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**Chief Executive**

## **CABINET AGENDA**

**Date:**     **Wednesday 18th March 2020**

**Time:**     **7.00pm NB Time**

**Venue:**    **Council Chamber**

**This meeting will be webcast live on the internet.**

### **Membership:**

<b>Councillor Smith</b>	<b>Chairman - Leader of the Council</b>
<b>Councillor Stanley</b>	<b>Finance, Policy and Resources</b>
<b>Councillor Mrs Egan</b>	<b>Housing and Council Homes</b>
<b>Councillor Hart</b>	<b>Streets, Waste, Floods and Water Management</b>
<b>Councillor Isaacs</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods &amp; Safer Communities</b>
<b>Councillor Johnson</b>	<b>Youth &amp; Tourism</b>
<b>Councillor MacLean</b>	<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>
<b>Councillor Mumford</b>	<b>Regeneration &amp; Business Liaison</b>
<b>Councillor Sheldon</b>	<b>Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunity</b>
<b>Councillor Varker</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Leisure</b>

<b>Cabinet Enquiries:</b>	<b>Ann Horgan ext. 2413</b>
<b>Reference:</b>	<b>9/2019/2020</b>
<b>Publication Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday 10th March 2020</b>

**AGENDA**  
**PART I**  
**(Business to be taken in public)**

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- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Members' Interests**
- 3. Minutes**  
To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2020.
- 4. Forward Plan**  
To review the Forward Plan.
- 5. Health and Community Safety**
- 6. Environment**
- 7. Housing and Regeneration**
  - 7(a) Procurement of a New Housing Management System**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Members for Housing and Council Homes and Finance, Policy & Resources)*
  - 7(b) Removal of Telephone Boxes**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Members for Regeneration & Business Liaison and Streets Flood and Water Management)*
  - 7(c) Private Sector Housing Service Plan 2020-25**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing)*
- 8. A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council**
  - 8(a) Corporate Plan - Annual Objectives 2020/21**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources)*
  - 8(b) Local Council Tax Scheme for Care Leavers**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources)*
  - 8(c) Corporate Scorecard Quarter 3**  
*(Report of the Cabinet Member for Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunity)*
- 9. Matters to be referred from /to Policy & Scrutiny Committees**  
There are no matters.
- 10. Matters to be referred from /to the Standing Committees**  
There are no matters.

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**PART II**

**(Business to be taken in private)**

**(Item to be considered with the press and public excluded from the meeting)**

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There were no items at time of publication of this agenda.

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**INFORMAL  
CABINET SESSION**

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## CABINET



**19TH FEBRUARY 2020**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Smith	Chairman – Leader of the Council
Councillor Stanley	Finance, Policy and Resources
Councillor Mrs Egan	Housing and Council Homes
Councillor Hart	Streets, Waste, Floods and Water Management
Councillor Johnson	Youth and Tourism
Councillor Mumford	Regeneration and Business Liaison
Councillor Sheldon	Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunities
Councillor Varker	Environment & Leisure

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Isaacs

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillors: Acott, Campagna, EEgan, Fuller, Sharp and Wood.

### **77. MEMBERS' INTERESTS:**

No declarations were made.

### **78. MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22.1.2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record with the addition of Councillor Anderson as also present at the meeting.

### **79. FORWARD PLAN:**

To comply with regulations under the Localism Act 2011, the Leader presented a revised Forward Plan to the meeting which outlined key decisions likely to be taken within the next quarter of 2020. The Plan was reviewed each month.

**Resolved** – To note and approve the Forward Plan.

### **80. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) – 2020/21 RENT LEVELS, REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLAN FOR 2020/21 AND 2019/20 REVISED**

Mindful of the Cabinet's role to determine the rent levels for Council dwellings and garages and approve a budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) that meet legal requirements and deliver the approved HRA Business Plan and associated policies and strategies. The Cabinet considered a report submitting the following: Rent levels for Council dwellings and garages for 2020/21; HRA Revenue budgets for 2019/20 (revised) and 2020/21.; HRA Capital Plans for 2019/20(revised) and 2020/21.

**Resolved:**

1. To agree a rent increase of 2.7% for all social rent HRA dwellings resulting in an average increase of £2.35 per week.
2. To agree a rent increase of 2.7% for all affordable rent HRA dwellings resulting in an average increase of £4.50 per week.
3. To agree a rent increase of £1 for all council owned garages is applied in 2020/21.
4. To approve the HRA revenue budget for revised estimate 2019/20 and estimate 2020/21, as set out in Annexe A to the report.
5. To approve the HRA capital plan for revised estimate 2019/20 and estimate 2020/21, as set out in Annexe B to the report.

#### **81. OIKOS MARINE AND SOUTH SIDE DEVELOPMENT – DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER**

Cabinet received a report providing an overview of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process for the proposed expansion of the Oikos Port on Canvey Island and seeking agreement to include the hazardous substances consent within the DCO. Cabinet noted that a further report would be brought to the Cabinet to approve the Council's representation on the DCO.

##### **Resolved:**

1. To note the Development Consent Order process and the role of the Council.
2. To approve the inclusion within the Development Consent Order the Hazardous Substances Consent and waive the Council's determination of such a consent only in respect to the matters identified in the Development Consent Order.
3. That a report is made to Cabinet in respect of the Council's representation to the Development Consent Order.

#### **82. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET SETTING FOR 2020/21**

Cabinet received a report presented by the Strategic Director (Resources) (Section 151 Officer) submitting proposals and recommendations for the Council's Policy Framework and Budget Setting for 2020/21. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy and Resources drew attention to the Statutory report of the Section 151 Officer. Cabinet was asked to consider these matters and make appropriate recommendations to Council at the meeting to be held later that evening.

**Resolved: to refer the report and recommend to Council:  
Implementation of Council policies and related spending plans**

1. That the Council note the efficiency savings, cost reductions and additional income summarised in table 2.3.
2. That the Council approves the continued funding of priority projects and other items of discretionary expenditure, as set out in table 9.2.
3. That the Council notes the cost pressures and budget increases (growth) as set out in table 9.3.
4. That subject to recommendations 1 to 3 above, the revenue spending plans for 2019/20 (revised) and 2020/21, set out in section 9, tables 9.4 (summary) and 9.5 (net services expenditure) of the accompanying report, are approved.

**Capital spending plans and prudential indicators**

5. That the capital spending plan described in section 11 of the accompanying report (tables 11.2 and 11.3) is approved in respect of 2019/20 (revised) and 2020/21.
6. That as required by section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003, and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code), the following Prudential Indicators are approved as set out in the appropriate sections of the accompanying report:

<b>Prudential Indicator - Reference to sections 11, 12 and 13 of accompanying report</b>	
Capital expenditure	Tables 11.2 and 11.3
Capital financing requirement (CFR)	Table 11.4
Authorised limit for external debt	Table 11.5
Operational boundary for external debt	Table 11.6
Ratio of financing costs to new revenue stream	Table 11.7 (a & b)
Gross external borrowing does not exceed CFR	Section 11 –para 52
Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing - upper and lower limits	Table 12.2
Upper limits of fixed and variable interest rate exposures	Table 12.3
Maximum period and counterparty limits for specified and non-specified investments	Table 13.2, 13.3 & 13.4

7. That the Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision for 2020/21, as stated in paragraphs 54 to 58 of section 11 of the accompanying report is approved.
8. That no new capital proposals are allowed until:
  - the proposal has been evaluated in accordance with relevant evaluation criteria;
  - the Cabinet has confirmed affordability and compliance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
  - the Cabinet has considered and approved details of the proposal.
9. That, as stated in paragraph 66 of section 11 of the accompanying report, and as required by the Prudential Code, the statement of the Strategic Director

(Resources) in respect of the affordability, deliverability and appropriateness of risk management arrangements with respect to the Capital Strategy is noted.

10. That the policies and strategies supporting the budget framework and contained within the accompanying report are approved.

**Statutory report of the Strategic Director (Resources)**

11. That as required by section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the report of the Strategic Director (Resources) set out in section 16 of the accompanying report in respect of robustness of the estimates is noted.
12. That as required by section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the report of the Strategic Director (Resources) set out in section 8 of the accompanying report in respect of the adequacy of proposed financial reserves is noted.

**Statutory calculations in respect of the budget requirement & Council Tax as required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (“the Act”)**

13. That as set out in section 5 of the accompanying report it is noted that acting under delegated authority and in consultation with the Cabinet Member responsible for Finance, Policy & Resources, the Strategic Director (Resources) has calculated:
- a) A tax base for the Borough of Castle Point of **30,969** being the amount **T** required by section 31B of the Act; and
  - b) A tax base for Canvey Island to which a Town Council precept applies as **11,952**.
14. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

Ref	Amount £	Item
(a)	<b>50,056,309</b>	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish (Town) Councils.
(b)	<b>47,654,798</b>	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
(c)	<b>8,401,511</b>	being the amount by which the aggregate at 14(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 14(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item <b>R</b> in the formula in Section 31B of the act)
(d)	<b>271.29</b>	being the amount at 14(c) above (item <b>R</b> ), divided by item <b>T</b> (14(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish (Town) precepts.
(e)	<b>251,709</b>	being the aggregate amount of the (Parish (Town) precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
(f)	<b>263.16</b>	being the amount at 14(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 14(e) above by item <b>T</b> (14(a) above), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of

		the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
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15. That the Cabinet recommends that Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each category of dwelling. This information is included within section 17 of the accompanying report:

Castle Point Borough Council Tax 2020/21, including and excluding Town Council precept, for each of the following categories of dwelling:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Council Tax Including Town Council £</b>	<b>Council Tax Excluding Town Council £</b>
<b>A</b>	189.48	175.44
<b>B</b>	221.06	204.68
<b>C</b>	252.64	233.92
<b>D</b>	284.22	263.16
<b>E</b>	347.38	321.64
<b>F</b>	410.54	380.12
<b>G</b>	473.70	438.60
<b>H</b>	568.44	526.32

16. To note that the County Council, the Police Authority and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area, as indicated in the table below:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Castle Point Borough Council</b>	<b>Essex County Council</b>	<b>Essex PFCC - Fire and Rescue Authority</b>	<b>Essex PFCC - Policing and Community Safety</b>	<b>Total excluding Town Council</b>	<b>Canvey Island Town Council</b>	<b>Total including Town Council</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>A</b>	175.44	880.74	49.26	132.42	<b>1,237.86</b>	14.04	<b>1,251.90</b>
<b>B</b>	204.68	1,027.53	57.47	154.49	<b>1,444.17</b>	16.38	<b>1,460.55</b>
<b>C</b>	233.92	1,174.32	65.68	176.56	<b>1,650.48</b>	18.72	<b>1,669.20</b>
<b>D</b>	263.16	1,321.11	73.89	198.63	<b>1,856.79</b>	21.06	<b>1,877.85</b>
<b>E</b>	321.64	1,614.69	90.31	242.77	<b>2,269.41</b>	25.74	<b>2,295.15</b>
<b>F</b>	380.12	1,908.27	106.73	286.91	<b>2,682.03</b>	30.42	<b>2,712.45</b>
<b>G</b>	438.60	2,201.85	123.15	331.05	<b>3,094.65</b>	35.10	<b>3,129.75</b>
<b>H</b>	526.32	2,642.22	147.78	397.26	<b>3,713.58</b>	42.12	<b>3,755.70</b>

17. To note that, in accordance with the requirements of section 52ZC of the Act the Council has determined whether it's Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is excessive.



For 2020/21, the relevant basic amount of Council Tax for Castle Point would be deemed excessive if the authority's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is:

- (a) 2%, or more than 2%, greater than its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2019/20; and
- (b) More than **£5.00** greater than its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2019/20.

Ref	Amount £	Item
(a)	<b>258.03</b>	being the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2019/20, excluding local precepts.
(b)	<b>2.0%</b>	being the percentage increase above which the Secretary of State has determined the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 would be excessive.
(c)	<b>263.19</b>	being the amount above which the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21, excluding local precepts, would be excessive (rounded down to the nearest penny).
(d)	<b>263.16</b>	being the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21, excluding local precepts.

The Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is therefore not excessive and the duty to make substitute calculations and hold a referendum does not apply (Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Act).

### **83. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM / TO POLICY & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

There were no matters.

### **84. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM / TO THE STANDING COMMITTEES**

There were no matters.

Chairman



# **Castle Point Borough Council**

## **Forward Plan**

**MARCH 2020**

# **CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **FORWARD PLAN**

**MARCH 2020**

This document gives details of the key decisions that are likely to be taken. A key decision is defined as a decision which is likely:-

- (a) Subject of course to compliance with the financial regulations, to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates subject to a threshold of £100,000; or
- (b) To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the area of the local authority.

The Forward Plan is a working document which is updated continual

<b>Date</b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b>Council Priority</b>	<b>Decision by Council/ Cabinet</b>	<b>Lead Member(s)</b>	<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>
March 2020	<u>Housing Management System Procurement – for approval</u>	Housing and Regeneration	Cabinet	Housing and Council Homes Finance, Policy & Resources	Head of Housing and Communities
March 2020	<u>Private Sector Housing Strategy Report</u>	Housing and Regeneration	Cabinet	Housing and Council Homes	Head of Environment
March 2020	<u>Council Tax Local Discount Scheme for Care leavers</u>	A Commercially and Democratically Accountable Council	Cabinet	Finance, Policy & Resources	Head of Housing and Communities
April 2020	<u>Lower Thames Crossing Consultation Response to Consultation</u>	Housing and Regeneration	Cabinet	Regeneration and Business Liaison	Head of Place and Policy
April 2020	<u>Report of the Peer Challenge Working Group</u>	A Commercially and Democratically Accountable Council	Cabinet	Regeneration and Business Liaison	Chief Executive
June 2020	<u>Housing Allocations Policy – For approval</u>	Housing and Regeneration	Cabinet	Housing and Council Homes	Head of Housing and Communities

**AGENDA ITEM  
NO.7(a)**

**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

**Subject: Procurement of a new Housing Management System**

**Cabinet Members: Councillor Mrs B Egan Housing and Council Homes,  
Councillor Stanley Finance, Policy and Resources**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on plans to replace the old existing housing management system with a new offsite hosted system.
- 1.2 To seek authority to progress with the procurement of a new housing management system.

**2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives**

- 2.1 The work is linked to the priority of Housing and Regeneration.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the award of a new housing management system, to Civica CX based on the assessment detailed in section 5 of this report.

**4. Background**

- 4.1 Cabinet will be aware from a previous report that the existing Housing Management System has been in place since April 1999. It is therefore, by today's technological standards, out of date.
- 4.2 The existing system whilst still supported by the supplier Northgate, is a redundant system that has no development potential. It is inflexible and lacks the facilities for modern working practices. For example, there is no facility for on-line services for customers and real time interfaces with contractors. In the past the supplier has tried to end support and requested users to migrate to their other products. Consequently, there is a risk that in the near future support for the system currently used by Housing Services will cease. This means that should there be a critical failure of the system, the Council will be left with no housing management system in place.
- 4.3 The current system creates additional costs and inefficiencies in working practices. For example, it's lack of flexibility necessitates 'work arounds' and over reliance on spreadsheets to supplement the information and analysis required by the service. Data cannot easily be transferred electronically between the current

system and contractor or other council systems (for example, to allow for repair jobs to be raised electronically direct with the contractor, or to reconcile payments). The current system has very poor direct debit functionality. Consequently, there is an over reliance on the use of standing orders which require customers to adjust when rent changes. As a result, more staff time and resources are used to maintain a myriad of working practices.

- 4.4 There is no facility to make even minor system changes. This requires the buying in of consultancy time from Northgate. This is costly, and time consuming and average costs are in the region of £1,100 per day. Modern systems allow for greater user configuration without the need for specialist IT consultants and will significantly reduce time and costs in future system development.
- 4.5 Consequently, following a report in September 2019, Cabinet agreed to the procurement of a new Housing Management System. This report sets out the results of that procurement and details the preferred supplier for the contract award.

## **5. Report**

- 5.1 Housing Services Management worked with a professional procurement consultant to ensure a robust approach to the procurement of the new Housing Management System.
- 5.2 An initial review showed that costs for suppliers to larger landlords for a solution to the Council's requirements would require a formal OJEU tender. However, most suppliers provided indicative costs over four years that were outside the Council's price range. The Council was keen to avoid the cost and potential legal risks attached to an OJEU procurement and therefore decided to procure using a framework that would pick up the suppliers that the Council could afford.
- 5.3 As a result the Council decided to use a framework, and the Government has a suitable Crown Commercial Services framework for the procurement of Data and Application Solutions by the public sector, including local government. The Council did consider other framework options for procurement but for the contract on offer, the Crown Commercial Services framework was the better fit as it is based on both goods and services.
- 5.4 Following a process that took several months, and involved a wide range of housing staff, the successful bidder was the supplier with the lowest cost and highest quality, and this is Civica CX for Housing and Asset Management. There are a number of additional benefits to awarding the contract to Civica, and this includes:
  - 1. It has been built on a completely web-based platform with the most modern technology available. This provides assurance on future proofing of the solution, ensuring that it will enable the council to benefit from access to the latest technology for the foreseeable future.
  - 2. Civica was much clearer about its ability to offer a pre-configured solution, which it has done elsewhere, and better able to estimate the resource requirements for the council.

