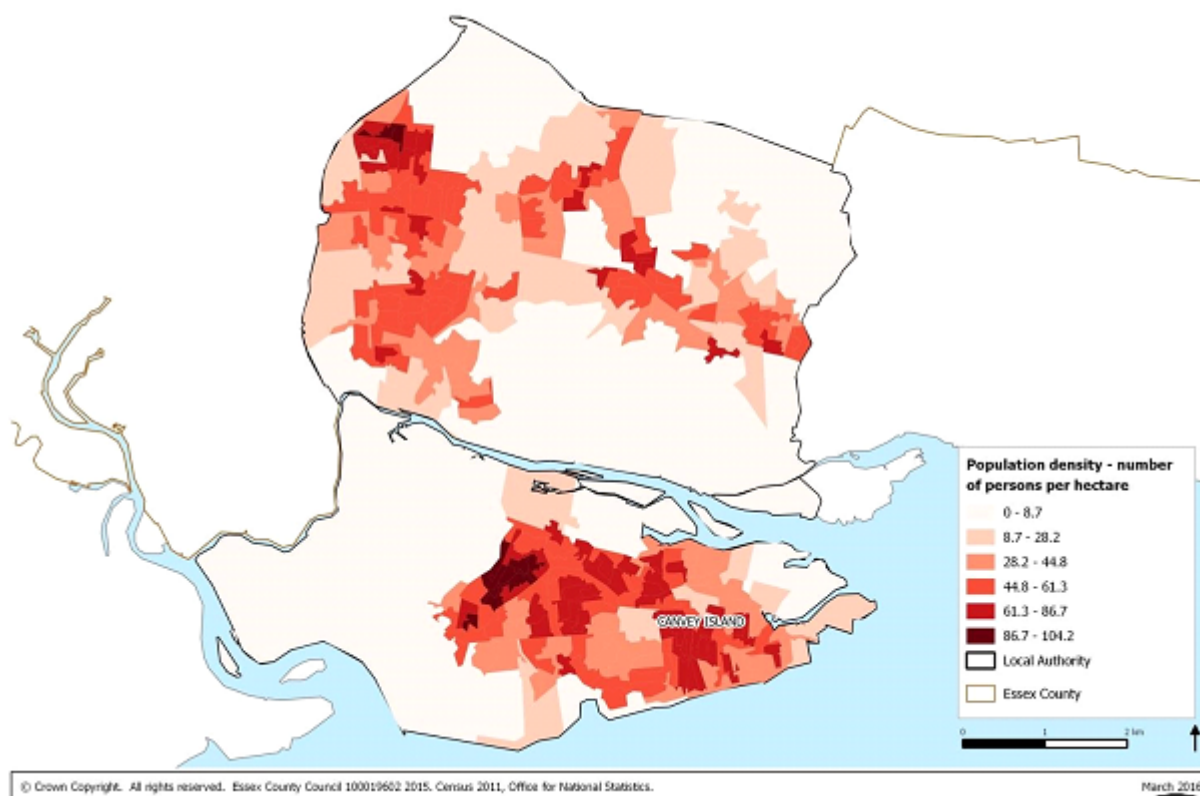
Asian 1.5%

Black 1.1%

Population Density

Castle Point has a population density of 19.21 persons per hectare, the second highest district in the county and considerably above the 4.0 average for the whole of Essex. The population density map below shows the highest rates of population are in the centre/south east of Canvey Island and within the towns of Benfleet and Hadleigh, although there are also expanses of low population density. Just 51% of the Castle Point district is classified as green space, the lowest proportion in the county (the Essex highest figure is 93% in Uttlesford): green spaces are important for wellbeing, community cohesion and for wildlife.

Population Density in Castle Point, 2011



Housing

A total of 82.9% of households in Castle Point are people that own their own homes (either with a mortgage or outright), more than nationally (64.2%) and the whole of Essex (72.0%). There is a very low proportion of social tenants (5.4%), who may be impacted by low stock levels, and low proportion of private tenants (11.8%).

Castle Point Council is the second lowest stockholding Council in the Country with just over 1,500 homes. This results in a shortage of affordable housing for which there is an acute demand.

Lack of affordable housing remains a significant issue in Castle Point, for example 57.4% (November 2017) of households cannot afford a flat based on a mortgage at 3.0 times their income. This is more acute for first time buyers as illustrated in the table below:

3 times income

	Castle Point District (B)
	Percent of households priced out of market
FTB households - Flats	64.03%
FTB households - Terraced houses	82.25%
FTB households - Semi-detached houses	89.51%
FTB households - Detached houses	89.51%
Owner occupier - Flats	57.41%
Owner occupier - Terraced houses	74.35%
Owner occupier - Semi-detached houses	82.25%
Owner occupier - Detached houses	85.23%

House prices are increasing and for example lower quartile prices in Castle Point were £163,000 in February 2013 increasing to £244,000 in November 2017, a percentage increase of 49.7% in under five years. Affordable Housing is a generic term and includes rented social housing provided by a local authority or housing association, as well as schemes such as shared ownership and rent to buy (known as intermediate housing) to help people get on the property ladder.

Energy Usage and Pollution

Climate change is a significant issue for the UK and the Council has arrangements in place to measure and monitor green-house gas emissions such as Carbon Dioxide. Comparison of emissions was undertaken in 2014 for all district councils and is set out in the table below:

Local Authority CO ₂ emissions estimates (tonnes CO ₂) 2014				
Local Authority	Industry and Commercial	Domestic	Transport	Total
Basildon	262,700	285,200	290,900	838,800

Braintree	243,200	252,500	352,200	847,900
Brentwood	95,700	150,100	209,500	455,300
Castle Point	58,000	158,200	107,000	323,200
Chelmsford	280,700	296,400	379,600	956,700
Colchester	263,800	293,200	347,400	904,400
Epping Forest	187,500	252,100	189,100	628,700
Harlow	145,100	125,600	79,900	350,600
Maldon	98,900	117,800	83,900	300,600
Rochford	70,200	149,600	103,400	323,200
Southend	184,100	307,600	154,100	645,800
Tendring	184,300	249,400	240,300	674,000
Thurrock	381,100	239,200	311,400	931,700
Uttlesford	187,000	163,200	239,700	589,900
Essex Total	2,642,300	2,493,400	2,622,800	7,758,500

Unsurprisingly, authorities with higher populations, transport and industry have higher emission estimates. This includes Chelmsford, Thurrock and Colchester. The lowest areas are Maldon, Castle Point and Rochford.

With the introduction of Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding from 2012, the Council has participated in the Essex Energy Partnership and monitored the number of measures installed. In 2016 Castle Point had the second highest number of ECO measures per 1,000 households at 64.4 compared to an Essex average of 48.2. The average for the Eastern region is 48.5 and the all England average is 72.4.

Fuel poverty in Castle Point is below the Essex average. Fuel poverty is defined by the Government as a household that has:

- required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level)
- were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line

The percentage of households in Castle Point considered to meet this definition in 2014 was 6.4%. The lowest was Rochford at 6.2% and the highest was Uttlesford at 9.7%. The Essex average is 7.5%.

The Council's housing service has also undertaken work to improve energy efficiency within Council housing stock. Since September 2016 we have been working in partnership with Aaron Services to help maximise ECO funding and undertake a variety of boiler installations. The carbon savings for the jobs completed by Aran so far is 562.65mt – the equivalent of 94 double decker buses.

We will continue to monitor CO2 emissions and will work to undertake further improvements to energy efficiency, for example by continuing to install modern 'A' class boilers to our Council homes.

