



Council Offices, Kiln Road,
Thundersley, Benfleet,
Essex SS7 1TF.
Tel. No: 01268 882200
Fax No: 01268 882455



David Marchant LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons) CEng FICE FCMI
Chief Executive

CABINET AGENDA

Date: Wednesday 19th September 2018

Time: 7.00pm NB Time

Venue: Council Chamber

This meeting will be webcast live on the internet.

Membership:

Councillor Smith	Chairman - Leader of the Council
Councillor Stanley	Finance, Policy and Resources
Councillor Mrs Egan	Housing and Council Homes
Councillor Howard MBE	Streets, Waste, Floods and Water Management
Councillor Isaacs	Neighbourhoods & Safer Communities
Councillor MacLean	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Mumford	Regeneration & Business Liaison
Councillor Sheldon	Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunity
Councillor Varker	Environment & Leisure

Cabinet Enquiries:	John Riley Ext 2417/Ann Horgan ext. 2413
Reference:	3/2018/2019
Publication Date:	Tuesday 11th September 2018

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

1. Apologies

2. Members' Interests

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2018.

4. Forward Plan

To review the Forward Plan.

5. Public Health and Wellbeing

5(a) Revision of Disabled Facilities Grants Policy

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing)

6. Environment

7. Transforming Our Community

7(a) Setting up of new markets in Hadleigh and Canvey Island Town Centre

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Business Liaison)

7(b) Local Plan Intervention

(Report of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Business Liaison)

7(c) Housing Asset Management Plan

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Council Homes)

8. Efficient and Effective Customer Focused Services

8(a) Financial Update

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources)

8(b) Annual Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential indicators

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources)

8(c) Corporate Plan

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy & Resources)

8(d) Corporate Performance Scorecard Quarter 1, 2018-2019

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunities)

9. Matters to be referred from /to Policy & Scrutiny Committees

10. Matters to be referred from /to the Standing Committees

There are no matters.

PART II

(Business to be taken in private)

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

There were no items known at the time of publication of the agenda.

INFORMAL

CABINET SESSION

All Councillors are welcome to take part in this informal question time session with Cabinet at the end of the meeting. The session will be time limited and will conclude not later than 9pm.



CABINET

18TH JULY 2018

PRESENT:

Councillor Smith Chairman	Leader of the Council
Councillor Stanley	Finance, Policy and Resources
Councillor Mrs Egan	Housing and Council Homes
Councillor Howard MBE	Streets, Waste, Floods and Water Management
Councillor Isaacs	Neighbourhoods & Safer Communities
Councillor MacLean	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Mumford	Regeneration & Business Liaison
Councillor Sheldon	Commercial Contracts and Commercial Opportunities
Councillor Varker	Environment & Leisure

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors: Acott, Campagna, Greig, Hart, Mrs Haunts, Johnson, Palmer, Riley, Mrs Sach, Skipp Mrs G. Watson and N. Watson.

11. MEMBERS' INTERESTS:

Councillor Sheldon declared an interest in Items 6a Minute 14 and 7a Minute 15 as an Essex County Councillor; Chairman of the Local Highways Panel and Deputy Essex County Council Cabinet member.

12. MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th June 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. FORWARD PLAN:

To comply with regulations under the Localism Act 2011, the Leader of the Council presented a revised Forward Plan to the meeting which outlined key decisions likely to be taken within the next quarter 2018. The Plan was reviewed each month.

Councillor Howard gave an update on a recent meeting of the Essex Flood Board and was able to pass on assurances from the Essex County Council; Environment Agency and Anglian Water that arrangements were in place should it be necessary to respond to heavy rainfall when this period of fine weather ends.

Resolved – To note and approve the Forward Plan.

14. HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS – ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL MATCH FUNDING OFFER

Cabinet considered a report advising of a match funding offer of up to £100k described in the report from Essex County Council (ECC) for highway improvements. (This was ratified by ECC Cabinet on 17.7.2018)

It was suggested that the Council took up this offer subject to certain matters. These were that the funding was to be used for highway improvements and not routine maintenance. Secondly ECC agrees to roll forward its funding contribution to future years until such time that all the highway improvements schemes funded by this agreement have been completed; and finally to approve the transfer of £100k from reserves to fund this Council's contribution to highway improvements.

Resolved:

1. To note the content of this report;
2. To accept the match funding offer of up to £100k from ECC subject to (i) the funding being used for highway improvements and not routine maintenance and (ii) ECC agreeing to roll forward its funding contribution to future years until such time that all the highway improvements schemes funded by this agreement have been completed; and
3. To approve the transfer of £100k from reserves to fund this Council's contribution to highway improvements.

15. PROVISION OF CLINICAL WASTE AND OFFENSIVE WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES

Cabinet considered a report informing of the decision by NHS England to cease clinical waste and offensive waste collections from householders and advising Cabinet of the need for this Council to offer clinical waste collections from January 2019. A further report would be made to Cabinet on the details of the service once information had been received from the NHS and the current contractors.

Resolved:

1. To note the decision by NHS England to cease providing clinical waste and offensive waste collections from 1 January 2019;
2. To endorse the need for the Council to provide a clinical waste collection service from 1 January 2019;

3. To agrees to the collection element of the clinical waste charge being funded by the Council for an initial 12 month period to allow officers time to ascertain likely demand levels beyond this point, with any additional costs that cannot be covered from savings elsewhere being drawn from reserves; and
4. To reviews the arrangements after the new service has been in operation for one year and take up/ services costs are better understood.

16. REGENERATION AND ASSETS UPDATE

The Cabinet considered a report informing the Cabinet of progress with current active regeneration and asset initiatives.

A schedule attached to the report informed the Cabinet regarding progress with the following key projects.

For the Hadleigh Town Centre “Gateway” site, options for the future of the wider site, as well as the Council’s land at the former Crown PH site were now being considered and a separate report would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet once this work had concluded.

Proposals had been approved to allow for egress from the Morrison’s store onto London Road, together with any consequential alterations to the bus lane. Once these proposals had been confirmed, detailed design and implementation work could begin on public realm improvements to the public footpaths in the town centre in the vicinity of the Morrison’s store.

For Canvey Island, consultation on the proposed master plan for the seafront area had revealed some interesting proposals and these were under consideration.

Work on a detailed business case for proposals at The Paddocks for new community space continued in accordance with the Cabinet’s decision in January 2018.

Resolved:

To note the progress underway on the initiatives set out in the Schedule to the report.

17. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM/TO POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES:

There were no matters.

18. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM /TO THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES:

There were no matters.

Chairman



Castle Point Borough Council

Forward Plan

SEPTEMBER 2018

CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2018

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 continually.

Date	<u>Item</u>	Council Priority	Decision by Council/ Cabinet	Lead Member(s)	Lead Officer(s)
September 2018	<u>Housing Asset Management Plan</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Housing and Council Homes	Head of Housing & Communities
October 2018	<u>Canvey Island Seafront</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Strategic Partnerships Regeneration & Business Liaison	Local Plan & Regeneration Advisor
October 2018	<u>Regeneration & Assets Update</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Strategic Partnerships Regeneration & Business Liaison	Local Plan & Regeneration Advisor
October 2018	<u>Thames Estuary Commission</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Strategic Partnerships Regeneration & Business Liaison	Local Plan & Regeneration Advisor
September /October	<u>Interreg Approvals – Markets Hadleigh Canvey Island</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Strategic Partnerships Regeneration & Business Liaison	Local Plan & Regeneration Advisor
October 2018	<u>The Paddocks – Business Case</u>	Transforming Our Community	Cabinet	Environment & Leisure Finance, Policy & Resources	Strategic Director (Resources)
October 2018/	<u>Budget and Policy Framework</u>	All	Cabinet/ Council	Finance, Policy & Resources	Head of Resources

February 2019	To make recommendations to Council on the Council tax and budget setting.				
November 2018	<u>Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2019/20</u> Consideration of response to consultation on options and arrangements	Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed Services	Cabinet /Council	Finance, Policy and Resources	Revenues& Benefits Transformation Manager Head of Resources
September/ November 2018	<u>Financial Update</u>	Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed Services	Cabinet	Finance, Policy & Resources	Strategic Director (Resources)
Sept /October 2018	<u>Treasury Management Report – Updates</u>	Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed Services	Cabinet	Finance, Policy & Resources	Strategic Director (Resources)

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Disabled Facilities Grants Policy

Cabinet Member: Councillor MacLean – Health and Well Being

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks the approval of Cabinet for revisions made to the Disabled Facilities Grants Policy for Castle Point Borough Council.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

The new policy links directly to the Council's Community Safety Priority.

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet approves and agrees to adopt the revisions described to the Disabled Facilities Grants Policy & Guidance document with immediate effect.

4. Background

- 4.1 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 associated regulations.
- 4.2 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 decide the best available adaptation options for the disabled person, in conjunction with the Environmental Health Service at Castle Point Borough Council.
- 4.3 Examples of the type of adaptation works previously funded by the Council for local residents have included:

- Stair lifts
- Through Floor Lifts
- Wet rooms
- Specialist Toilets
- Reconfiguration of rooms / widening of doorways
- House extensions
- Ramps to enable front and rear access to properties
- Heating improvements

- 4.4 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 cost of the required work. The way 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 benefits are 'passported' through the means testing process (automatically approved for a 100% contribution from the Council) and children are exempt from the means test.
- 4.5 Subject to all eligibility criteria being met, the Council must 'determine' (i.e. approve) properly made applications for mandatory DFGs 'as soon as reasonably practicable' but no later than 6 months from the date a valid application has been received.
- 4.5 The maximum amount of a mandatory DFG is currently set by statute at £30000. In addition the Council is able to provide discretionary assistance which must be described in our DFG policy.
- 4.6 A DFG grant will be recovered by the Council via a land charge, following the sale of the property within 10 years of the payment of the grant, provided that the Council is satisfied that 'it is reasonable in all circumstances to require the repayment.' Grants below £5000 are excluded from repayment and the maximum amount recoverable in any one case is limited to £10000. 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.

5. Revised Policy Documentation

- 5.1 Cabinet approved the original DFG Policy document in 2014. This has required some revision to reflect general changes in practices and processes since 2014 and the opportunity has been taken to expand and improve the existing guidance provided to stakeholders.
- 5.2 Changes in practices include that Papworth Trust is no longer used as a provider of HIA (Home Improvement Agency) assistance services for

customers, which is now undertaken by Basildon Borough Council. In addition the document details recent improvements that have been made to the procurement of certain items of equipment (i.e. stairlifts) to provide additional customer benefits including expedited installation & extended warranties and to allow the reuse of equipment no longer required.

6) **Proposed Policy Changes**

- 6.1 In addition to the general changes detailed above, the revised policy proposes a number of changes which relate specifically to discretionary grants assistance.
- 6.2 The current DFG policy allows for discretionary assistance to be provided in the form of a 'top-up' grant, for when works may exceed £30000 and all other reasonable options for external financing (charities, etc.) have been exhausted.
- 6.3 The revised policy expands the circumstances that discretionary assistance can be provided, to include a 'relocation grant' and a 'special assistance' grant.
- 6.4 The purpose of the **Relocation grant** is where a mandatory DFG is determined not to be a feasible or reasonable option and the customer is considering relocating to another more suitable property, which they intend to purchase. Subject to an application to the Council and support from an Occupational Therapist, a discretionary grant may be made available towards specific relocation expenses including estate agent fees, legal costs and removal costs.
- 6.5 The cost of the relocation grant together with the cost of adaptations to the new dwelling must demonstrate value for money and assistance would not be made available towards the actual purchase cost of any new dwelling.
- 6.6 It is felt that the provision of this additional grant would give the resident and the Council more options, where it is not feasible to provide a DFG within an existing dwelling. The additional money would allow those who may not otherwise be able to afford it, the potential to move to a property that better meets their specific requirements.
- 6.7 The **Special Assistance grant** is intended to help applicants to pay for the cost of adapting their home to meet the needs of the disabled person where this may not be covered by a mandatory DFG. Each case would still need to be supported by a recommendation of an Occupational Therapist. Examples of adaptations that would not generally be covered by a mandatory DFG, but could be considered under a special assistance grant would include, but would not be restricted to:
 - The provision of a safe play space for a disabled child
 - To provide an area for specialist care or treatment (i.e. a dialysis room.)
 - The provision of facilities for a child in foster care (where the length of stay is likely to be years rather than months)

- Adaptations to a second property, where a disabled child is living under a dual residency arrangement, where residency has been split between two parents (or other designated guardian)
 - Provision of a storage facility for a mobility scooter, with a fixed charging point.
- 6.8 By increasing the number of potential circumstances that discretionary assistance could be provided by the Council, this will directly help to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough and provide additional support for those persons who care for, or provide them with assistance, on a day to day basis.
- 6.9 It is proposed that the existing '**Top-up grant**' to enable discretionary assistance to be provided to disabled persons, where the cost of works exceeds that allowed by the mandatory DFG, should remain in place. This has worked well in the past and has proved necessary in recent times, due mainly to the rise in general building costs since the £30000 financial limit was originally set in the mid 1990's.

7. Corporate Implications

a) Financial Implications

- 7.1 Central Government provides annual capital grant funding towards the provision of DFGs, which is administered via the Essex Better Care Fund. The amount of grant awarded each year is normally confirmed early in the year in question and historically the amount awarded has been around £250k, but by 2018/19 this had increased to £630k per annum. Furthermore, subject to availability of capital resources the Central Government grant is normally topped up with internal Council funding to increase the total available to spend on DFGs.
- 7.2 Notification of future grants is not provided in advance for future years, so this impacts on the ability to make forward financial plans. However, additional amounts of grant are sometimes also awarded late into each financial year, although this is not always guaranteed every year.
- 7.3 All Councils are required to submit to Central Government an annual declaration that grant conditions have been complied with as well as a return detailing amounts spent on DFGs and other supporting information, such as age of the grant recipient. In practice it has been Council policy for many years that the total grant received from central Government is fully allocated to mandatory DFG spend.
- 7.4 Reallocation of capital budget to discretionary grants will reduce the amount available for other mandatory grants by the same amount, as it is taken from the same account. As such, it will be important to ensure that any discretionary award is only considered having regard to the amount of resources the Council has available at that time.

(b) Legal Implications

- 7.5 The policy requires formal adoption in order to satisfy the requirements of individual Acts of Parliament/ Statutory Instruments and this includes revision or review of such policies.

(c) Human Resources

- 7.6 There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

(d) Equality Implications

- 7.7 There is a potential for a positive impact on the following groups of people: - Adults and Children with Disabilities.

8. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

It is recommended that any approval of the policy should take place with immediate effect.

9. Background Papers

DFG Policy Document – 2014.

Report Author: Simon Llewellyn, Environmental Health Operational Manager

Disabled Facilities Grants Policy & Guidance

Version 2.0

**Castle Point Borough Council
Council Offices
Kiln Road
Benfleet
Essex
SS7 1TF**

September 2018

- **Strategy or policy:** Disabled Facilities Grants Policy
- **Date adopted:** TBC
- **Date last revised and reasons for revision:** Original Policy approved by Cabinet April 2014. Revision contains significant revision and expansion of guidance for customers and other stakeholders, expansion of the ability to approve discretionary works and various amendments to reflect changes in practice and procedure since 2014.
- **Links to Council priorities:**

Council priority	Linked?
Environment – Civic Pride	No
Regeneration and Homes	Yes
Improving the Council	Yes
Community Safety	Yes

- **Links to other strategies and policies:**
- **Name of lead officer responsible for implementing the action plan:**
Simon Llewellyn, Environmental Health Operational Manager
Phone: 01268 882200
E-mail: slllewellyn@castlepoint.gov.uk
- **Name of lead Member and Member body responsible for monitoring implementation of the action plan:**
 - Cllr Colin McClean, Cabinet Member responsible for Health and Well Being
- **Equality Impact Assessment undertaken:**
- **Sustainability appraisal undertaken:**
- **Policy register on N Drive updated:**

1 Introduction

- 1.1) Perfectly good homes can be quite unsuitable for occupants with mobility needs, to the extent that they can actually be dangerous and isolating. Adaptations are needed by many disabled people so that they can remain safe and independent in their own home. They can be needed by people of all ages, but as our population ages and life expectancy increases, the number of people needing assistance to adapt their homes is expected to grow.
- 1.2) Castle Point Borough Council is committed to helping disabled residents and will administer Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) (and other forms of assistance such as discretionary grants, where available) so as to help them achieve a home which meets their needs.
- 1.3) The Council has only finite resources and as the number of people seeking adaptations and the cost of providing them grows, its finite resources are likely to mean that it cannot provide immediate help to all those needing assistance.
- 1.4) Following the regulatory reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 it is a requirement for any updates or revisions of the Council's policies in respect of the allocation of housing grants to be formally adopted.
- 1.5) This policy document 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 services.

2 DFG Summary

- 2.1) 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.
- 2.2) 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.
- 2.3) 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.
- 2.4) 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.

- 2.5) 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.
- 2.6) 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.
- 2.7) 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.’

3 Regulatory Framework

There are a number of legal provisions governing DFGs and the application process including:

- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (“The Act”) (as amended)
- Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) order 1996
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to Approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008
- The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002 (“The Order”)
- The Housing Renewals Grants (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2008
- The Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008
- Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People – A good practice guide (June 2006)
- The Equalities Act 2010

4 Definition of a Disabled Person

- 4.1) For the purposes of the legislation relating to DFG’s a person is defined as being disabled if:
- Their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired;
 - They have a mental disorder to impairment of any kind; or
 - They are physically disabled by illness or impairment present since birth or otherwise
- 4.2) A person aged 18 or over is considered disabled if:
- They are registered as a result of arrangements made under section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948; or
 - They are a person for whom welfare arrangements have been made under that section or might be made under it.
- 4.3) A person aged under 18 is considered disabled if

- They are registered in a register of disabled children maintained under the Children Act 1989; or
- In the opinion of the Social Services Authority (Essex County Council) they are a disabled child as defined for the purposes of Part III of the Children Act 1989.

4 Responsibility

- 4.1) The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 gives the statutory duty to Castle Point Borough Council as a local housing authority, responsibility for providing DFGs. The Council cannot, by law, refuse to process a properly made DFG application that it receives from an owner-occupier or tenant. If the eligibility criteria and proper process are satisfied, the Council must approve the appropriate grant.
- 4.2) The Council is given a sum of money each year by the government, via the Better Care Fund, which is specifically used for providing grants to help disabled people adapt their home. In addition the Council provide an annual sum of money to 'top-up' the government grant.