3. Civica CX was able to immediately offer a Software as a Service solution. This is preferred by the Council as a cloud-based service hosted by the provider Civica CX, who takes all the risks for issues such as system updates and business continuity.
4. The Civica CX customers contacted were happy with the service and with their decision to go with Civica CX, even as early adopters of a brand new system.
5. The Council already uses other Civica applications, allowing for potential leveraging of the investment with Civica and easier integration between different applications, for example the Council uses the Civica Revenues and Benefits system and the Civica Abritas system for council housing applicants.
6. Civica CX will enable Castle Point Borough Council to hold its own asset data, currently held by South Essex Homes this will create opportunities for more efficient working between partners as well as potentially enabling corporate assets to be managed through the system as well. This offers the opportunity for a more joined up approach to asset management with a comprehensive asset database that can be used to pro-actively manage assets reducing costs and maximising estate management potential.
7. In addition to improving data quality and efficiencies, Civica CX will also improve the customer experience enabling customers to amongst other things:
  - a. Carry out two-way communication with us via their preferred method of contact including chat on-line and social media
  - b. Give real time feedback on the services the housing department are delivering either directly or through a contractor
  - c. Real time on- line access to a customer portal which will enable them to view cases, documentation specific to themselves, their rent account balance and transactions, report changes of circumstances, request permissions to carry out works and report/request repairs

## Costs

- 5.5 The costs for the procurement and implementation of the new Housing Management Service need to be broken down into One off Capital project implementation costs and Revenue Costs. It should also be noted that project implementation costs are the **maximum assumed costs** and are detailed in the tables set out in the following page.

	20/21		21/22		22/23	
	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b><u>System Setup Costs</u></b>						
Civica	121,900	0	60,950	0	0	0
Data Migration	44,833	0	44,833	0	0	0
Project Management	113,500	0	113,500	0	0	0
	<b>280,233</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>219,283</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Project Support Officer	35,000	0	35,000	0	0	0
Software and Hosting	23,700	42,053	0	44,754	0	45,509
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>338,933</b>	<b>42,053</b>	<b>254,283</b>	<b>44,754</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45,509</b>
<b><u>Funding</u></b>						
Potential Staff Saving	0	0	0	(28,300)	0	(28,900)
Current HMS IT spend	0	0	0	(17,300)	0	(17,300)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(45,600)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(46,200)</b>
<b>Capital Financing Costs</b>	<b>(338,933)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(254,283)</b>	<b>33,893</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59,322</b>
<b>Net Postion</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42,053</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,047</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58,631</b>

- 5.6 The table above shows the initial set up costs over 2020/21 and 2021/22 which are predominantly to be capitalised. Whilst in 2022/23 the revenue costs are offset by potential staff savings and currently budgeted IT costs in relation to the annual support, maintenance and upgrades to the existing system, these are all included with the software and hosting amount shown. Once the new system is fully embedded in 3- or 4-years' time, there will be further savings from more efficient working practices, however it is impossible to accurately predict these savings until the system is fully functional and new working practices established.
- 5.7 It is proposed to fund the capitalised costs over a 10-year period, this is deemed prudent for the reasons laid out in section 5.4, and it being based on a modern platform that is currently being developed by Civica and rolled out to other products. Also, the current system due to be replaced has been in operation for in excess of 20 years and due to the complexities of implementing a Housing Management System a life of under 10 year is believed to be unlikely. The anticipated future efficiency savings will be used to offset the capital financing costs incurred over the initial 10-year period.
- 5.8 The significant costs for the implementation of the new system are necessary. It is vital that there is sound project management and a phased approach to implementing the new system which will require significant user feedback and testing. Specialist skills are required for transferring data and officers have already



undertaken significant process mapping to help with the system design, which will need to be managed by experts.

- 5.9 In recognition of the complex technical skills required for the effective project management of this new system, along with specialist skills in areas such as data migration, Housing Services undertook a procurement from specialist contractors to provide the necessary technical support. This will ensure all the necessary skills are in place significantly reducing risk to the Council. This approach was necessary when the current housing management system was implemented with a supplier providing both project management and data migration skill sets.
- 5.10 This is a complex project and an example of a draft project plan has been placed on deposit in the Members Group Rooms to illustrate the various stages and dependencies. This project plan will be subject to review, and the aim is to complete the project within 18 months but allowing up to two years for contingency purposes. Consequently, the implementation costs have been built around assumptions of a two-year implementation, although it is likely that this will be significantly shorter and consequently result in less costs than detailed in section 5.5.

## **6. Corporate Implications**

### **a. Financial implications**

These are set out in the report section 5 above.

### **b. Legal implications**

There are legal implications surrounding compliance with procurement guidelines. These have been carefully considered and appropriate expertise has been used to assist in ensuring a sound procurement approach. In relation to the Data Protection Act (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Civica operates and provides services from its locations across the globe. In order to be DPA and GDPR compliant, the Council will need to exercise its right to restriction of data processing to prevent information going to Civica Group locations outside of the EEA.

### **c. Human resources and equality**

There will be significant implications on staff resources. This includes significant as part of the implementation and configuration of any system to meet our requirements. Further human resources are necessary to progress the project, and these are detailed in section 5.

### **d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors**

Following Cabinet approval. Full deployment and go live would be dependent on the implementation plan which has yet to be agreed. The project plan attached as Appendix 1 is an example of an ambitious implementation and will be subject to review once specialist project management resources have been appointed.

## **7. Background Papers:**

None

Report Author: Craig Watts, Head of Housing & Communities.

**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Removal of Telephone Boxes</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Councillor Mumford – Regeneration and Business</b>
	<b>Liaison Councillor Hart - Streets Waste Floods and Water Management</b>

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- 1. Purpose of Report**  
The purpose of this report is consider the submitted responses to the recent Stage 1 consultation in respect of the removal of 12 telephone boxes (PCB) from the Borough.
- 2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives**  
Improving public health and well-being through the provision of essential services.  
Transforming the Community by working to develop Community resilience through the retention of appropriate communication networks. Payphones are seen by many as an important public service and the provision of local services is a key issue within the Corporate Plan.
- 3. Recommendations**  
  
That with the exception of the PCB provided adjacent to the Monico Public House, Eastern Esplanade, Canvey Island, no objection be raised to the removal of the identified PCB.  
  
An objection is raised to the removal of the PCB provided adjacent to the Monico Public House, Eastern Esplanade, Canvey Island, for the following reasons:
  - (i) The site is located in close proximity to the sea defences and adjacent publicly accessible coastal area (which is not directly supported by lifeguards or similar safety measures) and is considered necessary to ensure the opportunity to summon assistance in the event of an emergency.
  - (ii) The site is at the heart of the Canvey Island Seafront Entertainment Area which supports a robust seafront and night time economy which would benefit from the presence of a PCB.

In reaching these recommendations the Council has justified its decisions, encouraged competition and looked after the interests of all citizens.

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#### **4. Introduction and Background**

Castle Point Borough Council received written notification from British Telecom (BT) that 12 public payphones had been proposed for removal.

BT's rationale for their proposals is based on the declining use of payphones, largely due to mobile phone take-up. BT's own figures show that the number of calls made from BT payphones has halved in the last three years. 99% of UK homes now have a phone at home, and 85% have a mobile phone

Prior to removal BT and the Local Authority is required to undertake consultation on the Proposals.

As part of the consultation process, BT has placed notices on the relevant payphones inviting comments and has notified the Council of its intentions.

It is the role of the Council as the 'relevant public organisation' to decide whether it wishes to use its local veto to object to the removal of any of the call boxes.

To do this, the Council must first seek the views of the local community by carrying out consultation on the proposal.

A notice posted by BT on each relevant call box also invites local comments.

To fulfil its obligation in respect of consultation, the Council has consulted the Canvey Town Council and placed a notice, appropriate information and a response form on its website for wider engagement.

It has also tweeted the information to interested parties.

Local residents and other interested parties were asked to consider three options in respect of each phone box as follows:

- to agree to the removal
- to adopt the call box for use by the local community; or
- to object to the removal.

This initial consultation period expired on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

Under the Consultation Process, any responses received must be considered within a framework of relevant factors and a determination made in respect of each proposed removal.

This determination will provide the basis of the preparation of a First Notice which is then subject to further consultation for a period of one month.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry must also receive this notice.

The Council must consider any comments received to this second round of consultation and then publish its second notice (known as the 'Final Notice'), which sets out the Final Determination and the reasons behind it.

In reaching the Final Determination the Council must work within the terms of the Communications Act 2003. This means that it must be able to justify its decisions, encourage competition and look after the interests of all citizens.

The Council must make sure that these notices reach all the local people.

A copy of the Final Determination Notice must be sent to BT and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Any Final Notice must be received by BT and the Secretary of State no later than the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Any comments received after this date will be turned away.

Should the Council not issue a Final Response, BT has right to remove any of the payphone identified without further consultation. BT has the right of appeal against any objections; therefore it is vital that all objections are fully evidenced and justifiable.

Any appeal would be considered by the Competition Appeals Tribunal.

Ofcom has issued guidance on some of the relevant factors to be taken into account when making a decision over the proposed removal of public phones boxes. These are:

- o Who lives there – the type of local housing around a phone box may say how important it is to the area. If it's surrounded by people who own their homes, there's a fair chance they have home phones or mobiles as well. However, if the neighbourhood has mainly rented properties, social housing or residential-care homes, it could be that there are people on low incomes who need that phone box.

- o Emergency Calls - many people feel reassured that phone boxes are available if there's an emergency. This can range from 999 calls to being able to call for help if your car breaks down. The Authority needs to think about whether a particular phone box is more likely to be used for emergency calls than another. If, for example, the call box is near a known accident black spot, it may strengthen the argument for it to be kept.

- o Income - whether it's a shop, a pub or a phone box, the amount of money people spend on a local service is a sign of whether it's important to them. BT has shown how much business a particular phone box is getting. If it's a very low figure, this may support their case to remove it.

In addition there are a number of local factors that could be considered e.g. impact on a conservation area.

## **5. The Proposal**

The following telephone boxes have been identified for removal:

	Telephone Number	Address	Post Code	No. of calls in last 12 months
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1	01268682124	Admiral Jellicoe High Street Canvey	SS8 7RS	131
2	01268682353	Somnes Avenue Canvey	SS8 9QB	0
3	01268682894	Link Road. Opp. Eastways Canvey	SS8 9TH	122
4	01268684273	Seaview Road Canvey	SS8 7PD	80
5	01268684410	Third Avenue Canvey	SS8 9SU	0
6	01268684573	St. Michaels Road Canvey	SS8 9NA	1
7	01268684620	Haven Road Canvey	SS8 0NR	2
8	01268685923	Monico PH. Eastern Esplanade Canvey	SS8 7DN	174
9	01268685925	o/s 292 Long Road Canvey	SS8 0JS	0
10	01268793273	o/s 295 High Road Benfleet	SS7 5HA	270
11	01268793487	o/s 94 Arundel Road Benfleet	SS7 4EF	2
12	01268794246	Junc. Dark Lane/Hart Road	SS7 3PF	146

## 6. Response to the initial consultation

The Council received one response to the proposals, from the Canvey Island Town Council as follows:

	Telephone Number	Address	Post Code	No. of calls in last 12 months	Agree/Adopt Object	Comments/Reasons
1	012686 82124	Admiral Jellicoe High Street Canvey	SS8 7RS	131	object to the removal	Object due to the level of usage
2	01268 682353	Somnes Avenue Canvey	SS8 9QB	0	agree to the removal	
3	01268 682894	Link Road. Opp. Eastways Canvey	SS8 9TH	122	object to the removal	Object due to the level of usage
4	01268 684273	Seaview Road	SS8 7PD	80	agree to the removal	

		Canvey				
5	01268 684410	Third Avenue Canvey	SS8 9SU	0	agree to the removal	
6	01268 684573	St. Michaels Road Canvey	SS8 9NA	1	agree to the removal	
7	01268 684620	Haven Road Canvey	SS8 0NR	2	agree to the removal	
8	01268 685923	Monico PH. Eastern Esplanade Canvey	SS8 7DN	174	object to the removal	Object due to the level of usage
9	01268 685925	o/s 292 Long Road Canvey	SS8 0JS	0	agree to the removal	
10	01268 793273	o/s 295 High Road Benfleet	SS7 5HA	270	No comment	
11	01268 793487	o/s 94 Arundel Road Benfleet	SS7 4EF	2	No comment	
12	01268 794246	Junc. Dark Lane/Hart Road	SS7 3PF	146	No comment	

## 7. Determination of the Proposal

In determining its response to the proposal, the Council must consider not only the responses from interested parties but also the demographic character of the area that surrounds the box, giving particular consideration to:

- The character and occupancy of the surrounding area
- Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot
- How much the box is used and
- Mobile phone coverage

This assessment will enable a justified determination of whether the Council wishes to object to any of the proposed removals.

Each proposed removal must be determined individually.

### 7.1 Admiral Jellicoe, High Street , Canvey Island

### The Site

The site is located immediately adjacent to the front boundary of the former Jellicoe Public House, on the north side of High Street.



### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The character of an area can provide an indicator of the relative levels of deprivation in an area and an indication of the likely use of mobile phones. Research suggests that within areas exhibiting lower levels of deprivation and a high level of home ownership, reliance on public telephones is less likely.

It should be noted that whilst some areas of the Borough are more deprived than others, Castle Point has relatively low levels of deprivation when compared to other areas of Essex.

The area surrounding the telephone box outside the site of the former Admiral Jellicoe Public House has a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest less availability of other forms of electronic communication, however the area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is not located close to an Institution such as a Children's Home, Care facility or a significant shopping area where the use of a public telephone might be required and is no longer associated with the use of a Public House, where use of the PCB for telephoning taxis or potentially emergency services might have been required.

No overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified and given the limited use of the PCB under consideration, (131 calls in 12

months), it is not considered that this PCB is essential for the maintenance of the local communication network.

Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the PCB is not near an identified accident blackspot.

How much the box is used.

The Town Council has objected to the proposed removal of the phone box on the basis of usage.

It should be noted that no response was received from any users of the PCB. This suggests that the box is not regularly used by a limited number of individuals, dependent on its availability.

It is noted that in the last 12 months the PCB has been used on 131 occasions, this equates to approximately 2.5 calls per week.

It is not considered that this level of use identifies this phone box as being critical to electronic communication in the area.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

## **7.2 Somnes Avenue, Canvey Island**

The Site

The site is located within an area of the greensward, to the northwest of the junction of Harvest Road with Central Wall Road/Somnes Avenue, within North Ward.







#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The area surrounding the telephone box has not been identified as an area with a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. The area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

No overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified. It should be noted that no objections have been received in respect of the removal of this PCB. This suggests that the box is not regularly used by a limited number of individuals, dependent on its availability.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

In the last 12 months this PCB has not been used to make any calls. Consequently it is not considered that this phone box is critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **7.3 Link Road. Opp. Eastways, Canvey Island**

#### The Site and surroundings

This PCB is located within the greensward at the junction of Eastways and Link Road.



#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within Winter Gardens Ward which has been identified as having a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest less availability of other forms of electronic communication, however the area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is not located close to an Institution such as a Children's Home, Care facility or a significant shopping area where the use of a public telephone might be required.

No overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified and given the limited use of the PCB under consideration, (122 calls in 12 months), it is not considered that this PCB is essential for the maintenance of the local communication network.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

The Town Council has objected to the proposed removal of the phone box on the basis of usage.

It should be noted that no response was received from any users of the PCB. This suggests that the box is not regularly used by a limited number of individuals, dependent on its availability.

It is noted that in the last 12 months the PCB has been used on 122 occasions, this equates to approximately 2.3 calls per week.

It is not considered that this level of use identifies this phone box as being critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **7.4 Seaview Road, Canvey Island**

The site is located on the western side of Seaview Road, just north of the junction with Eastern Esplanade.



#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The area surrounding the telephone box has not been identified as an area with a higher than average level of economic deprivation. Whilst Local Authority housing is provided in close proximity, the area nevertheless maintains a high level of home ownership which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. As such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is not located close to an Institution such as a Children's Home, Care facility or a significant shopping area where the use of a public telephone might be required.

No overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified.

Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

How much the box is used.

The Town Council has not objected to the proposed removal of the phone box on the basis of usage.

It should be noted that no response was received from any users of the PCB. This suggests that the box is not regularly used by a limited number of individuals, dependent on its availability.

It is noted that in the last 12 months the PCB has been used on 80 occasions, this equates to approximately 1.5 calls per week.

It is not considered that this level of use identifies this phone box as being critical to electronic communication in the area.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

## **7.5 Third Avenue, Canvey Island**

The Site and surroundings

This PCB is located within the greensward adjacent to the parade of shops on Third Avenue.





#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within Winter Gardens Ward which has been identified as having a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest less availability of other forms of electronic communication, however the area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is located close to a school, a shopping parade and a scheme for the elderly and is therefore in a location where the availability of a public telephone may be more likely to be required.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

Despite the location and the potential for use, this PCB has not been used to make a single 'phone call in the last 12 months.

It should be noted that no response was received from any users of the PCB and the Town Council has raised no objection to its removal.

Under the circumstances it is not considered that this phone box as being critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **7.6 St Michael's Road, Canvey Island**

#### The Site

This PCB is located within the Greensward on the western side of St Michael's Road, adjacent to No.20.





#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The area surrounding the telephone box has not been identified as an area with a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. The area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is not located in close proximity to any institutions, schools or shopping parades where access to a public phone box might be required.

No overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified.