Chapter 3 – Consulting with our Communities

3.1 Essex Place Survey 2016

This is undertaken by Essex County Council each year, and includes a number of questions that are relevant to the understanding of Essex and individual district council's understanding of the place.

3.1.1 Satisfaction with the Area as a Place to Live

In 2016 an Essex Wide place survey found that satisfaction with the area as a place to live was the third lowest at 72%, for Castle Point, and 16% were dissatisfied with the area as a place to live, which is 1 in 6 of the population. The Essex average for satisfaction was 82%. This comparatively low satisfaction level may be related to the population density of the borough.

3.1.2 Community Cohesion / Local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together

The same survey found that Castle Point was the second lowest district in Essex to agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together at 59%. The lowest was 57% and the highest 75%. Castle Point does not have an ethnically diverse population but does have communities with a strong sense of locality.

3.1.3 Satisfaction with Public Services

The Essex Survey also found the following results in 2016:

	Local tips/ Household Waste Recycling Centres (5,358)	Parks and open spaces (5,264)	Libraries (4,621)	Local bus services (4,317)	Local transport information (4,278)
Basildon	79%	72%	77%	53%	36%
Braintree	84%	77%	77%	44%	35%
Brentwood	87%	85%	78%	49%	38%
Castle Point	77%	71%	80%	57%	42%
Chelmsford	85%	83%	69%	44%	32%
Colchester	83%	85%	74%	58%	35%
Epping Forest	75%	79%	76%	43%	38%
Harlow	78%	76%	70%	41%	36%
Maldon	77%	82%	79%	47%	37%
Rochford	75%	83%	83%	61%	50%
Tendring	70%	74%	75%	51%	38%
Uttlesford	83%	80%	77%	34%	27%
Total:	80%	78%	76%	49%	37%

It is clear that satisfaction with parks and open spaces is the lowest in the county at 71%. This may again be related to the population density of the Borough and general lack of accessible green space.

3.1.4 Accessibility of Services

In terms of accessibility of services, Castle Point performance is consistent as illustrated by the following table:

	Parks and open spaces (5,311)	Libraries (5,117)	Local tips/ Household Waste Recycling Centres (5,305)	Adult Community Learning (3,110)
Basildon	81%	89%	67%	54%
Braintree	87%	90%	81%	62%
Brentwood	87%	88%	79%	67%
Castle Point	87%	91%	82%	59%
Chelmsford	84%	80%	74%	42%
Colchester	89%	83%	73%	58%
Epping Forest	89%	89%	74%	62%
Harlow	88%	88%	72%	62%
Maldon	92%	89%	82%	66%
Rochford	91%	93%	70%	61%
Tendring	86%	86%	73%	69%
Uttlesford	88%	88%	80%	60%
Total:	87%	87%	75%	60%

3.1.5 Satisfaction with Local Roads and Transport

The results are illustrated in the table overleaf:

	Street lighting (5,294)	Safety on roads (5,231)	Pavements and footpaths (5,456)	Cycle routes and facilities (3,660)	Levels of local traffic pollution (4,821)	Traffic levels and congestion (5,308)	Highway services overall (5,154)	The condition of the roads (5,398)
Basildon	34%	43%	31%	26%	26%	25%	21%	14%
Braintree	46%	40%	45%	32%	25%	19%	23%	18%
Brentwood	41%	43%	40%	20%	28%	25%	24%	16%
Castle Point	34%	36%	26%	25%	15%	9%	18%	14%
Chelmsford	35%	31%	38%	15%	33%	25%	22%	16%
Colchester	48%	35%	35%	32%	18%	12%	16%	13%
Epping Forest	40%	36%	34%	24%	29%	28%	17%	11%
Harlow	56%	46%	31%	51%	23%	20%	20%	12%
Maldon	48%	40%	48%	30%	36%	30%	21%	16%
Rochford	39%	37%	38%	18%	15%	9%	22%	19%
Tendring	35%	38%	33%	29%	39%	38%	20%	12%
Uttlesford	49%	34%	40%	20%	21%	20%	16%	11%
Total:	41%	38%	36%	27%	26%	22%	20%	14%

Castle Point was the lowest in 4 of the 8 measures and illustrates significant resident concerns with the general condition of the highways, traffic congestion and street

lighting. This is again related to the compact nature of the Borough with its high density resident population.

3.1.6 Views on the Council

The **perception of value for money provided by Castle Point** was low when compared to other Essex Districts, with 23% of respondents agreeing that the Council provides value for money, the lowest in Essex alongside Colchester and Tendring.

Satisfaction with how the Council runs things was higher at 39%, although below the Essex average with the lowest score at 36% and the highest at 53%.

In respect of **influencing decisions in the local area**, only 19% of respondents believed they could influence decisions in Castle Point. The second lowest on the county and below the Essex average.

3.1.7 Fear of Crime

Fear of Crime is high in Castle Point. A total of 66% respondents were worried about burglary. This is the second highest in Essex. A further 56% were worried about being a victim of crime.

3.2 Public Consultation undertaken by Castle Point Borough Council

The Council consults service users as part of service reviews and as part of normal service operation. Many services conduct regular surveys to inform decision making and gauge levels of satisfaction.

In the summer of 2017 a public consultation was held on the Corporate Plan and members of the public were asked to complete a questionnaire which asked questions on the relative importance of council services, service objectives and service satisfaction. There were about 350 responses, and the results are consistent with previous consultations as summarised below:

Table 1 – Top 5 Most Important Services

Rank	Service
1	Waste collection, recycling and composting service
2	Tackling Crime and anti-social behaviour
3	Streets & public areas clean of litter and refuse
4	Controlling & removing dog fouling in public
5	Environmental Health Services

Table 2 – Top 5 Least Important Services

Rank	Service
1	Events like the Castle Point Show and Fireworks Fiesta
2	Land Charge services
3	Processing applications for housing benefit
4	Processing a planning application
5	Graffiti removal and flyposting

In general, all service areas received significant scores for importance, with even the lowest getting an average of 6 out of 10. Environmental services (including Refuse Collection, Street Scene and Environmental Health) and Crime Reduction continue to be seen as key services for residents. Partnership working to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour also feature strongly. The areas which receive least importance tend to be the statutory services which are not used by significant numbers of the population as well as community events. However, it should be noted that events tend to generate high customer satisfaction by those that attend.

When asked what the priorities for improvement were, environment featured strongly, as did Town Centre improvements and reducing empty homes in the Borough:

Table 3 – Priority Areas for Improvement

Activity	Importance
Look to further improve our environment as a place to live, work and play.	8.9
Work with partners to ensure adequate drainage and flood defences throughout the Borough.	8.8
Helping our town centres to thrive.	8.3
Work to reduce the number of empty homes in the Borough.	8.2
Develop opportunities for residents to set out their views on Council services and the services of other public organisations such as highways and the police.	8.1
Work more closely with the business community to help develop opportunities for businesses in the Borough.	7.8

Improve the health of our community through joint working with partners and providing activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.	7.7
Work with volunteers and community groups to improve 'hotspots' for example with community litter picks.	7.5
Build more new Council homes and work to ensure housing owned by the Council is of good quality.	7.1
Improve the way the Council communicates with its community such as through the internet.	6.5

3.3 Service Satisfaction

A service satisfaction survey was also undertaken in the summer of 2017 for a range of services. The maximum theoretical score is 10 and the results are as follows:

Service	Satisfaction Score
Waste collection, recycling and composting service	7.8
Overall satisfaction with council services	7.5
Maintaining Parks and Recreation Grounds	6.9
Providing playground facilities for young children	6.9
Sports and leisure facilities and activities	6.8
Environmental Health Services	6.7
Grass verge cutting	6.2
Building Control Services - checking building works	6.2
Streets & public areas clean of litter and refuse	6.1
Graffiti removal and flyposting	6.1
Events	5.9

Land charges - providing searches for house moves	5.8
Processing a planning application	5.7
Maintaining public toilets	5.7
Controlling & removing dog fouling in public	5.5
Tackling Crime and anti-social behaviour	5.5
Providing and managing housing for council tenants	5.4
Processing applications for housing benefit	5.4
Working with partners to improve your town centre	5.3
Helping homeless people find a home to live in	5.1

To some extent, the results for satisfaction replicate the results for the importance of services, although there are some exceptions. Environmental services (including Refuse Collection, Parks and Playgrounds as well as Sport and Leisure facilities and activities). However, overall satisfaction with Council services is the second highest.