4.3 Eligibility and Amount of DFG grant assistance available to applicant

- 4.3.1) DFGs are available to homeowners, owners of qualifying houseboats, owners of qualifying park homes, tenants of private landlords and tenants of Housing Associations. Grants are available for adaptations to the common parts of buildings containing one or more flats.
- 4.3.2) Registered Social Housing Providers (RSHP) are also eligible to apply for a mandatory DFG, but in these situations the Council will firstly investigate the RSHP's ability to carry out and fund the adaptation work themselves and the individual merits of the case. In all such cases, the Council will request that the RSHP contributes towards the cost of the adaptation works before processing the application, which may be in the form of an upfront or deferred payment.
- 4.3.3) Each case must be supported by a recommendation from an occupational therapist working with Essex County Council Social Services. Should an applicant provide an independent Occupational Therapists recommendation, the Council will consult with the Occupational Therapy Service at Essex County Council, before processing the application.
- 4.3.4) The Council reserves the right to refuse grant assistance where the works are not necessary, appropriate, reasonable, practicable, are excessively expensive and/or where the property is not suitable for adaptation. The Council may offer a discretionary DFG, in the form of a relocation grant to help the disabled person move to a more suitable dwelling.
- 4.3.5) There is no restriction on multiple DFG's for the same property and depending on the time lapse between applications, there is provision for any means tested contribution made on the first grant not to be taken into account on subsequent application. This is five years for a tenant's application and 10 years for an owner occupier's application.
- 4.3.6) The maximum amount of grant is set by statutory instrument. The current statutory limit on the maximum amount of mandatory DFG is £30,000.

4.4 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant assistance – General

4.4.1) There are a number of circumstances where it may be appropriate to offer help by way of a discretionary grant. For instance a discretionary grant may be considered where:

- The existing home is unsuitable for adaptations and the grant will enable the occupant to relocate to a more suitable property and this is a more cost effective solution.
- The grant awarded to an applicant is insufficient to carry out the works recommended by the Occupational Therapist i.e. the required works are in excess of £30,000 and the applicant is unable to raise the money required. For instance where a property extension is required and relocation is not a suitable or cost effective option.
- A mandatory DFG is not available for the required adaptations works

4.4.2) Three types of discretionary assistance are available from Castle Point Council

- a) Top up assistance
- b) Special assistance
- c) Relocation assistance

4.4.3) Whilst the Council do not have to provide discretionary assistance it will consider applications on a case-by-case basis.

4.4.4) Any discretionary award will only be considered having regard to the amount of resources the Council has available at the time. If the Council does not have sufficient resources to deal with other mandatory referrals, the Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.

4.4.6) All discretionary grants will be recorded as a charge on the land registry and will remain indefinitely. The grant will be repayable in full where a dwelling is disposed of whether by sale, assignment, and transfer of the title or otherwise for any reason.

4.4.7) **(a) Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants Assistance – “Top Up Assistance”**

4.4.7.1) The maximum amount of mandatory DFG was set by statute in 2008 at £30000. Since this time there has been a general increase in build costs for major adaptations such that in some instances £30000 is insufficient to provide adaptations to meet the needs of the disabled person and their family.

4.4.7.2) To be eligible for consideration of a discretionary top up grant in cases where the cost of the proposed adaptation works exceed the maximum mandatory DFG limit of £30000, the grant applicant must meet the criteria for a mandatory DFG.

4.4.7.3) The discretionary DFG top-up grant will be subject to the same financial means test as a mandatory DFG unless the relocation is for a disabled child, in which case no such test will be applied.

- 4.4.7.4) The Head of Environment in consultation with the Strategic Director (Resources) is authorised to agree a discretionary grant of up to £10,000 in exceptional circumstances subject to budget availability. Discretionary top-up grants in excess of £10,000 up to a maximum of £30,000 will be determined by Cabinet.
- 4.4.7.5) Before approving a top-up grant, the Council will have expected the applicant to have exhausted all other reasonable options with which to raise the required funds for any works over and above the £30000 mandatory limit. This is to ensure a fair allocation of funding between the many applications received by the Council every year. Examples of these include, but are not restricted to:
- Equity release for owner occupied property
 - Bank loans
 - Charity Grants / Contributions
 - Sale of certain discretionary assets, i.e. if multiple vehicles are owned by the applicant, above and beyond those required for normal day-to-day activities.
- 4.4.7.6) The Council reserves the right to decline any request for top up assistance if sufficient written evidence of the above is not provided.
- 4.4.8) **(b) Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants Assistance – Special assistance**
- 4.4.8.1) The purpose of a Discretionary Disabled Facilities “Special assistance” grant is to help applicants to pay for the cost of adapting their home to meet the needs of the disabled person where they are not covered by the mandatory DFG.
- 4.4.8.2) In order to be eligible for Discretionary Disabled Facilities Special Assistance Grant, an applicant must meet the qualifying criteria for a mandatory DFG.
- 4.5.8.3) Each case must be supported by a recommendation from an Occupational Therapist working with Essex County Council. The Council reserves the right to refuse grant assistance where the works are not necessary, reasonable, practicable, or are excessively expensive or where the property is not suitable for adaptation.
- 4.5.8.4) Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants Assistance is available to fund the following adaptations to enable a disabled person to remain living in their own homes:

- a) To make the dwelling suitable for the disabled person. Examples include:
 - The provision of a safe play space for a disabled child
 - The provision of more satisfactory internal arrangements which would directly benefit the disabled person
- b) To make the dwelling suitable for the employment of the disabled person within the existing footprint of the dwelling (examples include the provision or adaptation of a room for the disabled person to use as a work area). Any such assistance would be subject to the applicant obtaining any relevant planning permission that may be required for working/running a business from the dwelling.
- c) To provide an area for specialist care of treatment (e.g. provision of a dialysis room).
- d) The provision and installation of ceiling track hoists.
- e) The provision and installation of a dropped kerb to facilitate access to a hard standing located within the curtilage of the disabled person's dwelling.
- f) The provision and installation of an appropriate storage facility for a mobility scooter with a fixed charging point.
- g) Provision of facilities for a child in foster care, where the likely length of care at a dwelling is likely to be years, rather than months.
- h) Provision of additional facilities in a second property in circumstances where a disabled child is living under a dual residency arrangement, where residency is split between the parents (or other designated guardian.)
- This list is not exhaustive and other works may be considered subject to an Occupational Therapists recommendation being received by the Council.

4.5.8.5) Any discretionary award will only be considered having regard to the amount of resources the Council has available at that time. If the Council does not have sufficient resources left to deal with other mandatory referrals that have been passed to them by the Occupational Therapy Service at the time, the Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.

4.5.8.6) All discretionary DFG Assistance will be recorded on the Local Land Charges Register indefinitely. The assistance will be repayable in full where a dwelling is disposed of whether by sale, assignment, or transfer of the title or otherwise for any reason.

4.5.8.7) A Discretionary Disabled Facilities "Special Assistance" grant, may be authorised by the Environmental Health Operational Manager in consultation with the Head of Environment.

4.5.9) **(c) Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants Assistance – Relocation Grant**

4.5.9.1) A discretionary relocation grant may be available to an applicant who owns or privately rents their dwelling if adaptation of their current home through a

mandatory DFG is determined not to be a feasible or reasonable option and they are considering relocating to a suitable property they intend to purchase.

- 4.5.9.2) Applicants must be aged 18 or over on the date that the application is made and in the case of a disabled child, the parents would make the application.
- 4.5.9.3) Any such application must be supported by a recommendation from the Occupational Therapy Service at Essex County Council.
- 4.5.9.4) The Council and the Occupational Therapist must both be satisfied that the proposed dwelling already meets the needs of the disabled person without further adaptation or are satisfied that it can be adapted at a reasonable cost.
- 4.5.9.5) Applicants must be relocating within the Castle Point Borough. Consideration may be given to a move in Essex but this would require:
 - a) The approval of the relevant district/borough council
 - b) Whether or not adaptations are required to the new dwelling
 - c) The scale of any adaptations before a relocation grant can be considered
- 4.5.9.6) A discretionary relocation grant of up to £10000 may be made available towards specific relocation expenses which includes estate agent fees, legal costs and removal costs.
- 4.5.9.7) The cost of the discretionary relocation grant together with the cost of any adaptations required to the new dwelling must demonstrate value for money, whether the move is within the Castle Point Borough or another district / borough within Essex.
- 4.5.9.8) Applications must be submitted prior to relocation, grants cannot be paid retrospectively.
- 4.5.9.9) Assistance will not be made available towards the purchase price of a new dwelling.
- 4.5.9.10) The Council will normally require two quotations from independent contractors that realistically reflect the cost of the works / service being provided. In some circumstances, one estimate may be accepted if the Council is satisfied that the cost is reasonable.
- 4.5.9.11) All applicants will be required to complete the move within 12 months from the date of approval of their application. Any payments made will be made either directly to the service / work provider, or to the grant applicant. In either case, valid invoices or receipts must be provided prior to the payment.
- 4.5.9.12) If on sale of the applicants existing dwelling, a net equity of more than £10000 is released, the discretionary relocation grant will only fund the physical removal costs.
- 4.5.9.13) Net equity refers to any equity released when the purchase price of the new dwelling is less than the existing dwellings selling price.
- 4.5.9.14) If the move is aborted through the fault of the applicant then the grant will not be paid and any monies already paid will be reclaimed from the applicant. If

the reason for the move falling through is, in the opinion of the Council, not the fault of the applicant, then the Council will cover the full costs.

- 4.5.9.15) The new dwelling must be the disabled person's main residence and no applicant will be awarded a discretionary relocation grant on more than one occasion.
- 4.5.9.16) If the disabled occupant moves from the new dwelling within 5 years or if the dwelling is disposed of whether by sale, assignment, transfer of the title or otherwise, for any reason within a period of 5 years, the grant must be paid back in full to the Council unless there are exceptional circumstances. The discretionary relocation grant will be recorded on the Local Land Charges Register for a period of 5 years from the date that the new dwelling is occupied by the disabled occupant.
- 4.5.9.17) The discretionary relocation grant will be subject to the same financial means test as a mandatory DFG unless the relocation is for a disabled child in which case no means test will be applied.
- 4.5.9.18) Any discretionary award will only be considered having regards to the amount of resources the Council has available at that time. If the Council does not have sufficient resources left to deal with other mandatory referrals that have been passed to them by the OT service, the Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.
- 4.5.9.19) A discretionary disabled facilities "relocation assistance" grant may be authorised by the Environmental Health Operational Manager, in consultation with the Head of Environment.

5 Use of Home Improvement Agencies (HIA's)

- 5.1) Castle Point Borough Council offers customers the option of using a preferred Home Improvement Agency (HIA) to provide services as part of the grants process. Basildon Borough Council Building Control Consultancy are able to act on behalf of the applicants in all administrative and legal respects for the provision of the disabled facilities grant. The HIA is also able to act as the Council's agent in certain aspects of the DFG process, described later in this document.
- 5.2) The Services provided by the HIA to the applicant include: completing the application form with the client; preparing any plans which need to be submitted with the application; confirming the work specifications; seeking tenders; obtaining any specific permissions to undertake works, supervising the works and liaising with all parties in respect of completion and payment of the grant. For these Services, the HIA will charge no more than 12.5% of the costs of the tendered works, which is added to the grant amount.
- 5.3) The applicant is not required to use the services of a HIA to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant, and may choose to administer the process themselves. However, all applicants are advised of the complexity of the grant process at the outset and this course of action would only be recommended for those persons confident with this type of role.

5.4) Provision of stairlifts under Procurement for Housing Framework agreement with Basildon HIA

- 5.4.1) Basildon Council HIA have entered into a Procurement for Housing Framework with Stannah Lift Services Ltd (Stannah.) Applicants who choose to use the services of Basildon HIA will have the option of utilising this agreement for the procurement a stairlift.
- 5.4.2) Users of the agreement will benefit from an expedited installation process and a 5 year warranty provided on the equipment.
- 5.4.3) The arrangement allows for the provision and installation of straight flight and curved track stairlifts which are installed and maintained for a period of 5 years by Stannah. The stairlifts remain the property of the Council during this 5 year warranty and maintenance period.
- 5.5.4) Should circumstances arise within this period where the stairlift is no longer required, Stannah will remove the lift and store it on behalf of the Council until such time that it can be re-used by another applicant.
- 5.6.5) Re-cycled stairlifts will be provided and installed at a reduced cost to the Council but will be installed in the new dwelling with the same 5 year warranty and maintenance period for the new DFG applicant.
- 5.7.6) At the end of the 5 year period, the Council will gift the stairlift to the DFG applicant who will then be responsible for all future servicing and maintenance of their stairlift. Stannah will contact the DFG applicant towards the end of the 5 year period regarding the future servicing and maintenance of the stairlift.
- 5.8.7) NOTE: This PFH arrangement enables the Council to re-cycle perfectly good stairlifts at a reduced cost, thus making better use of DFG funding and will provide value for money.
- 5.9.8) The DFG applicant is under no obligation to use Stannah; all applicants are free to obtain quotations for the supply, installation and maintenance of their stairlift from any other provider who can meet the specification provided by the Occupational Therapist. However, in these instances only the manufacturer's standard warranty and maintenance terms (usually 12 months) will be provided, as it will fall outside of the provisions of the framework agreement.

6 The Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant Eligibility Criteria

- 6.1) DFGs are available to fund adaptations to the homes of elderly or disabled residents to enable them to live independently at home or be cared for at home. Grants are dependent on;
- The works being necessary and appropriate;
 - The works being reasonable and practicable; and
 - A financial assessment of the applicant's ability to fund the works themselves.

- 6.2) Eligibility criteria for DFGs are laid out in Section 23 of The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration (As Amended) Act 1996 and primarily relate to accessing principle rooms within the home and accessing and using essential facilities including access to gardens and outside areas of a property.
- 6.3) The Occupational Therapists working with Essex County Council and Environmental Health Officers at Castle Point Borough Council seek to support all applicants but by the nature of grant funding this process.

6.4) Works that are eligible for a mandatory disabled facility grant

6.4.1) *Facilitating Access*

- a) A grant may be given for works to remove or help overcome any obstacles that prevent the disabled person from moving freely into and around the dwelling.
- b) Access to the garden or yard (front, side or rear) means immediate access from the dwelling and does not include landscaping. This would be fulfilled by either improving existing access or by providing a suitable outdoor space that can be accessed safely from inside the dwelling to allow appreciation of the outdoor area by the disabled person.

6.4.2) *Making a Dwelling or Building Safe*

- a) A grant may be given for certain adaptations to the dwelling or building to make it safe for the disabled person and other persons living with them. This may include the provision of lighting where safety is an issue, or for adaptations designed to minimise the risk of danger where a disabled person has behavioural problems.

6.4.3) *Access to a Family Room*

- a) A grant may be given to ensure the disabled person has access to a room used for or usable as the principal family room (i.e. living room or lounge).

6.4.4) *Access to a Room usable for Sleeping*

- a) A grant may be given for the provision of a room usable for sleeping where the adaptation of an existing room in the dwelling (upstairs or downstairs) or the access to that room is unsuitable in the particular circumstances. Where the disabled person shares a room with a spouse or partner a grant may be given to provide a room of sufficient size so that normal sleeping arrangements can be maintained.

6.4.5) *Access to a Bathroom*

- a) A grant may be given for the provision of, or access to, a WC, washing, bathing and/or showering facilities.

6.4.6) *Facilitating Preparation of and Cooking of Food*

- a) A grant may be given to re-arrange or enlarge a kitchen to improve the access for a wheelchair and to provide specially modified or designed storage units, work top area etc. Where most of the cooking and preparation of meals is done by another household

member, it would not normally be appropriate to carry out full adaptations to the kitchen. However, it might be appropriate that certain adaptations be carried out to enable the disabled person to perform minor functions in the kitchen, such as preparing light meals or hot drinks.

6.4.7) Heating, Light and Power

- a) A grant may be given to provide or improve the existing heating system in the dwelling to meet the disabled person's needs. A grant will not be given to adapt or install heating in rooms which are not normally used by the disabled person. The installation of central heating to the dwelling will only be considered where the well-being and mobility of the disabled person would otherwise be adversely affected.
- b) Provision is also made under this category for the adaptation of heating, lighting and power to make them suitable for use by the disabled person.

6.4.8) Dependent Residents

- a) A grant may be given for works to enable a disabled occupant better access around the dwelling in order to care for another person who normally resides there whether or not they are related to the disabled person. Importantly, the dependent being cared for need not be disabled.
- b) Such works could include adaptations to a part of the dwelling to which the disabled person would not normally need access but which is used by a person to whom they are providing care and therefore it is reasonable for such works to be carried out.

6.4.9) Common Parts

- a) A grant may be given for works to facilitate access to a dwelling through the common parts of a building.

6.5 Deciding on the suitability and feasibility of an adaptation for a customer

Necessary and Appropriate

- 6.5.1) Necessary and Appropriate works are determined through an assessment of the client and their home environment by an Occupational Therapist from Essex County Council. This concentrates on the client's ability to remain living independently in their own home and must distinguish between works which are desirable, and those, which are necessary and appropriate.
- 6.5.2) Occupational Therapists from Essex County Council and Environmental Health Officers from Castle Point Borough Council liaise to:
 - a) Discuss proposed applications;
 - b) Determine whether applications meet the necessary and appropriate criteria with reference to the legislation;
 - c) Determine if the works are likely to be reasonable and practicable.

6.5.3) When identifying and agreeing adaptations we will ensure that:

- They are the simplest, least disruptive and most cost-effective adaptation to meet the needs;
- They are designed to fit within the existing structure of the home; this may involve using the home in a different way i.e. sleeping in a ground floor room or sub dividing space and that;
- Providing additional space within a home is only considered if all other options have been fully exhausted and if it is practicable to provide additional space.

6.6 Reasonable and Practicable

6.6.1) There are times when it is simply not reasonable and practicable to adapt a property, for instance where there are excessive changes in level; where there are space constraints; or where moving existing services is prohibitively expensive. Rather than investing funding to poorly adapt a property, grants may be declined because the works are not reasonable and practicable.

6.6.2) If works are not considered reasonable and practicable within the home this will involve asking clients to seriously consider if they are currently in the most appropriate housing or if moving to more readily adaptable level access accommodation would be a better option.

6.6.3) In owner occupied premises where work is not considered reasonable and practicable, Disabled Facility Grant aid may be available to help with some of the basic costs of moving home. This would be dependent on the Means Test and each case would be judged individually on its merits.

6.6.4) In registered social housing provider (RSHP) accommodation (for instance homes provided via housing associations,) they are often happy to work with clients to identify alternative suitable housing. Where clients may be under occupying a home this has an added advantage of freeing up much needed family housing and there are monetary incentives available from the housing association for this.