It should be noted that no objections have been received in respect of the removal of this PCB.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

In the last 12 months this PCB has been used once. Consequently it is not considered that this phone box is critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

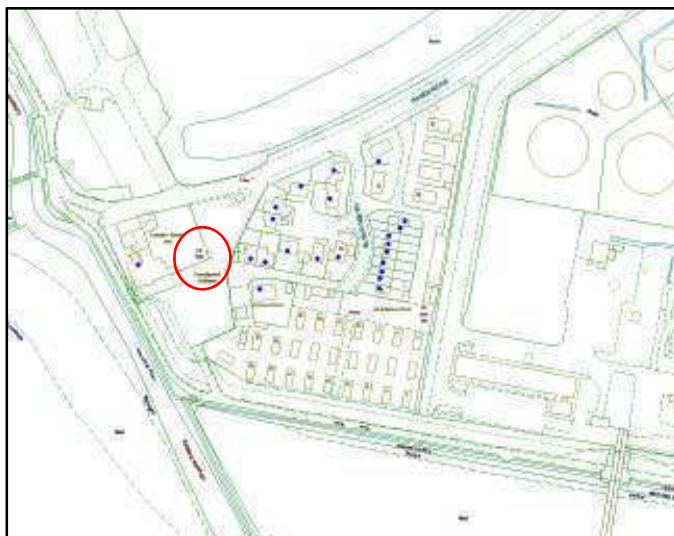
### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

## **7.7 Haven Road**

### The Site

This PCB is located adjacent to the Lobster Smack Public House Car park at the southern end of Haven Road.



### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The area around the PCB is characterised by a residentially occupied caravan site and small residential estate to the east beyond which lie the installations at Oikos and Calor Gas.

To the south is the Lobster Smack Public House.

The area surrounding the telephone box has not been identified as an area with a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication.

The site is not located in close proximity to any institutions, schools or shopping parades where access to a public phone box might be required and no overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified.

The site is located in close proximity to a Notifiable Hazardous Installation and consideration must be given to the necessity for access to a PCB in the unlikely event of an emergency.

Given the stringent operational and security measures implemented within the Hazardous Installation, the availability of good network coverage and the identified limited need for a PCB under normal circumstances, which implies the availability of alternative means of electronic communication, an overriding need to maintain this PCB has not been identified.

It should be noted that the Town Council has raised no objection to its removal.

Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

How much the box is used.

In the last 12 months this PCB has been used twice. Consequently it is not considered that this phone box is critical to electronic communication in the area under normal circumstances.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

## **7.8 Adjacent to the Monic Public House, Eastern Esplanade, Canvey Island**

The Site

This PCB is located immediately to the west of the Monico Public House, on the southern side of Eastern Esplanade.







#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within South Ward which has been identified as having a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest less availability of other forms of electronic communication, however the area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is located in close proximity to the sea defences and adjacent publicly accessible coastal area (which is not directly supported by lifeguards or similar safety measures) and is at the heart of the Canvey Island Seafront Entertainment Area which supports a robust seafront and night time economy.

Proximity to the seafront and the potential for emergencies arising from use of the water in particular suggests that this PCB should be retained in the interests of public safety.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot but is located in proximity to a potential source of emergency.

#### How much the box is used.

This PCB has a relatively high level of usage, with 174 calls being recorded over the last 12 months. This equates to 3.3 calls per week.

It should be noted that no response was received from any users of the PCB but the Town Council has raised an objection to the removal of this PCB on the basis of usage. The lack of response from users suggests that the box is not regularly used by a limited number of individuals, dependent on its availability but is more widely used.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That an objection be raised to the removal of the PCB on safety grounds.

### **7.9 Outside 292 Long Road, Canvey Island**

#### The Site

This PCB is located within the highway opposite the junction of Miramar Avenue with Long Road.



The area surrounding the telephone box has a higher than average level of economic deprivation which would suggest less availability of other forms of electronic communication, however the area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is not located close to an Institution such as a Children's Home, Care facility or a significant shopping area where the use of a public telephone might be required and no overriding need for the retention of the PCB on demographic grounds can be identified.

Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

How much the box is used.

No calls have been made from this PCB over the last 12 months.

It is not considered that this level of use identifies this phone box as being critical to electronic communication in the area.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

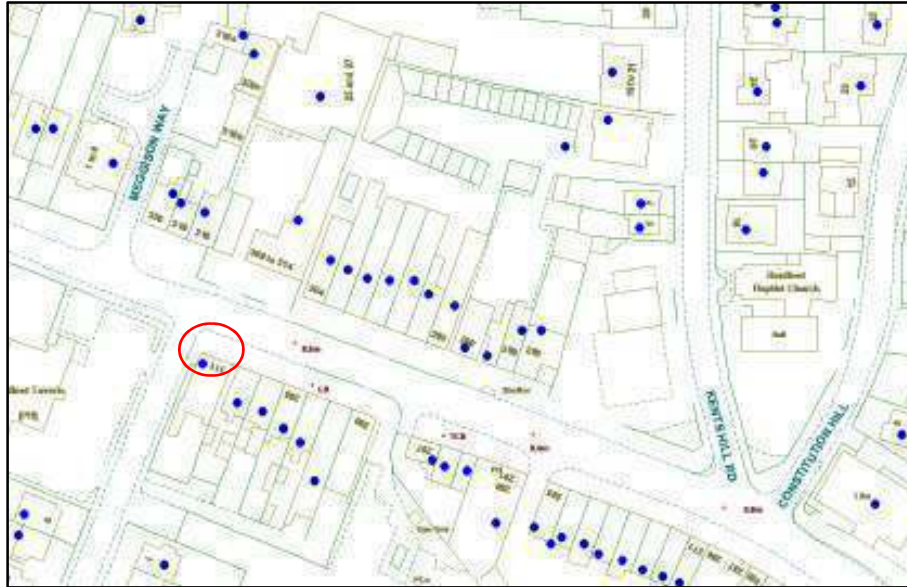
## Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **7.10 Outside 295 High Road, Benfleet**

#### The Site

This PCB is located on the south side of Benfleet High Road, close to the access road to Richmond Hall.



#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within St Mary's Ward which has been identified as being one of the least deprived areas of the Borough which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. The area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is however located close to a school, a shopping parade, a Public House, an elderly persons scheme, a local Hall, a youth facility and open space and is therefore in a location where the availability of a public telephone may be more likely to be required.

Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

How much the box is used.

This PCB has the highest level of usage from those identified for removal at some 270 calls recorded over the last 12 months. This equates to 5.1 calls per week.

It should be noted however that no response was received from any users of the PCB which suggests that use is primarily by a range of individuals rather than a limited number of people dependent on the PCB for communication purposes.

Under the circumstances, whilst well-used, it is not considered that this phone box is critical to electronic communication in the area.

Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

## **7.11 Outside 94 Arundel Road.**

The Site

The PCB is located at the junction of Arundel Road and Rushbottom Lane and is associated with a local parade of shops.





#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within St George's Ward which has been identified as being one of the least deprived areas of the Borough which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. The area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is however located close to a school and a local shopping parade and is therefore in a location where the availability of a public telephone may be more likely to be required.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

This PCB has been used for only two calls over the last 12 months.

At this level of use it is not considered that the retention of this PCB is critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **7.12 Junction of Dark Lane and Hart Road.**

#### The Site

The site is at the western end of Dark Lane, immediately adjacent to the Hart Road Car Park.





#### The character and occupancy of the surrounding area

The site is located within Cedar Hall Ward which has been identified as being one of the least deprived areas of the Borough which would suggest wider availability of other forms of electronic communication. The area also exhibits a high level of home ownership and as such reliance on public telephones is likely to be more limited.

The site is however located close to a school, a shopping parade, a Public House, and an elderly persons scheme and is therefore in a location where the availability of a public telephone may be more likely to be required.

#### Whether the box is located in an emergency/ accident blackspot

The site of the Phone box is not near an identified accident blackspot.

#### How much the box is used.

This PCB has been used to make 146 calls over the last 12 months. This equates to 2.8 calls per week.

It should be noted however that no response was received from any users of the PCB which suggests that use is primarily by a range of individuals rather than a limited number of people dependent on the PCB for communication purposes.

Under the circumstances, it is not considered that this phone box is critical to electronic communication in the area.

#### Mobile phone coverage

Mobile coverage across all networks is rated as good in this postcode area.

#### Conclusion

That no objection be raised to the removal of the PCB.

### **8. The Appeal Process**

The Council has the option to agree or object to the removal of each of the twelve PCBs identified. Reasons to justify the objection must be included. The Council has the power of 'local veto' and would prevent BT from removing any phone box to which the Council has raised objection. BT can appeal against the Council's decision to the Competition Appeals Tribunal.

### **9. Corporate Implications**

#### **(a) Financial implications**

If BT appeals against any local veto (objection) to payphone removals by the Council and the Competition Appeals Tribunal rules in favour of the appellant there may be a risk of costs being awarded against the Council.

#### **(b) Legal Implications**

The process set out in this report accords with Ofcom guidance under the Communications Act 2003. The Council has a responsibility to initiate a public consultation and respond to BT's proposals.

The Council must ensure that it meets the deadlines should it wish to invoke its right to veto. This may be achieved via the approval of recommendations outlined in this report. If the Council does object to the removal of one or more public payphones as proposed by BT, the Council must ensure that its response is fully reasoned, robust and defensible to reduce the risk of costs.

#### **(c) Human Resource and Equality Implications**

Any appeal in respect of an objection is likely to have resource implications for the Council.

#### **(d) IT and Asset Management Implications**

None.

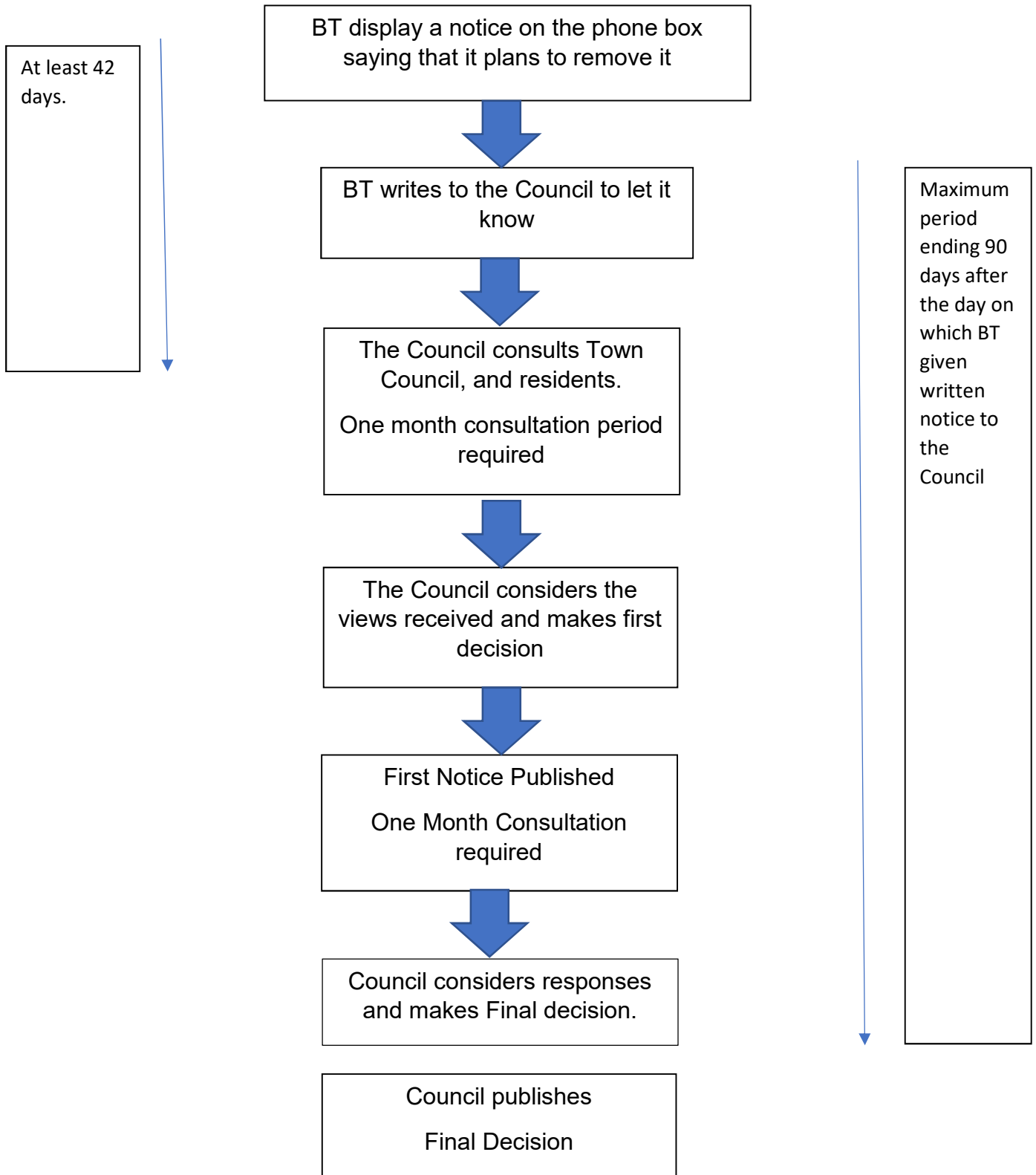
### **10. Background Papers**

- Consultation Letter from BT dated 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020.
- Ofcom – Guidance on procedures for the removal of public call boxes.
- Process for removing a public call box

### **11. Report Author**

K. Fisher-Bright Strategic Developments Officer

## The process for removing a public call box (phone box)





**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

**Subject: Private Sector Housing Service Plan 2020-25**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor MacLean – Health and Well Being**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

**This report seeks approval for the Private Sector Housing Service Plan 2020-25 appended to this report.**

**2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives**

**The new plan links directly to the Council's Housing and Regeneration Priority.**

**3. Recommendations**

**That Cabinet approves the Private Sector Housing Service Plan 2020-25.**

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**4. Introduction**

The Environmental Health Service ('EHS') is responsible for delivering a wide range of functions for the Council, with the overall aim of protecting the health, safety and welfare of residents and visitors to the Castle Point Borough.

The Private Sector Housing function within EHS aims to ensure that the living conditions of our residents continues to improve, with the aim of enabling residents of the Castle Point Borough to live in decent homes which are in good repair and are safe, secure and warm.

The proposed Private Sector Housing Service Plan ('the Service Plan') aims to present some of the key challenges facing the Council regarding maintaining and improving housing conditions in the Borough, with a focus on both the current activities and initiatives carried out by EHS and of our future intentions relating to this field of work. This will also contribute towards the legal responsibilities placed on the Council under the Housing Act 2004.

When compiling the Service Plan, full regard was given to the Castle Point Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018-21 and to the draft Castle Point Borough Council Housing Strategy 2020-25 and a range of other evidence, with the aim of ensuring that the work of EHS within Private Sector Housing matches up with the overall priorities of the Council and of any legislative requirements.

## **5. Background**

As part of their strategic leadership role, Local Authorities should understand and work to address housing need across all tenures within their Borough. The draft Castle Point Corporate Housing Strategy 2020-25 ('the Housing Strategy') is an overarching document that sets out how the Council will work with partners and the local community to meet the housing needs of all residents.

From the analysis of the Housing challenges facing the Borough, 5 priorities have been identified by the Housing Strategy:

- P(Priority)1 – promote and enable the development of diverse and high-quality sustainable housing
- P2 – Acquire and construct more affordable social housing
- P3 – Help prevent homelessness and support vulnerable people
- P4 – Improve the condition and usage of existing housing across all tenures
- P5 – Improve Council Housing Service.

The work of EHS proposed by the Service Plan aims to directly contribute towards Priority 4 ('improve the condition and usage of existing housing across all tenures') of the Housing Strategy and towards the overall 'Housing and Regeneration' priority of the Castle Point Borough Council Corporate Plan 2020-25.

## **6. Evidence Base**

In producing the Service Plan a range of data has been referred to including:

- Office for National Statistics (ONS) neighbourhood statistics
- Census 2011 (Published 2013)
- DHCLG English Housing Survey 2018-19
- Building Research Establishment (BRE) Stock Condition Modelling report for Castle Point Borough Council
- South Essex Market Trends Reports
- Public Health England local statistics

## **7. Current Scope of the Private Sector Housing Function**

The Private Sector Housing work currently undertaken by the EHS includes our statutory responsibilities and where resources allow, a discretionary aspect which includes proactive activities.

The majority of the work of EHS relating to our statutory responsibilities, is focused on the private rented sector within the Borough.

A full explanation of each of the below areas can be found within the proposed Service Plan document:

Core statutory functions of EHS within our Private Sector Housing role include:

- Investigation of complaints regarding housing conditions
- Licensing of Caravan Sites
- Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants ('DFGs')
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation ('HMOs')
- Undertaking Housing Overcrowding Assessments

Discretionary work currently undertaken by EHS within our Private Sector Housing role includes:

- Ad-hoc proactive projects, with partners such as HMRC, Police, Fire and Border Force officials.
- Operation of local Landlords' Forum
- Participation in Housing Forums
- Provision of Housing Grants other than DFGs
- Operation of Ready to Rent scheme
- Operation of local Energy Efficiency Schemes.

## **8. Forward Work Plan**

The draft CPBC Housing Strategy 2020-25 identifies several areas which have been deemed to be corporate housing priorities.

When formulating the proposed Service Plan, EHS has considered our evidence base and aim to carry out work to contribute towards the overall aims of the Housing Strategy, to contribute towards the key priorities identified within the document and to work to ensure that residents of the Castle Point Borough are able to live in decent homes which are in good repair and are safe, secure and warm.

The overall aims of the work of EHS within the private housing sector are:

- Engage with private landlords to ensure that those who rent privately in the Borough can access safe, healthy and good quality homes.
- Work with partners to ensure that local residents can live in warm homes that they can afford to heat.
- Ensure that the existing stock of homes in the Castle Point Borough is put to best use.
- Ensure that local residents can live in safe, secure and accessible homes, by making effective use of informal persuasion, formal powers and provision of financial assistance.
- Seek to provide an effective contribution towards overall CPBC corporate objectives and priorities.