The service areas with the lower satisfaction levels tend to be the statutory services of which there will be limited use by a number of respondents. However, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is also relatively low and this may also be linked to resident perceptions of crime and the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

3.4 Further Views

Respondents set out a range of further views. Whilst these tend to underpin the views above there are a number of further detailed issues including concerns regarding public toilets, street scene and highway issues as well as dog fouling and community safety. These issues are also apparent in the place survey analysis.

Chapter 4: The Impact of Legislation and National Priorities

The national Government has produced a range of legislation over recent years, which impact on the business of local authorities and in some areas provide for new roles and responsibilities. These include:

4.1 Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Act sets out the following:

- An extension of the period during which an authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days.
- Clarification of the action an authority should take when someone applies for assistance having been served with a valid section 21 notice of intention to seek possession from an assured shorthold tenancy.
- A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness.
- A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants.
- A new duty on public services to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

4.2 Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 is intended to strengthen neighbourhood planning by ensuring that planning decision-makers take account of well-advanced neighbourhood development plans by giving these plans full legal effect at an earlier stage.

4.3 Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 contains provisions on new homes (including starter homes), landlords and property agents, abandoned premises, social housing (including extending the Right to Buy to housing association tenants, sale of local authority assets, 'pay-to-stay', and secure tenancies), planning, compulsory purchase and public land (duty to dispose).

4.4 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016

The Welfare Reform and Work Act takes forward government commitments to introduce a duty to report to Parliament on progress made towards achieving full employment and the three million apprenticeships target in England. The Act also ensures reports on the effect of certain support for troubled families and provision for social mobility, the benefit cap, social security and tax credits, loans for mortgage interest, and social housing rents.

4.5 Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 provides the legal framework for the implementation of devolution deals with combined authorities and other areas. It is an enabling piece of legislation, with further details for different areas to be set out in regulations that will be put before Parliament.

4.6 Deregulation Act 2015

The Deregulation Act 2015 (the Act) provides for the removal or reduction of burdens on businesses, civil society, individuals, public sector bodies and the taxpayer. These include measures relating to general and specific areas of business, companies and insolvency, the use of land, housing, transport, communications, the environment, education and training, entertainment and alcohol, public authorities and the administration of justice.

4.7 Infrastructure Act 2015

The Act covers transport, housing, regeneration, infrastructure and energy. A number of the provisions in the legislation are of importance to, and will affect, local government. These include: the creation of strategic highways companies to replace strategic highways authorities; government investment in cycling and walking; the discharge of certain types of planning conditions; the transfer of publicly held land; the local land charges service; and shale gas extraction.

4.8 Earlier Legislation and Guidance

Earlier legislation which continues to have an impact on Local Authorities includes:

4.8.1 Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act obtained Royal Assent in November 2011 and outlines major housing and planning reforms. Major changes were made to homelessness legislation, housing allocations and tenancies. It also marks a shift away from regional planning towards neighbourhood planning, including incentives to promote new development where it is needed locally.

4.8.2 National Housing Strategy 2011

Published in November 2011, the National Housing Strategy set out a number of objectives and actions. Key objectives include:

Increasing Supply: More Homes, Stable Growth

Social and Affordable Housing Reform

A Thriving Private Rented Sector

A Strategy for Empty Homes

Quality of Housing Experience and Support, including

- Homelessness
- Tenant Empowerment
- Empowering Independence

- New Deal for Older People's Housing
- Quality, Sustainability and Design

4.8.3 The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in April 2012 and revised in July 2018. Broadly, the NPPF provides a set of national planning objectives which are simultaneously designed to support growth, protect the environment and ensure decisions are made at a local level. The principle of “**sustainable development**” is at the heart of the NPPF and it is a concept that permeates the objectives set out in it. It is composed of three key components: economic, environmental and social well-being. The NPPF makes it clear that each component should be given equal weight when the concept of sustainability is considered. The achievement of this objective is structured around the requirement of the planning system that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.8.4 Welfare Reform Act 2012

In 2010 the Government announced changes to the welfare system and aims to simplify the benefits system through the implementation of **Universal Credit**. Key changes that impact on housing are summarised below:

Changes to the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA). These have been increased from 25 to 35.

This means that single claimants up to the age of 35 have their LHA based on a room in a shared property rather than a self-contained one-bedroom property. There will be exceptions for some disabled claimants, certain people who have previously been homeless, and ex-offenders who could pose a risk to the public.

Changes to Housing Benefit. Effective from April 2013, size criteria applies in the social rented sector (e.g. council and housing association properties) replicating the size criteria that applies to Housing Benefit claimants in the private rented sector under the Local Housing Allowance rules. This means that people living in houses larger than they need (under-occupiers) are required to move to somewhere smaller or make up the difference in rent because their Housing Benefit is reduced:

- 14% cut in Housing Benefit if you under-occupy by one bedroom
- 25% cut in Housing Benefit if you under-occupy by two or more bedrooms

Changes to Council tax benefit. Effective since April 2013: Council Tax Benefit was replaced by localised support for Council Tax. Local authorities set up new schemes to support people in their own areas within a 10% reduced budget. This will only affect people of working-age who currently receive Council Tax Benefit.

Implementation of a Benefit Cap. As part of the Welfare Reform Act there is a cap on the amount of benefits a working-age household can receive, which is currently set to £20k per annum.

Universal Credit is to be implemented in Castle Point in July 2018. As part of the new arrangements, the payment of housing benefit will no longer be paid direct to the

landlord but to the claimant as part of the universal credit. These changes are likely to lead to significant affordability issues and will result in a loss of rental payments for both the private and social sectors.

The implementation of welfare reforms has and will have significant impact on Council services. For example, following the introduction of the benefit cap, rent arrears are increasing significantly for those households affected.

4.8.5 Consultation on a White Paper - Fixing our Broken Housing Market

In addition, the Government has consulted on a White Paper 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market'. The emphasis of the Paper was on four areas:

1. Local Planning Authorities planning for the right homes in the right places
2. Building homes faster
3. Diversifying the housing market
4. Helping people right now to invest in affordable homes

Consultation includes a new approach to assessing objectively assessed need' ("OAN") for homes to be implemented by April 2018, and will encourage local authorities to plan for new homes on that basis. Requiring authorities to have an up to date Local Plan. The Government is also proposing a new rolling 3 year housing delivery test with a first assessment period from April 2014 – March 2017. It is proposed to use an area's local plan where it is up to date (less than 5 years old) to establish the appropriate baseline for assessing delivery. Where there is not an up to date plan, published household projections for the years leading up to and including April 2017 – March 2019 will be used.