7 The Disabled Facilities Grant Process

Occupational Therapist Referrals and prioritisation

- 7.1) The Occupational Therapy Service at Essex County Council submits recommendations for Disabled Facilities adaptations to the Council for all tenures.
- 7.2) All recommendations received from the Occupational Therapists at Essex County Council are no longer ranked according to priority on a routine basis.
- 7.3) Prioritisation of cases is most often based on date of receipt of referral of a report from the Occupational Therapist. Where an Occupational Therapist makes additional requests for urgent / emergency assistance, this additional information will usually be taken into account, when deciding on a prioritisation for an individual case. Referred cases will be held on a priority based list until such time as the Council is able to begin working on a case.
- 7.4) All appropriate steps will be taken to minimise the waiting time before a grant case can be worked on and approved. The prioritisation mechanism is kept under review to ensure it is operating as intended and as circumstances require.
- 7.5) The length of time someone has to wait on the priority list will depend on the size of the grant budget available to the Council, staff workload and the number of cases with a higher priority. Applicants will be notified in writing if there is likely to be a prolonged delay in progressing their case.
- 7.6) The Council however reserves the right to start processing some cases out of strict priority order in exceptional cases (as determined by the Head of Environment or Environmental Health Operational Manager) for instance, where it is determined that it is necessary to ensure efficient allocation of staff resources, or budget allocation and spend.
- 7.7) In the event that changes are required to the prioritisation mechanism, they will be determined by the Environmental Health Operational Manager in consultation with the Head of Environment.

Application

- 7.10) Should the proposed recommendations require a pre application feasibility study this will involve the Occupational Therapists at Essex County Council and Environmental Health Officers from the Council meeting to discuss this matter. The Council, as a Statutory Regulator of the Housing Act 2004 is unable to allow works to take place which will result in the creation of Housing Health and Safety Rating System Hazards.
- 7.11) When sufficient financial resources are available to the Council to pay for these works, the applicant is informed by letter and asked whether they would like to use a HIA partner to act on their behalf in all administrative and legal respects for the provision of the disabled facilities grant, or whether they want to administer and make arrangements for the preparation of an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant themselves.
- 7.12) If the disabled person is the tenant of a private landlord or Housing Association, the landlord/owner must give permission for the work to be carried out. Fixed items such as level access showers will usually become the property of the owner.

- 7.13) Should the applicant choose to use our HIA partner, the customer will be referred to Basildon Borough Council Building Consultancy, who will get in touch with the customer directly.

7.14 Financial Assessment (The Means Test)

- 7.14.1) Applications for Disabled Facilities Grants are generally subject to a Means Test.
- 7.14.2) The way in which the Council carries out the Means Test is governed by regulations and the Council does not have any discretion in applying it. Once the applicant's income and savings have been recorded on the application form, this information is used to calculate whether any contributions are required to be made by them towards the costs of the required work.
- 7.14.3) As part of an application for a mandatory DFG, a test of resources (financial means test) must be carried out in order to assess the amount, if any, that the applicant must contribute towards the cost of the proposed adaptation works.
- 7.14.4) The means test applies to the disabled applicant and any spouse or partner. The applicant is required to provide information about all sources of income and all savings to provide evidence to support information given in the application form.
- 7.14.5) Specifically the Council will require the disabled applicant to provide the following:
- a) 3 months' payslips (where monthly paid) or 6 weeks' payslips (where weekly paid)
 - b) Copies of most recent state pension letters
 - c) Copies of most recent private/occupational/other pensions in payment
 - d) Copies of any disability benefit letters (attendance allowance, Disabled Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments, and Employment Support Allowance etc.) where in payment
 - e) 3 months bank statements (immediately prior to the application date)
 - f) Up to date statements/balances of all savings accounts and ISA's
 - g) Copy of a recent utility bill (dated within 6 months of the DFG application)
 - h) Up to date statements/balances of all other savings and investments such as premium bonds, stocks and shares
 - i) Details of any other capital and property owned
- 7.14.6) Applicants who are in receipt of one of the following types of income will be "passport" through the means testing process and will not be required to make a contribution towards the cost of the proposed adaptation works:
- a) Income Support
 - b) Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
 - c) Guarantee Pension Credit
 - d) Housing Benefit
 - e) Working/Child Tax Credit (if income for tax credit is below a specified amount)
- This list is prescribed by central government and may be amended from time to time.

- 7.14.7) Where the result of the means test is a 'nil' contribution, it is accepted that the applicant will automatically wish to proceed with the application. Where the result of the means test is such that the clients contribution is likely to be less than the total cost of the works the client will be required to confirm in writing their intention to proceed with their application on this basis.
- 7.14.8) Where the result of the means test is such that the clients contribution is equal to or likely to exceed the cost of the works the client can request the Council to approve a 'nil' grant. This will enable the cost of these works to be deducted from any future application for a DFG so long as any subsequent OT recommendation is received within 10 years from the approval of the 'nil' grant (5 years for a tenant's application).
- 7.14.9) Where an applicant is unable to meet their assessed financial contribution under the means-test for a mandatory DFG and in the absence of any suitable affordable alternative, the Council may in exceptional circumstances provide the applicant with Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Assistance to enable the works to proceed, subject to the exhaustion of alternative funding options described in 4.4.7.5.
- 7.14.10) Any Discretionary DFG Assistance will only be considered having regard to the amount of resources the Council has available at that time. If the Council does not have sufficient resources left to deal with other mandatory referrals that have been passed to them by the Occupational Therapy Service at the time, the Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.
- 7.14.11) All Discretionary DFG Assistance will be recorded on the Local Land Charges Register indefinitely. The assistance will be repayable in full where the applicant disposes of the dwelling whether by sale, assignment, transfer of the title or otherwise for any reason.
- 7.14.12) All Discretionary DFG Assistance will be recorded on the Local Land Charges Register indefinitely. The assistance will be repayable in full where the applicant disposes of the dwelling whether by sale, assignment, transfer of the title or otherwise for any reason.

8. DFG Application Conditions

- 8.1) All applications for assistance must be made on the appropriate Council application forms and shall be accompanied by all relevant supporting documents. The minimum age for applicants is 18 years of age at the date of application and in the case of joint applications, at least one person must be over 18 years of age at the date of the application.
- 8.2) In making an application the applicant shall give the Council permission to share such given information with other Council services and departments or other statutory agencies.
- 8.3) Private sector tenants may make applications where they are eligible for assistance, but the Council will require written consent from the owner of the property before approving the DFG.

- 8.4) Tenants of a Registered Social Housing Provider (RSHP) may make applications where they are eligible for assistance but the Council will require written consent from the relevant RSHP, will make an assessment of the RSHP's ability to pay for the works in full and will in all cases, seek a financial contribution from them towards the cost of the works before approving the DFG.
- 8.5) CPBC tenants in all cases should approach CPBC Housing in the first instance as the Council has funds set aside for disabled facility adaptation works in their own properties. In certain cases, including but not limited to unreasonable delays that may otherwise occur in the process due to exceptional circumstances, or specific appeals from an Occupational Therapist, DFG assistance may be considered towards the cost of any works, on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Environmental Health Operational Manager.
- 8.6) The adaptation works must be carried out in accordance with any plans, specifications and schedules provided by the Council.
- 8.7) Quotations for adaptation works must be provided on the specifications and schedules provided by the Council for this purpose and must be itemised and totalled on each page. Provisional sums are not acceptable except in cases where for example scaffolding *may* be required or where exploratory works *may* be required. Works covered by insurance claims or work that should have been covered by such, will not be eligible for DFG assistance of any kind.
- 8.8) The following number of quotations will be required by the Council when procuring adaptation works:

Works	Number of quotations required*
Stairlifts procured under the PFH Stannah agreement with Basildon HIA	1
Works up to a value of £9,999	2
Works £10,000 or above	3
Specialist works where providers of equipment or service are limited in number.	Generally 2 quotations required, any difficulties with obtaining quotations should be discussed with the Council. In exceptional circumstances, one quotation may be allowed for works to proceed.

*The Council reserves the right to request additional quotations as necessary, if it considers predicted costs to be excessive or inadequate..

- 8.9) The Council will not normally approve any DFG application if the relevant works have started before the application is approved. One exception to this rule is where an authorised officer has already carried out an inspection of the dwelling and has agreed in writing that the works may commence, due to particular risks to the health and safety of the disabled applicant.
- 8.10) DFG assistance will only be approved for the benefit of the disabled applicant where they are able to provide evidence of a valid National Insurance Number.

9. Decision Making Criteria

- 9.1) Once the Council is satisfied that the proposed adaptation works are necessary and appropriate, reasonable and practicable, the following specific expectations and presumptions are taken into account:
- a) The DFG works should fully and properly meet the applicants assessed needs. DFGs that only partially meet those needs will only be considered in exceptional cases (e.g. where the disabled person's condition is deteriorating and independent living is unlikely to be sustained for very much longer).
 - b) The works funded by the DFG will be the simplest and most cost-effective adaptations that will meet the need of the applicant's assessed needs (this includes any equipment provided).
 - c) Wherever practicable and realistic, the change of use of existing rooms or the re-ordering of rooms will be the preferred solution and will take precedence over both the construction of extensions and the installation of specialist equipment.
 - d) Generally, the DFG will only fund one facility to a dwelling e.g. only one external door will be provided with a ramped access to the outdoors.

10. Alternative Scheme of Works

- 10.1) In certain circumstances a grant up to the value of the estimated cost of providing an adaptation can be used to contribute towards an alternative scheme. For example, where a through-floor lift would meet the needs of the disabled person but the preference of that person is for the construction of a ground floor extension, a DFG equal to the cost of the lift could be approved. In any such case the following criteria must be met:
- a) The proposed alternative scheme shall meet the applicant's needs as assessed by the Occupational Therapist and put forward in the original recommendation.
 - b) The Council must be satisfied that the applicant has sufficient financial resources to complete the alternative scheme, including a contingency sum of 10% of the total cost of works to account for any unforeseen works.
 - c) The applicant must provide the Council with a minimum number of estimates listed in table 8.8 from competent contractors for the proposed works. The Council reserves the right to seek an alternative estimate where those provided by the applicant seem either excessive or inadequate.

- d) An experienced agent shall design/control the works and shall certify their satisfactory completion. The applicant is responsible for any additional costs of designing the alternative scheme and for obtaining building regulation approval and/or planning permission where necessary.
- e) The Council will only pay an amount equal to the cost of the works originally recommended by the Occupational Therapist. The Council will not pay for the DFG approved works until all works have been completed and certified as satisfactory by the Council or its agent.
- f) The Council's payment shall be the final part payment made towards completion of the alternative scheme and will not be paid until the Council receives confirmation from the contractor that all other monies owing have been paid in full by the applicant. Payment will be subject to the Council or its agent inspecting the works and certifying the scheme as fully completed to its satisfaction (inside and out).
- g) The alternative scheme must be completed within 12 months of the DFG being approved, unless a written request for an extension to the time limit is received within 6 weeks of the 12 month period expiring. Extension to the mandatory time limit for completion of the works will be at the discretion of the Council and the applicant should not assume that such a request will be agreed.
- h) Where the alternative works are not completed within the 12 month time period allowed and where the Council has not received a written request to extend this period, the DFG will be void.
- i) No variation of the approved DFG will be made for any additional unforeseen works; all such costs are to be borne by the applicant.
- j) If, for whatever reason, during the course of the works, the need for them ceases, the DFG will not be paid in full.

11. Two Disabled Occupiers in the same Household

- 11.1) Where two disabled people occupy the same dwelling as their main residence and both have individually assessed needs by an Occupational Therapist, depending on the adaptations, there may be a case for considering two separate DFG applications (for example, this is more likely to affect families with more than one disabled child.)

12. Approval of a DFG

- 12.1) Although the Council is statutorily obliged to approve valid applications within 6 months, where possible, the Council will aim to approve applications within 30 days of them being determined as complete and valid. If information is missing from the application, the applicant will be contacted and notified as to what they need to provide before the application can be considered complete.

- 12.2) Though the Council aim to approve all grants in less than 30 days in some cases and at certain times it may take longer to determine an application. This is particularly relevant where discretionary cases are concerned as the Council must make the best use of its financial resources. It is important to note that where mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are concerned, the Council must determine applications within 6 months of receiving a complete and valid application so these cases may take priority over discretionary DFG assistance.
- 12.3) The DFG approval notice will set out:
- a) The amount of assistance approved and the name of the successful contractor upon whose estimate the grant has been calculated.
 - b) The applicants contribution (where relevant) towards the cost of the works as determined by the financial means test.
 - c) The conditions applied to the approval of the grant.
- 12.4) The Council or its agent will notify the winning contractor that the grant has been approved and will forward them a contract that is to be signed by the applicant and the contractor and returned to the Council prior to the commencement of the adaptation works.
- 12.5) The Council will not normally approve a Disabled Facilities Grant application where the relevant work has already begun. However, in exceptional circumstances it can approve such a grant if it is satisfied that there were good reasons for beginning the works before the application was approved. Any such grant approval may be reduced to reflect the works undertaken prior to approval of the DFG.
- 12.6) The Council will not approve an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant if the relevant works have already been completed.

13. Works on Site

- 13.1) Though the DFG is an agreement made between the grant applicant and the Council, all works relating to the Disabled Facilities Grant are a contractual agreement made between the grant applicant and the contractor. The contractor is working for the grant applicant and not the Council.
- 13.2) The Council will not be responsible for supervising the work or the contractor. The grant applicant and/or the contractor must notify the Council or its agent of the date that they agree the works shall commence.
- 13.3) The applicant must ensure that they receive from the contractor any instruction manuals for equipment that they have installed; this includes warranties for any specialist equipment, such as a stairlift, through floor lift, ceiling track hoist and wash/dry toilets.
- 13.4) Once the adaptation works are complete applicants will need to arrange and pay for any future repairs or maintenance of their adaptation and equipment when

any warranty periods have expired or where warranties paid by the Council as part of the DFG have expired as these future costs cannot be paid by the Council.

14. Unforeseen Works

- 14.1) Additional DFG funding will only be provided above the original grant approval in the event that unforeseen works are required in order to allow the completion of the eligible works, or associated works, and where these works are of a nature to protect the health and safety of the applicant, and where these works could not have reasonably been foreseen at the time of the contractor pricing for the contract.
- 14.2) The following points must be observed in all cases of a request for additional unforeseen works:
- a) As soon as it becomes apparent that unforeseen works are necessary the applicant or the contractor must notify the Council or its agent;
 - b) The Council or its agent must be able to independently verify any such works as being necessary and this may involve a site inspection;
 - c) The contractor must provide a written quotation to the Council or its agent for the cost of completing the unforeseen works;
 - d) No unforeseen works can commence until written confirmation from the Council or its agent has been received as to whether these works are reasonable in terms of cost, are truly unforeseen and whether the works are necessary.
 - e) In exceptional circumstances, these terms can be waived where the authorised Officer dealing with the DFG agrees either verbally, or in writing, without necessarily carrying out an inspection that the works may commence, due to risks to the health and safety of the grant applicant.
 - f) Where unforeseen works are agreed by the Council or its agent the grant will be re-calculated when all works have been completed and a revised approval notice will be issued when the grant is paid.

15. Abortive Works

- 15.1 This term relates to situations where a DFG application has been aborted before all works have been completed, e.g. where the applicant has died.
- 15.2 In such circumstances, consideration will be given to payment of a proportion of the grant assistance in line with current legislation and guidance and at the discretion of the Environmental Health Operational Manager.

16. Completion of Works

16.1 The grant applicant and/or the contractor shall notify the Council on the day that the adaptation works are completed. This will enable the authorised officer to schedule an appointment to inspect the works at the earliest opportunity, thus expediting payment to the contractor.

16.2 The authorised officer will inspect the works and:

- a) Verify that all works are complete;
- b) Verify that the works have been completed in accordance with the OT's recommendation, the Councils' schedule of works and the surveyor's plan;
- c) Note any snagging items and contact the contractor to resolve prior to arranging payment;
- d) Ensure that the applicant signs a completion form to confirm that they are satisfied with the works and to authorise the Council to release payment to the contractor;
- e) Ensure that the applicant is in receipt of all relevant guarantees and warranties;
- f) Collect any invoices which the contractor has left with the applicant;
- g) Provide the applicant with a survey form.

17. Payment of Grant

17.1) The Act allows the Council to pay the grant directly to the contractor on satisfactory completion of the works. Most applicants prefer the Council act in this manner. Therefore, the Council will pay the contractor following the final inspection visit so long as the works have been carried out to its satisfaction and in accordance with the Occupational Therapist's recommendation, the Councils' schedule of works and the surveyors' plan.

17.2) Payment will only be made on production of a final invoice.

17.3) Where the applicant chooses to take responsibility for paying the contractor direct, then on production of a receipt confirming that payment has already been made to the contractor, the Council will make the payment to the applicant.

17.4) Payment of grant will be subject to the satisfactory receipt of all certificates relevant to the adaptation works carried out e.g. a Gas Safe Certificate, Electrical Installation Certificate and Building Control Completion Certificate etc.

17.5) The Council will consider requests for interim payments if they are requested before works commence but usually this will only apply to DFG's approved at the maximum mandatory grant amount of £30,000. The Council will not normally approve an interim payment of more than 90% of the cost of the completed works

and, in aggregate no more than 90% of the total approved cost of the work will be paid before the final completion of the adaptation works.

18. Changes in Circumstances

- 18.1) Applicants (or their representative/parent/guardian) must inform the Council or its agent of all relevant changes in their circumstances from the date of making their enquiry through to approval and payment of their grant assistance.
- 18.2) Applicants are encouraged to contact the Council or its agent in advance if they believe that their circumstances may change in order that they can be given advice on the options available to them.
- 18.3) Certain changes in the applicants' circumstances may affect the payment of the Disabled Facilities Grant. Such changes, prescribed by legislation, are:
 - a) Where the works cease to be necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person;
 - b) The disabled person ceases to occupy the dwelling; and
 - c) The disabled applicant dies.

In such circumstances the Council can decide:

- d) Not to pay the grant, or pay not to pay any further instalments;
 - e) That some or all of the works should be completed and the grant or a partial grant will be paid; or
 - f) That the grant application should be re-determined.
- 18.4) Under the Act, the Council has the right to demand the repayment of the grant that had already been paid, together with any interest in the circumstances outlined above. However, such cases will be considered on their own merit.
- 18.5) The right to demand repayment also applies where the applicant ceases to be entitled to a grant before completion of the works. An example of where this may apply would be if the applicant ceases to own the dwelling or does not have a tenancy agreement for the dwelling to be adapted.

19. Cases in which a DFG may be re-calculated, withheld or repaid

- 19.1) The Council is entitled to refuse to pay a grant, to refuse to pay further instalments on a grant or may recalculate the grant in circumstances such as:
 - a) The grant was approved on the basis of inaccurate, incomplete or false information;
 - b) The cost of the works is less than/more than the original estimates.