As such, the key work priorities for EHS within our Private Sector Housing function are proposed as follows:

- Investigate a landlord's accreditation scheme and support landlords' forums
- Ensure the effective coordination of caravan site works to reduce the number of caravans used by vulnerable people.
- Investigate and promote initiatives to improve the energy efficiency of private sector housing stock and reduce fuel poverty.
- Develop and implement a programme to reduce the number of empty homes in the Borough.
- Administer programmes for Disabled Facilities Grants for the private and social housing sectors.
- Investigate complaints of housing conditions and promote initiatives to reduce the number of category 1 HHSRS hazards (housing condition failures) in the Borough.
- Ensure that any House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) which meets the criteria for inclusion on the mandatory licensing scheme is identified, its conditions fully assessed, and a licence properly issued.
- Ensure the work of the service effectively contributes to the overall corporate objectives of the Council and specifically the Corporate Housing Strategy.

Further details and full explanation regarding the above priorities can be found in the proposed Service Plan. A copy has been placed in each of the Member Group Rooms.

## **9. Timeframe of Service Plan**

It is proposed that the timescale of this plan should match that of the main Housing Strategy (2020-25.) This will allow for major plan updates to have full regard to future corporate housing priorities and ensure that EHS continue to carry out work to meet the aims and objectives of the Council, alongside ensuring completion of our statutory responsibilities.

## **10. Update and Review and Monitoring of Service Plan.**

It is proposed that the Service Plan is subject to an annual review, to be undertaken by the Environmental Health Operational Manager. This will reflect any changes in local, corporate and national priorities and of legislative requirements and allow the Service to highlight any additional work undertaken or problems encountered during each year.

It is proposed that the Service Plan is subject to full renewal after 5 years, in line with the corporate Housing Strategy. Cabinet approval will be sought for the renewed Plan.

Action planning, performance monitoring and workplan review will be undertaken via a cross department working group, comprising all services with involvement in the delivery of the Corporate Housing Strategy.

## **11. Financial Implications**

To meet our legal requirements under the Housing Act 2004, the Council must keep the housing conditions in its area under review. The BRE Housing Stock Modelling survey used for this purpose will therefore need periodically refreshing. As the last CPBC report was last published in 2017, this survey is likely to require recommissioning within the next 2 years.

## **12. Legal Implications**

The work detailed in this Service Plan contributes towards meeting the legal requirements placed on the Council under the Housing Act 2004.

## **13. Human Resources**

There are no additional human resources implications associated with this report.

## **14. Equality Implications**

If implemented the recommendations in this report will have a positive impact on the lives of disabled persons.

### **Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors**

It is proposed that if the plan is approved, it should become operational from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

Private Sector Housing is one of a wide range of work areas undertaken by EHS. Proactive / discretionary work can only be undertaken as resource allows, as statutory duties will take precedence during times where the Service is busy and/or resource is limited. This may impact on the ability of the Service to deliver all aspects of the Service Plan, or cause delays to what we are able to deliver.

## **15. Background Papers**

None

Report Author: Simon Llewellyn, Environmental Health Operational Manager



# **Private Sector Housing Service Plan 2020-25 Environmental Health Services Castle Point Borough Council**

March 2020

Rev 1.1

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Private Sector Housing Service Plan aims to present some of the key challenges facing the Council regarding maintaining and improving housing conditions in the Borough, with a focus on both current initiatives carried out in this field of work by Environmental Health Services and our future intentions. The aim of this service plan is:

*‘To continue to improve the quality of life of our residents by ensuring people in the Castle Point Borough live in decent homes which are in good repair and are safe, secure and warm.’*

- 1.2 In order to build a picture of the private sector housing stock within the Borough, the council periodically reviews property conditions, most recently via the commissioning of a report from the Building Research Establishment (BRE), who undertook a series of modelling exercises to provide up to date information in order to inform this strategy. The results of this modelling exercise were published in the BRE Dwelling Level Housing and Database (Stock Modelling) for Castle Point Borough Council, published in 2017.
- 1.3 When compiling this document reference has also been made to the Castle Point Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018-2021 and to the Castle Point Borough Council Housing Strategy 2020-25, with the aim of ensuring that our work in Private Sector Housing matches up with the overall priorities of the Council.

## **2.0 Castle Point Area Profile**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 Castle Point is a small Borough located in SE Essex covering 17.3 square miles, with an estimated population of 89,700. 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%).
- 2.1.2 The Borough benefits from good links to London such as the C2C Fenchurch Street railway line, the dual carriageways of the A13 and A127, which link within 20mins to the M25 motorway. Castle Point as an area has a long history, but is essentially modern in character, with most development having taken place post 1930.

### **2.2 Key Facts**

- 2.2.1 Area: 45.08 km<sup>2</sup> (17.41 square miles) Rural Land Area: 60% Population: 88,900(2014 Estimate) Population Density: 1,921.2/km<sup>2</sup> (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



- 2.2.2 Ethnicity: White 96% Asian 1.5% Black 1.1%
- 2.2.3 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.
- 2.2.4 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%).
- 2.2.5 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.
- 2.2.6 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.
- 2.2.7 House prices are increasing and for example lower quartile prices in Castle Point were £163,000 in February 2013 increasing to £249,266 as of March 2020. This compares with a regional average of £219,700. 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.

### **3.0 Context - Key housing strategy policy areas and legislation**

- The Service Plan is informed by the following key housing strategy policy areas and legislation. Please refer to **Appendix A (section 12)** for more detail and analysis for each of the below sections:

3.1 Private Rented Sector

3.2 Health Inequalities

3.3 Integrated Care

3.4 Public Health Outcomes Framework

3.5 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies

3.6 Empty homes

- 3.7 Potential Increase in private sector rented properties
- 3.8 Local Housing Statistics (LAHS) and EPC Ratings
- 3.9 The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)
- 3.10 Housing Act 2004
- 3.11 Energy Act 2011
- 3.12 Housing and Planning Act 2016
- 3.13 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and Welfare Reform Act 2012
- 3.14 Localism Act 2011
- 3.15 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Better Care Fund (BCF)

#### **4.0 Context - Corporate strategies and Policies**

##### **4.1 Castle Point Corporate plan 2018-21**

4.1.1 The Council has developed a Corporate Plan, which has been carefully developed through a joint policy and scrutiny committee and is refreshed annually. The Council has identified four medium term priorities, which include:

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

4.1.2 The work of Private Sector Housing within Environmental Health directly contributes towards the corporate Housing and Regeneration priority.

##### **4.2 Castle Point Housing Strategy 2020-25**

4.2.1 Key issues identified by the Housing Strategy include:

- Lack of affordable housing and the need to acquire and develop more stock
- The need to diversify the housing profile
- The need to provide for the needs of an aging population
- The need to bring empty stock back into habitation
- The need to work with the private sector to diversify the housing market and develop innovative solutions to meet housing need
- The need to target work to reduce the number of homes with poor thermal qualities or HHSRS hazards in the private sector

- The need to implement key legislative requirements, to include the Welfare Reform Act 2012, Housing and Planning Act 2016, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- The need to improve energy efficiency
- The need to consider and implement the requirements of the national housing strategy
- The need to continue with management improvements to the Housing Service.
- The need to deal with residency issues for caravan sites.

#### 4.2.2 From the analysis of the challenges facing the Borough:

- Priority 1 – Promote and enable the development of diverse and high-quality sustainable housing
- Priority 2 – Acquire and construct more affordable social housing
- Priority 3 – Help prevent homelessness and support vulnerable people
- Priority 4 – Improve the condition and usage of existing housing across all tenures
- Priority 5 – Improve Council Housing Services

#### 4.2.3 The work that Environmental Health primarily undertakes contributes directly to the 'Improve the condition and usage of existing housing across all tenures' priority and our identified actions aim to improve the overall standard of the private sector housing stock in the borough and ensuring private rented stock, having regard to any resource limitations which all services face.

#### 4.2.4 Environmental Health Services principally address issues relating to the condition of existing private sector housing stock in the Borough. Most of our focus is on the private rented sector, although we also have legal powers to intervene in matters relevant to privately owned housing where necessary and undertake a range of proactive activities relating to the whole private housing sector.

## **5.0 Context - Local Policies**

### 5.0.1 The following policies are specific to our service area and both approved by Cabinet.

#### 5.1 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) Policy

#### 5.1.1 The Disabled Facilities Grants Policy & Guidance sets out how the Council will use its resources to help those who need disabled adaptations and how decisions will be made about the help that it gives and to provide guidance for applicants, stakeholders and other users of our service. This document, which received significant revisions in late 2018, includes full information on mandatory and discretionary grants, setting out the ways that this money will be fairly distributed to those in need.

## 5.2 Housing Enforcement Policy

- 5.2.1 The policy outlines the Council's approach to securing compliance with the law in relation to private sector housing. In particular, the policy outlines the extent to which the Council will intervene to make use of the powers in Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, in relation to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and its approach to the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation. It sets out what owners, landlords, their agents and tenants of private sector properties can expect from officers. The document also explains our staged approach to enforcement, including both informal and formal means of compliance.

## 6.0 Monitoring and Housing Standards in the Borough

### 6.1 BRE Housing Stock Model report.

- 6.1.1 The Housing Act 2004 requires the Council to keep housing conditions in their area under review. As such, Castle Point Borough Council commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to undertake a series of modelling exercises on their housing stock which requires BRE to produce an integrated stock model which includes Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data provided by Castle Point Council.

- 6.1.2 The BRE Housing Stock Models were used to provide such estimates at dwelling level and focussing on private sector housing. The key indicators provide Castle Point with detailed information on the likely condition of the housing stock and the geographical distribution of the properties of interest.

#### 6.1.3 Headline results for CPBC

- There are 36,467 dwellings in Castle Point, 85% are owner occupied, 9% private rented and 6% social rented. There are an estimated 1611 park homes used for permanent residential purposes in the Borough, across 4 sites.
- An estimated 4,108 dwellings in the private sector have category 1 HHSRS hazards. This equates to 14% of properties in the private sector.
- 446 dwellings in the private rented sector are estimated to have category 1 HHSRS hazards. This equates to 14% of properties in the private rented sector.
- The highest concentration of all HHSRS hazards in the private sector are found in the wards of St. Mary's, St. Peters and Canvey Island Central.
- The highest concentrations of fuel poverty (low income, high costs definition) in the private sector are found in the wards of Canvey Island Winter Gardens, Canvey Island Central and Canvey island West and for excess cold the highest concentrations are in St. Peters, Boyce and St. Marys.
- The total cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in Castle Point's private sector stock is estimated to be £8.34 million.

- 2.4% (813) of private sector dwellings and 4.6% (144) of private rented dwellings in Castle Point are estimated to have an EPC rating below band E.
- In the private sector stock, there are an estimated 10,532 dwellings with un-insulated cavity walls and 6,102 dwellings with less than 100mm of loft insulation.
- Castle Point generally performs better than England for the majority of indicators (except for falls)
- The private rented sector is generally worse than other tenures across all the key indicators (except for falls hazards which is the same as the owner-occupied sector and low-income households which is higher in the social rented sector)
- 4.6% of dwellings in the private rented sector are estimated to have an EPC below band E. Under proposed legislation these properties would not be eligible to be rented out after 2018.

## 6.2 BRE Stock Model - Regional and national stock condition comparisons

- 6.2.1 For all stock, Castle Point generally performs better than the EHS England average, in particular for excess cold hazards (1% compared to 5%), the fuel poverty indicators (7% compared to 10%) and low-income households (11% compared to 24%). Castle Point performs slightly worse for fall hazards (9% compared to 8%).
- 6.2.2 When comparing Castle Point to the East of England region, the picture is very similar. Comparing Castle Point to the EHS England average figures for the private sector stock, again there is a similar picture with Castle Point performing better for the majority of indicators with the exception of fall hazards (10% compared to 8%).

## 6.3 BRE Stock Model - HHSRS hazards

- 6.3.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having a category 1 (serious) hazard. The HHSRS hazards are listed in appendix A.

## 6.4 Excess cold

- 6.4.1 The excess cold category covers threat to health from sub-optimal indoor temperatures. Those aged 65 or over are more at risk of illness from excess cold. A healthy indoor temperature is around 21oC although cold is generally not perceived until the temperature drops below 18oC. Serious health risks occur when the temperature falls below 16oC.
- 6.4.2 The causes of excess cold can be poor energy efficiency, an absence of central heating, not using heating systems due to the cost, excess ventilation (i.e. ill-fitting doors/windows, etc.) measures such as structural thermal

insulation, adequate heating systems, the exclusion of excessive drafts, etc, can all help to make a property warmer.

6.4.3 There are concentrations of high levels of category 1 hazards scattered across the borough, with the highest levels overall are St. Mary's, St. Peter's and Canvey Island Central.

6.4.4 Looking at the hazard of excess cold, there are again higher concentrations scattered across the borough, the highest levels overall are in St. Peter's, Boyce and St. Mary's but there are also pockets of higher concentrations elsewhere – for example in central parts of Canvey Island North.

## 6.5 Falls hazards

6.5.1 This category covers falls associated with baths, showers, any level surfaces, trip hazards, stairs and falling between levels (i.e. out of windows, balconies, landings.) Those aged over 60 and over are more vulnerable to falls, with those aged 5 and under being more vulnerable to falls between levels.

6.5.2 In terms of the distribution of fall hazards. some pockets of higher concentrations found in the more urban areas of Canvey Island, Hadleigh and South Benfleet, for example. The data behind this shows that the wards with the highest levels of fall hazards are St. Mary's, Canvey Island Central and St. Peter's.

## 6.6 Stock model – Disrepair

6.6.1 A dwelling fails the disrepair component if:

- One or more key building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacing or major repair; or
- Two or more other building components are old and, because of their condition, need replacement or major repair.

6.6.2 Key building components are those which, if in poor condition, could have an immediate impact on the integrity of the building and cause further deterioration in other components. They are the external components plus internal components that have potential safety implications and include:

- External walls
- Roof structure and covering
- Windows/doors
- Chimneys
- Central heating boilers
- Electrics

6.6.3 If any of these components are old, and need replacing or require major repair, then the dwelling is not in a reasonable state of repair.

6.6.4 The data indicates that there are pockets of higher levels of disrepair across the area. The highest levels overall are in the wards of St. James, St. Mary's and Boyce. There are higher levels of disrepair scattered across the area – for example to the north of St. James ward and to the east of St. Mary's ward.

#### 6.5 Stock model - Energy efficiency

6.5.1 The energy efficiency rating of a property is measured by the Standard Assessment Procedure ('SAP'.) This gives a property rating between 0 and 100 based on the calculated annual energy cost for space and water heating. The higher the number, the better the energy performance of the dwelling.

6.5.2 An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is required whenever a new building is constructed, or an existing building is sold or rented out. An EPC is a measure of the energy efficiency performance of a building and is rated from band A – G, with A representing the best performance. The EPC ratings correspond to a range of SAP ratings from 1 – 100, with 100 being the best. It is possible, therefore, to give a dwelling an EPC rating based on the SAP rating.

6.5.3 The estimated average SAP for the private sector stock in Castle Point is 59 which corresponds to an EPC rating of D. The number of private sector dwellings with an EPC rating below band E is estimated to be 813 (2.4%). The distribution of EPC ratings across the bands is broadly similar to the England figures, although Castle Point has a slightly higher proportion of dwellings in the band D and slightly lower proportions in the E to G bands.

6.5.4 Under the Energy Act 2011, new rules mean that from 2018 landlords must ensure that their properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard - which has been set at band E.

#### 6.6 Stock model – Low income households

A low-income household is defined as a household in receipt of:

- Income support
- Housing benefit
- Attendance allowance
- Disability living allowance
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- War disablement pension
- Pension credit
- Child tax credit
- Working credit

6.7 For child tax credit and working tax credit, the household is only considered a low-income household if it has a relevant income of less than £15,860. The definition also includes households in receipt of Council Tax benefit and income-based Job Seekers Allowance.

- 6.8 Concentrations of low-income households are clustered around the more urban areas of Canvey Island, Hadleigh and, to a lesser extent, South Benfleet. The highest levels overall are found in Canvey Island Central, Canvey Island Winter Gardens and Canvey Island North. Canvey Island Central ward the highest levels are in central and western parts of the ward.

## **7.0 Service delivery**

### **7.1 Environmental Health Services**

- 7.1.1 Private Sector Housing is one of a wide range of Environmental Health related functions covered by the Service.
- Food Safety
  - Occupational Health and Safety
  - Public Health and Nuisance control
  - Environmental Protection
  - Animal Welfare
  - Private Sector Housing
  - Provision of grants
  - Licensing
  - Pest Control
- 7.1.2 The service operates on a generic basis, in that each qualified officer undertakes work activities in all the main areas of Environmental Health. The Environmental Health Operational Manager has overall responsibility for the Service, including activities relating to private sector housing. The service manager is supported by a team of Environmental Health Officers and Technical staff, supervised by Team Leader, which currently consists of 5 professionally qualified Environmental Health Officers (inclusive of service manager and team leader) and 3 technical support staff.
- 7.1.3 The service deals with approximately 2000 requests for service per year and in addition undertake approximately 500 proactive inspections / visits which include food hygiene inspections, licensing of HMO's, animal welfare premises, inspection and issuing of permits for solvent emissions, air quality monitoring and food sampling. We also carry out investigations and take enforcement action, up to and including prosecutions in addition to our other activities, which include proactive projects for each area of work. As such, resource continues to be very tight which limits the amount of time that can be dedicated to activities beyond simply meeting our statutory legal requirements.
- 7.1.4 As with many smaller authorities, a large amount of work, with multiple statutory responsibilities across many subject areas combined with a relatively small number of staff, means that any proactive work needs to be targeted effectively and, on the understanding, that we can only achieve so much with the resource that we have.