4.9 Austerity

The impact of Austerity on local authorities has ranged from reductions in central government funding to increased demand for those services which are provided to our residents at times of need. For example, as the impact of austerity takes effect on our residents, demand for welfare support and other services such as housing and homelessness support has increased. Often these services are costly to deliver and authorities have a statutory and moral responsibility to respond.

At the same time, councils have been required to absorb financial pressures transferred from central government and other partner organisations as they too respond to the impact of Austerity on their own organisations.

In a context of rising costs and reducing or constrained income, Austerity has proved to be one of the greatest challenges faced by local authorities in recent years and has fundamentally changed the way local services are funded, as demonstrated by the following table.

	2007/08 £000's	%	2017/18 £000's	%	2021/22 £000's	%
Local Council Tax	6,723	53%	7,560	71%	8,235	82%
Central Government	6,067	47%	3,088	29%	1,832	18%

In 2007/08 local services were funded broadly 50/50 between Local Council Tax and Central Government Grant. By 2017/18 this has shifted to 70/30, with 70% being represented by Council Tax. The comparison with 2021/22 projects a continuation of this trend into the future.

The Council Tax referendum rules which restrict the amount by which councils may increase council to 2%, mean that councils need to look elsewhere to bridge the funding gap and indicate that financial self-sufficiency is the only solution.

The methods by which financial self-sufficiency may be achieved fall broadly within the theme of commercialism and, the programme of work which is forming under this theme, as expected, includes a focus on raising additional revenue, but also includes increasing financial awareness, adopting smarter ways of working in order to reduce operating costs and making better use of all council operated resources.

Work streams which are currently in progress include:

- Principles of being a Commercial Council. The expression “Commercialisation” has many interpretations and encompasses a range of behaviours which may or may not be applicable to this organisation. The purpose of establishing a set of Commercial Principles is to express how the term will be applied specifically by this Council.
- Understanding the Cost of Discretionary Functions. Work is in progress to establish the net cost to the Council of its discretionary services / activities on an individual service basis. This work will clearly set out the level at which specific discretionary services are currently subsidised by the general council tax payer.
- Review of Chargeable Services. This is similar to the work involved in relation to discretionary services. Going forward it is desirable for charges for services to be set at a level which at least covers their direct costs. Ultimately chargeable services should recover full cost.
- Undertake a “gap analysis” – what the council needs to do in order to fully comply with its own commercial principles.
- Consideration of adoption of trading accounts for specific chargeable functions to aid performance measurement.

Chapter 5 Our Partner Priorities

We work closely with a range of partners and share joint ambitions. This includes:

5.1 Local Enterprise Partnership

The partnership consists of the upper tier and unitary authorities of Essex, Kent and East Sussex.

The partnership developed a strategic economic plan in 2014 which included the following ambitions:

- Enable the creation of 200,000 sustainable private sector jobs over the decade to 2021, an increase of 11.4% since 2011;
- Complete 100,000 new homes by 2021, which will entail, over the seven years, increasing the annual rate of completions by over 50% by comparison with recent years;
- Lever investment totalling £10 billion, to accelerate growth, jobs and homebuilding.

The plan was successful in attracting a total of £591m to deliver 78,000 jobs, 29,000 homes and attract a further £960 million extra investment into the South East.

In addition, successful bids by SELEP means that by 2020 it will have invested £161m from the EU's European Structural and Investment Funds, including £71.6m in skills, education and lifelong learning, and improving access to employment for young people and enhancing social inclusion.

A new Strategic Economic Plan is currently being developed and is due to be published in 2018. This will:

- Articulate a clear, compelling vision, strategy and action plan for our economy
- Identify opportunities to collaborate to generate sustainable economic growth
- Articulate the risks of overlooking the South East economy and address the stereotypes and misunderstandings, perceptions about London and the greater South East
- Put forward a collective case for investment and a model for delivery
- Take into account federated areas and fit with the formed partnerships

5.2 South East Essex 2050

The South Essex 2050 initiative consists of the Authorities of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend and Thurrock and Essex County Council. Work began in the summer of 2017 to jointly develop a place vision for the collective area which will guide long term spatial, economic and infrastructure priorities and explore the scope for greater strategic collaboration across the South Essex growth corridor.

5.3 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Castle Point and Rochford share a strategic partnership with a joint vision for our communities. It has brought together at a local level the different parts of the public sector, as well as representatives from the private, business community and voluntary sectors, so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together. We have built up experience and now have a successful record of productive partnership working.

Our LSP believes that the best way to achieve this vision is by working together, with people and communities, with local businesses, organisations and interest groups, and with a wide range of other partnerships and providers of local services.

During 2014 the partnership re-developed its ambitions and priorities to the following:

Community Development: *strengthening local communities and ensuring inequalities in quality of life are reduced*

Community Safety: *achieving a community where people feel safe to lead their lives*

Employment Skills & Business: *opportunities for everyone to learn, making Castle Point a prosperous place with a well skilled workforce. Achieving a sustainable, prosperous economy in a Borough where people can afford to live*

Health & Wellbeing: *ensuring everyone has access to the health and care services they need and that all services work towards a healthier community*

Safe & Thriving Children: *securing better outcomes for children, young people and their families*

Chapter 6

Developing our Priorities

The Borough faces a variety of challenges and opportunities that arise from its unique identity. This includes a range of environmental and social factors as well as the results of resident feedback. In addition new national challenges have emerged over the last few years. This includes the challenging economic climate and the national focus to cut public expenditure and obtain greater efficiencies. Legislation also place new expectations and responsibilities on local authorities.

There are a range of issues that face the Borough and the Council, which we believe we can help to improve through actions either by ourselves or with others. These are set out below:

6.1 Things we need to do in partnership with others:

We need to help create more confidence in the Economy by undertaking regeneration work that:

- Regenerates our Town Centres
- Helps create more local employment;
- Increases the level and quality of housing, both affordable and at market values.

Town Centres and the use of land for business is important for the overall economy of the borough, and we will work with partners to secure sustainable long term opportunities to develop opportunities for business growth and regenerate our town centres to provide attractive shopping and leisure facilities where possible.

We need to raise the skills and knowledge of the local workforce so that:

- Employers are attracted to locate in Castle Point;
- We can improve the life chances of our residents.

We need to regenerate town centres and improve the quality and quantity of housing whilst promoting our Parks and Open Spaces to be able to:

- Make the Borough a place of choice to live, work and play;
- Reduce the fear of crime
- Meet the needs of a diverse and ageing population.

We need to ensure that public services for our communities, irrespective of the provider, are accessible, tailored and targeted to support the wellbeing of the area such that:

- Services are valued by all of the Borough's communities;
- Reduces social inequality;
- Disadvantaged residents are supported appropriately;
- Our communities are sustainable.

- The health of our residents improve, including reducing obesity and encouraging exercise
- We support the engagement of our community and help deliver high quality public services

We need to work with the community and our partners to help articulate and resolve concerns such as:

- The density of development and the need to enhance access to open space
- Helping to find solutions to Environment and Highway Issues
- Helping to resolve concerns regarding community safety
- Helping to residents express their concerns and act with partners to resolve them on a regular basis.

6.2 Things we need to do ourselves or through services we commission:

We need to maintain and improve the local Environment by:

- Ensuring our street cleansing service provider adheres to the contract requirements
- Maintaining satisfaction with our street scene services
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the Borough through the effective management of our parks, woodland, open spaces, beaches and foreshore
- Delivering high quality refuse and recycling collection services for residents and local businesses
- Utilising our enforcement powers and targeting known hot spots for enviro – crime; and by
- Adopting a risk based approach to the inspection of businesses operating within the Borough.