20. Disputes with Workmanship

- 20.1) Where a dispute arises regarding the standard of a contractor's workmanship the Council will withhold payment to the contractor until the works have been completed satisfactorily in the professional opinion of the Council or its agent.
- 20.2) Where works are deemed to meet the Council's or its agent's approval but the grant applicant is not satisfied the Council will not unreasonably withhold payment to the contractor.

21. Maintenance and Warranties (General)

- 21.1) When equipment is installed under a Disabled Facilities Grant, the grant applicant becomes the owner of the equipment and is therefore responsible for maintenance and repairs or for removing equipment once it is no longer required beyond any warranty and maintenance periods already paid for, and included in the grant, by the Council.
- 21.2) Therefore, once the DFG works are completed the Council will not finance or organise servicing, repairs or maintenance after the expiry of any applicable warranty period, which is usually 12 months, with the exception of stairlifts provided through the PFH framework agreement, where the warranty will be 5 years. Applicants are therefore encouraged to consider a longer warranty at the time of the installation as subsequent and future repairs can be expensive.

22. Removal of Adaptations and Reinstatement Works

- 22.1) Generally, the Council do not and will not remove adaptations if and when they are no longer required. Neither are any reinstatement works carried out.
- 22.2) If an applicant changes their mind about an adaptation once the OT assessment has been carried out and the works have been completed, unless there has been a significant change in the applicant's medical condition the Council will not remove or carry out further adaptation works.

23. Replacement of Facilities & Specialist Equipment

- 23.1) The Council will give consideration to the replacement of damaged, broken or worn out facilities and/or equipment under a further DFG providing it:
 - a) Cannot be repaired;
 - b) Has not been wilfully damaged;
 - c) Still meets the needs of the applicant;
 - d) Has been annually serviced and/or maintained, where applicable, and the warranty period has expired.

- 23.2) A further DFG will not be considered where a facility or equipment that was present in the dwelling previously has been removed by, or under the instruction of, the applicant unless there is a proven good reason for the removal.

24. Registered Social Housing Providers

- 24.1) RSHP's have a prescriptive duty of care to their tenants and have to meet certain standards and targets relating to the condition of their dwellings such as The Decent Homes Standard, and they are able to access other sources of funding due to their status.
- 24.2) The Council therefore expects RSHP's to conform to these duties on behalf of their tenants, which in the opinion of the Council, would include the provision of disabled facilities adaptations for their own tenants.
- 24.3) In all cases where the Council receives a DFG recommendation for a tenant of a RSHP, they will be issued with a formal written request for a financial contribution towards the cost of the adaptation works. The DFG may not proceed until a response has been received. In normal circumstances, the general expectation of the Council is that a minimum of 50% contribution is provided by the RSHP.
- 24.4) CPBC tenants in all cases should approach CPBC Housing in the first instance as the Council has funds set aside for disabled facility adaptation works in their own properties. In certain cases, including but not limited to unreasonable delays that may otherwise occur in the process due to exceptional circumstances, or specific appeals from an Occupational Therapist, DFG assistance may be considered towards the cost of any works, on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Environmental Health Operational Manager.

25 Grant Repayment Conditions

- 25.1 In order to make the most of limited funding, the Property Charges introduced under The Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008, provide a method for Castle Point Borough Council to reclaim a proportion of the Disabled Facilities Grants monies it paid in certain circumstances.
- 25.2 In accordance with this General Consent, repayment requirements will apply where the applicant disposes of the premises (whether by sale, assignment, transfer, or otherwise), in respect of which a Disabled Facilities Grant was paid, within 10 years of the certified date of completion. This will apply to grants over £5000 with a maximum repayment condition of £10,000. Grants below £5,000 will be exempt from repayment.
- 25.3 Repayment will also be required if a property is transferred from one person to another, whether or not this involves members of the same family, including cases where no monies are involved in the transaction.
- 25.4 The amount that is required to be repaid (if any,) will be recorded as a charge against the relevant property. Applicants who do not wish a charge to be placed against their property and have the resources to do so, may pay this amount to the Council prior to the charge being placed, or may repay the charge at any stage afterwards, by contacting the Council and asking for a settlement figure.

25.5 Table 1 provides examples of how this will work.

Table 1 – Repayment Calculations

Grant £	Repayment Requirement £
30,000	10,000
25,000	10,000
20,000	10,000
15,000	10,000
10,000	5,000
5,500	500

25.5 Where a premises for which Castle Point Borough Council has approved a Disabled Facilities Grant is disposed of, the Council will normally seek to recover the value of the grant that it is legally entitled to recover. However, before requiring repayment the Council will take into account the following:

- a) Whether the recipient will suffer financial hardship were he/she be required to repay all or any of the grant;
- b) Whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment or to change the location of his/ her employment;
- c) Whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or wellbeing of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
- d) Whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with or near any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity.

26 Performance and Review

26.1 Overall responsibility for the performance management of the grants process rests with the Head of Environment and the Environmental Health Operational Manager assisted by the Environmental Health Officers.

26.2 Regular meetings and reviews of the activity of the Home Improvement Agencies will take place to ensure that grants and works are carried out in accordance with the policy and to ensure excellent customer satisfaction and value for money.

26.3 Regular meetings are held between the Council and Occupational Therapists to discuss progress with cases and feedback any matters of concern.

26.4 The status of applications will be reviewed on a regular basis and queries will be raised with the appropriate organisation or officer in the case of unexplained delays at any stage of the process.

26.5 Regular information reports are submitted to the Council's Financial Services department which allows for the monitoring of expenditure on grants throughout the year.

27 Appeals, complaints and compliments

- 27.1) In the first instance any issues should be brought to the attention of the authorised officer or agent dealing with the application.
- 27.2) If you remain dissatisfied, to escalate any matter of concern, please contact the Environmental Health Operational Manager on eh@castlepoint.gov.uk or 01268 882200.

28 Amendments to Policy

- 28.1) Minor amendments to the DFG policy and guidance may be made by the Environmental Health Operational Manager in consultation with the Head of Environment. Significant changes must be formally approved by the Council Cabinet.

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Setting Up of New Markets in Canvey and Hadleigh Town Centres

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mumford- Regeneration and Business Liaison

1. Purpose of Report

This report is to seek Cabinet Approval to proceed to contract to enable the set-up, operation and development of two new quality markets on Canvey Island and in Hadleigh Town Centres consistent with the GOTRADE Interreg Initiative.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

The initiative described in this report is directly linked to the Council's 'Transforming Our Community' priority- the regeneration of town centres

3. Recommendations

- 1. That the Cabinet approves the entering into a contract with one or more market operators to set up town centre markets in Hadleigh and Canvey, on terms and conditions approved by the Chief Executive.**
 - 2. That the Cabinet approves the entering into a licence with the Greater Manchester Pension Fund for appropriate land within the Knightswick Centre curtilage to enable the operation of a market on Canvey, on terms and conditions approved by the Chief Executive.**
 - 3. That the Cabinet agrees the defrayal of Interreg funds consistent with the proposed items of expenditure set out in Appendix 1**
-

4. Background

The Council has an ambition to revitalise and regenerate the town centres in the Borough and is seeking to bring forward a number of initiatives in support of that objective. Vibrant modern markets are an important part of the product mix in town centres and the existing markets in Hadleigh and on Canvey are not particularly performing well. Therefore the Council has an ambition to facilitate a step change in performance through the introduction of quality new markets on Canvey and in Hadleigh town

centres. In support of this ambition, the Council has secured funding as a partner in a European Interreg Project called 'GO TRADE'. The project is being undertaken in collaboration with 16 partners of market towns in England and France and will enable us to learn from the experience of other markets and provide financial support to enable new markets to be introduced.

The agreed items that can be supported through Interreg Funding are set out in Appendix 1. A part time Town centre Project Officer has been appointed to support the implementation of the initiative.

5. Proposals

Discussions have taken place with managing agents acting for the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) over achieving a licence on some of their landholding fronting Furtherwick Road/High Street to facilitate a monthly market in Canvey town centre consisting of up to 40 stalls. The principle is now agreed and terms will be finalised once the Council has agreed arrangements with the preferred market operator.

With regard to Hadleigh Town Centre, there is no obvious location for the market; rather the Council has a range of landholdings in the town centre that could facilitate a market, with an actual site for the market being established in conjunction with the preferred market operator. Again the initial intention is to hold a monthly market although we will be guided by the proposed market operator as to the best arrangements to achieve a successful market.

The Council has undertaken soft market testing through the placing of an advertisement in both the national Market Times and the more local Castle Point Echo. We have sent out information packs to interested parties and received a good response from potential operators. We now intend to embark on a formal tender process to select an appropriate market operator for either Hadleigh or Canvey or both. It is anticipated that this process will be concluded by the end of October. The heads of terms agreed with the proposed market operator(s) will need to be reflected into the final arrangements agreed with the GMPF on Canvey and our own landholdings in Hadleigh. Any arrangement for the Hadleigh Market will be reported back to Cabinet for a decision prior to moving forward to contract.

It is envisaged that contractual arrangements will be concluded by the end of November. For the avoidance of doubt, other than the appropriate defrayal of Interreg Funds and officer time, there is no requirement for any additional funds to be allocated from the Council.

Subject to the legal contracts being finalised, it is hoped that there might be a revitalised market in Canvey town centre before Christmas, with both markets operational by spring 2019.

6. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The Council formally entered into a Partnership Agreement in September 2017. The total project cost set out in the agreement is envisaged to be £188,000. This is funded through an Interreg grant of c£122,000 (dependent on exchange rate fluctuations) and £66,000 match funding via staff time. It is not envisaged that there will be any direct financial contribution for the Council.

Given that the project funding has been sourced from a European Programme, there is an inherent risk of clawback should the funding not be defrayed in accordance with the Partnership Agreement. The project will need to be tightly managed and is being formally monitored on an ongoing basis by Internal Audit via a 'First Level Controller'

(b) Legal Implications

The Partnership Agreement sets out a number of obligations on the Council as one of the Project Partners which must be complied with otherwise there is a risk that the Project Grant will not be released to the Council or reduced due to non-compliance. The management of the project is being undertaken by the Council's Town Centre Project Manager supervised by the Council's Regeneration Manager and compliance is being formally monitored on an ongoing basis by Internal Audit via a 'First Level Controller'.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

None

(d) IT and Asset Management Implications

None

7. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

Tender process for Selection of Market Operator commences-21st September 2018

Selection of Market Operator-19th October 2018

Contracts concluded with GMPF and the Market Operator-November 2018

Site for market in Hadleigh confirmed-January 2019

Both Markets operational - Spring 2019

8. Background Papers

Cabinet Reports March 2018 Regeneration Update

Report Author: Mark Evershed

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF PROJECT COSTS FOR INTERREG GO TRADE PROJECT

The following table provides a summary of the total project budgets for the Interreg Go Trade project as they relate to Castle Point Borough Council and as per the approved application and partnership agreement of the 18th September 2017.

Description	Budget Amount
Project Management & Administration	£8,600
Marketing & Communications	£5,950
Branded Stalls	£45,000
Digital Corner	£5,500
Research	£1,500
Business Development and Training	£1,250
Performance Measurement	£5,000
Animation Events	£1,800
Tourism Network Development	£1,000
Local Coordinator Recruitment	£500
Market/Project Launch Events	£4,000
Market Signage and Site Adaptations	£1,500
Advertising	£3,300
Staff Costs	£103,434
TOTAL	£188,334

It should be noted that the project funding is provided from Interreg at a maximum ratio of 69%/31% contribution, so CPBC will be required to provide a matched contribution of at least 31% of total project costs above in the form of staff time (i.e. a minimum contribution of circa £60,000).

It should also be noted that these costs have been listed in GBP for simplicity and therefore subject to on-going variations in the GDB/EUR exchange rate (as Interreg operates using the Euro as its accounting currency). Our project budgets have been set conservatively to mitigate against this risk.

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Local Plan Intervention

**Cabinet Members: Councillor Smith
Leader of the Council – Strategic Partnerships
Councillor Stanley – Finance, Policy and Resources
Councillor Mumford - Regeneration & Business Liaison**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to update the Cabinet on Intervention by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and inform of the potential consequences should the Secretary of State continue with intervention regarding a new local plan for Castle Point.**

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

- 2.1 The initiatives described in this report are directly linked to the Council's "Transforming our Community" priority – ensuring that there is the right planning framework in place for a sustainable future for the Borough.**

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Cabinet notes the update and potential consequences for the Borough Council as local planning authority should the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government continue with intervention, both in terms of plan-making and decision-taking on planning applications.**

4. Background

- 4.1 In November 2017, the Secretary of State wrote to 15 councils across the country expressing his concern at the apparent lack of progress on plan-making. In South Essex, Basildon, Brentwood and Castle Point each received a letter.
- 4.2 The Secretary of State asked for responses to his letter by January 2018, setting out any exceptional circumstances and measures to be taken to accelerate plan production, before deciding whether to intervene himself. He also sought information on the wider planning context in each area.
- 4.3 The three South Essex councils each prepared their individual replies. Castle Point Borough Council made specific reference to the ambitions of South Essex councils through the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) to put in place a joint strategic plan (JSP), and that intervention in any of the South Essex councils would be likely to jeopardise the strong collaborative work already underway on strategic planning.
- 4.4 Nonetheless the Secretary of State wrote again to the Borough Council in March 2018, indicating that he was minded to continue with intervention since there was no clear timetable for preparing and adopting a local plan for the Borough.
- 4.5 Ministry officials and their consultants visited the Borough Council in May to complete a “diagnostic check” of the position with local plan work. As a consequence of that visit and subsequent advice Castle Point Borough Council agreed a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) in June 2018, committing the Council to the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough on an accelerated timetable, as well as continuing to support the preparation of the JSP.
- 4.6 The accelerated timetable described in the LDS committed the Council to a Regulation 18 consultation in July and August, which has now been completed. Publication of the Local Plan for Regulation 19 purposes will take place in January 2019.
- 4.7 The Regulation 18 Consultation made reference to the work previously carried out for the draft local plan from 2014 and the submission plan from 2016. All previous representations are being taken into account. Furthermore, an extensive refresh of the evidence base is underway, with a call for sites carried out, and updated housing land availability work underway.
- 4.8 Whilst the Borough Council is on course to meet the milestones in the LDS, as discussed with the Ministry, it is at this stage timely to draw the Cabinet’s attention to the potential consequences should there be any deviation from those milestones or the agreed programme.
- 4.9 The Housing White Paper of February 2017 made clear that the Secretary of State will determine whether to intervene by judging the following matters;
 - the least progress in plan-making has been made

- policies in plans had not been kept up to date
- there was higher housing pressure; and
- intervention would have the greatest impact in accelerating Local Plan production

4.10 Cabinet is reminded the MHCLG continues to monitor closely the Council's progress in meeting the timetable in the LDS with regular reports and contact maintained with the Government.

5. Intervention and the potential consequences

5.1 Intervention by Government in any area of local government business is a last resort and follows poor decision making and failure to follow Government direction and advice. We have been reminded by Government that intervention is a sanction and should not be considered as an alternative mechanism to deliver a Local Plan. We are aware that the Secretary of State is still considering whether to intervene in the local plan process. Failure to keep to the programme as agreed by Council in the LDS to produce a legally and technically compliant local plan is likely to result in intervention. The Secretary of State has extensive powers to intervene in the planning process.

5.2 There are two principal areas where the Secretary of State could intervene in the Borough Council's work as Local Planning Authority. In terms of **plan-making**, it is clear from legislation that the Secretary of State has wide-ranging powers to intervene in plan-making; for example he may direct that a certain approach be taken, or not taken. In these circumstances the local planning authority loses control of the plan-making process. A plan would be prepared elsewhere by others and with reference to evidence, national policy and guidance; it would be taken through the necessary legal stages to adoption. Members of the Council will not be involved and will be excluded from the plan making process. This would then become the statutory development plan for the Borough, with no formal involvement by the Borough Council.

5.3 In terms of **decision-taking**, the Government will wish to make certain after intervention that the statutory development plan and policies for the Borough will be implemented and will not allow the local plan once agreed to be frustrated by the Development Control process. Consequently as the Borough Council had no role in the preparation of the plan, indications from the MHCLG are that the Secretary of State will exercise powers available to him to direct that any strategic planning applications submitted pursuant to the plan will be referred to the Planning Inspectorate directly rather than the Borough Council, to ensure that the plan and its policies are correctly implemented. The Borough Council through the Development Control Committee will not be involved in implementation of the statutory development plan and the Council's ability to take decisions locally on strategic planning applications will be lost.

5.4 As one of the very few planning authorities under intense scrutiny by MHCLG the Council remains at great risk of intervention and this will lead to considerable reputational damage on a national scale. This may cause other non-intended consequences such as the inability to attract staff; implications

for joint working arrangements and funding opportunities which could last over many years.

6. Corporate implications

a. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Borough Council would be expected to meet all of the costs incurred by the Secretary of State as a result of any intervention. This would apply not only to plan-making but also the determination of strategic planning applications.

b. Legal Implications

- 6.2 The Borough Council would have no *locus*, other than as an interested party, at either an examination into a local plan for the Borough, or in the determination of any strategic planning application.

c. Human Resources & Equality Implications

- 6.3 There are no implications of this kind arising from the recommendations in this report.

d. Timescale for implementation & risk factors

- 6.4 Through the LDS, the Borough Council has committed to the preparation of a draft local plan by November 2018. Any deviation or slippage from that timetable is likely to undermine the confidence of the Secretary of State that the Borough is aware of the serious concerns he has raised and greatly enhances the risk of intervention.
- 6.5 Intervention would then jeopardise the ability of South Essex councils to make progress with the JSP, jeopardising the potential for co-ordinated growth and infrastructure investment across the sub-region.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The preparation of a new local plan for the Borough is making good progress, but any slippage to the agreed timetable is likely to come swiftly to the Secretary of State's attention and result in intervention.
- 7.2 Intervention is a sanction. Powers of intervention are significant and not solely confined to plan-making, but also decision-taking. The financial, legal and reputational costs to the Borough Council if intervention were to take place will be significant.

Background Papers

Secretary of State Local Plan Intervention letters 16.11.17 & 23.03.18

Castle Point Borough Council LDS 06.06.18

Report Author:

David Marchant – Chief Executive

Steve Rogers – Local Plan & Regeneration Adviser

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Housing Asset Management Plan

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mrs Egan – Housing and Council Homes

1. Purpose of Report

To present to Cabinet a proposed Housing Asset Management Plan 2018 - 2021.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

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

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet considers and agrees the Housing Asset Management Plan 2018 – 2021 as set out in Appendix A and the objectives and actions as detailed in section 5.