## **8.0 Scope of the Service (Private Sector Housing – Core statutory services)**

8.0.1) The private sector housing service operates a core service which covers our statutory duties and where resources allow, a discretionary aspect which generally covers proactive activities which directly or indirectly aim to improve the condition of the private housing stock in the borough and or living conditions for residents. Most of our work concerns issues relating to the condition of private sector rented housing.

### **8.1.1 Investigation of housing complaints**

8.1.1 Environmental Health staff investigate complaints by tenants of disrepair to private sector rented property and assess housing standards using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced under the Housing Act 2004. The HHSRS is used to calculate the severity of a problem in a dwelling by determining if any of 29 hazards are present and calculating how serious the health effect would be on the residents. A guide to the HHSRS and its operation can be found in Appendix 1.

8.1.2 The council has a duty to take statutory action to deal with a category 1 hazard and has discretionary power to take statutory action regarding category 2 hazards. Statutory notices can be served on both owner occupiers and landlords to require that work is carried out, or in extreme cases, for properties to be closed or demolished. In practice, the large majority of activity is concentrated on landlords to require repairs or improvements for the benefit of tenants.

8.1.3 We do all that we can to educate, inform and encourage property owners to fulfil their responsibilities. However, firm enforcement action to protect the health and safety of occupiers will sometimes be required, in accordance with our private sector housing enforcement policy.

### **8.1.2 Licensing of caravan sites**

8.2.1 Castle Point contains a high number of caravans and park homes in the Borough. 2011 Census data shows that the Council has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest number of households (1,275) living in caravans, mobile or temporary structures compared to other local authorities. When looking at this compared to other local authorities, since 2001 Castle Point has moved from being the 31<sup>st</sup> highest to the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest. Using the latest statistics, it is estimated the figure has now risen to 1,611.

8.2.2 The service is responsible for licensing the four residential and one non-residential caravan sites in the Borough under the provisions of the Caravan Sites Act 1968. Under the Mobile Homes Act 2013, the Council also has additional powers including the ability to proactively monitor site conditions and charge site owners for any intervention activities undertaken by the Council.

8.2.3 The service does not currently proactively monitor adherence with site licences (i.e. by completing regular inspections,) but does investigate complaints from residents and members of the public when they are received.

### 8.3 Provision of disabled facilities grants

8.3.1 Disabled facilities grants are available from the Council to pay for essential housing adaptations to enable disabled people to stay on in their own homes. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were introduced in 1990 but the principle legal provisions are now contained in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (HGCRA) and regulations made there under.

8.3.2 DFGs are mandatory grants available to disabled people when works to adapt their home are judged necessary and appropriate to meet their needs and when it is reasonable and practicable to carry them out having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building. Occupational Therapists working with Essex County Council assess whether any works are necessary and discuss the best available options with the Environmental Health Service at Castle Point Borough Council.

8.3.3 DFGs are generally subject to a means test which means that the applicant's income and savings have to be assessed to determine whether any contributions are required to be made by them towards the costs of the required work. The way in which the means test is carried out is governed by regulations and the Council does not have any discretion in applying it. Applicants in receipt of certain specified benefits are "passported" through the means testing process and children are exempt from the means test.

8.3.4 Subject to all the eligibility criteria being met, the Council must 'determine' (i.e. approve) properly made applications 'as soon as reasonably practicable' but no later than 6 months from the application date.

8.3.5 The maximum amount of DFG is currently set by statute at £30,000. However the Council will consider payment of an additional discretionary grant in exceptional circumstances.

8.3.6 The DFG grant will be recovered following the sale of the property within ten years of payment of the grant, provided the Council "is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment". Grants below £5,000 are excluded from repayment, and the maximum amount recoverable in any one case is limited to £10,000. Where the grant is in excess of £5000, only the amount in excess of £5000 is recoverable up to the maximum of £10,000. In the case of discretionary grants, the Council will seek to recover the value of the grant in full following the sale or transfer of the property.

8.3.7 In the event of an applicant's death before works are complete, the Council has the discretion to pay a grant towards any fees incurred, any works already carried out or any 'other relevant works.'

8.3.8 The service works in partnership with a Housing Improvement Agency at Basildon Borough Council, to assist customers through the process, including

application, financing advice, drawing up plans, tendering of works and ensuring that the works have been completed to the required standard.

#### 8.4 Licensing of housing in multiple occupation (HMOs)

- 8.4.1 Across the country, conditions in houses of multiple occupation tend to be less satisfactory than homes occupied by single households, especially in terms of fire safety. In such properties, residents commonly share facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- 8.4.2 This type of tenure includes dwellings where two or more tenants typically rent a single room each and share bathroom and kitchen facilities (commonly known as bedsits.) HMOs typically have poorer physical and management standards than other types of rented accommodation. However, for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society, they are often the only housing option.
- 8.4.3 Due to the often-limited space available in HMOs the potential for overcrowding, insufficient amenities, and lack of fire safety is ever present. It has been estimated that the overall risk of death from fire in a bedsit accommodation is six times higher than in other tenures.
- 8.4.4 As they are seen as high-risk premises, the Housing Act 2004 made provision for local authority licensing ('mandatory licensing') of HMOs consisting of 3 or more storeys, with 5 or more occupants. This has now been reduced to include 2 storey properties.
- 8.4.5 Relevant provisions include the Housing Act 2004, The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006, and the Essex HMO amenity standards. The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018 which introduces a tighter regime for the licensing of HMOs and the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018.
- 8.4.6 The Council inspects and licenses every 5 years any HMO which falls within the criteria for mandatory licensing.
- 8.4.7 The Council also operates a proactive approach to seek out licensable HMOs that we may be unaware of, to include the use of information received through members of the public, searching records held at the council and suspect properties that we become aware of while carrying out other environmental health functions.

#### 8.5 Housing overcrowding assessments

- 8.5.1 The service undertakes assessments under the Housing Act 2004 and Housing Act 1985, in terms of the overcrowding within residential properties. We use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to make an assessment of the risks posed to individuals living in a property where there are issues surrounding crowding and space. We also use figures set in law to

determine the maximum number of people who can occupy a dwelling based on the size and number of rooms and the age, sex and relationship of the people living there.

- 8.5.2 The number of people, rooms sizes and the facilities provided are also considered in determining the numbers of people who can live in Houses in Multiple Occupation. The Environmental Health Service also completes overcrowding assessments for Castle Point Council Housing Department where assistance is required when making assessments.

## **9.0 Scope of the service – Discretionary services currently undertaken**

### **9.1 Ad-hoc proactive projects**

- 9.1.1 From time to time the service undertakes a range of proactive projects, often in partnership with other Essex Local Authorities or external organisations such as the Police, HMRC and Border Force Officers. This includes joint investigations into illegal immigration, potential tax fraud and breaches of Housing law.

### **9.2 Landlords' Forum**

- 9.2.1 A scheme originally set up in conjunction with Rochford Council, later joined up with Thurrock and Basildon Council offering a local well-attended discussion forum with landlord and lettings industry representation with regular speakers, offering a cascade of the latest legal and other relevant information to private landlords. Following the success of last year's South Essex wide Landlords' Forum with the National Landlords Association, another forum is planned in November 2020.

### **9.3 Housing Forums**

- 9.3.2 The service participates in local and regional forums to discuss issues relating to private sector housing conditions, share best practice and examine the potential of joint working activities, to help improve private housing conditions.
- 9.3.3 The South Essex Private Sector Housing Sub Group is a networking partnership between Rochford, Castle Point, Thurrock, Basildon, Brentwood and Southend Councils, the National Landlords Association and the Eastern Landlords Association. This is facilitated by a representative of the main South Essex Housing Group (SEHG.) SEHG aims to contribute and influence national and regional housing agenda through supporting, developing and implementing local housing strategies.
- 9.3.4 The Essex Housing Group is a grouping of all 14 Essex Local Authorities, meeting every quarter to discuss matters relevant to private sector rented housing / Environmental Health, seeking to improve Housing conditions in the County.

#### 9.4 Provision of Housing Grants other than DFGs

- 9.4.1 The Castle Point Disabled Facilities Grants Policy and Guidance approved by CPBC cabinet in September 2018 also allows for discretionary grants to be offered to applicable customers.
- 9.4.2 The Disabled Facilities Grants “Top-up assistance” is additional money that can be provided by the Council in cases where the mandatory grant exceeds the statutory limit of £30000. The Special Assistance grant is to help applicants pay for home improvements where these items are not covered by the mandatory DFG. This may include the provision of a safe play space for a disabled child, to provide a specialist treatment area for specialist care.
- 9.4.3 On receipt of a recommendation from an Occupational Therapist, the Service will provide further advice and facilitate the application process for the applicant. The Service administers these grants for the benefit of disabled residents of the Borough.

#### 9.5 Ready to Rent Scheme

- 9.5.1 Coordinated by South Essex Local Authorities, Ready to Rent aims to encourage good practice in the private rented market by giving approval to lettings that meet a management code of practice and property standard. Ready to Rent is available to landlords of empty properties only.
- 9.5.2 This provides an inspection of the property using HHSRS criteria and provides confidence at the start of a tenancy that a property is free of category 1 hazards. For properties which pass the inspection, a certificate is issued that may provide supporting evidence if faced with action under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

#### 9.6 Energy efficiency schemes / ECO related activity

- 9.6.1 The Service has partnered with Rochford District Council and Aran Services Ltd to provide residents with free or discounted loft and/or cavity wall insulation. On request, a free home energy assessment will be made, and this will be used to potentially access grant funding from the ECO (Energy Company Obligation) scheme to reduce carbon emissions and reduce fuel poverty.
- 9.6.2 The Latest Policy ECO3 commenced in December 2018 and runs until March 2022 and the most common measures are loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, solid wall insulation and a new boiler.
- 9.6.3 An EPC / Energy efficiency project was recently initiated by the Service to identify and take action against properties with an EPC rating of F & G which are now illegal to let under the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015. This makes use of BRE data sourced through the stock modelling programme, to help identify illegally let properties.

## **10.0 Forward work plan**

10.0.1 The Castle Point Borough Council Housing Strategy 2020-2025 identifies corporate housing priorities which this private sector plan feeds into. The BRE stock condition modelling data and statistics were used to formulate both the Corporate Housing Strategy Priorities and that of the Private Sector Housing Work Plan.

10.0.2 We aim to carry out work to contribute towards the overall aims of the Corporate Housing Strategy, to contribute towards key priorities identified within the document and work to improve the overall condition of private housing in the Borough.

10.0.3 The below describes our 5 overall aims (A-E) which is further split into 8 planned work priorities (1-8):

### ***A) 'Engage with private landlords to ensure that those who rent privately in the Borough can access safe, healthy and good quality homes'***

- 1) Investigate a landlord accreditation scheme and support landlord forums
  - The Service aims to continue develop good relationships with private landlords through partnership work. This includes a joint approach with neighbouring councils to promote regular landlord's forum to share information. We aim to investigate landlord's accreditation schemes and aim to potentially work with our partners to promote such a scheme and its benefits, to ensure that landlords with property in the Borough manage their properties to a high standard, benefiting tenants and reducing the intervention work required by the Service.
- 2) Ensure effective coordination of caravan site works to reduce the number of caravans used by vulnerable people.
  - Working with CPBC Housing services and other partners, we intend to begin to proactively monitor conditions on all caravan sites and their adherence with licensing conditions. Where appropriate licensing conditions will be reviewed with the aim of improving the standard of caravans / park homes, particularly those in the private rented sector.
- 3) Ensure that any HMO which meets the criteria for inclusion on the mandatory licensing scheme, is identified, it's conditions fully assessed, and a license properly issued.
  - The service aims to further raise awareness with landlords as to the licence requirements and standards and encourage property owners to come forward, potentially with a temporary amnesty. We also aim to increase the volume of reported /identified HMO properties through increased public awareness and proactive joint working with relevant agencies. Through licensing we aim to

ensure that all HMOs covered by the mandatory scheme are of an acceptable standard, with enforcement action taken against those landlords that deliberately flout the rules.

***B) 'Work with partners to ensure that local residents can live in warm homes that they can afford to heat'***

- 4) Investigate and promote initiatives to improve energy efficiency of private sector housing stock and reduce fuel poverty.
  - Working with internal and external partners, aim to promote energy efficiency measures and available government grant funding. Work proactively to prevent properties with poor energy performance being illegally let out in the Borough.

***C) 'Ensure that the existing stock of homes in the Castle Point Borough is put to best use'***

- 5) Develop and implement a programme to reduce the number of empty homes
  - Focussing on long term empty properties, seek to encourage property owners to bring their empty properties back into use, initially on an informal basis, building on the experience of the South Essex Empty Homes scheme (2011-14). Ongoing review and intelligence on empty homes with internal partners enabling targeted interventions. Any major works in this area would be subject to available resource, so a business case will be considered with the aim of securing additional resource for this work if necessary.

***D) 'Ensure that local residents can live in safe, secure and accessible homes, by making effective use of informal persuasion, formal powers and provision of financial assistance.'***

- 6) Administer programmes for disabled facilities grants for the private and social housing sectors
  - The service will aim to work with our partners to ensure the most effective delivery of disabled facilities and discretionary grants, maximising the number of people that we can assist while delivering home improvements in the timeliest manner.
- 7) Investigate complaints of housing conditions and promote initiatives to reduce the number of categories 1 HHSRS housing failures in the Borough.
  - Ensure timely response to complaints of housing conditions in the Borough, seeking to use both informal means and legal powers where appropriate to secure improvements to private rented housing stock in the Borough. Make

use of BRE stock condition data to target area(s) where HHSRS cat 1 failures are likely, with the aim of promoting initiatives likely to reduce the prevalence of Cat 1 failure in these areas.

**E) 'Seek to provide an effective contribution towards overall CPBC corporate objectives and priorities'**

- 8) Ensure the work of the Service effectively contributes to the overall corporate objectives of the Council and specifically to the Corporate Housing Strategy
  - The service intends to join up with our partners in Housing, Planning Policy and Financial Services to develop effective action planning, performance monitoring and review activities, in the form of a Corporate Housing Governance group. The group will meet periodically and feedback progress via directorate highlight reporting to the programme board.

## 11.0) Forward Action plan

11.1) The below chart details the actions planned to meet our aims and objectives, performance targets will be updated as work comes on stream and the Housing Governance Group has been convened to allow further discussion.

What needs to be achieved (+work priorities ref no.)	How are you going to achieve it (Actions)	Who will be doing the work and are there any costs (Resources)	Who is the lead officer?	By what time do you expect the actions to be achieved?	Are there any performance measures / Outcomes you expect to see from completing the actions?	Are there any Risks that need to be considered ?
Private Sector Housing Service Plan (This document)	Private Sector Housing Service Plan developed setting out approach to managing Private Sector Housing conditions.	Environmental Health staff	Environmental Health Manager	Agreed at Cabinet March 2020	Document approved by cabinet.	Document not approved by Cabinet.
(1) Support landlord forums / investigate accreditation scheme	Investigate potential for landlord accreditation scheme and support Landlord forums	Environmental Health Staff	Environmental Health Manager	Landlord forum support ongoing.	Landlord forum successfully delivered.	Capacity of service to deliver work



What needs to be achieved (+work priorities ref no.)	How are you going to achieve it (Actions)	Who will be doing the work and are there any costs (Resources)	Who is the lead officer?	By what time do you expect the actions to be achieved?	Are there any performance measures / Outcomes you expect to see from completing the actions?	Are there any Risks that need to be considered ?
(2) Control of Caravan sites	<p>Ensure effective co-ordination and control of caravan sites and proactively work to ensure that site licensing conditions are fully complied with.</p> <p>Work with partners to examine the use of the site licensing regime to reduce the number of vulnerable people living in poor conditions and the replacement of sub-standard caravans with park homes meeting year-round living standards.</p>	<p>Environmental Health Staff</p> <p>Environmental Health Staff</p>	<p>Environmental Health Manager</p> <p>Environmental Health Manager</p>	<p>Annual inspection of sites by March 2021 / monitoring ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Annual inspection completed</p> <p>Decision to be made as to ability/willingness to use licensing regime to ensure the replacement of sub-standard caravans.</p>	Capacity of service to deliver work.
(3) HMO licensing	<p>Raise awareness of issues with landlords and public.</p> <p>Seek out potential unlicensed HMOs through partnership working and investigation.</p> <p>Inspect and issues licences.</p>	Environmental Health Staff	Environmental Health Manager	Ongoing	Increase in HMOs licensed by the authority.	Capacity of service to deliver work.

What needs to be achieved (+work priorities ref no.)	How are you going to achieve it (Actions)	Who will be doing the work and are there any costs (Resources)	Who is the lead officer?	By what time do you expect the actions to be achieved?	Are there any performance measures / Outcomes you expect to see from completing the actions?	Are there any Risks that need to be considered ?
	Enforce legislation with those deliberately flouting rules.					
(4) Energy Efficiency initiatives and enforcement	Investigate and promote initiatives to improve energy efficiency of private sector housing stock and reduce fuel poverty.  Work proactively to prevent properties with poor energy performance being let out.	Environmental Health Staff	Environmental Health Manager	Ongoing work	Reduction in number of properties let out with F or G EPC rating.	Capacity of service to deliver work
(5) Reduce the number of empty homes in the borough.	Work with internal partners to identify long-term empty homes in the Borough.  To communicate with the owners of long-term empty homes to support and encourage voluntary action to bring these homes back into use.	Environmental Health staff	Environmental Health Manager	Ongoing	Long term empty properties to be identified.  Contact to be made with property owners. Relevant information to be provided.	Capacity of Service to deliver work.  Work beyond basic information provision and encouragement is likely to require extra resource.