We need to help transform our community by:

- Developing a local plan in consultation with our community and which fits with the strategic objectives of our 2050 partnership and helps to regenerate our town centres whilst ensuring Castle Point is a place of choice to live, work and play.
- Developing more effective ways of engaging with our communities to strengthen our decision making and also to encourage them to become more involved in issues that affect the local community.
- Building more Council homes in appropriate brownfield locations
- Work with the public and private sectors to develop housing that is of good quality and to help meet demand by reducing the number of empty homes

- Considering the needs of our residents in the design and delivery of services.

We need to develop wellbeing in the Borough by:

- Encouraging healthy lifestyles with a range of leisure activities and by encouraging more people to undertake regular exercise either by using our leisure facilities or by utilising the natural attractions in the area to walk, cycle and run.
- Promote our parks, open spaces and beaches and foreshore as areas in which the whole community can enjoy leisure pastimes.
- Improving the quality of housing, both Council and privately owned
- Working to support more vulnerable residents for example by facilitating the access to greater social activities of sheltered housing for elderly people that may live nearby.
- Ensuring that businesses operating in the Borough do so in a safe manner and comply with all relevant legal requirements.

We need to ensure our services provide the best possible value for money by:

- Transforming the way we work and using new technologies and new working practices to be a more efficient and effective organisation.
- Looking to provide services in other ways such as by the private sector, community organisations or other public bodies.
- Reviewing the value for money provided by services and implementing improvements.

Chapter 7

Our Vision for the Borough

The Council is working hard with partners to improve the Borough as an area to live, work and play. We want to see a re-vitalised Borough with the development of town centres at Canvey and Hadleigh with improved infrastructure, more housing and better employment opportunities. We share our vision with our Local Strategic Partnership which is:

‘A community where everyone can prosper, be safe and live in a high quality environment’

We recognise that working and planning for the future, in partnership, is key to maximising opportunities for the Borough. As such we have joined with our partners through a Local Strategic Partnership, to share high level ambitions for the Borough. This links in with other partnership organisations both regionally and more locally.

Chapter 8

Our Medium-Term Priorities and Targets

We want to reduce social inequality, improve the health of our communities and develop a prosperous economy through targeted regeneration of the Borough. We want to improve the wellbeing of our community with clean streets, pleasant open spaces and good quality housing. We will nurture community resilience and work closely with our partners to help the community help itself and to enable greater participation in decision making. We want to achieve this through the following four aims:

- **Environment**
- **Housing and Regeneration**
- **Health and Community Safety**
- **A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council**

Priority: Environment

The environment is consistently a high priority for residents, who want to see well maintained parks and open spaces, and streets that are clean and free from litter, refuse, graffiti and fly posters. Whilst we have some fabulous, well maintained recreational areas, satisfaction with our Parks and Open Spaces is low when compared to other authorities. We want to better promote the facilities we maintain and to improve and maximise any positive impacts on the environmental quality of the Borough by encouraging a reduction in waste production and increased participation in our recycling and composting services. We will continue to promote our new chargeable garden waste wheeled bin scheme and undertake a campaign to promote our parks and open spaces to encourage a more diverse usage of these areas and to increase satisfaction. We will also work closely with the community to help enable community projects to improve our Environment and to enable the further development of parks, beaches and foreshore, open spaces, playgrounds and community facilities. We will work closely with the community to reduce litter and to help alleviate flooding concerns and to prevent dykes being blocked. We will also liaise with Essex County Council to help improve our highways and footpaths.

Our Targets:

Increase the percentage of households using the chargeable wheelie bin garden waste recycling service from 10% (March 2018) to 30% by March 2020

Maintain high satisfaction (over 90%) with the refuse collection service

Rationale: To maintain a good quality refuse collection and recycling service.

At least 80% satisfaction with parks and open spaces (March 2021)

Rationale: To improve satisfaction with parks and open spaces and encourage greater participation in physical activity.

At least 80% satisfaction with Council's efforts to keep public land clear of litter and refuse (March 2021)

Rationale: To ensure a high-quality grounds maintenance and street cleansing service.

Priority: Housing and Regeneration

We aim to transform our community to ensure we provide a sustainable future for all who live, work and play in the Borough. We will do this by setting the right planning framework in place, in consultation with our community, which allows for a sustainable future and the regeneration of town centres. We will work with the private and public sectors to improve the supply of good quality housing and we will maximise the use of our assets and work with partners to further develop affordable housing to help meet the needs in the borough. We will work with our partners to deliver a strategic and local planning framework that provides for the needs of our community now and in the future.

Our Targets:

Construction of homes in accordance with the local housing target, as set out in the national guidance and the new local plan.

Construction or acquisition of a total of 40 new affordable or social rented homes by the Housing Service by March 2021. (Baseline March 2014).

Construction or acquisition of 25 new units for homeless people by March 2021 (Baseline March 2015).

Rationale: There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in the borough and temporary accommodation for homeless people. New homes are urgently needed.

Progress the development of the Local Plan in accordance with the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme

Rationale: It is important for any development in the Borough to be undertaken in a planned way to protect the green belt as well as allow for appropriate development in our town centres and in the construction of housing.

Encouraging the regeneration of Hadleigh and Canvey Town centres through the planning process (March 2021).

The fabric of the town centres has decayed over the years and needs to be reinvigorated to meet the needs of the community and provide modern retail, residential and transport infrastructure.

Priority: Health and Community Safety

We will seek to secure the wellbeing of our community and will work closely with our partners to achieve outcomes that have an impact on people's lives. We will work closely with residents, local businesses and our partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. We will work to improve the wellbeing and health of our community by improving our leisure and recreational offer and by working with our partners to promote healthy living. We will engage more closely with our community and develop services in partnership with other public sector organisations to improve the quality of people's lives and assist with dealing with the needs of an ageing population as well as provide for needs of younger people through sport, recreation and play facilities. We will work closely with the voluntary sector to provide essential services for those facing difficulties in this challenging economic climate through debt advice and support.

Our Targets:

Continue to support the Community Safety Partnership in meeting its strategic priorities of reducing anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, acquisitive crime and re-offending.

Promote and communicate neighbourhood watch and other schemes to help develop community resilience and reduce the fear of crime.

Reduce the proportion of people who feel unsafe after dark to 35% (March 2021)

Crime and feeling safe after dark remains a significant priority for residents and the Council is engaged in partnership work to reduce anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse acquisitive crime and re-offending by supporting key partnership initiatives and programmes.

Increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity by:

- **Promoting the new dry side facilities at Runnymede Leisure Centre and the Waterside Leisure Centre with the aim of having and retaining 3000 signed up leisure memberships by March 2019.**
- **Publishing and promote comprehensive information on our parks, open spaces, seafront and woodland walks (by March 2019)**
- **Undertaking activities to promote the use of parks, open spaces, seafront and woodland walks including working with voluntary groups to promote guided walks etc. (Programme in place by March 2020, to be measured by number of participants)**
- **Assist community and voluntary groups to fulfil their aspiration to further develop the Gunny recreational space with play and other facilities by March 2020**

Rationale: Some of the key health issues facing the Borough relate to lifestyle factors including obesity, poor eating habits and below national average physical activity. The targets above are designed to promote physical and wellbeing activities and increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity.

Priority: A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

Reductions in public funding and increasing demand for good quality customer focused services mean that Council services must be as lean as possible. Restrictions on council tax also mean that councils need to consider new ways of bridging the funding gap and strive towards financial self-sufficiency.