4. Background

- 4.1** Local authority owned housing faces a number of challenges. Reduction in Council rents over a four year period reduces the income to the Housing Revenue Account substantially, and for the year 2018/2019 it has been necessary to reduce capital expenditure for housing by approximately £1m. Demand for affordable housing continues to grow and there is a significant number of households on the Council's housing needs register. For Castle Point, the number of households on the housing needs register was 544 in December 2017, a significant reduction from the 1,090 a year earlier. This is a result of a re-development of the allocation policy with more stringent criteria being applied for eligibility, but it is evident that demand outstrips supply.
- 4.2** In addition there is a significant increase in homeless households. This is illustrated in the figures for the number of people in temporary accommodation which at 30th June 2014 was 59. By October 2017 this increased to 132, a growth of 124%. The number of approaches to the authority in the period has increased from 160 to 265 and the number of homeless applications increased from 98 to 132. More recently, and as at 30th June 2018, the number of people in homeless households decreased slightly to 126, but is still significantly more than a few years ago.

- 4.3 The tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire on the 14th June 2017 has resulted in a scrutiny of building control regulations relating to fire safety and renewed urgency to ensure the approach to health and safety, in particular fire safety, is appropriate for all Council owned housing stock. Consequently work has been initiated to replace battery operated smoke alarms with mains operated alarms and to provide carbon monoxide alarms to all households. The Housing service is also in the process of procuring replacement fire doors for all blocks.
- 4.4 Whilst demand for new social housing and temporary housing for homeless households is high, construction is not without significant difficulties. This is partly related to the availability of the brownfield sites for the housing service, which tend to be ex-garage sites. These often have significant issues, including, for example, individual garages in private ownership, rights of way and location of services such as electrical sub stations and drainage, all of which hinder and can prevent development. In addition development of garage sites can often incur concerns from nearby residents as well as political resistance and furthermore the funding available for development and construction has been hit by the reduction in revenue from rents.
- 4.5 Like most other Council's, the housing service continues to assess its housing stock against a decent homes standard, which ensures key aspects of persons home are in place and in reasonable condition. This includes, for example, kitchens, bathrooms, electrical wiring, roofs and boilers. This requires up to date surveys of all housing stock and a capital programme of replacement of items that are in a poor condition or have come to the end of their useful life. This programme is expensive and is often the bulk of the capital works. The Council measures the percentage of homes that are assessed as decent.
- 4.6 Customer expectations for housing is one of continuous improvement in both the fabric and infrastructure of the housing estate. This includes, for example, improvement to access roads and estate exterior works as well as demands for parking and parking restrictions and additional street lighting. In addition there is an increasing demand for specialist adaptations to housing such as wet rooms. These works obviously incur considerable expense. These works are largely unmeasured under decent homes criteria.
- 4.7 The challenge for the housing service is to balance all of the competing demands, expectations and pressures on the housing stock whilst managing the diminishing revenue on the Housing Revenue Account. This requires a planned approach, and one element of this is to have a Housing Asset Management Plan.

5. Report - Housing Asset Management Plan

- 5.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan is attached as Appendix A. It sets out considerable detail which includes:
- a. A profile of the Council's housing stock.
 - b. The demands faced,
 - c. Details on housing standard, including the decent homes standard,
 - d. The target for decent homes, which is 98% of all home reaching the decent homes standard by March 2019
 - e. Financial planning and the priorities for future capital improvement works which includes:
 - To maintain expenditure within the current business plan budget;

- To ensure there is sufficient development of new housing to replace homes sold under right to buy legislation
 - To improve the percentage of homes meeting the minimum requirements for Decent Homes Standard
 - To undertake some limited estate improvements based on a condition assessment.
- f. The plan also sets out the approach to health and safety and for example identifies a programme to install fire doors in all Council housing blocks, as well as provide carbon monoxide alarms to all residents.
- g. Further reference is made in the plan to issues such as energy efficiency, adaptations to homes for people with disabilities and customer involvement.

5.2 Objectives

5.2.1 The Housing Asset Management Plan identifies the following objectives:

1. Enable the development of new good quality housing stock
2. Regenerate Housing Estates and maximise use of existing stock
3. Ensuring Fire Safety requirements are met
4. Maintaining the stock to a standard comparable with that of other well managed Social Landlords and achieve 98% of all Homes at the Decent Homes Standard by March 2019 and maintain this level going forward.
5. Ensure a sustainable approach to stock management that considers the financial resources of the Housing Revenue Account and ensures long term financial stability and energy efficiency.

5.2.2 These objectives form the basis of action planning which is set out in appendix 4 of the Housing Asset Management Plan. Actions include:

- Construction of a House in Multiple Occupation at Hatley Gardens and 4 homes in Church Close, Canvey Island as well as two homes in Windsor Close.
- Clearing of problem garage sites
- Installation of Fire Safety Doors
- Works to ensure decent homes target is met.

5.2.3 In pursuing these objectives the Housing Services undertakes a varied range of actions and a wide range of procurements with values that are comparatively small to comparatively large. The Housing Service has a capital budget of £1.7m and this year is procuring a range of contracts covering areas such as disabled adaptations, central heating, kitchen improvements, environmental improvements, roofs, electrical rewiring, doors, bathroom improvements, wall finishes and smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. During the summer period the Housing Service entered into an agreement for the provision and maintenance of washing machines at sheltered housing sites with an approximate value of £30,432 per annum. Cabinet will wish to support the continuation of the work. It should be noted that much of the capital procurement work is undertaken by South Essex Homes and the Housing Services is looking to negotiate a five year SLA arrangement with South Essex Homes and this follows from a recommendation made by the Peer Challenge Team in February this year.

5.2.4 There is limited scope to undertake further estate improvements in 2018/19 due to the reduction in available funding in the housing revenue account.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The actions from the Housing Asset Management Plan are integrated into the service planning arrangements for the Housing Service, which will include highlight reporting to corporate management team and reporting to the cabinet portfolio holder on a regular basis.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 That Cabinet considers and agrees the Housing Asset Management Plan 2018 – 2021 as set out in Appendix A.

8. Corporate Implications

a. Financial implications

The impact of the reduction in rent revenue over a four year period has been considered as part of the development of the Housing Asset Management Plan and the capital programme. The targeting of ensure decent homes standard is met by 98% of properties by March 2019 has carefully considered the available financing.

b. Legal implications

The attached report at paragraph 4.2 sets out the significant legislative changes impacting on the Council as a Social Landlord which includes:

- a) Increased focus on 'Right to Buy' with greater discounts being offered to tenants.
- b) Encouragement for council's to replace housing sold through right to buy with new homes.
- c) Changes to the HRA also included the transfer of all housing stock to local authorities at a price dependant on type of accommodation and condition.
- d) Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires (i) local authorities to establish and maintain a register of brownfield land, including their own land, suitable for housing development (ii) allow development of this land for housing (iii) enable the extension of right- to-buy to housing association tenants (iv) local authorities to ensure 'Starter Homes' are built, with funding diverted from existing affordable housing funding within the planning system.
- e) Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 reduced tenant's rents by 1% per year for four years from 2016 / 2017.

When procuring services or works to maintain the Council's housing stock to ensure it meets the decent homes standard, the Council is subject to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules as well as EU Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Failure to do so may result in a legal challenge and fines or damages for non-compliance.

c. Human resources and equality

There are significant human resource implications for the implementation of the Housing Asset Management Plan and associated capital programmes and these have been carefully considered in its development.

d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

This is set out in the action plan for the Housing Asset Management Plan in Appendix A.

9. Background Papers:

None

Report Author: Craig Watts ext. 2419 crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk



2018
to 2021

Housing Asset Management Plan



Index

Section	Page Number
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Strategic View	4
1.2 Purpose of the Housing Asset Management Plan	4
1.3 Objectives	4
1.4 Asset Management Components	5
2. Asset Profile	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Location	6
2.3 Property Type	6
2.4 Age	6
3. Demand	6
4. Meeting Demand	7
4.1 New Schemes	7
4.2 Legislative Changes	7
4.3 Progress in Acquiring New Housing Stock	9
4.4 Obsolete Property	9
5. Standards	10
5.1 Minimum standard	10
5.2 Decent Homes	11
5.3 Garage Sites	13
5.4 Programmed Maintenance	13
6. Stock Condition Survey	14
6.1 Objective for Meeting the Decent Homes Standard	14
6.2 Current Need	14
6.3 Target for Decent Homes	15
7. Financial Plan	15
7.1 Housing Revenue Account	15
7.2 Overall Conclusions	15
7.3 Priority of Works	15
7.4 Maximising Use of Assets	16
7.5 Benchmarking	17
8. Implementation	20
8.1 Planned Maintenance and Capital Improvements	20
8.2 Response Maintenance and Voids	21
8.3 Gas Service Contracts	22
8.4 Service Contracts	22
9. Health and Safety	23

10.	Energy Efficiency	24
10.1	Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	24
10.2	Green Materials	25
10.3	Energy Efficiency Grants	25
11.	Adaptations to homes for people with disabilities	25
12.	Customer involvement	25
12.1	Customer Consultation	25
12.2	Customer Feedback	26
13.	Issues Arising	26
14.	Action Plan	29
	Appendices	30
	Appendices	
	Appendix 1 — Table 1 — Stock by Area	30
	Appendix 2— Table 2— Property Type	31
	Appendix 3— Table 3— Stock Owned by Age Band	32
	Appendix 4— Action Plan	33

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Strategic View

This Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Asset Management Plan is referenced to the aims detailed in the Council's Corporate Business Plan: Public Health & Wellbeing; Environment; Transforming our Community and Efficient and Effective Customer focussed services. Further details of how the objectives in this plan link to the corporate aims are set out in section 1.3 of this document.

The plan has also considered the strategic objectives and principles of the council's Asset Management Plan and the Asset Management Group were consulted on the contents and structure of this plan.

1.2 Purpose of the Housing Asset Management Strategy & Plan

This Asset Management Plan aims to complement and inform the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy as well as the Housing & Communities Service plan and Housing Team Plan and to set out priorities for the improvement of the housing stock.

In common with most Local Authorities, Castle Point Borough Council has finite resources to spend on asset management, which must be managed efficiently to gain maximum benefit to:

- Develop new housing stock and regenerate housing estates
- Keep dwellings in good condition in the most cost effective ways
- Bring properties up-to-date and in line with current and projected customer expectations and demand
- Ensure works comply with all health and safety requirements and current and prospective regulations
- Provide a balance between response and cyclical repairs and capital investment
- Provide links to lettings, Supporting People, stock improvement and disposals strategies
- Meet the decent homes standard
- Achieve high standards of energy efficiency

1.3 Objectives

There are five key objectives related to the management of Housing Assets. These have been developed following the analysis undertaken in chapters 2 to 11 and the summary of key issues in Chapter 12. The suggested Housing Asset Objectives are as follows:

Housing Asset Objective	Links to Council Priorities
1. Enable the development of new good quality housing stock	Housing and Regeneration
2. Regenerate Housing Estates and maximise use of existing stock	Housing and Regeneration

3. Ensuring Fire Safety requirements are met	Health and Community Safety
4. Maintaining the stock to a standard comparable with that of other well managed Social Landlords and achieve 98% of all Homes at the Decent Homes Standard by March 2019 and maintain this level going forward.	Health and Community Safety
5. Ensure a sustainable approach to stock management that considers the financial resources of the Housing Revenue Account and ensures long term financial stability and energy efficiency.	A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Service

1.4 Asset Management Components

There are several components within this plan to ensure the housing stock meets the needs and standards required now and in the future.

- A development and regeneration approach to housing assets, garages and land to provide greater numbers of new homes and regenerate estate of poor condition such as some identified garage blocks.
- Refurbishment and remodelling of dwellings to ensure they remain attractive, meet modern requirements and tenant expectations
- A planned maintenance programme, achieving economies by replacing components just before they would otherwise require response repairs, anticipating changes in minimum acceptable standards, and reducing future requirements for cyclical maintenance
- Cyclical maintenance such as external painting, to prevent deterioration in the physical condition of the stock
- A responsive maintenance service, to ensure that tenants remain satisfied with the standard of repairs to their accommodation and to prevent unplanned deterioration in its condition.
- An efficient and effective voids repair service, helping to speed the repairs process and protect the council's revenue.

2 ASSET PROFILE

2.1 Introduction

Castle Point Borough Council is a Local Authority, established in 1974 and currently (as at November 2017) owns 1,516 permanent rented homes which include 8 supported housing schemes.

2.2 Location

Castle Point Borough Council has a property portfolio covering a geographical area of 45.08 square kilometres. Appendix 1 displays stock by area.

2.3 Property Type

Appendix 2 sets out the number of properties owned and maintained by the Council's Housing Services. As at July 2017 the Council owned a total of 1,516 properties.

- a) The number and percentage of one bedroomed properties (including bedsits) is: 715 units (47.16%)
- b) The number and percentage of two bedroomed properties is: 361 units (23.81%)
- c) The number and percentage of three bedroomed properties is: 430 units (28.36%)
- d) There is an acute lack of four bedroomed properties with just 10 units, or 0.66% of stock.

2.4 Age

Most of the Council owned homes were built after 1945 and before 1980. Appendix 3 details stock owned by age band, and 98.3% of properties were constructed during this period. A significant proportion of homes were constructed between 1945 and 1964 (44.2%) and these are typically homes that have been constructed with limited consideration of thermal warmth and lack, for example, cavity wall insulation. This can result in affordable warmth issues, and consequently the Council has in the past pursued schemes such as loft insulation schemes, to help improve the energy efficiency of the stock.

3. DEMAND

There is a high demand for Social Housing. The Council produced a Tenancy Strategy in 2013 which set out new policy requirements for integration into the Allocations Policy including significant changes to residency requirements. This includes the requirement to have lived in the borough for at least three of the last five years. Nevertheless demand for social housing remains strong and there are currently 544 people on the housing needs waiting list. The demand for one and two

bedroomed properties is particularly acute as demonstrated by the following figures as at 22/8/2018:

Band A - 117	
1 bedroom	43
2 bedroom	40
3 bedroom	26
4 bedroom	7
5 bedroom	1

Band B - 98	
1 bedroom	37
2 bedroom	33
3 bedroom	24
4 bedroom	4

Band C - 238	
1 bedroom	105
2 bedroom	66
3 bedroom	45
4 bedroom	12

Band D - 101	
1 bedroom	85
2 bedroom	15
3 bedroom	0
4 bedroom	1

4. MEETING DEMAND

4.1 New Schemes

The Council covers areas where there is a high demand for housing for all tenures and the addition of new homes for affordable rent, either through development by the Council in partnership with a suitable developer, or through enabling development with Housing Associations, where the authority has nomination rights, remains a key objective.

4.2 Legislative Changes

Since 2011 a number of legislative changes have been made which impact on the Council as a Landlord and on the way the Council manages its Housing Revenue Account (HRA). These include:

- a) a) Increased focus on 'Right to Buy' with greater discounts being offered to tenants. For example for a property valued at approximately £100k, the Council's HRA could expect to obtain a net receipt of approximately £47k (based on sales since 12/13 and after the deduction of the Treasury's required share of receipts of between £30k and £40k and the contribution to the Councils GF of between £11k and £16k per quarter over this period).
- b) Encouragement for council's to replace housing sold through right to buy with new homes. This encouragement is by setting out, through an individual agreement with each local authority; a requirement to replace Council homes sold with new ones within a three year period or lose the receipt obtained.
- c) Changes to the HRA also included the transfer of all housing stock to local authorities at a price dependant on type of accommodation and condition. Councils were required to in effect take a large mortgage out and purchase the properties in return for being able to retain any rent collected. Castle Point

took out a package of loans to the value of £36.5m in 2011 based on 1,535 homes.

A 30 year business plan has been constructed and sets out the finance required to pay the interest and debt. There is also 'head room' which is an additional capacity to borrow further funding. The maximum allowable debt for the authority is £37.5m which means there is loan head room of £1m, which will increase as the debt is repaid.

Since the new arrangements were put in place, the Council has continued to sell homes under the Right to Buy process but has also acquired and constructed new homes as detailed below. The current housing stock as at 11th December 2017 was 1,516 homes.

4.2.1 Housing and Planning Act 2016

The Act requires:

- a) Require local authorities to establish and maintain a register of brownfield land, including their own land, suitable for housing development.
- b) Allow development of this land for housing.
- c) Enable the extension of right- to-buy to housing association tenants.
- d) In order to generate revenue to pay for Housing Associations to offer right to buy to their tenants, councils will be required to pay an annual levy to the government based on the value of the estimated sale of Council homes for that year. This will fund Right to Buy discounts for Housing Association tenants across the country. This will result in further reductions in the Housing Revenue Account. The provisions have not yet been implemented and a recent social housing green paper published in August 2018 refers to repealing this element of the legislation.
- e) The Act requires local authorities to ensure 'Starter Homes' are built, with funding diverted from existing affordable housing funding within the planning system.

4.2.2 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016

Amongst other provisions, this act reduced tenant's rents by 1% per year for four years from 2016 / 2017. This has a very significant impact on the HRA **requiring costs savings of approximately £1.2m a year every year for the next 30 years.**

As a consequence, the Council's financial position to acquire new stock is significantly limited and any acquisitions will need to make good use of section 106 contributions as well as the sale of targeted land and assets to generate the necessary income. It also significantly reduces the amount of capital funding available to improve existing stock and maintain the decent homes standard.

4.2.3 November 2017 Budget Provisions

On the 22nd November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced additional funding to help increase the number of homes developed nationally to 300,000 per annum by the mid 2020's. This included the following:

- Housing Investment: the government will provide £1.1bn for a new Land Assembly Fund; a further £2.7bn to the competitively allocated Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) in England and a further £630m through the NPIF to accelerate the building of homes on small, stalled sites, by funding on-site infrastructure and land remediation.
- Housing Revenue Account: The government will lift Housing Revenue Account borrowing caps for councils in areas of high affordability pressure, so they can build more council homes. Local authorities will be invited to bid for increases in their caps from 2019/20, up to a total of £1bn by the end of 2021/22.

The Council will explore the further opportunities provided by the initiatives above as further details are known.

4.3 Progress in Acquiring and Constructing New Housing Stock

The Council has made significant progress in acquiring new housing stock with the purchase, in November 2014, of a block of new build flats at Draper Court, Long Road. This resulted in the provision of 25 new flats, including 11 one bedrooomed and 14 two bedrooomed flats.

The Council's Housing Services has undertaken a review of land and assets and has begun a development programme which focuses on garage sites in a poor state of repair to be developed into new homes. To date three new Council homes have been constructed at St Christopher's Close and a further two are were completed at Lawns Court. A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) was also acquired and refurbished in April 2016 to house 8 homeless households in Camperdown Road, Canvey Island. Further plans include the construction of an HMO at Hatley Gardens and the development of four new homes at Church Close.