What needs to be achieved (+work priorities ref no.)	How are you going to achieve it (Actions)	Who will be doing the work and are there any costs (Resources)	Who is the lead officer?	By what time do you expect the actions to be achieved?	Are there any performance measures / Outcomes you expect to see from completing the actions?	Are there any Risks that need to be considered ?
(6) Support people in need and at risk by providing disabled facilities grants to enable them to stay in their own homes.	Administration of disabled facilities grant scheme. Process disabled facilities grants in a timely manner, adhering to local and statutory performance indicators.  Ensure effective partnership working with Basildon Borough Council HIA, via SLA. Monitor to ensure a high standard of service for the customer.	Environmental Health staff  Environmental Health Staff	Environmental Health Manager  Environmental Health Manager	Ongoing	% DFG applications processed within 6 months  % DFG cases processed within agreed timescales.	Allocated resource / government capital grant is insufficient.
(7) Reducing HHSRS 1 failures	Investigate complaints of housing conditions and promote initiatives to reduce the number of category 1 housing HHSRS failures.	Environmental Health Staff	Environmental Health Manager	Ongoing work	Investigate complaints within corporately set timescales.	Capacity of service to deliver work
(8) Ensure the work of the service effectively contributes to overall corporate	Form housing governance group, with colleagues from relevant Council Services	Officers from relevant service areas inc.EH.	TBC	TBC	TBC – Terms of reference	Capacity of all services to deliver work

What needs to be achieved (+work priorities ref no.)	How are you going to achieve it (Actions)	Who will be doing the work and are there any costs (Resources)	Who is the lead officer?	By what time do you expect the actions to be achieved?	Are there any performance measures / Outcomes you expect to see from completing the actions?	Are there any Risks that need to be considered ?
priorities						

## **12.0 Appendix A – Context in detail – Key housing strategy policy areas and legislation.**

### **12.1 Private rented sector**

12.1.1 In the report “Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England” Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the private rented sector and empty homes.

12.1.2 New measures are being developed to deal with rogue landlords and to encourage local authorities to make full use of enforcement powers for tackling dangerous and poorly maintained dwellings. The report encourages working closely with landlords whilst still operating a robust enforcement regime (e.g. Landlord Forums and Panels across the country).

12.1.3 There has been significant growth in the private rented sector in Castle Point in recent years from 4% of the total stock in 2001 to 12% in 2017 - so that 8% of the stock has changed over that time period to now be private rented. This is similar to the change of 9% seen in England as a whole.

### **12.2 Health inequalities**

12.2.1 The government’s white paper “Choosing Health” states that the key to success in health inequalities will be effective local partnerships led by local government and the NHS working to a common purpose Integrated Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database and reflecting local needs. Housing is a key determinant of health, and poor housing conditions continue to cause preventable deaths and contribute to health inequalities.

### **12.3 Integrated care**

12.3.1 It has been recognised by central government that to fully address the health needs of the population, services need to become more integrated and there needs to be better communication between different providers. Housing is a key aspect of this:

“Many people with mental and physical disabilities, complex needs, long-term conditions and terminal illness also need to access different health care, social care, housing and other services, such as education, and often simultaneously”

12.3.2 It is therefore essential that departments providing or regulating housing work with other council departments and health organisations to provide services that are integrated and take full account of the needs of the individual.

## **12.4 Public Health Outcomes Framework**

12.4.1 The Public Health Outcomes Framework “Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency” sets out desired outcomes for public health and how they will be measured. Many of the measurements have links to housing, some of the more relevant being:

- Falls and injuries in over 65's
- Fuel poverty
- Excess winter deaths

## **12.5 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies**

12.5.1 The JSNA and joint health and wellbeing strategy allow health and wellbeing boards to analyse the health needs of their local population and to decide how to make best use of collective resources to achieve the priorities that are formed from these. The Department of Health document “*Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and joint health and wellbeing strategies explained - Commissioning for populations*” says “This will ensure better integration between public health and services such as housing and education that have considerable impact on the wider determinants of health”.

## **12.6 Empty homes**

12.6.1 The need to bring empty private sector dwellings back into use is a key government objective that is part of a wider strategy to tackle housing affordability. It is generally accepted that in a time of housing shortage, empty dwellings represent a wasted resource.

12.6.2 There are several issues in dealing with private sector vacant dwellings including the transient nature of vacant dwellings and their difficulty of identification. Properties are being continually bought and sold, let and modernised, which means that at any given time a proportion of the stock will be naturally vacant. The only dwellings that tend to be of most interest to local authorities are those that are not turning over in the normal way.

12.6.3 The latest figures 2017 the number of properties classified above as unoccupied as a proportion of overall properties on the valuation list is relatively small at 2.18%, which is below the England average of 2.54%, of which 0.7% of dwellings are long-term vacant (6 months or more.) A report by the Council Revenues Service to Cabinet in September 2019 estimates that of

the long-term empty properties in the Borough, 129 homes have been empty for more than 2 years.

- 12.6.5 While empty properties are a wasted resource, many also have wider Environmental Health implications for the Borough. Long term empty homes are often left to deteriorate, with overgrown gardens harbouring vermin, water ingress affecting the condition of neighbouring properties and acting as a magnet for anti-social behaviour.

## **12.7 Potential increase in private rented sector properties**

- 12.7.1 Policies such as the Build to Rent and the New Homes Bonus are aimed at increasing the supply of properties. As the private rented sector is already growing, it is reasonable to assume that some of the new properties being built will be rented to private tenants. The Council will need to be aware of the potential impact on the demand for their services and how their perception of their local area may have to change if large numbers of properties are built.

## **12.8 Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) and EPC ratings**

- 12.8.1 The purpose of these statistics is twofold – firstly to provide central government with data with which to inform and monitor government strategies, policies and objectives as well as contributing to national statistics on housing, secondly, to the local authorities themselves to help manage their housing stock. Local authorities are required to complete an annual return which covers a wide range of housing-related issues. Of relevance is “Section F: Condition of dwelling stock” which, amongst other things, requests the following information:

- Total number of dwellings and number of private sector dwellings with category 1 HHSRS hazards and the estimated costs of mitigating these
- Estimates of the number of HMOs and the number of mandatory licensable HMOs

- 12.8.2 Whilst the LAHS no longer requires reporting of average EPC ratings of the private sector stock and the proportion below a certain rating, this information remains pertinent due to the Energy Act 2011. Under this act new rules mean that from 2018 landlords must ensure that their properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard - which has been set at band E - by 1 April 2018

## **12.9 The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)**

- 12.9.1 ECO requires energy companies to assist in the installation of energy efficiency measures in Great Britain to low income and vulnerable households. Under the ECO, energy companies are obliged to meet targets expressed as carbon or costs saved.
- 12.9.2 The Energy Company Obligation (ECO3) runs from Autumn 2018 until March 2022. The scheme delivers energy efficiency and heating measures to homes in Great Britain, including:

- focusing the entire scheme to support low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households
- reducing the current supplier obligation threshold of 250,000 customer accounts (or equivalent) for the scheme, in a phased way, to 150,000 customer accounts (or equivalent) from 2020
- requiring 15% of measures to be delivered to rural homes
- increasing the proportion of the scheme that can be delivered under local authority flexible eligibility to 25%
- allowing up to 10% of a suppliers' obligation to be met through the delivery of new, innovative products
- supporting households that have a broken heating system by allowing the equivalent of 35,000 broken heating systems to be replaced per year
- encouraging a multiple measure approach by allowing the replacement of inefficient heating systems to be replaced (outside of the broken heating system cap) if they are installed alongside insulation
- requiring the equivalent of at least 17,000 solid walled homes to be treated per year, either through solid wall insulation, or using a combination of other technologies (if equivalent savings can be achieved in the property.)

12.9.3 'Excess Cold' is one of the major hazards that is assessed by the Service when inspecting properties under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System criteria of the Housing Act 2004 (see following section) so by encouraging take-up of subsidies available under this scheme, there is an opportunity to reduce potential and actual category 1 hazards within the Borough.

## **12.10 Housing Act 2004**

12.10.1 The Housing Act 2004 'the Act' brought about fundamental changes to the statutory framework for private sector housing. The Act is the main piece of legislation used by the Service to improve housing conditions in the Borough. It contains statutory duties which must be complied with by the Council including:

- Introduced a duty on local authorities to keep housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them under relevant parts of the 2004 Act and other specified legislation.
- Introduced mandatory licensing for Houses in multiple occupation (HMO's) where they meet certain criteria.
- Replaced the previous fitness standard with the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System, placing a duty on Local Authorities to serve improvement notices where category 1 hazards are identified. Introduced under the Housing Act 2004, the HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies in dwellings. The HHSRS assesses

29 categories of housing hazards and determines whether the hazard is rated as category 1 or 2.

12.10.2 The Act is the major enforcement tool available to the Council when seeking to rectify complaints of poor housing conditions in the Borough, which has relevance to the private rented sector and tackling landlords who may be neglecting their responsibilities to their tenants.

### **12.11 Energy Act 2011**

12.11.1 The Act states that from April 2016 private landlords cannot refuse tenants reasonable requests for consent to energy efficiency improvements where a finance package through the Energy Company Obligation is available.

12.11.2 The Act also states that from April 2018 it will be unlawful for a landlord to rent out a residential property that does not reach a minimum energy efficiency standard set at EPC rating E. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) requires energy companies to assist low income and vulnerable households or those living in hard to treat properties to install energy efficiency measures. The Service can take advantage of this by encouraging take up of subsidised energy efficiency schemes operated in the Borough.

### **12.12 The Housing and Planning Act 2016**

12.12.1 The Housing and Planning Act introduced a range of measures relating to private sector housing:

- A duty on private landlords to ensure that electrical safety systems are met.
- Allowing local authorities to apply for a banning order to prevent a particular landlord/letting agent from continuing to operate where they have committed certain housing offences
- Creating a national database of rogue landlords/letting agents, which will be maintained by local authorities
- Allowing tenants or local authorities to apply for a rent repayment order where a landlord has committed certain offences (for example continuing to operate while subject to a banning order or ignoring an improvement notice). If successful, the tenant (or the authority if the tenant was receiving universal credit) may be repaid up to a maximum of 12 months' rent
- Introducing a new regime giving local authorities an alternative to prosecution for offences committed under the Housing Act 2004, including all HMO offences. Effectively, local authorities will have a choice whether to prosecute or impose a penalty with a maximum fine of £30,000. The local authority can also retain the money recovered, which is not currently the case with fines imposed in the magistrates' court
- An obligation on local authorities to ensure that a person applying for a HMO license is lawfully present in the UK and not and insolvent / undischarged bankrupt.



12.12.2 The Act provides the service with a further range of enforcement tools which assist with our overall aim of improving Housing Conditions in the Borough.

### **12.13 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 and the Welfare Reform Act 2012**

12.13.1 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 gained royal assent in March 2016. The Act introduces 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 reporting on the effect of 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. These include the following:

- Overall reduction in benefits – a four-year freeze on several social security benefits
- Benefit cap reduction – the total amount of benefit which a family on out of work benefits can be entitled to in a year will not exceed £20,000 for couples and lone parents, and £13,400 for single claimants, except in Greater London where the cap is set at £23,000 and £15,410 respectively
- Local Housing Allowance rent cap – this is the locally agreed maximum benefit threshold for a dwelling or household type within a defined geographical area. Therefore, if rises in rent outstrip growth in income, renters may find it increasingly difficult to pay
- A 1% reduction in social rents per year for 4 years to reduce the housing benefit bill

12.13.2 In addition, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 (which is in parts amended by the 2016 Act discussed above) is relevant to our Service– in particular the sections relating to the under occupation of social housing, and the benefit cap. Whilst this will mainly affect tenants in the social rented sector it will undoubtedly have an impact on private sector services. Social tenants may find themselves being displaced into the private sector, increasing demand in this area, and the tenants of Registered Providers (RP's) and some private landlords may have greater trouble affording rent payments. If tenants are in arrears on their rental payments, then authorities may be met with reluctance from landlords when requiring improvements to properties.

### **12.14 Localism Act 2011**

12.14.1 The Localism Act allows social housing providers to offer fixed term, rather than secure lifetime, tenancies. As with the Welfare Reform Act, this has a greater direct impact on the social rented sector, however, there is some concern this may lead to greater turnover of tenancies meaning such that some traditional social tenants may find themselves in the private rented sector.

12.14.2 Both policy changes above may increase the number of vulnerable persons in private sector properties. If this occurs any properties in this sector in poor

condition are likely to have a far greater negative impact on the health of those occupiers.

## **12.15 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Better Care Fund.**

- 12.15.1 A suitable, well adapted home can be the defining factor in enabling a disabled person to live well and independently. At a time of financial constraints and policy change, delivering to help with home adaptations in the most efficient and effective ways and making use of scarce resources is more important than ever.
- 12.15.2 Since 1990, local authorities have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes. The current legislative framework governing DFG's is provided by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
- 12.15.3 Mandatory Grants of up to £30000 must be provided, subject to means test for purposes defined in S23 of the Act. These criteria are largely around facilitating access to, from and around the home of the disabled person, which can involve such adaptations as ramps, stairlifts, through floor lifts, widening doors, providing showers/wet rooms through to home extensions to create more ground floor space.
- 12.15.4 Other specified purposes relate to making the dwelling safe, providing for or improving heating systems, facilitating the preparation and cooking of food, facilitating the use of a source of power, light and/or heat and caring responsibilities of a disabled person.
- 12.15.5 Since 2014 capital grant funding for this purpose has been provided to local authorities via the better care fund (BCF.) The BCF is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government which seeks to join up health and care services, so people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities for as long as possible. The BCF encourages integration by requiring clinical commissioning groups (CCG's) and local authorities, to enter into pooled budget arrangements and agree an integrated spending plan. Capital funding was previously provided directly from the Department for Communities and Local Government (now the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government) is now pooled into a joint Essex budget, which is then distributed to each second-tier authority for the provision of disabled facilities grants.
- 12.15.6 The council are committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure the continued and effective provision of adaptation grants to disabled persons and aim to continually refine the way that we operate, to ensure the best value for money for the Council and the most effective customer focussed service.
- 12.15.7 The Council's approach to providing assistance is described in our Disabled Adaptations Policy 2018.

## 13.0) Appendix B – Housing Health and Safety Rating System

Housing Act 2004 - HHSRS – The 29 hazards used by Environmental Health to assess condition of properties.

HHSRS 29 Hazards	
Damp & Mould	Threats to mental & physical wellbeing from living with dampness, mould, fungal growths and dust mites. <i>Most Vulnerable: 14 years or less</i>
Excess Cold	Threats to health from exposure to sub-optimal indoor temperatures. <i>Most Vulnerable: 65 years plus</i>
Excess Heat	Threats to health from excessively high indoor temperatures. <i>Most Vulnerable: 65 years plus</i>
Asbestos & MMF	Threats to health caused by exposure to asbestos and manufactured mineral fibres (MMF). <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Biocides	Threats to health from chemicals used to treat mould growth and timber in dwellings. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Carbon Monoxide & Fuel Combustion Products	Hazards to health due to high levels of CO, NO <sub>2</sub> , SO <sub>2</sub> & smoke in the atmosphere. <i>Most Vulnerable: for CO - 65 years plus for NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub> &amp; smoke - no specific group</i>
Lead	Threats to health from the ingestion of lead. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 3 years</i>
Radiation	Threats to health from radon gas, airborne or dissolved in water. <i>Most Vulnerable: People aged 60-64 who have had a lifetime exposure to radon</i>
Uncombusted Fuel Gas	The threat of asphyxiation due to fuel gas escaping into the atmosphere within a dwelling. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Volatile Organic Compounds	VOC's are diverse group of organic chemicals which includes formaldehyde that are gaseous at room temperature, and are found in a variety of materials within the home. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Crowding & Space	Health hazards linked to a lack of living space for sleeping and a normal family/household life. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Entry by Intruders	Problems keeping a dwelling secure against unauthorised entry, and the maintenance of defensible space. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Lighting	Threats to physical and mental health linked to inadequate natural and/or artificial light. It includes the psychological effect associated with the view from the dwelling through glazing. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
Noise	Threats to physical and mental health caused by noise exposure inside the dwelling or within its curtilage.