The methods by which financial self-sufficiency may be achieved fall broadly within the theme of commercialism and the programme of work which is forming under this theme, as expected, includes a focus on raising additional revenue but also includes increasing financial awareness, utilising technology and adopting smarter ways of working in order to reduce operating costs, and making better use of all council operated resources. We will continue to review services and explore working practices to maximise efficiency and we will seek to provide services in the most cost effective way, working with partners in the private, public and with the wider community to secure the best value for money service provision. We will work with our communities to provide greater accountability on the services we provide.

Our Targets:

Delivery of a balanced budget in current and future years. (Ongoing).

The development and adoption of a set of commercial principles which express what commercialism means specifically to this authority and which will include:

- Reputation & Behaviour: Operate at the highest standard of efficiency and effectiveness and encourage confidence and trust as a service provider
- Promote the Borough & the Council: Actively promote our Borough and the services the Council provides
- Deliver services in the most appropriate ways: Consider new and more effective ways of service delivery
- Procure goods & services in the best way: Purchase only goods and services that are essential
- Maximise return on our existing assets: Use the assets we have in the most effective way
- Maximise income from fees and charges: Ensure we obtain the maximum income we can for the services we deliver
- Maximise council tax & business rates revenue: Ensure services are paid for fairly
- Review Asset Management programme annually

Rationale: To achieve a balanced budget through net cost reduction and more efficient working practices.

Re-develop the approach to Community Engagement with a review and implementation of a new approach to Neighbourhood Meetings and partnership with the Town Council and partner organisations including the County Council and Highways Authority, Health Services, and the Police.

Rationale: There is a perception that residents are not sufficiently involved in decision making and that the borough and county council do not provide value for money and that resident views are not listened to. There is a need to address this situation with a refresh of the approach to community engagement.

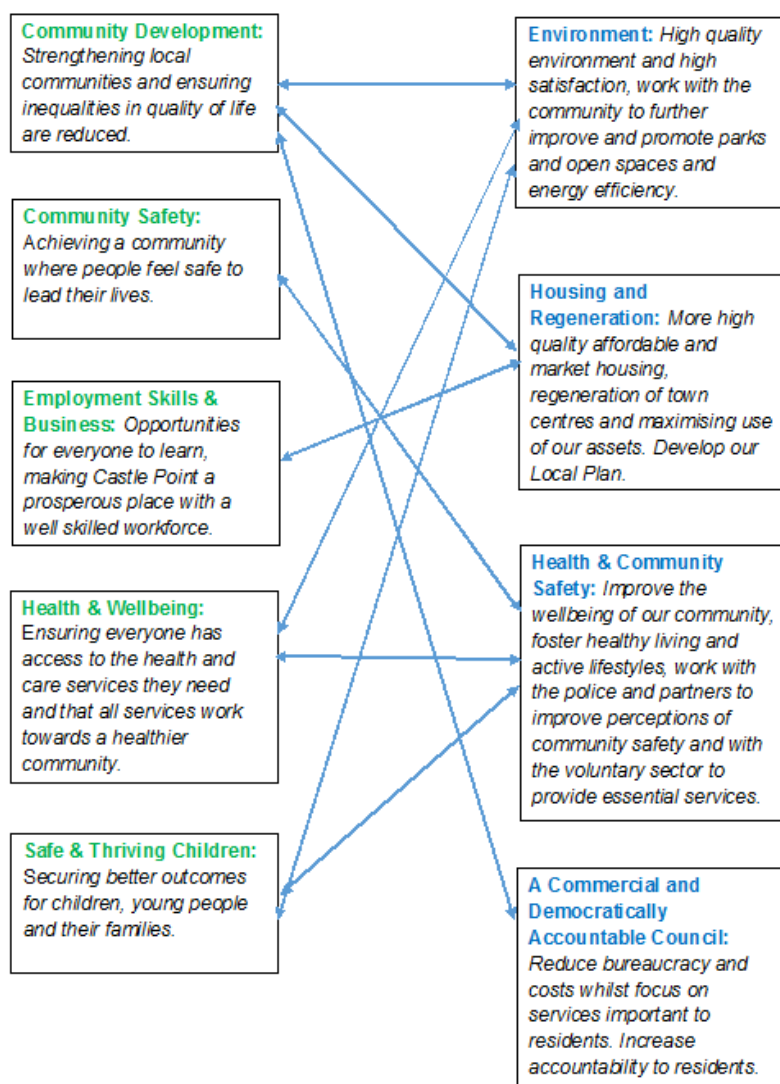
Chapter 9

How our Priorities link with our Community Strategy Ambitions

Our priorities are designed to help complement the ambitions of our local strategic partnership as illustrated in the diagram below:

Community Strategy Ambitions

Corporate Plan Priorities



Chapter 10

Our Annual Objectives for 2018/19

For each of the four aims we agree a set of annual objectives for the year, which are designed to ensure we can achieve our medium term corporate priorities.

Overarching Objective

To work with local authorities and partners in South Essex to clarify a strategy for the development of the region including a coherent and holistic approach to economic development, transportation, housing, town centre regeneration and planning policy. To adjust the Council's corporate plan in alignment with the strategy developed.

Responsibility: Chief Executive / Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

Service Planning Objectives

Environment

1. Develop and implement a marketing and promotion campaign to encourage and promote increased usage of the Borough's Parks, Open Spaces, Ancient Woodlands, Seafront and Leisure facilities.

Performance measures

- a) Number of signed up leisure memberships (Runnymede and Waterside Farm Leisure Centre)
- b) Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces
- c) Satisfaction with Leisure Facilities

Responsibility: Head of Environment

Housing and Regeneration

2. Engage with the Public and Private Sector to promote and obtain the development of good quality housing in the borough including affordable and market housing. To include:

- Development of draft Housing Strategy by April 2019
- Develop House in Multiple Occupation by July 2019.
- Develop four homes at Church Close by July 2019

Responsibility: Head of Housing and Communities

Performance Measures

- a) Number of new homes constructed or acquired by Castle Point Council

3. To work with local authorities and partners in South Essex to clarify a strategy for the development of the region including a coherent and holistic approach to economic development, transportation, housing, town centre regeneration and planning policy. To adjust the Council's corporate plan in alignment with the strategy developed.

Responsibility: Chief Executive

4. To improve the public realm with effective master planning in place for key sites. To include:

- Progress the disposal of the former Crown Public House site in Hadleigh for town centre regeneration
- Agree the Canvey Seafront master plan (March 2019)

Responsibility: Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

5. Develop and agree a robust Local Plan

Local Plan agreed for submission to the planning inspectorate by March 2019 subject to no government intervention.

Responsibility: Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

6. Complete review of the Housing Service to ensure the service has the right capacity and systems to provide a comprehensive and cost effective service. To include:

- Restructure of services to meet the requirements of the Homeless Reduction Act – September 2018
- Develop Homelessness Strategy – March 2019
- Develop medium term Service Level Agreement with South Essex Homes – March 2019

Responsibility: Head of Housing and Communities

Health and Community Safety

7. Develop partnership arrangements with the Health Sector to create greater opportunities for more effective joint working and to promote healthy living activities in the borough. To include:

- Develop working arrangements with the public health officer to enhance co-ordinated work between health and Council services
- Further develop partnership working with the health sector to provide a more seamless transfer of activities and services between health and leisure etc.