4.4 Obsolete Property

The majority of the authority's housing stock is fit for purpose and in good condition, with many meeting the DHS. This is due to a number of years of consistent investment in major repairs and improvements. The remaining homes will be programmed to receive a defined programme of works to ensure they comply with the DHS. There is, however, a need to monitor house types and estates, which may become obsolete or unpopular.

There are a number of reasons why a property may cease to meet the strategic requirements of the Council and become obsolete. These are set out in the table below, together with some proposed factors that will be monitored.

Property Obsolescence Review Factors

Reason	Factors to be Considered
A property may need a considerable amount of work to be done to bring it up to the Decent Homes Standard or other relevant standard. It may also occupy large footprint and be suitable for further development or being developed into more than one home in the same plot.	Properties identified in the stock condition survey as in need of substantial works will be prioritised for potential re-development if they should become void. Estate works will be undertaken to identify properties that occupy a large footprint to elicit further development potential.
A property may, over time, cease to meet the needs for which it was originally constructed. For example, a sheltered housing scheme may suffer a loss of demand.	The number of people leaving the property, together with the time taken to re-let empty homes and the level of demand.

The reasons and factors above consequently inform the Council's approach to reviewing property which maybe better suited to re-development.

5. STANDARDS

Listed below are the different standards which the Council must meet to comply with the law and government initiatives.

5.1 Minimum standard

Castle Point are legally obliged to maintain property up to the standards covered by the following legislation -

- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, section 11(1)
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 79 (1)
- The Defective Premises Act 1972, section 4 (1) and (2)
- The Housing Act 2004, part 1.

It is good practice to meet the following standards relating to repair, long term maintenance and improvement of stock by:

- Having an effective, efficient and responsive repair service to their residents, with published standards.
- Ensuring residents have access to a 24 hour emergency service and inform residents about this policy and the procedures used to provide this service.
- Meeting the requirements of the Right to Repair regulations.
- Monitoring and, at least annually, reporting performance to residents against service standards.

- Ensuring that the housing is in a reasonable and lettable condition, including having an approved lettable standard.
- Having reasonable methods for knowing the condition of the stock and up-to-date information on the condition, including its energy efficiency.
- Having costed plans for future maintenance and improvement of housing.
- Meeting the Councils obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995.
- Making adequate financial provision for planned maintenance and improvement works.
- Ensuring value for money and probity in the commissioning and execution of repair, maintenance and improvement works.

5.2 Decent Homes

The Decent Homes Standard was introduced by the Government in July 2001. The essence of this standard was to create a minimum standard of housing across all Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSL's).

The standard is broken down into four main criterions (A-D). A decent home is defined as one that meets all the following four criteria:

- **Criterion A - Housing Health Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** - The housing health and safety rating system (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 identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.
- The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard. Each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having category 1 (serious) or category 2 (other). The criteria quite wide and includes, for example, overcrowding. For the purpose of decent homes condition, the criterion from the HHSRS is condition rather than human related.
- A property will fail the decent homes criteria automatically if it does not meet the HHSRS standards. A property should be free from serious health and safety hazards, which are classed as Category 1 failures and include problems such as damp/mould, asbestos, domestic hygiene, structural failures, electrical hazards, fire hazards and hot surface issues. Following completion of the stock condition survey, approximately 93% of stock were surveyed in 2012 and it was possible to profile the existing stock that have not. Those failing the standard are addressed as a matter of immediate priority. Continuous monitoring is then undertaken through the various inspection regimes associated with planned and reactive maintenance and in keeping the database up to date.

- **Criterion B - It is a reasonable state of repair** - With regards to this criterion, there are two components - key and other. In order for a key component to fail, one or more component must be old and in a poor condition. Key components include external walls, roof structure, roof covering, windows, doors, chimneys, central heating boilers, gas fires, storage heaters and electrics.

Other components (non-key) will fail if two or more components are older than the following in years and in poor condition:

- > Kitchen which is 30 years or older
 - > Kitchen in a poor condition
 - > Bathroom which is 40 years or older
 - > Bathroom in a poor condition
- **Criterion C - It has reasonable modern facilities and services.** For properties to fail this criteria, if three or more of the following are present at a property it will fail:
 - > A kitchen which is 20 years old or older;
 - > A kitchen with inadequate space and layout;
 - > A bathroom which is 30 years old or more;
 - > An inappropriately located bathroom and wc;
 - > Inadequate insulation against noise;
 - > Inadequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks and flats
- **Criterion D - Provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.** Dwellings failing on this point are those without effective insulation and heating. This is a particular issue for some dwellings constructed after the war and before 1970. In April 2013 the number of dwellings judged to lack a reasonable degree of thermal comfort was 37 (2.45%). However, the Council has historically performed well in the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) which is the methodology used by the Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. The Decent Homes survey did not include an assessment of the loft insulation, although work undertaken for repairs and maintenance and voids has revealed the following figures:

Property Type	Insulation Depth (Count)		
	50MM	50 - 199MM	>200MM
Bungalow	28	97	231
Bedsit Bungalow			11
Flat	19	103	77
Flat Bedsit		18	38
House	26	153	251
Total	73	371	608

Grants were available to homeowners and private tenants and are part of the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) and the Green Deal. However, these grants were not available to Council or Housing Association tenants.

Consequently the Council will work to ensure targeted support for improving thermal efficiency. This includes exploring any funding available to help homes become better insulated any dwelling judged to lack a reasonable degree of thermal comfort and prioritising those properties with loft insulation depth of just 50mm for improvement.

Also note that the recent social housing green paper (August 2018) proposed that there will be a review of the decent homes criteria and social landlords will need to comply with this new criteria.

5.3 Garage Sites

In addition to the housing stock, the authority manages 430 Garages. The garage sites vary in quality and a number are not fit all for purpose. A number of garage sites have been incorporated into a development programme which will look to develop the sites into social or affordable housing.

In addition there are a number of garage sites that whilst in a poor state of repair, are not suitable for re-development for a variety of reasons. This includes size and location of the garage site, private ownership of garages and rights of way. Consequently further work is being undertaken to develop a wider programme of garage improvement which will see, for example, the clearing of garages that are not suitable for development.

5.4 Programmed Maintenance

In order to ensure that properties are maintained to a high standard, a planned programme of maintenance is in place to ensure a high standard of quality living is continued for tenants. These works are detailed and carried out in consultation with tenants as detailed in section 11 of this strategy. The outcomes of the Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2011/12 is a key driver for this programme going forward.

6. STOCK CONDITION SURVEY

South Essex Homes (SEH) undertook a stock condition survey for the Council during the summer of 2011 to the spring of 2012. This was followed by another stock condition survey in the spring of 2018. SEH also maintain a stock condition database on behalf of the Housing Services and maintain this database with the survey results as well as any work undertaken through planned and cyclical repairs.

6.1 Objective for Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

As at 31st March 2018, the percentage of homes reaching decent homes standard is estimated to be 95.8%.

It is also important to note that to just maintain the Decent Homes Standard; it is necessary to undertake a continual programme of works as for example, kitchens, bathrooms and wiring age and need to be replaced. The Decent Homes survey clarified the current need of the stock and this is further detailed below:

6.2 Current Need

The information on the current stock condition has been used to identify the repair and replacement needs and estimated budgets for this work. This is profiled in Appendix 4 and some work has been undertaken to reduce significant peaks and troughs up to about 2024, and will be reviewed annually.

6.3 Target for Decent Homes

The Council wants to ensure that as many homes as possible are at the decent homes standard, although this needs to be balanced with the reduction in capital funding available from the implications of the 1% rent reduction and the need to undertake some wider estate improvements. Programmed works to increase the percentage of decent homes as follows:

Percentage of Decent Homes Profiling (all dates are as at 31st March)

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
95.8%	98%	98.5%	99%	99.5%

Consequently the percentage of non-decent homes is **targeted to decrease from 10% in April 2013 to 2% by March 2019 and to then to continue to improve by 0.5% per annum until achieving 99.5% by March 2022** based on a housing stock of 1,516 homes (as at June 2018), this does not take into account projected right to buy sales of stock.

7. FINANCIAL PLAN

7.1 Housing Revenue Account

The Housing service has a financial plan that is linked closely to the 30 year business plan which includes a debt of £35.6m on the Council's Housing Stock. The Council's assessment of its stock investment needs must be fully met throughout the duration of the thirty year loan. It is therefore critical that the Asset Management Planning, and the information that supports it, is viable for the long term and based on good quality information to ensure the needs can be met.

7.2 Overall Conclusions

The financial plan looks at the resources required to meet the expenditure on the Council's properties over the next 30 years. This includes expenditure on:

- Responsive Repairs (including voids)
- Gas servicing
- Cyclical Painting and Repairs
- Reinvestment including meeting and keeping the decent homes standard
- Reinvestment that is outside the decent homes standard
- Costs associated with decreasing rent by 1% from 2016/17 for the next 4 years.

From the stock condition information, a capital works programme incorporating an estate improvement programme has been devised.

The service is targeting improved compliance with the DHS standard and the value of the capital works required decrease the percentage of non-decent homes from 10% in April 2013 to 2% by April 2019 is considered in the profiling.

It should be noted that the significant expenditure for the catch-up was identified as a result of the 2013 stock condition survey illustrating a number of urgent works to be undertaken in such areas as roofs, wall structure and general estates improvements. In addition significant works were identified for two sheltered Housing Schemes, Gowan Court and Amelia Blackwell, which has resulted in the conversion of the premises to allow for each tenant to have their own bathing facilities.

7.3 Priority of Works

The estimates for compliance with the Decent Homes Standards only allow for the minimum works to comply with the Standards. Thus, for example if a kitchen is old (over 20 years) and in poor condition, this in itself is not a cause for failure of the DHS. However if there are radiators, or a bathroom in poor condition and over 30 years then this will trigger a failure. The forecasts only allow remedying one of two items of non-key component failure in order to comply with the DHS. This will provide a Decent Home in accordance with the definition.

However, there are other issues for the condition of the Housing Stock, including the general condition of some elements of the wider estate such as alleyways and footpaths, wall finish and condition of stairwells etc, which require prioritisation for future works.

Furthermore there is a need to develop new housing, as right to buy receipts have increased following the government decision to increase the amount of discount to incentivise right to buy's. Furthermore the Housing service will be required to repay replacement housing capital receipts to government if funding is not used in the construction of replacement homes within three years of the end of the quarter in which the sale took place.

Finally, there is a need to ensure that any capital expenditure is within the financial planning and is part of the 30 year HRA business plan.

Consequently the priority of future capital improvement works is suggested as follows:

- To maintain expenditure within the current business plan budget;
- To ensure there is sufficient development of new housing to replace homes sold under right to buy legislation ;
- To improve the percentage of homes meeting the minimum requirements for Decent Homes Standard
- To undertake some limited estate improvements based on a condition assessment.

7.4 Maximising Use of Assets

The Council's strategy is to sell property and HRA land where it is not required; however, option appraisals will be carried out on properties with high levels of past and forecast expenditure. Properties that then cannot be converted or used in other ways at viable costs may be disposed of in accordance with the principles contained in the Asset Management Plan.

The Housing service will construct and implement a programme for the sale and disposal or development of garage sites and the Housing Land in 2014 and this will be implemented over several years to assist helping to meet the need to develop new homes to replace those sold under right to buy legislation.

The programme will likely see a mixed economy approach to the disposal of land with some sites developed in partnership with another housing provider, particularly to meet specialist need requirements such as people with learning difficulties, some sold to private developers to provide funding for development and some sites will be developed by the Council in partnership with an appropriate developer. The approach

will aim, as far as possible, to ensure the long term sustainability of the Housing Revenue Account.

Right to Buy (RTB) sales have increased in recent years. Since the new arrangements were put in place, the Council sold 9 homes in 2012/13 and 15 in 2013/14. This reduced the housing stock to 1,509 homes and the corresponding rental income. However, the purchase of a block of flats in 2015 increased the figure to 1,522 in 2016, and it is now down to 1,516 as at December 2017. There is strong demand for Council homes with approximately 530 people on the Housing Needs Register waiting for a variety of different size homes.

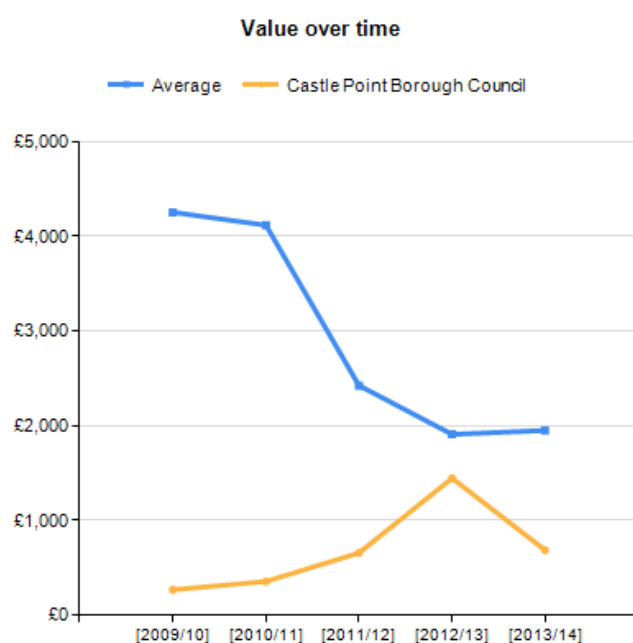
7.5 Benchmarking

The Housing service use Housemark and value for money information produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government using CIPFA data and performance indicators to benchmark cost and performance and to identify and learn from best practice.

Analysis of the value for money information provided by the Audit Commission reveal the following:

In 2010/11, the last year for which national comparative information is available, Castle Point Borough Council spent an average of £11.13 per dwelling per week on repairs and maintenance, which is very low when compared to all other district councils, with the average cost being £16.01. In fact Castle Point was in the lowest 10% for all district councils.

The expenditure by Castle Point on tackling non decent dwellings has also been historically low, as illustrated by the following graph, which compares Castle Point's expenditure with the average for all district council's in £1,000's:



In short, the Council was not actually spending as much on responsive repairs and capital works when compared to other district councils, and needed to identify the condition of its housing stock in order to identify capital works.

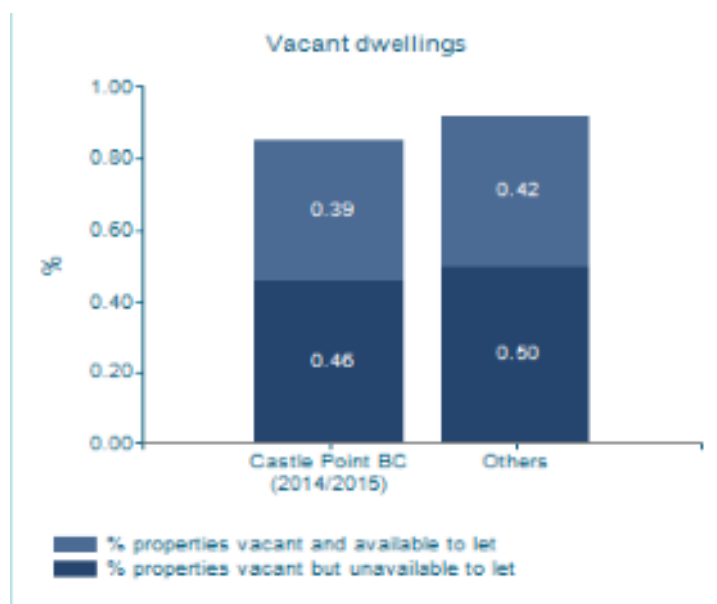
Consequently the Housing service embarked on a survey of its housing stock and identified a number of issues (such as leaking roofs) which have been subject to planned capital and cyclical improvement works. It is envisaged that this should eventually reflect on reduced calls for reactive repairs based on leaks. The very big investment in capital spend should result in significant reductions in future reactive repairs.

The average SAP rating (based on void information only) was 64, in 2016/17, which is slightly below the national average for Council homes of 65.6 in 2014.

Finally in 2012/13, the percentage of non-decent council homes was 10.8%, in the 2011/12 worst quartile with the national average at 3.1%, currently the proportion of non-decent homes is 4.2%.

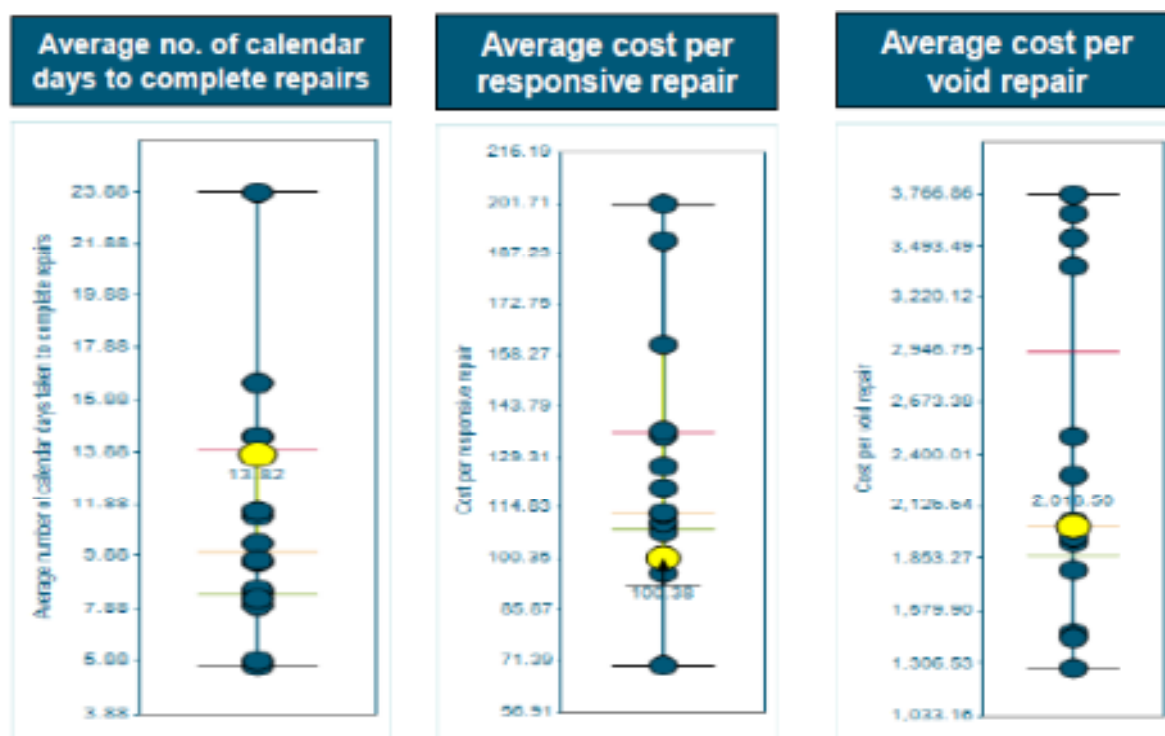
A significant amount of investment has recently been made on the Council's housing stock and the Housing service participated in Housemark benchmarking in 2015. Castle Point was compared to a family group of 16 other local authorities and Housing Associations. A summary of some of the key results are set out below:

Vacant Properties



Commentary: Overall the Housing Service is slightly better than average.