	<i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
<b>Domestic Hygiene, Pests &amp; refuse</b>	Health hazards due to poor design, layout and construction to the point where the dwelling cannot readily be kept clean and hygienic; access into and harbourage within dwelling for pests; inadequate and unhygienic provision for storing and disposal of household waste. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
<b>Food Safety</b>	Threats of infection due to inadequate facilities for the storage, preparation and cooking of food. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
<b>Personal Hygiene, Sanitation &amp; Drainage</b>	Threats of infection and threats to mental health associated with personal hygiene, including personal washing and clothes washing facilities, sanitation and drainage. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 5 years</i>
<b>Water Supply for Domestic Purposes</b>	The quality and adequacy of the water supply for drinking and for domestic purposes such as cooking, washing, cleaning and sanitation. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>
<b>Falls Associated with Baths etc</b>	Falls associated with a bath, shower or similar facility. <i>Most Vulnerable: 60 years plus</i>
<b>Falls on the Level</b>	Falls on any level surface such as floors, yards and paths. It also includes falls associated with trip steps, thresholds or ramps, where the change in level is less than 300mm. <i>Most Vulnerable: 60 years plus</i>
<b>Falls Associated with Stairs and Steps</b>	Falls associated with stairs, steps and ramps where the change in level is greater than 300mm. It includes falls on stairs or internal ramps within the dwelling, internal common stairs or ramps within a building, access to the dwelling and to shared facilities or means of escape in case of fire. It also includes falls over stair, step or ramp guarding (balustrading). <i>Most Vulnerable: 60 years plus</i>
<b>Falls between Levels</b>	Falls from one level to another, inside or outside a dwelling, where the difference in levels is more than 300mm. For example, falls out of windows, falls from balconies or landings, falls from accessible roofs, into basement wells, and over garden retaining walls. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 5 years</i>
<b>Electrical Hazards</b>	Hazards from electric shock or electricity burns, including from lightning strikes. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 5 years</i>
<b>Fire</b>	Threats from uncontrolled fire and smoke. It includes injuries from clothing catching alight, which appears to be common when people attempt to put out a fire. It does not include clothing catching alight from a controlled fire by reaching across a gas flame or an open fire used for space heating. <i>Most Vulnerable: 60 years plus</i>
<b>Hot Surfaces &amp; Materials</b>	Burns or injuries caused by contact with a hot flame or fire, and contact with hot objects or hot non-water based liquids, and scalds – injuries caused by contact with hot liquids and vapours. It includes burns caused by clothing catching alight from a controlled fire or flame. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 5 years</i>
<b>Collision &amp; Entrapment</b>	This includes risks of physical injury from: Trapping body parts in architectural features, e.g. trapping limbs or fingers in doors / windows; Colliding with objects e.g. glazing, windows, doors, low ceilings and walls. <i>Most Vulnerable: Under 5 years</i>
<b>Explosion</b>	Threat from the blast of an explosion, from debris generated by the blast, and from the partial or total collapse of a building as the result of an explosion. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>

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<b>Position &amp; Operability of Amenities</b>	Threats of physical strain associated with functional space and other features at dwellings. <i>Most Vulnerable: 60 years plus</i>
<b>Structural Collapse &amp; Falling Elements</b>	The threat of the dwelling collapsing, or a part of the fabric falling because of inadequate fixing or disrepair, or as a result of adverse weather conditions. Structural failure may occur internally or externally. <i>Most Vulnerable: No specific group</i>

**CABINET**

**18TH MARCH 2020**

**Subject: Corporate Plan - Annual Objectives 2020/21**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley, Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy and Resources**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed Annual Objectives 2020/21 and for Cabinet to recommend these objectives to Council.

**2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives**

- 2.1 These annual objectives support delivery of the corporate plan which is explicitly linked to all the Council's priorities.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet considers and approves the proposed Annual Objectives 2020/21 and recommends these objectives to Council for formal adoption.
- 

**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 Further to a review of the original Corporate Plan for 2018-21, a number of changes – principally to the annual objectives – were proposed which were reviewed by Scrutiny and all Policy and Scrutiny Committees before approval by Cabinet and formal adoption at Council in October 2019.
- 4.3 In the same report to Council in October 2019, in order to re-align corporate planning and financial planning, it was also proposed that:
- the 2019/20 annual objectives will form the basis of the 2020/21 annual objectives; and

- these annual objectives (including any changes) will be presented at the same time as the Policy Framework and Budget Setting 2020/21 report to Special Council in February 2020.

4.4 Following a review of the emerging service and directorate plans, which are produced each year across all service areas, there are a small number of changes proposed to the annual objectives as outlined in section 5 of this report and in Appendix 1.

## **5. Proposals**

5.1 Chapter 10 of the Corporate Plan sets out the annual objectives which are designed to ensure that the Council can achieve its medium-term corporate priorities. The objectives are reviewed each year as new service and directorate plans are drafted.

5.2 Changes are proposed to the following annual objectives (deletions with a strikethrough and new text underlined):

### ***Priority: Environment***

There are no proposed changes to the objectives under this priority.

### ***Priority: Housing & Regeneration***

Objective 5. Engage with the public and private sector to promote and obtain the development of good quality housing in the borough – including affordable housing, market housing and social housing – and ensure that developer contributions to new infrastructure are secured and spent.

Objective 8. ~~Develop and implement a strategic approach to dealing with homelessness~~ Deliver the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

### ***Priority: Health & Community Safety***

Objective 9. Develop partnership arrangements to create greater opportunities for more effective joint working, including ~~healthy living~~ health & wellbeing and community safety.

Objective 10. ~~Continue to improve the effectiveness of the Licensing Service and Community Safety work.~~

### ***Priority: Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council***

Objective 11. Implement initiatives to reduce costs of delivery or generate income whilst maintaining excellent customer services, including:

- Efficiencies through the use of technology
- Council website as a gateway to self-service, interactive forms and automation

## **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.

**c. Human resources and equality**

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

The refreshed corporate plan adopted by Council in October 2019 was accompanied by an updated Equality Impact Assessment as a background paper.

**7. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors**

Annual objectives adopted and in place from 1 April 2020.

**8. Background Papers**

Report to Council on 22 October 2019 - *Corporate Plan 2018-21 (2019 Refresh)*

**Report Author:** Ben Brook, Strategy, Policy and Performance Manager  
[bbrook@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:bbrook@castlepoint.gov.uk)



## Appendix 1 – Annual Objectives 2020/21

Annual Objective 2019/20	Annual Objective 2020/21
<p>1. To work with local authorities and partners to prepare a long-term strategy for the development of, and investment in, South Essex including a coherent 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.</p>	<p>1. To work with local authorities and partners to prepare a long-term strategy for the development of, and investment in, South Essex including a coherent 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.</p> <p>[Unchanged]</p>
<p>2. Ensure that the Borough's Parks, Public Open Spaces, Seafront &amp; Foreshore, Ancient Woodlands, Walks and Leisure facilities are well maintained, accessible and publicised to increase usage and satisfaction rates.</p>	<p>2. Ensure that the Borough's Parks, Public Open Spaces, Seafront &amp; Foreshore, Ancient Woodlands, Walks and Leisure facilities are well maintained, accessible and publicised to increase usage and satisfaction rates.</p> <p>[Unchanged]</p>
<p>3. Re-develop The Paddocks community hall to ensure the provision of a modern and efficient facility that is valued by the local community.</p>	<p>3. Re-develop The Paddocks community hall to ensure the provision of a modern and efficient facility that is valued by the local community.</p> <p>[Unchanged]</p>
<p>4. Engage with and influence the development of the new Resources and Waste Strategy for England</p>	<p>4. Engage with and influence the development of the new Resources and Waste Strategy for England</p> <p>[Unchanged]</p>
<p>5. Engage with the public and private sector to promote and obtain the development of good quality housing in the borough including affordable housing, market housing and social housing.</p>	<p>5. Engage with the public and private sector to promote and obtain the development of good quality housing in the borough – including affordable housing, market housing and social housing – <u>and ensure that developer contributions to new infrastructure are secured and spent.</u></p> <p>[Addition to this objective to capture work around s106 and in the future CIL]</p>

## Appendix 1 – Annual Objectives 2020/21

6. To improve the public realm of our town centres and deliver effective master planning for key sites.	6. To improve the public realm of our town centres and deliver effective master planning for key sites.  [Unchanged]
7. Agreement of the Local Plan and successful examination of the plan leading to its approval	7. Agreement of the Local Plan and successful examination of the plan leading to its approval  [Unchanged]
8. Develop and implement a strategic approach to dealing with homelessness	<del>8. Develop and implement a strategic approach to dealing with homelessness</del> <u>Deliver the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</u>  [Objective changed to reflect adoption of Strategy]
9. Develop partnership arrangements to create greater opportunities for more effective joint working, including healthy living and community safety.	9. Develop partnership arrangements to create greater opportunities for more effective joint working, including <del>healthy living</del> <u>health &amp; wellbeing</u> and community safety.  [Propose amendment to make a clearer link to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy]
10. Continue to improve the effectiveness of the Licensing Service and Community Safety work.	<del>10. Continue to improve the effectiveness of the Licensing Service and Community Safety work.</del>  [Propose removal as Annual Objective – Licensing-specific improvements embedded, Community Safety work picked up in objective 9]
11. Ensure the organisation has the right capacity and resources in place for effective customer focussed services whilst ensuring a balanced budget for 2020/21 and future years.	<del>11.</del> <u>10.</u> Ensure the organisation has the right capacity and resources in place for effective customer focussed services whilst ensuring a balanced budget for 2020/21 and future years.  [Unchanged]

## Appendix 1 – Annual Objectives 2020/21

<p>12. Implement initiatives to reduce costs of delivery whilst maintaining excellent customer services.</p>	<p>4211. Implement initiatives to reduce costs of delivery <u>or generate income</u> whilst maintaining excellent customer services, <u>including</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Efficiencies through the use of technology</u></li> <li>• <u>Council website as a gateway to self-service, interactive forms and automation</u></li> </ul> <p>[Proposed amendment to make role of technology explicit to this objective and also to reference the Council website]</p>
<p>13. Ensure the Council is fit for purpose by meeting national and local requirements to agreed timescales and to optimum performance standards.</p>	<p>4312. Ensure the Council is fit for purpose by meeting national and local requirements to agreed timescales and to optimum performance standards.</p> <p>[Unchanged]</p>

**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

**Subject: Council Tax – Local Council Tax Discount Scheme for Care Leavers**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Finance, Policy and Resources**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

This report sets out a proposal for Castle Point Borough Council to introduce a local Council Tax discount scheme for Care Leavers until the age of 21 years

**2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives**

- Commercial & Democratically Accountable Council

**3. Recommendations**

That Cabinet notes the content of this report and approves the introduction of a Care Leavers Discount Scheme from 1 April 2020 permitting care leavers under the age of 21 years to receive a Council Tax Discount as set out in the Scheme document at Appendix A.

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**4. Background**

- 4.1 The Children's Society published a report in March 2015 entitled Wolf at the Door which called for Council Tax exemptions for Care Leavers up to the age of 21 years old.
- 4.2 Research by the Children's Society found that council tax debt collection is harming care leavers as they are a particularly vulnerable group for council tax debt.
- 4.3 It found that when care leavers move into independent accommodation and begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time, this can often be a challenging time for them - particularly if they are falling behind on their council tax.
- 4.4 In September 2017, after this initial report, the Care Act was amended to raise the age that Local Authorities are responsible for Care Leavers to, to the age of 25.

- 4.5 The Children's Society also raised the age to which they recommend a Council Tax exemption to age 25.
- 4.6 The Government Strategy Keep on Caring – supporting young people from care to independence (July 2016) confirms that corporate parenting responsibilities should apply in relation to provision of all the services that a local authority provides.
- 4.7 This strategy recommends that Local Authorities consider discounts and exemptions from Council Tax for Care Leavers as a way of providing financial support and assisting them with establishing stability in their home lives.
- 4.8 At the Essex Finance Officers Association meeting on 19 December 2019, there was general agreement that;
- a) districts should reduce the council tax liability of Care Leavers;
  - b) that there should be the same approach across all Essex authorities to ensure consistency;
  - c) that Essex County Council would pay a share of the cost in proportion to their precept; and,
  - d) that any reduction would stop at age 21.
- 4.9 The numbers potentially involved for Castle Point are expected to be low (i.e. single figures).

## **5. Corporate Implications**

### **a. Financial implications**

Under Section 13A(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), the Council has the power to reduce liability for Council Tax in relation to individual cases or class(es) of cases that it may determine.

There are financial implications to awarding any discounts other than those currently available under the statutory legislation and the financial burden of Section 13A discounts has to be met through an increase in the general level of Council Tax for other payers or from the General Fund.

The total cost of the relief cannot be determined precisely as the number of care leavers, under the age of 21, and who reside in the Castle Point area cannot be accurately determined; neither can the value of other national discounts or exemptions or Council Tax Support they would be entitled to.

Essex County Council has agreed to pay a share of the cost in proportion to their precept.

### **b. Legal implications**

There are no direct legal implications.

### **c. Human resources and equality implications**

There are no human resource issues

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed - a copy is attached at Appendix B of this report.

The Policy will benefit all those Care Leavers living in the Essex area (excluding Southend and Thurrock) irrespective of their gender or all other categories.

**d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors**

**6. Background Papers:**

Appendix A: CPBC Care Leavers Scheme

Appendix B: EQIA for Proposed 2020-21 Care Leavers Scheme

Children's Society Report: Wolf at the Door (Mar 2015)

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/the-wolf-at-the-door-how-council-tax-debt-collection-is>

Statutory guidance: Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers (Feb 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers>

Policy Paper: Keep on caring - Supporting young people from care to independence (Jul 2016)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-on-caring-supporting-young-people-from-care-to-independence>

**Report Author: Gary Burns – Revenues Manager**

**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

**Subject: Council Tax – Local Council Tax Discount Scheme for Care Leavers**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Finance, Policy and Resources**

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-on-caring-supporting-young-people-from-care-to-independence>

**Report Author: Gary Burns – Revenues Manager**

## **Care Leavers Scheme**

### **1. Introduction**

It is the desire of Councils in Essex to assist children leaving the care of a Local Authority with their Council Tax liability until the age of 21 years.

- 1.1 This scheme utilises the discretionary power available to billing authorities arising from S13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to reduce, or further reduce, the amount of council tax a person is liable to pay as it sees fit.

### **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 For the purpose of this scheme, a 'Care Leaver' is defined as:

A person aged up to 21, who has either

- (a) been looked after by Essex County Council 'Essex' for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after by the local authority at school-leaving age or after that date; or
- (b) who is entitled to leaving care support from Essex.

- 2.2 The Children Act 1989 defines the categories of children entitled to leaving care support as:

'Eligible children' are those young people aged 16-17 who are still in care and have been 'looked after' for a total of 13 weeks from the age of 14 and including their 16th birthday;

'Relevant children' are those young people aged 16 and 17 who have already left care, and who were 'looked after' for at least 13 weeks from the age of 14 and have been 'looked after' at some time while they were 16 or 17;

'Former relevant children' are those young people aged 18, 19 or 20 who have been eligible and/or relevant.

### **3. Scheme statement**

- 3.1 For the purpose of calculating the amount of discretionary council tax reduction to apply, Care Leavers (and those in their household) are required to take steps to minimise their liability for council tax by claiming discounts, exemptions and council tax reduction.
- 3.2 After all discounts, exemptions and council tax reduction has been claimed the Council will reduce the council tax liability so that the liability of the household is the same that it would have been had the care leaver been a 'disregarded person' (such as students) as detailed in s11 and Schedule 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

For example:

A care leaver joining an existing household with a single person discount in place will be given sufficient discretionary relief to ensure that the council tax liability does not increase as a result of their presence.

A household where only care leavers are liable to pay council tax will be given sufficient discretionary relief to extinguish the council tax liability completely.

A care leaver in a property, which would otherwise be exempt from council tax, will be given sufficient discretionary relief to ensure that no council tax continues to be payable.

### **4. Effective Date & Review Arrangements**

- 4.1 This Scheme takes effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and will be reviewed annually by the Revenues Manager.



# **Local Council Tax Care Leavers Scheme 2020-21**

## **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

**Jan 2020**

# Strategy and Policy EqIA

All strategies and policies must be initially screened for their positive and negative equality impacts.

This initial screening will determine whether or not it is necessary to carry out a full EqIA for the strategy or policy.

This template has been designed to help you initially screen your strategy or policy and, if necessary, undertake a full EqIA .

<b>Title of strategy or policy:</b>	Local Council Tax Care Leavers Scheme
<b>Person undertaking EqIA:</b>	Gary Burns
<b>Head of Service:</b>	Craig Watts
<b>Department:</b>	Housing & Communities
<b>Date EqIA completed:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

# Strategy and policy overview

Strategy and policy overview	
What is the strategy or policy intending to achieve?	To introduce, from 1 April 2020, a local council tax discount for Care Leavers aged between 18 and 21 years old with a council tax liability.
What are the summary aims and objectives of the strategy or policy?	<p>A local authority has responsibility for a child in care up to the age of 21 and has further responsibilities up to the age of 25 where the Care Leaver is in full time education. A key priority is to support young people in care to move successfully into adult life and financial support and assistance is often critical in young adulthood.</p> <p>In late December 2016, the Department for Communities and Local Government published a Council Tax Information Letter referring to the July 2016 Department of Education 'Keep on Caring' cross government care leaver strategy</p> <p>The strategy set out the Government's ambitions for Care Leavers and highlighted that each Council, under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and through Council Tax Support Schemes, should be flexible to support this vulnerable group by offering discounts or exemptions from Council Tax. Consideration is being given to awarding a Council Tax discount to care leavers to alleviate some of the financial burden for this vulnerable group when transitioning into adulthood.</p>

## Appendix B

<p>Who will benefit from implementing the strategy or policy?</p> <p>What are the links to the Council's corporate priorities?</p> <p>What are the links to other Council strategies and policies?</p> <p>What are the links to other community strategies and policies?</p>	<p>This policy will ensure Care Leavers are eligible for Council Tax Discounts</p> <p>The scheme benefits young people who have left care and are becoming independent.</p> <p>This Policy supports the Council's corporate priority of being 'A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council' by ensuring the Council is 'fit for purpose by meeting national and local requirements to agreed timescales and to optimum performance standards' and 'ensuring the organisation has the right capacity and resources in place for effective customer focussed services whilst ensuring a balanced budget for 2020/21 and future years'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt Recovery Policy</li> <li>• Exceptional Hardship Policy</li> <li>• Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</li> <li>• Vulnerability Policy</li> </ul> <p>Government Policy on supporting young people from care to independence:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-on-caring-supporting-young-people-from-care-to-independence">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-on-caring-supporting-young-people-from-care-to-independence</a></p> <p>Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers</a></p> <p>Children's Society Report:  <a href="https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/the-wolf-at-the-door-how-council-tax-debt-collection-is">https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/resources-and-publications/the-wolf-at-the-door-how-council-tax-debt-collection-is</a></p>
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# Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 introduces 2 specific statutory duties on public bodies such as local authorities:

- **Socio-economic duty:**
  - Have due regard when making strategic decisions to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage
- **Single (integrated) equality duty:**
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other conduct prohibited by the Act
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not
  - Foster good relations between people who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not

The Equality Act 2010 brings together all of the different equality strands and refers to them as “**protected characteristics**”:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation



# Initial screening

This initial screening template will determine whether or not the strategy or policy requires a full EqIA  
If any of the answers to the 6 screening questions is “yes”, then a full EqIA will be required.