Responsibility: Head of Licensing and Safer Communities

8. Continue to improve the effectiveness of Community Safety work. To include:

- Review of Community Safety and Licensing services
- Development of partnership arrangements

Review completed by March 2019

Responsibility: Head of Housing and Communities / Head of Licensing and Safer Communities

A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

9. Ensure a sustainable organisation with the right capacity and resources in place whilst ensuring a balanced budget for 2018/19 and future years. To include:

- Continued application of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, identifying future years funding requirements.
- Development and implementation of a Commercial Council strategy and associated programme which sets out the approach to service reviews, charging and any other actions to help support the Councils Financial Plans.

Responsibility: Head of Resources

Performance Measures

Balanced budget at commencement of each new financial year.

Minimum level of reserves exceeded.

10. Further develop the governance arrangements of the Council. To include:

- Develop and deliver a programme of training for members for 2018/19
- Develop and deliver a programme of scrutiny work

Responsibility: Head of Governance

Annexe 1.

Annual Report 2017/ 2018

Our achievements are set out under our previous corporate priorities and objectives as follows:

Public Health and Wellbeing

1. Facilitate the further development of social, recreational and sport opportunities for residents.

The Council has been working hard to refurbish and develop a brand-new dry side facility at Runnymede Pool which includes the construction of a modern fitness suite, group exercise and spinning studios, café and changing areas as well as refurbishments to the swimming pool. The facility was officially opened by Beth Tweddle on 2 January 2018 and it opened to the public on the following day.

Our Leisure services continue to provide high quality services as demonstrated by the results of the customer survey below:

Group Exercise feedback – 95% very happy

Swimming Lesson Feedback – 96% very happy

NPS score 68 above national average of 45. Score places Waterside in the top 20 in the Country out of 1000 sites in the country!

Environment

2. Provide an efficient and reliable refuse and recycling collection service which encourages the prevention or reduction of waste, re-use and recycling. The combined performance for Household waste means that just under half (48.5%) of domestic waste is recycled or composted. During this year the Council has successfully introduced the Chargeable Wheeled Bin recycling service. To date we have in excess of 5800 bins leased which equates to a participation rate of approximately 15%. This compares favourably to our year 1 participation target of 10%. Since advertising the new chargeable garden waste service we have sold 600 compost bins (compared to just a handful for the same period the previous year)

The performance information for street cleanliness did not meet targets and decreased from the previous year from 8.9% of streets deemed unsatisfactory to 12.9%. Litter has increased particularly around refuse collection and recycling days, and an education campaign was initiated with door knocking and leafleting which has helped to reduce litter levels. Fly tipping and grass verge cutting Indicators generally demonstrate strong performance and that the contractual arrangements are continuing to be effective. For example, 100% of all fly tips notified were removed within one day.

Transforming the Borough

3. Progress development of the Local Plan for the Borough

Following intensive work to prepare a Local Plan, the Inspector concluded that we had failed in our duty to cooperate with other local authorities in 2017 and the plan was withdrawn. Consequently, we are developing our partnership arrangements with other South Essex authorities to develop a strategic vision for the South Essex area which will see a holistic approach to planning, regeneration, economic development, transportation and housing. Furthermore we are now focussing on developing our local plan and intend to submit a plan to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government by March 2019.

4. Clarify approach to Town Centre Regeneration programme.

We have worked closely with partners to develop an exciting master plan for the development of new community facilities, shops and homes on the Hadleigh Gateway site – the former Crown Public House, Library and Fire Station – in the Town Centre. However, there have been some difficulties in finalising an agreement and we are currently exploring the options to progress the regeneration of this key town centre site further.

5. Increase the number of affordable homes constructed in the borough.

Significant work has been undertaken throughout the year and 2 new bungalows at Lawns Court were completed in May 2018. These homes are fully disabled accessible and will help provide much needed accommodation for people on the Council's housing needs register. They meet modern energy efficiency requirements and are well insulated and include photovoltaic panels on the roof to help reduce energy consumption. Each new home has been carefully designed and has helped transform and regenerate an old parking area.

This continues the programme of acquisition and construction which has seen:

- The acquisition of a new block of 25 one and two bedroomed flats in 2014
- Acquiring and developing a building into an 8 bedroomed House in Multiple Occupation in the spring of 2016
- Construction of three new 3 bedroomed homes in the summer of 2016, which regenerated a previous garage site in a poor state of repair

The Council has also successfully applied for and received planning permission to construct a nine bedroomed House in Multiple Occupation at Hatley Gardens as well as four new homes at a garage site in Church Close.

6. Developing effective VFM customer focussed Housing Services

The core performance of the Housing Service is good. We have benchmarked with other providers using a common set of key performance indicators co-ordinated by Housemark, and in key areas our performance compares well with others. For example: Average re-let days were top quartile at 21 days compared to median of

comparators at 24.75 days and satisfaction rent provided value for money 91% compared to median of comparators at 86.5%. We do recognise there are some areas for improvement – for example in resident engagement and we are undertaking a review of the service to look at this. We do have an active Tenant & Leaseholder Group (TLG) that meets regularly and reviews and approves new and revised policies and provides challenge on performance. It is recognised by the group members and officers that it is not fully representative of our residents. There is a very active sheltered housing forum that meets monthly with representatives from all complexes involved.

We have undertaken a structural review to help deal with the increased caseload in some areas, such as housing options and advice as well as strengthen our Housing Management arrangements. We are also focussing on customer care as part of the new arrangements and plan to have training for staff.

Furthermore, we have strengthened the SLA arrangements we have in place with South Essex Homes. For example, last year there was an underspend in our capital work programme as works in some areas were not completed in time. Consequently, we have developed the SLA agreement this year to be more specific in expectations. As a result the completion of our capital works programme for the year 2017/2018 was significantly improved.

In respect of capital works, whilst we continue to have a programme for decent homes, we are also focussing on estate improvements as the condition of some blocks has in the past been poor. For example, this year we have identified an area that requires a range of works with poor condition highway and parking areas, poor paint works and doorways and general poor condition (St Guiberts and Middleburg area). This is an area of an estate in Canvey, and we expect to complete a significant improvement to the area in the near future.

Annexe 2. Financial Report

1. The Corporate Plan provides the links between the aspirations of the community and individual service plans. These plans demonstrate how each service will be delivered and how that service links to one or more of the Council's key priorities. Each year service plans are produced and used to drive budget planning, to ensure that the future allocation of resources is based on the Council's four key priorities. Within the previous Corporate plan, the four key priorities are shown as: -

- **Public Health & Wellbeing**
- **Environment**
- **Transforming our Community**
- **Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed services**

2. The method of calculating revenue spending plans has been broadly in-line with that set out in the Council's Financial Planning and Capital Strategy as described in section 1.

3. The Council's application for a multiyear financial settlement was accepted by Government in November 2016, giving greater certainty over funding for the period up to and including 2019/20. In December 2016 the outcome of a Government consultation in respect of the New Homes Bonus, and funding for 2017/18 was also published. However, changes to the New Homes Bonus scheme announced as part of the 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement, coupled with the relatively low new property yield within the Borough, has meant that Castle Point and many other authorities in a similar position did not qualify for any new NHB funding for 2018/19, although will continue to receive historic payments.

4. The key steps in the process of producing the base budget for 2018/19 were: -

- A review of 2017/18 estimates to arrive at a core no-growth base budget for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 (provisional), driven by current service plans. This includes where applicable, increases for inflation of costs relating to pay, employer's pension fund contributions, contracts, rates, utilities and insurances. Controllable service costs have been carried forward at existing levels except in the case of inescapable increase.
- Service providers were then required to review their services to identify options for reductions in net expenditure (without reducing service levels).
- Income from fees and charges has been reviewed and recalculated taking account of latest trends, proposed price increases and the impact of the current economic climate.
- Provision has been made for costs or savings expected to arise from known and proposed changes in legislation.