Costs and Completion of Repairs



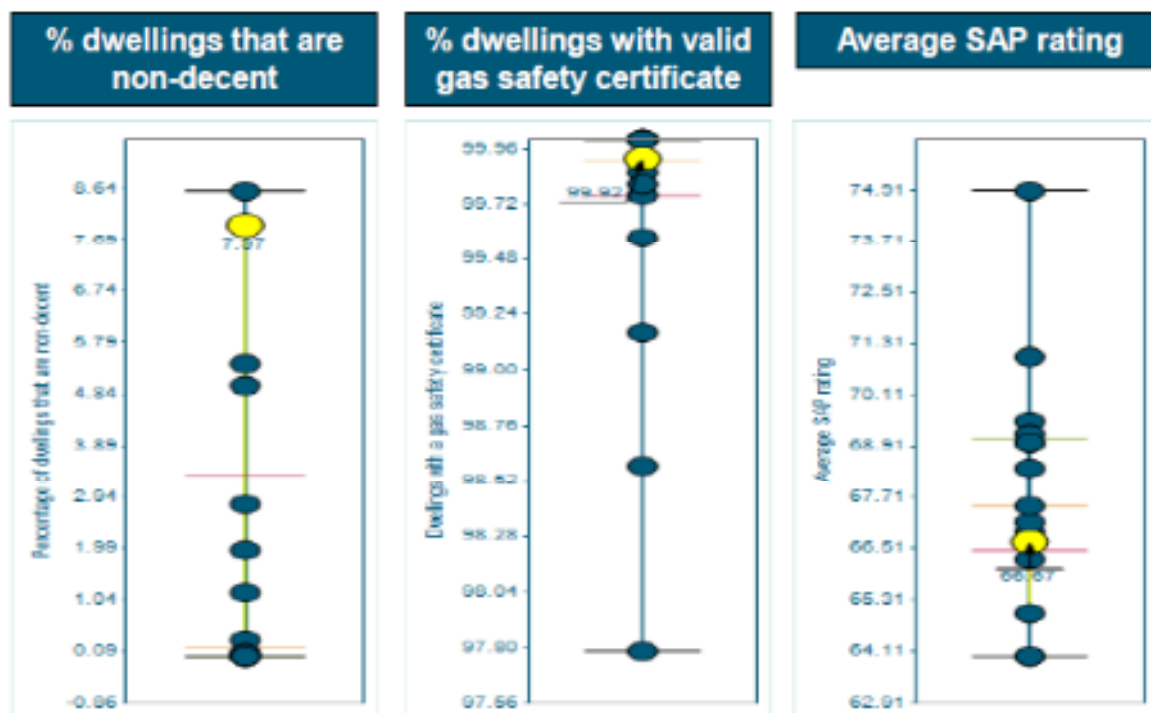
Commentary: The yellow indicates the position of Castle Point. Although the average number of days to complete a repair is above average, the actual costs are below average.

Major and Cyclical Works Costs



Commentary: This helps to illustrate that the Housing Service has recently made significant investment in major capital works following a number of years where investment was much lower.

Major Works and Cyclical Maintenance Key Performance Indicators



Commentary: The Housing Service has a high proportion of non-decent homes following years of relatively low investment in capital works. The average SAP rating needs further investigation and is based on a limited sample from void works.

8. IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Planned Maintenance and Capital Improvements

The reinvestment, planned and cyclical maintenance programmes are presently delivered through tendering, with contractors installing building components and undertaking external painting, maintenance and refurbishment works.

Programmes for future years will undertake elemental programmes of central heating installations, roof, windows and kitchen/bathroom replacement packages. This approach tackles disrepair and lack of amenity across a larger number of homes.

The authority will continue with this elemental approach to reinvestment programmes of works, but will also try to concentrate activity on specific streets, postcodes or locations to bring about better economies of scale and more efficient management of output. Results from the Stock Condition Survey will help with this approach.

Whole Life cycle cost theory has been used to help formulate the costs relating to the condition survey, and to build a picture of potential future expenditure. Following

the stock condition survey and as the condition information continues to be fed into the asset management system, a clearer picture will develop. The whole life cycle costing will then evolve to be more specific to properties in accordance with the principles in the Asset Management Plan.

Planned maintenance and capital improvements relates to the objective of Maintaining the stock to a standard comparable with that of other well managed Social Landlords and achieve 98% of all Homes at the Decent Homes Standard by March 2019. This work is undertaken by several contractors and monitoring is assisted by staff from South Essex Homes through a Service Level Agreement arrangement.

There are a number of measures in place to assess performance, and some of the most important include:

- Overall satisfaction with one off heating replacements
- Overall satisfaction with roof replacements
- No of roof replacements undertaken
- No of kitchen replacements undertaken
- No of bathroom/wet room replacements undertaken
- No of electrical tests-inspections undertaken re: re-wire and upgrade programme

8.2 Response Maintenance and Voids

Responsive Repairs maintenance is managed by a single contractor, Kier. A separate Service Level Agreement is in place with South Essex Homes who undertake more technical Housing Service requirements including surveying and managing the contract with Kiers and others to ensure an effective responsive repairs and capital works programme.

The responsive repairs service is linked to the objective of providing good quality affordable homes to people in housing need and those requiring care and support.

There are a significant number of measures to monitor the effectiveness of the responsive repairs and maintenance service. Measures of importance include:

- Percentage overall satisfaction with Landlord Housing Services: Leaseholders (Annual Indicator)
- Average void turnaround time (Calendar Voids).
- Overall Tenant satisfaction with repairs & maintenance.
- Dwellings with a valid gas certificates in last 12 months.
- Satisfaction of Property Condition post inspection

These measures are monitored by the Housing service on a monthly basis to ensure to meet the objectives above.

The Council needs to have a higher percentage of the repairs programme being undertaken on a planned rather than responsive basis.

8.3 Gas Service Contracts

The service is currently provided by Aaron with contract management undertaken by South Essex Homes on behalf of the Housing Service. There is monthly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reporting relating to compliance on valid Landlord Gas Safety Records (LGSR) and responsive maintenance and repairs. Management systems are also in place to deal with properties where access cannot be gained to complete LGSR's.

8.4 Service Contracts

Service contracts are in place to cover both servicing (preventative maintenance) together with responsive repairs. Contracts are in place for:

- Leasehold Insurance
- Window Cleaning Services
- Sheltered Scheme Alarms
- Laundry Equipment – sheltered schemes
- Careline
- Grounds Maintenance
- Fire Extinguisher testing sheltered schemes
- SLA Property Management
- EPC
- Sheltered Lift Services
- Fire Alarms Sheltered
- PAT testing
- DDA Works
- Electrical upgrade and re-wire
- Asbestos Removal
- Asbestos Consultancy
- Annual servicing of stair lifts
- Gas repair and servicing contract

- One off heating upgrade works
- Water Treatment
- Kitchens and Bathrooms one off replacement
- External Painting
- Responsive repairs and voids contract
- Bramley Court
- Facia, Soffit, Guttering Replacements
- Replacement of Flat roofing to sheltered schemes
- Door Control (Maintenance)
- Internal Fire Doors Renewals – Sheltered Schemes

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

The Council has a health and safety policy statement This sets out CPBC position on managing the following risks including roles and responsibilities, monitoring and control provisions and KPI's to obtain re-assurance,:

- Fire Safety
- Electrical testing
- Gas Safety
- Asbestos
- Water testing
- Lift and stair lift servicing
- Door and Barrier Servicing

Following the Grenfell tragedy on the 14th June 2017 the Housing Service has reviewed it's arrangements for Health and Safety and has identified the need for further works, which includes:

- Replacing any battery fire alarms with the installation of mains powered smoke alarms.
- Providing Carbon monoxide alarms to all households.
- Undertaking a programme of Fire Door Replacements.

These works are further detailed in the action plan attached as appendix 4.

10. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The plans that are in place to improve the energy efficiency of stock support the Council's aim to reduce levels of fuel poverty amongst tenants. The Council's overarching Asset Management Plan underpins this objective.

To assist with this objective, it is necessary to obtain better quality data on energy efficiency of properties. Currently the estimated SAP energy efficiency is 64

10.1 Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)

SAP's are the Government's preferred energy rating for homes and assess if they conform to the requirements of the building regulations.

A home scoring 0 is very inefficient (very expensive to run), whilst a home scoring 100 is very efficient (cheap to run).

The English Housing Survey published in 2017 states:

In 2016, the average SAP rating of English dwellings (private and public) was 62 points, up from 45 points in 1996. This increase was evident in all tenures. However, the increase appears to be slowing and there was no change in the average SAP rating of homes between 2015 and 2016 (in any tenure).

The Council does not have full information on the SAP rating for all of its dwellings. Instead an assessment has been made from Voids and on this basis the average SAP for the different types housing stock is 64 which is slightly below the national average of 68.9 for all council housing stock. Benchmarking data reveals that Castle Point was 56th out of 74 providers nationally. Further work needs to be undertaken to improve the robustness of data for SAP rating.

The authority will concentrate on those with low values first and introduce energy efficiency measures to increase the energy efficiency of the home. Subject to budget constraints the programme of works will include:

- Ensuring loft insulation is at least 270mm
- Providing more energy efficiency boilers as part of the Council's replacement programme
- Installation of double-glazed windows
- Cavity wall insulation to external walls

In undertaking this work the Council will explore opportunities for external funding and grants and will liaise with the Essex Wide Energy Partnership to maximise impact from ECO projects.

10.2 Green Materials

The maintenance of housing (materials, transport and waste) contributes significantly to the carbon emissions of the council's operations. The use of locally derived and sustainably produced products and materials will significantly reduce this negative impact on the environment.

The Council's policy is to ensure all contractors consider sustainability issues which are further specified in tender documentation. Furthermore, when constructing new homes, tender documentation will include ensuring all building control requirements are met which by the end of 2016 required meeting the equivalent of level 4 of the code of sustainability for new homes. For example, recent new homes constructed have solar panels on their roofs to provide electricity.

10.3 Energy Efficiency Grants

The Council aim to continually monitor grants that may be available and apply for those which are applicable.

11. ADAPTATIONS TO HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Council are committed to addressing the needs of all customers and undertake measures such as aids and adaptations in order to enable residents to stay in their homes. In addition, the authority works closely with Occupational Therapists and the local Adult Services departments to identify and address disability issues.

The Council has capital and revenue budgets to provide minor and major adaptations. In 2013/14 from a total of £2.231m capital programme expenditure was provided for Major adaptations of £115k. Similar amounts have continued over time and this is projected to continue with a budget of £120k agreed for 2018/19.

The Council has undertaken a programme of improvements to the communal areas in the sheltered housing schemes to help residents stay in their homes and maintain their independence for longer.

The adaptations and lettings teams work closely to match suitable tenants to fully adapted properties in order to make best use of the stock and offer greater choice.

12 CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

12.1 Customer Consultation

The Housing service undertakes biennial consultation with residents to seek their views on how the Council can best improve housing services, including maintenance issues. This consultation and resident involvement will help the authority further develop its asset management plan and refine its work programmes.

The Housing Service is due to undertake the next consultation in 2018/19.

12.2 Customer Feedback

The Council has various means to contact customers after they have had a responsive repair carried out to check that they are satisfied, and where they are not, appropriate action is taken. Overall tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance for the quarter period ending in September 2018 was 98% and represents a general trend of improvement. Where the contractor gets satisfaction ratings below their target, the results of the survey is fed back to the contractor and work is then carried out with them in order to achieve improvements. In response to customer feedback, the Council's approach with its contractors has been to focus on the quality of the work, getting it right first time and setting and meeting appointments that suit the customer. The Council has set performance measures to help ensure that these areas for improvement can be measured.

Customer feedback is being sought on priorities for work for the investment programme through regular consultation and this feedback will be used to ensure that the plan is informed by tenant priorities.

Surveys on the authority's cyclical maintenance and capital programmes are sent out in tranches throughout the programme. This is to ensure that defects and complaints are picked up and actioned as soon as possible after the works are completed. The questionnaire measures consultation prior to the start of works (notification, individual requests and responses from Contractor) and Contractors performance (notification, how the works were carried out and defects).

13. ISSUES ARISING

There are a number of issues arising from the review of assets in this plan that will need further improvement work. These are grouped under the proposed priority objectives as follows:

1. Enable the development of new good quality housing stock

- a) There continues to be high demand for social housing of all types, but particularly one and two bedroomed properties.
- b) The right to buy process has been incentivised further, and consequently the Council continues to be compelled to sell homes under this scheme.
- c) If right to buy receipts are not used within 3 years it is returned to central government.
- d) The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires the Council to sell high value voids and provide the receipt to government, further diminishing housing stock, although this has not yet been implemented.
- e) There are a number of garage sites in a poor state of repair. These have the potential to be further developed for new social housing and an appraisal has been undertaken of targeted garage sites to assess suitability.

- f) The Council has begun to acquire stock with the purchase of 11 one bed and 14 two bed flats at Drapers Court in Canvey in November 2014 and the construction of 3 new homes at St Christopher's Close in July 2016. Two further bungalows at Lawns Court are to be constructed by March 2018. The Housing service has also provided the capacity to acquire and refurbish an 8 bedroomed house in multiple occupation in Canvey in April 2016 and is currently progressing a planning application to construct a nine bedroomed HMO in Benfleet.

Consequently, there is a need for the Council to build new homes for the first time in 30 years. This requires a detailed programme and new skills and knowledge in order to plan, design, project manage and construct new homes. This programme is further detailed in the action plan set out in Appendix 4.

However, the reduction in rent payments for tenants over a 4 year period means that there is now restricted capital available to the HRA.

Consequently, any capital programme will need to be self-funding and will also need to include raising capital by the selling of assets or land in order to help regenerate and develop other housing related assets.

Furthermore there are some garage sites for which it may not be suitable to develop but which could instead be cleared. Consequently a programme will be developed to target the clearing of garage sites in a poor state of repair, subject to other priorities for capital expenditure.

2. Regenerate Housing Estates and maximise use of existing stock

- a) The external appearance of some housing estates has deteriorated over time with little cyclical maintenance. The Housing service has recognised this issue and has undertaken targeted improvement works and external and internal refurbishments at Chapman Court resulted in significant improvements and was renamed by residents to Ozonia Gardens. Works have also been undertaken to improve the fabric and highways of blocks at St Guiberts, Middleburg and Church Parade.
- b) Similarly some sheltered housing schemes are not suitable for modern living with shared bathing facilities. The internal fabric of some facilities has also decayed over time. Consequently the Council has already undertaken a programme of investment and improvement with two sheltered housing facilities (Gowan Court and Amelia Blackwell) subject to significant improvement works to provide residents with their own bathing facilities. All Sheltered Housing Schemes have undergone refurbishment of some internal areas such as common walkways and carpet replacements.
- c) There is potential to get more use of existing stock. For example by re-modelling some unused warden flats to be suitable for tenants. Work has

been undertaken to develop several previous warden flats to sheltered housing units.

The Council will continue to undertake targeted refurbishments and will seek to utilise opportunities to further develop and maximise stock. Further detail is set out in the action plan in Appendix 4. Again, this will need to reflect the reduced financing of the HRA in future years.

3. Ensuring Fire Safety requirements are met

Following the tragedy at Grenfell, the Housing Service has undertaken an overview of the current arrangements for Fire Safety and can confirm that there are no blocks owned by that have the plastic cladding which has been identified as a fire hazard. However, the service has identified the need for the following:

- Installation of a significant number of fire safety doors in blocks of flats.
- A number of smoke alarms are battery not mains operated and need to be replaced.
- There are no CO alarms installed and whilst not a statutory requirement, it is desirable that these are installed ASAP.

These works were identified in 2017 and will be progressed as soon as possible.

4. Maintaining the stock to a standard comparable with that of other well managed Social Landlords and achieve 98% of all Homes at the Decent Homes Standard by March 2019 and maintain this level going forward.

- a) The percentage of homes that maintain the Decent Homes standard needs improvement and a capital programme to maintain and improve the percentage of homes is in place with a target of 98%.
- b) The capital works includes consideration of issues that affect the demand on responsive repairs (e.g. roof repairs) and it is envisaged that this will have a positive impact on the percentage of spend on responsive repairs compared to cyclical and planned maintenance in the future.
- c) Programming of capital works has been identified as an issue as there is a need to ensure there are not peaks in works between years as this will have a detrimental impact on capacity and budget programming. Consequently some work has been undertaken to further develop the capital programme to ensure it is manageable.
- d) In previous years the Council's achievement of the SAP rating was high. However, the Council now lacks this information as part of its stock data. The Council has identified that further work is required to properly understand the degree of thermal warmth and undertake a wider SAP assessment.

5. Ensure a sustainable approach to stock management that considers the financial resources of the Housing Revenue Account and ensures long term financial stability and energy efficiency.

The action plan in Appendix 4 sets further detail work to deal with the issues above.

14. ACTION PLAN

This report includes a range of targets that have been set for improving the management of the Council's assets and directing investment in the most cost-effective manner. The Housing service will monitor the delivery of the improvement projects detailed in Appendix 4.

The action plan is designed to cover a five-year period and will be refreshed annually and will be subject to a comprehensive review at the end of the five year period.