Initial screening		
Does the strategy or policy aim to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage?	<b>Yes / <del>No</del></b>	The Policy aims to provide financial assistance in meeting Council Tax costs for a small cohort of individuals for whom the Council has a responsibility in its role as a corporate parent.
Does the strategy or policy aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	<b><del>Yes</del> / No</b>	Not applicable
Does the strategy or policy aim to advance equality of opportunity?	<b>Yes / <del>No</del></b>	The Policy aims to provide financial support with Council Tax for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged whilst encouraging independence.
Does the strategy or policy aim to foster good community relations?	<b>Yes / <del>No</del></b>	It is expected that the discount for Care Leavers will represent a move towards a more cohesive community as it will help reduce the gap between care leavers and their peers by reducing the financial burden upon them.

## Appendix B

Does the strategy or policy have the potential to make a negative contribution to equality?	<del>Yes</del> / No	
Does the strategy or policy make a positive contribution to equality?	<del>Yes</del> / <del>No</del>	This policy will result in more favourable treatment being applied to Care Leavers living in the borough in order to advance equality of opportunity.
Initial screening outcome	<b>Full EqlA is required</b>	

# Full assessment

Information gathering	
What quantitative and qualitative information is there?	National research indicates that this group of young people is significantly disadvantaged in a range of outcomes compared to their peers
What additional information is required?	No further information is required.
What are the outcomes of any internal and/or external consultation with stakeholders?	At this stage no external engagement has taken place due to the small cohort of individuals who are impacted upon as a result of this change
What further consultation is required?	
What examples are there of existing good practice?	Essex wide proposal supported by Essex County Council and similar to a number of schemes already in place nationally.

Making a judgement	
How will the strategy or policy eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	By disregarding Care Leavers from council tax payments, the proposal intends to aid a vulnerable group in reducing the financial gap between them and their peers, when transitioning into adulthood
How will the strategy or policy advance equality of opportunity?	This policy will result in more favourable treatment being applied to Care Leavers living in the borough in order to advance equality of opportunity, with the overall aim of removing financial barriers, resulting in increased opportunities for employment, education and or training as well as an increase in financial well-being and inclusion
How will the strategy or policy foster good community relations?	It is expected that the exemption for Care Leavers will represent a move towards a more cohesive community as it will help reduce the gap between care leavers and their peers by reducing the financial burden upon them. The exemption thus represents an additional level of support for a vulnerable group.
Does the strategy or policy have the potential to make a negative contribution to equality?  If so, which groups with “protected characteristics” will be affected and what are the reasons?	No

**Appendix B**

What can be done to address any contribution to inequality caused by the strategy or policy?	Not applicable
What can be done to assist understanding of the strategy or policy?	<p>Details of the scheme will be publicised on the council website <a href="http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk">www.castlepoint.gov.uk</a> , and will be provided in hard copy and alternative formats (i.e. Braille, Large Print, Audio) on request.</p> <p>First Contact customer service staff are available to explain the scheme to any individuals or organisations who require assistance.</p>

Action plan					
Equality objective	Action(s)	Lead responsibility	Resources	Timescale(s)	Outcome(s)

**CABINET**

**18th March 2020**

**Subject: Corporate Performance Scorecard Quarter 3 2019/20**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Sheldon - Commercial Contracts and  
Commercial Opportunity**

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**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To set out the performance figures for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for quarter 3 (from 1 October 2019 to 31 December 2019).

**2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives**

- 2.1 The scorecard is explicitly linked to the Council's priorities.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet notes the report and continues to monitor performance.
- 

**4. Background**

- 4.1 The Corporate Scorecard reports on performance indicators for important service outcomes that are relevant to the Council's priorities.
- 4.2 The indicators for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for 2019/20 were considered and approved by Cabinet in June 2019.

**5. Report**

**5.1 Summary of performance**

- 5.1.1 The performance summary in Appendix 1 sets out the performance achieved by the Council against the measures in the scorecard. Of the 24 indicators reported, 17 are at or above target, a further 3 are near target and 2 indicators did not meet the target. The homelessness indicator – split into two parts – has a new definition for 2019/20 and therefore will not have a target until we can establish a baseline of typical performance over the year. Trend in performance shows that there is improving performance in 15 indicators, decreasing performance for 3 indicators and performance levels maintained for a further 2 indicators. The remaining 4 indicators do not have an indication of trend.

### 5.1.2 Performance is set out against the four priorities in the Corporate Plan as follows:

#### ***Environment***

Although the household recycling figure is slightly below target, when combined with household composting (including food waste) the performance is 52.8% and exceeds the combined target of 50%. The service is working to increase recycling rates through additional advertising (especially on social media), redesign of recycling guides and staff training on contamination. Waste collected over Christmas will be reflected in January's performance figures.

The good performance for street cleanliness continues this quarter with just 7.9% of inspected streets deemed unsatisfactory, down from 8.5% over the same period last year.

Fly tipping removal is above target and the number of requests for grass verge cutting has understandably dropped off at this time of the year.

#### ***Housing and Regeneration***

Tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance at 99.4% remains strong. The average void turnaround time was 15.4 days for the quarter; on target and down from 27.1 days over the same period last year.

The percentage of planning applications processed within target times has two measures – one for major and one for non-major applications. The method of calculating these planning indicators now mirrors the method used for returns to Government – this gives a longer-term view of performance as it looks over a rolling two-year period. Nationally-set targets have been comfortably achieved and performance has improved when compared with the same period last year.

The building control service ensured all applications were processed within statutory timescales.

Full Council approved the draft Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation on 22 October 2019. The Council also approved the LDS. The LDS requires consultation at Regulation 19 which started in December 2019 and ran to 14 February. Responses are being reviewed and summarised into a Statement of Community Engagement. Any further work required to improve soundness and legal compliance in light of the responses is being considered.

The preparation of the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) has run concurrent with the development of the wider strategies for South Essex. A new Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the plan needs to be approved. This new LDS will reset the timescales for this performance indicator. The JSP is part of a suite of documents that set out how the transformation will be achieved and investment secured for south Essex.

#### ***Health and Community Safety***

The Homelessness indicator was introduced in Q4 2018/19, following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act. This indicator looks at the success rate of the homelessness team in preventing and relieving homelessness.

Performance is derived from Government-verified statistics which, at the time of publication of this report, show performance to the end of September 2019. Year-to-date performance shows that the service secured accommodation for 7 out of every 10 households to whom the Council owed a Prevention duty and 4 out of 10 households to whom we owed a Relief duty.

The percentage of food premises that have been awarded a score of at least 3 on the food hygiene rating scheme was 93% (425 of 457 premises) and exceeded the target of 90% which is strong performance.

Satisfaction with Leisure Services is measured by a Net Promoter Score which can range from -100 (where everybody is a detractor and would not recommend the service) to +100 (where everybody is a promoter and would recommend the service). Waterside Farm achieved an exceptionally high score of 72 with Runnymede achieving a very high score of 62. Both scores are improvements on the same period last year. The Runnymede score is just below target. Feedback from customers refers to car parking – we expect this to improve now that the ANPR is active – and lack of dry-side shower facilities.

The number of leisure memberships stood at 3,088 at the end of Q3 2019/20, an increase from 2,869 memberships at the same point in 2018/19 and is on target for 3,200 memberships by year-end.

### ***A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council***

The First Contact team continue to deal with queries effectively; 94% of calls received were dealt with at the first point of contact without the need to transfer to the back office. This is just below target this quarter.

The sickness absence indicator has been split between short-term and long-term (4 calendar weeks or more) with targets adjusted to reflect levels seen in previous years as well as some comparative data. At 4.5 days against a target of 4.6 days, short-term absence has met target and is an improvement from the same period last year. Long-term absence has increased from the same period last year (from 4.2 days to 4.8 days) and is missing its target. All sickness absence is reported to First Care who provide health advice to the employee and management information to the services. This includes alerts when triggers are met and reminders to complete Return to Work Interviews. These processes involve referral to Occupational Health/Counselling when required and management review meetings.

Another new measure for 2019/20 is the number of wheeled bin garden waste subscribers. The service has an annual target of 8,970 subscribers to the wheeled bin garden waste collection service. Performance at the end of Q3 (9,114 subscribers) means the service has met this annual target and there are now over 1,300 more subscribers than at the same time last year.

The Council is keen to encourage members of the public and businesses to sign up to its e-billing service for council tax and business rates. The number signed up this service is 7,382 which is above the Q3 target of 7,375. The service will continue to promote e-billing to customers and is on track to have 7,500 customers signed up by the end of the financial year.



5.1.3 Further information and commentary on performance is set out in the table in Appendix 1.

## **6. Corporate Implications**

### **a. Financial implications**

Good performance on some indicators can lead to reduced costs.

### **b. Legal implications**

There are no direct legal implications at this stage.

### **c. Human resources and equality**

There are no direct human resource or equality implications at this stage.




### **d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors**

Monitoring of the Corporate Performance Scorecard is ongoing throughout the year.

## **7. Background Papers:**

None





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Key	
	More than relative 10% below target
	Less than relative 10% below target
	On or above target

## Appendix 1: Corporate Scorecard 2019/20 (Environment)

Quarter 3: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Note: All performance values are cumulative (i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> April to end of June/September/December/March) unless otherwise stated

PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018/2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
OPS4: Percentage of Household Waste Recycled  Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	24.1%	24.8%	25.0%			Recycling performance has improved compared with the same period in 2018/19 although is just below target. The service is working to increase recycling rates through additional advertising (especially on social media), redesign of recycling guides and staff training on contamination. Much of the Christmas waste will come through in January.  <i>Note: Figures are early estimates and may be subject to change.</i>
OPS5: Percentage of Household Waste Composted (including food waste)  Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	27.1%	28.0%	25.0%			Performance is above target and an improvement on the same period in 2018/19.  <i>Note: Figures are early estimates and may be subject to change.</i>




PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018/ 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
SS2 Percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory using Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse methodology.  Service Manager: Contracts Manager	8.5%	7.9%	Less than 10.0%	↑	✓	Pinnacle continue to provide a litter clearance programme that keeps the proportion of streets deemed unsatisfactory to below 10%.
SS3: Fly tips removed within one working day  Service Manager: Contracts Manager	100%	97%	90%	↓	✓	The third quarter showed the lowest levels of fly tipping in the Borough for over a year. Defaults were served for those fly tips not removed within one working day.
SS4: Number of default notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting  Service Manager: Contracts Manager	0	0	Under 90	↔	✓	No Defaults served as ground conditions limit cutting.
SS5: Number of service requests received in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting  Service Manager: Contracts Manager	14	4	45	↑	✓	As to be expected at this time of year, the number of service requests has fallen significantly (and is even fewer than over the same period in 2018/19).

# Corporate Scorecard 2019/20 (Housing and Regeneration)

Quarter 3: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Note: All performance values are cumulative (i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> April to end of June/September/December/March) unless otherwise stated



PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018 / 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
HOS1: Overall tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance  Service Manager: Housing Services Manager	96.5%	99.4% (YTD)	97%	↑	✓	Resident satisfaction with repairs and maintenance remains in excess of target.
HOS6: Average Void Turnaround Time  Service Manager: Housing Services Manager	27.1 Days	15.4 Days	20.5 Days	↑	✓	Focus on this area has continued to see performance exceeding the target set (lower number is better performance).
Percentage of planning applications processed within target time limits for major and non-major applications  Service Manager: Planning & Development Enforcement Manager	97.0%  98.8%	97.7%  99.3% (see note)	Major 60%  Non-Major 70%	↑  ↑	✓  ✓	This definition of this indicator has changed in 2019/20 to reflect the returns to Central Government. Performance is now shown on a two-yearly rolling basis. Performance determining Major and Non-Major applications has improved since the same period last year and both are comfortably above Government-set targets  <i>Note: Figures represent performance for 24 months to the end of September 2019 as Government-produced statistics to the end December 2019 are not yet available.</i>




PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018 / 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
BC1: Percentage of Building Control applications processed within statutory time limits  Service Manager: Building Control Manager	100%	100%	100%	↔		All applications continue to be processed within time limits.
NEW: Progress of Local Plan against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS)  Service Manager: Head of Place and Policy	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A		Full Council approved the draft Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation on 22 October 2019. The Council also approved the LDS.  The LDS requires consultation at Regulation 19 which started in December 2019 and ran to 14 February. Responses are being reviewed and summarised into a Statement of Community Engagement.  Any further work required to improve soundness and legal compliance in light of the responses is being considered.
NEW: Progress of the Joint Strategic Plan against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS)  Service Manager: Head of Place and Policy	N/A	0%	100%	N/A		The preparation of the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) has run concurrent with the development of the wider strategies for South Essex. A new Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the plan needs to be approved.  This new LDS will reset the timescales for this performance indicator.  The JSP is part of a suite of documents that set out how the transformation will be achieved and investment secured for south Essex.

# Corporate Scorecard 2019/20 (Health and Community Safety)

Quarter 3: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Note: All performance values are cumulative (i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> April to end of June/September/December/March) unless otherwise stated

PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018 / 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
<p>NEW: Percentage of prevention or relief duties which ended during the quarter with a successful outcome of:</p> <p>a) Homelessness Prevented b) Homelessness Relieved</p> <p>Service Manager: Housing Options Manager</p>	N/A	<p>a) 70% b) 40%</p> <p>(Q2 cumulative performance – see note)</p>	TBC	N/A	N/A	<p>This is a new measure for 2019/20 and therefore will not have a target until we can establish a baseline of performance over the year.</p> <p>From 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Prevention duty ended for 84 households of which we secured accommodation for 59 households (70%).</li> <li>the Relief duty ended for 72 households of which we secured accommodation for 29 households (40%)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Performance is cumulative and figures represent performance from April 2019 to end September 2019 – delay is due to verification process from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.</i></p>
<p>EH2: Percentage of food premises that are awarded a score of at least 3 on the food hygiene rating scheme.</p> <p>Service Manager: Environmental Health Operational Manager</p>	92%	93%	90%			<p>93% (425 of 457 premises) rated under the food hygiene rating scheme were awarded 3* or above.</p>

PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018 / 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
<p>L1: Leisure satisfaction – Net Promoter Score</p> <p>a) Waterside Farm b) Runnymede</p> <p>Service Manager: Leisure and Community Services Manager</p>	<p>a) 65 b) 54</p>	<p>a) 72 b) 62</p>	65	<p>↑ ↑</p>	<p>a)  b) </p>	<p>The leisure centres continue to score very highly in the Net Promoter Score with results for both centres showing improvement on performance at the same time last year.</p> <p>The Runnymede score is just below target. Feedback from customers refers to car parking – we expect this to improve now that the ANPR is active – and lack of dry-side shower facilities.</p>
<p>L3: Leisure Memberships</p> <p>Service Manager: Leisure and Community Services Manager</p>	2869	3088	3200 (annual target)	↑		<p>The number of leisure memberships stood at 3088 at the end of Q3 2019/20. This was an increase from the same point in 2018/19 and is on target to achieve 3200 members by the end of the financial year.</p>

# Corporate Scorecard 2019/20 (A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council)

Quarter 3: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

Note: All performance values are cumulative (i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> April to end of June/September/December/March) unless otherwise stated

PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018/ 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
<p>FC1: Percentage of calls taken from customers by First Contact that are dealt with without the need to transfer to the back office</p> <p>Service Manager: Revenues &amp; Benefits Transformation Manager</p>	95%	94%	95%	↓	⚠	<p>Performance has been slightly impacted by the switch from Landlines to Skype telephony in November.</p> <p>Of the 13,118 calls received, 12,349 were dealt with at the first point of contact without the need to transfer to the back office.</p>
<p>CORP1: Average number of days sickness absence per FTE staff for all Council Services (rolling year)</p> <p>a) Short term b) Long term</p> <p>Service Manager: Human Resources Manager</p>	<p>a) 4.9 days b) 4.2 days</p>	<p>a) 4.5 days b) 4.8 days</p>	<p>a) 4.6 days b) 3.9 days</p>	<p>↑ ↓</p>	<p>✔ ❌</p>	<p>This measure now shows sickness absence levels split by short-term and long-term (4 calendar weeks or more). Both are reported on a rolling year and targets have been adjusted considering past performance and comparative data.</p> <p>Short-term sickness absence is 4.5 days against a target of 4.6 days and an improvement on the same period last year.</p> <p>Long-term sickness absence is 4.8 days, missing target and up from 4.2 days at the same time last year.</p> <p>All sickness absence is reported to First Care who provide health advice to the employee and</p>



PI Code & Short Name	Q3 Value 2018/ 2019	Q3 Value 2019 / 2020	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
						management information to the services. This includes alerts when triggers are met and reminders to complete Return to Work Interviews. These processes involve referral to Occupational Health/Counselling when required and management review meetings.
NEW: Number of wheeled bin garden waste subscribers  Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	7808	9114	Annual Target 8970	↑	✓	The service has an annual target of 8970 subscribers to the wheeled bin garden waste collection service and this target has been exceeded at the end of Q3.  The number of new subscribers expected in Q4 is very low as it is too close to the end of the financial year.
REV6: Take up of e-billing services for Council Tax and Business Rates  Service Manager: Revenues & Benefits Transformation Manager	6901	7382	7375	↑	✓	The number of customers signed up to e-billing was 7382 at the end of quarter 3 which is above target and on track for 7500 customers signed up by the end of the financial year.