Efficiency work programme and savings identified

5. The efficiency work programme for 2017/18, supported by the Council's Austerity & Commercial Council strategy, has identified general cost reductions and efficiency savings relating to the current and future financial years, and these have been incorporated into the financial forecast at table 4.1.

Funding of priority projects

6. Table 9.1 sets out some of the priority projects that the Council continues to fund during the period of the forecast. These have been reflected in the financial forecast.

Cost pressures and other increases

7. Cost pressures and essential service increases identified during the budget process are summarised in table 9.2 and these are also reflected in the financial forecast.

Revenue spending plans

8. The resultant proposed net summary revenue spending plan for the General Fund is shown in the financial forecast at table 4.1.

Revenue Spending Plans

Table 4.1 Medium term financial forecast							Notes
Line	Current policies and service plans	£'000s	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
1	Total net expenditure / estimated exp. for future	14,166		10,367	9,940	12,843	10,566
	Funding sources						
2	Council Tax	7,319	7,628	7,934	7,934	8,172	8,418
3	Formula Grant - Revenue Support Grant / (tariff)	287	0	(515)	(515)	(528)	(541)
4	Baseline Funding Level - Redistributed Business Rates	2,012	1,808	2,225	2,281	2,281	2,338
5	Business Rates - Levy on retained income	(204)	(126)	0	0	0	0
6	New Homes Bonus	975	691	556	206	0	0
7	Capital grants and other grants and contributions	1,439	1,231	0	0	0	0
8	Net Collection Fund(s) surplus / (deficit)	192	5	0	0	0	0
9	Transfer (to) / from General reserve	330	(38)	0	0	0	0
10	Transfer (to) / from Earmarked reserves	1,816	(832)	(989)	1,883	(937)	
11	Total funding sources	14,166	10,367	9,211	12,014	9,278	
12	Budget / Funding Gap	0	0	(729)	(829)	(1,288)	
	General Reserve	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
13	Balance at start of year	5,839	5,509	5,227	4,298	3,269	
14	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 9 & 12)	(330)	38	(729)	(829)	(1,288)	
15	Potential planning appeals & associated legal costs	0	(320)	(200)	(200)	(200)	
16	Balance / (deficit) at end of year	5,509	5,227	4,298	3,269	1,781	
	Earmarked Reserves	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
17	Balance at start of year	9,314	7,498	6,707	5,293	2,780	
18	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 9)	(1,816)	832	989	(1,883)	937	
19	Other expected usage of earmarked reserves - not allocated to the detailed budget	0	(1,623)	(2,403)	(630)	(589)	
20	Balance at end of year	7,498	6,707	5,293	2,780	3,128	
	Council Tax						
21	Tax at band D	243.36	250.56	258.03	263.16	268.38	
22	Increase	1.96%	2.96%	2.98%	1.99%	1.98%	
		Minimum recommended balance for General Reserves is £1.9m					
		The precise timing of the use of earmarked reserves is, due to their nature, generally unknown.					
		Earmarked reserves are reviewed annually to ensure sufficiency and where need has diminished funds will be returned to General Reserves					
		Target increases within Council Tax referendum limits. The tax at band D does not include the amount charged by Canvey Island Town Council.					

Table 9.1 Funding of priority projects & other discretionary expenditure included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast					
Ref.	Description of priority project or discretionary item	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	Total £000's
	All services, Central & Corporate areas				
1	Production of one issue of external newsletter "Viewpoint" per year	8	8	8	24
2	Funding of discretionary portion of business rates relief to charities and other bodies - percentage of overall relief cost applicable to this Council	37	41	41	119
	Housing & Communities				
3	Funding towards the support of the Women's Refuge in Basildon	8	8	8	24
4	Funding for local and voluntary organisations	135	135	135	405
5	Contribution to Community Transport Scheme operated by Wyvern, providing transport for elderly and disabled residents of the Borough	10	10	10	30
6	Community events such as the Fireworks Fiesta, Castle Point Show and Easter & Summer activities (net direct cost excluding recharges)	11	8	8	27
7	Running costs of CCTV installed at various public locations around the Borough, including car parks, the Dutch Cottage, the seafront and specific residential areas	22	22	22	66
	Environment				
8	Festive lighting / decorations across the Borough	20	20	20	60
9	Public Conveniences across the Borough (net direct cost excluding recharges and capital charges)	36	35	36	107
	Total funding of priority projects and discretionary items	287	287	288	862

Table 9.2 Cost pressures & budget increases (Growth) identified and included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast					
Ref.	Description of cost pressure/budget increase item	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	Total £000's
	All services, Central & Corporate areas				
1	Increase in bad debts provision for 2017/18. A significant proportion of the provision relates to homelessness debtors	57	0	0	57
2	As members of the Braintree Procurement Hub, the Council receives a proportion of revenue income (rebates) earned when organisations utilise the procurement frameworks established by the Hub. The value of these rebates has reduced significantly due to competition between frameworks within the procurement market	10	35	21	66
3	Reduction in external fee paying work undertaken by Legal Services	12	0	0	12
4	CPBC contribution to South Essex Strategic Planning joint resource	0	20	20	40
5	Return into "Spend to Save" earmarked reserve relating to additional Council Tax revenue from a project reviewing empty properties	16	33	33	82
6	Increase to the Planned Preventative Maintenance programme for 2017/18, including: additional essential electrical safety works (various properties) and urgent flooring works at King George Pavilion	70	0	0	70
7	Financial impact of pending two year pay offer for 2018/19 and 2019/20 (subject to Union acceptance) A) Impact of 2% per year on all grades over and above current budgeted cost increase B) Additional impact of higher increases on lower graded posts, and merging of specific scale points	0 0	76 82	38 227	114 309
	Housing & Communities				
8	Net increase in Housing Benefit expenditure resulting from increased caseload and cap on amount of subsidy receivable from central government in respect of Rent Rebate benefit payments for non-HRA recipients	0	85	85	170

Table 9.2 Cost pressures & budget increases (Growth) identified and included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast					
Ref.	Description of cost pressure/budget increase item	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	Total £000's
9	Net increase in Homelessness temporary accommodation and prevention costs	52	60	60	172
10	Update to Civica (revenues and benefits system) to ensure compliance with GDPR requirements	17	3	3	23
11	Environment Environmental initiatives fund (2018/19 and 2019/20 only)	0	75	75	150
12	John H Burrows playing field cricket netting replacement	15	0	0	15
13	Shortfall in cemeteries income	16	0	0	16
14	Canvey Island foreshore public conveniences cleaning during summer holiday period	4	7	7	18
15	Pinnacle contract enhancement - provision of two staff during October to March for Canvey Island foreshore	12	15	16	43
16	Pinnacle contract enhancement - locking / unlocking of Northwick Road gate	2	6	6	14
17	Increase in requirement for security at the community halls, particularly the Paddocks	21	21	21	63
18	Decrease in memberships revenue at Waterside Farm, and removal of inflation increase on membership prices for 18/19 (previously budgeted for)	28	25	13	66
19	LED lighting upgrade at Waterside Farm Sports Centre (funded from the "Spend to Save" reserve)	60	0	0	60
Total cost pressures & budget increases (growth)		392	543	625	1,560

3. Corporate and Service Action Planning

The Council has a corporate and service action planning process which includes a corporate action plan that is refreshed annually.