Appendix 1Table 1 – Stock by Ward

	Appleton	Boyce	Cedar Hall	St Georges	St James	St Marys	St Peters	Victoria	Central	East	North	South	West	Winter Gardens	Total
Bedsit Bungalow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	2	0	14
1 bed Bungalow	9	0	20	33	13	4	0	13	55	22	12	12	5	3	201
2 bed Bungalow	1	0	2	1	9	0	0	5	104	10	15	0	12	11	170
3 bed Bungalow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	2	0	0	0	0	17
Bedsit Flat	24	0	0	18	2	16	0	0	8	38	0	20	0	62	188
1 bed Flat	18	0	48	18	24	16	0	65	6	16	0	44	0	57	312
2 bed Flat	5	0	6	10	9	18	0	0	23	17	0	12	0	27	127
3 bed Flat	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	10	0	0	0	0	12
2 bed House	12	0	7	0	0	0	0	6	23	2	0	0	3	11	64
3 bed House	26	0	53	21	4	35	2	8	88	3	42	0	27	92	401
4 bed House	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	1	10
Totals	95	0	136	104	61	89	2	98	328	120	70	99	50	264	1516
%	6.3%	0.0%	9.0%	6.9%	4.0%	5.9%	0.1%	6.5%	21.6%	7.9%	4.6%	6.5%	3.3%	17.4%	100.0%
							Benfleet	38.6%					Canvey	61.4%	

Appendix 2Table 2 – Property by Type

	General Needs	Sheltered	Total	% of stock
Bedsit Bungalow	3	11	14	0.92%
1 bed Bungalow	163	38	201	13.26%
2 bed Bungalow	165	5	170	11.21%
3 bed Bungalow	17	0	17	1.12%
Bedsit Flat	64	126	190	12.53%
1 bed Flat	206	104	310	20.45%
2 bed Flat	120	7	127	8.38%
3 bed Flat	10	2	12	0.79%
2 bed House	64	0	64	4.22%
3 bed House	401	0	401	26.45%
4 bed House	10	0	10	0.66%
Totals	1223	293	1516	100%

Appendix 3Table 3 – Stock Owned by Age Band

	Construction age bands						
	Pre 1919	1919 to 1944	1945 to 1964	1965 to 1980	1981 to 1990	Post 1990	Total
Bedsit Bungalow	0	0	2	12	0	0	14
1 bed Bungalow	0	0	122	75	2	2	201
2 bed Bungalow	0	1	134	7	28	0	170
3 bed Bungalow	0	0	15	2	0	0	17
Bedsit Flat	0	0	42	146	0	0	188
1 bed Flat	0	0	26	218	50	18	312
2 bed Flat	0	2	45	60	9	11	127
3 bed Flat	0	0	0	11	1	0	12
2 bed House	0	0	48	16	0	0	64
3 bed House	0	17	229	149	3	3	401
4 bed House	0	0	7	3	0	0	10
Totals	0	20	670	699	93	34	1516
	0.0%	1.3%	44.2%	46.1%	6.1%	2.2%	

Appendix 4 – Action Plan**Objective: 1. Enable the development of new good quality social housing stock****Expected Outcome: Construction of two new bungalows at Lawns Court by March 2018****Construction of a new HMO at Benfleet by March 2019****Construction of 4 new units at Garage site in Church Close Canvey Island by March 2019**

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Construction of HMO at Hatley Gardens	Appointment of project manager / design architect to secure the build	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	September 2017	Project Manager / Architect in Place.	None.	Achieved.
	Planning permission applied for and submitted to Development Control Committee for approval and approval achieved.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	October 2017 submitted Approved January 2018	Planning permission agreed.	Planning permission agreed.	Achieved
	Planning conditions and Building Regulation requirements submitted and met.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	September 2018	All Planning conditions and Building regulation requirements to start project	Conditions and requirements prove to be onerous leading to delays.	Achieved.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
					complied with.		
	Negotiate any issues to be resolved re: rights of way etc.	Housing and Communities, Project Team	Project Manager	October 2018	Site ready for construction with no outstanding issues.	Possible issues for perceived land ownership / Rights of Way – managed by project team.	Currently being progressed.
Undertake enabling works to provide services to the site.	Works to connect main services to site: Drainage, Water, Gas, electricity etc.	Housing and Communities, Project Team	Project Manager	November 2018	Site ready for construction with no outstanding issues.	Short term temporary closure of Access Road – Need to communicate and engage with local businesses / residents.	Currently being progressed.
Procure contractor to construct new homes.	Procurement of contractor to clear site and construct homes.	Head of Housing and Communities, Project Team Total Project costs = circa £620k	Head of Housing and Communities	January 2019	Contractor appointed	Ability to procure the right contractor in the timescales required.	Awaiting outcome
	New HMO constructed	Contractor	Head of Housing and Communities	December 2019	HMO constructed.	Various issues – e.g. satisfying building regs etc	Awaiting outcome

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Good Communication with residents and local Councillors	Communicate with residents and local businesses regarding enabling works and construction. Regular update reports to Councillors.	Housing Staff Head of Housing and Communities	Project Manager Head of Housing and Communities	Ongoing Ongoing until project ends.	Reduced concerns and queries from residents. Members regularly updated.	Residents remain dissatisfied.	To start when works to due to be undertaken, then ongoing.
Construction of 4 homes at Church Close	Appointment of project manager / design architect to secure the build	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	In place	Project Manager / Architect in Place.	None.	Achieved.
	Planning permission applied for and submitted to Development Control Committee for approval and approval achieved.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	February 2018 submitted Approved May 2018	Planning permission agreed.	Planning permission agreed.	Achieved.
	Planning conditions and Building Regulation requirements submitted and met.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	Submitted March 2018 met by October 2018	All Planning conditions and Building regulation requirements to start project complied with.	Conditions and requirements prove to be onerous leading to delays.	Awaiting outcome

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Good Communication with residents and local Councillors	Communicate with residents and regarding fencing works and construction. Regular update reports to Councillors.	Housing Staff Head of Housing and Communities	Project Manager Head of Housing and Communities	Ongoing Ongoing until project ends.	Reduced concerns and queries from residents. Members regularly updated.	Residents remain dissatisfied.	To start when works to due to be undertaken, then ongoing.
	Dismantle garages, clear site and install fencing.	Head of Housing and Communities, Project Team	Project Manager	November 2018	Site ready for construction with no outstanding issues.	Issues arise from garage rentals, possible rights of way claims etc.	Awaiting outcome
Procure contractor to construct new homes.	Procurement of contractor to clear site and construct homes.	Head of Housing and Communities, Project Team Total Project costs = circa £600k.	Head of Housing and Communities	February 2019	Site demolished and construction begins	Ability to procure the right contractor in the timescales required.	
	New homes constructed	Contractor	Head of Housing and Communities	December 2019	Three homes constructed.	Various issues – e.g. satisfying building regs etc	On track

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Construction of 2 homes at Windsor Gardens	Appointment of project manager / design architect to secure the build	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	In place	Project Manager / Architect in Place.	None.	Achieved.
	Planning permission applied for and submitted to Development Control Committee for approval and approval achieved.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	May 2018 submitted Approved August 2018	Planning permission agreed.	Planning permission agreed.	Achieved.
	Dismantle garages, clear site and install fencing.	Head of Housing and Communities, Project Team	Project Manager	May 2018	Site ready for construction with no outstanding issues.	Rights of way – issue resolved.	Achieved.
	Planning conditions and Building Regulation requirements submitted and met.	Appointed Architect.	Head of Housing and Communities	Submitted September 2018 met by November 2018	All Planning conditions and Building regulation requirements to start project complied with.	Conditions and requirements prove to be onerous leading to delays.	Awaiting outcome
Good Communication with residents and	Communicate with residents and regarding fencing works and construction.	Housing Staff	Project Manager	Ongoing	Reduced concerns and queries from residents.	Residents remain dissatisfied.	To start when works to due to be undertaken,

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
local Councillors	Regular update reports to Councillors.	Head of Housing and Communities	Head of Housing and Communities	Ongoing until project ends.	Members regularly updated.		then ongoing.
Procure contractor to construct new homes.	Procurement of contractor to clear site and construct homes.	Head of Housing and Communities, Project Team Total Project costs = circa £600k.	Head of Housing and Communities	March 2019	Site demolished and construction begins	Ability to procure the right contractor in the timescales required.	
	New homes constructed	Contractor	Head of Housing and Communities	December 2019	Three homes constructed.	Various issues – e.g. satisfying building regs etc	On track

Objective: 2. Regenerate Housing Estates and maximise use of existing stock**Expected Outcome: Programme for sale of land / Assets and Regeneration of Identified sites in place March 2017**

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Map out all HRA assets that can be suitable for development .	Use of Access database and data kept by Housing and to clarify areas that can be sold and areas requiring priority development. (Prioritising to include ease of development as well as condition). Also assess sites for suitable HMO new build.	Housing Services	Head of Housing and Communities	Ongoing	Prioritised programme in place.	Funding is the most significant risk. Programme will aim to be self-funding using income from asset sales and RTB receipts etc.	Database to be reviewed by November 2018

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Clearing of problem garage sites	Develop a programme of clearance of garage sites. To be linked to possible development to allow for displaced people to rent a nearby garage.	Housing Services	Housing Services Manager	November 2018	Analysis undertaken and identified sites part of the programme above.	Costs / affordability for capital programme.	Ongoing work
Identify void homes that can be further developed or sold to obtain income	Ongoing action to assess any voids whose footprint may make them suitable for further development.	Housing Services / South Essex Homes.	Housing Services Manager	Ongoing	None.	Planning restrictions need to be considered.	Ongoing.

Objective: 3. Ensuring Fire Safety requirements are met

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Replace all non - compliant fire doors.	South Essex Homes to arrange for procurement of and replacement of all Fire Safety Doors.	Housing Services	Housing Services Manager / SEH	Contract Start November 2018 – Date of completion to be clarified with contractor	All non-compliant Fire Safety Doors replaced.	Failure to procure in a timely fashion will result in unnecessary delays and risks.	Work to procure progressing.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Replace any legacy battery operated smoke alarms with mains operated alarms	South Essex Homes to arrange for Aaron boiler contractor to supply and fit.	Housing Services	Housing Services Manager / SEH	From April 2018 – completed June 2019	All battery operated smoke alarms replaced	Failure to procure in a timely fashion will result in unnecessary delays and risks.	Work ongoing.
Place CO alarms in all properties.	South Essex Homes to arrange for Aaron boiler contractor to supply and fit	Housing Services	Housing Services Manager / SEH	From April 2018 – completed June 2019	New CO alarms in place	Failure to procure in a timely fashion will result in unnecessary delays and risks.	Work ongoing.

Objective 4: Maintaining the stock to a standard comparable with that of other well managed Social Landlords and achieve 98% of all Homes at the Decent Homes Standard by March 2019 and maintain this level going forward.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Capital works programme ensures improvement in proportion of homes at Decent Homes Standard.	1. Annual refresh of Capital Programme. 2. Implementation of Capital works targeted to improve achievement of Decent Homes Standard. 3. Robust contract monitoring.	South Essex Homes / Housing Services	Housing Services Manager	1. December 2018 2. From April 2019 3. Monthly SLA meetings; Pentana performance system	Percentage of Homes at Decent Homes Standard.	Balance of issues and capital works to be addressed.	1. On target 2. Ongoing. 3. Ongoing.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Ensure Stock Condition data is up to date.	Commission South Essex Homes to undertake a stock condition survey January to March 2018.	South Essex Homes.	John Grisley	30 th April 2018	Clear understanding of stock condition and percentage meeting decent homes requirements	Not allowed entry into some homes. South Essex Homes to work with Housing management to deal with any issues.	Initial results received. To assess impact for future capital programming October 2018.
Investigate the energy efficiency of Council housing stock	Work with South Essex homes to identify data held – e.g. insulation thickness in buildings, SAP and identify opportunities to improve the stock	Information on stock to be obtained by working with South Essex Homes and	John Grisley	31 st March 2019.	Possible roofing insulation programme – small fund inviting	Large demand or demand too small. This will be established from the	Project will not be implemented until April 2019.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
	energy efficiency of Council housing stock.	to then identify possible capital improvement works.			tenants to apply.	response to the project.	

Objective 5. Ensure a sustainable approach to stock management that considers the financial resources of the Housing Revenue Account and ensures long term financial stability and energy efficiency.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
Ensure Capital programme is developed to ensure financial sustainability of HRA.	1. Annual refresh of Capital Programme includes financial considerations.	South Essex Homes / Housing Services	Housing Services Manager	December 2018	HRA is balanced whilst considering essential works required for strategy.	Pressure between limited funding and works required.	To be planned in Autumn 2018.
Improve Energy Efficiency of Housing Stock.	SEH to provide CPBC with proposals when developing the capital programme to help improve energy efficiency	South Essex Homes / Housing Services.	Housing Services Manager.	Development of Capital Programme December 2017	Average SAP rating of Housing Stock and identification	Costs and resources may be prohibitive	See above – to be discussed Autumn 2018.

What needs to be achieved (Objective)	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?	RAG / Comments
	of housing stock and targeted works to improve.				of stock with issues.		
	Liaise with partners including Essex Energy Partnership to elicit to obtain funding to help improve energy efficiency of targeted dwellings.	South Essex Homes / Housing Services.	Head of Housing and Communities.	Ongoing	N/A	Staff resources to obtain this information.	Ongoing.

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Financial Update

Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Finance, Policy and Resources

1. Purpose of Report

This report is intended to:

- **Provide Cabinet with the latest medium term financial forecast in respect of the General Fund.**
- **Update Cabinet on developments of a financial nature, which may impact on the Council's financial plans in respect of either the General Fund or Housing Revenue Account (HRA).**

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

This report is linked to the Council's priority of Efficient and Effective Customer Focused Services. Sound and strategic financial management is essential in order to ensure that resources are available to support the Council's priorities and maintain or improve services.

3. Recommendations

1. That Cabinet note the report and approve the update to the Housing Revenue Account annual programme of works for 2018/19, including an additional £70k for commencement of works in relation to the Church Close new build.

2. That authority to decide whether the Council should join a Business Rates Retention Pilot scheme for 2019/20 is delegated to the Strategic Director (Resources) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy and Resources.

4. Background & basis of the financial forecast

4.1 The Financial Planning Strategy is incorporated within the Policy Framework and Budget Setting report which is approved by Council in February each year. The strategy requires the submission of a financial forecast, enabling the Cabinet to monitor latest estimates of future spending and resources, and take appropriate action to ensure that the Council's financial targets are met.

4.2 There is much uncertainty pending the outcome of the review of the business rates funding mechanism, making medium to longer term financial planning difficult. In

the meantime, the Council continues to utilise its resources prudently and maintain reserves at a level sufficient to enable it to adjust smoothly to any detrimental change to funding which may arise.

5. Changes to approved budgets

- 5.1 The following budget changes have occurred since the budget was agreed by Council in February 2018.

	£k	Description
1.	100	Match funding of up to £100k towards highway improvements (ECC).
2.	40	Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) funding – joint strategic planning and joint resources. Full cost of £60k per year partially offset by existing budget provision of £20k .
3.	23	Increased annual budget in respect of business rates and utilities on Runnymede site.
4.	39	Reduction in Leisure Centres membership income.

- 5.2 The financial forecast at Annexe A incorporates these changes as well as other budget adjustments funded from earmarked reserves. The forecast also includes the increase in the earmarked reserve for expected planning LDS costs as approved by Cabinet at the 6th June 2018 meeting.

6. Revenue/Capital Budgets “on-watch”

- 6.1 This section of the report highlights revenue or capital budgets, HRA or General Fund, which are identified by the Strategic Director (Resources) as “on-watch”. This term refers to expenditure and income budgets where there is reason to believe that performance may not meet expectations and where the impact on the Council’s overall financial plan is likely to be material.
- 6.2 For the purpose of this report, items will be included if they have a full year financial impact of at least **£50k** and / or are felt to be of particular interest to Cabinet. There are currently no items to report.

Co-mingled Waste Contract

- 6.3 The Council is due to retender its current contract for the collection and disposal of kerbside co-mingled waste. The current contract comes to an end in October 2018 and the Council is currently exploring a number of potential procurement routes, including joint procurement with other Essex authorities.
- 6.4 However, the market for co-mingled waste material is very volatile and this is a contract which has always been flagged as a financial risk for the authority. It is anticipated that there may be a significant increase in cost, up to **£450k** per annum ongoing. The Council is working to minimise this cost as far as possible. Further updates will be provided via future financial update reports.

7. Changes to the Capital Programme - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 7.1 The budget has been amended to reflect a programme of works (Annexe B) informed by an updated stock condition survey undertaken by South Essex Homes. Main changes include increased provision for works relating to installation of Fire & CO detectors and Roofing maintenance, and reduced provision in relation to Wall finishes and Electrical Rewiring works.
- 7.2 The programme also includes provision of **£70k** relating to the Church Close new build which was reported to Cabinet in June. This represents initial preparatory works prior to the commencement of the construction and will be funded from a combination of HRA reserves and capital receipt balances.
- 7.3 Cabinet are asked to approve the updated programme of works and a recommendation to this effect is included above.

8. Key Financial Developments

Updates to key financial developments are provided within the following paragraphs. Information reported in earlier financial update reports is not reproduced below.

Council Tax Preceptors Sharing Agreement – Future years

- 8.1 Cabinet will recall from earlier update reports that Essex District Authorities are party to a “council tax sharing agreement” with Essex precepting Authorities. Under the arrangement, all parties contribute funding to enable the employment of additional staffing resources to support an enhanced council tax collection service than would otherwise be viable for the Districts to fund on their own. The arrangement was further extended to include data matching work across authorities to identify fraud and potential savings or increases to the council tax base.
- 8.2 As part of this agreement, the precepting organisations return to the District Council, 16% of the additional council tax which we have collected on their behalf.
- 8.3 The agreement is due for review during the current financial year and the County Council have indicated an intention to reduce the element of payback from the current 16%, to 14% in 2019/20 and 12% in subsequent years, with an intention to reinvest the reduction in funds in other joint initiatives. Discussions are currently ongoing and outcomes will be reported to Cabinet via future financial update reports

Local government finance settlement 2019 to 2020: Technical consultation

- 8.4 On 24 July, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government opened a consultation seeking views on technical issues concerning the 2019/20 local government finance settlement. The consultation closes on 18 September and refers to the following:
- Multi-year settlement offer
 - New Homes Bonus
 - Council Tax Referendum Principles
 - Negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 8.5 The most interesting aspect of the consultation relates to negative RSG. Castle Point and many other authorities will be required to effectively make payment to central government of an amount referred to as “negative RSG” from 2019/20. For Castle Point the value of the payment will be in the region of **£500k**. The Government are minded to remove this payment requirement and are consulting on how to fund the cost of doing so. A number of funding options are included within the consultation with the preferred option being that the cost is absorbed by central government.

75% business rates retention pilots 2019 to 2020: prospectus

- 8.6 On 24 July, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government issued an invitation to local authorities to pilot 75% business rates retention in 2019/20. The proposals for new pilots must be submitted to the department by 25 September.

The main points from the invitation are:

- All authorities can apply except those in London and the existing Pilots in devolution areas; suggesting these areas are going to be allowed to continue to operate as pilot areas in 2019/20.
- The ‘no detriment’ clause applied to 2017/18 and 2018/19 Pilots, will not apply to Pilots set up for 2019/20 through this application process.
- There will be a Safety Net set at 95%, to reflect the additional risk locally that 75% retention introduces, and this will apply pilot wide and not to individual authorities; and no levy will be paid.
- The Pilot programme in 2019/20 is likely to be smaller than the programme in 2018/19 (ten pilot areas, plus London plus the original five 2017/18 pilots);
- Successful pilots would last for one year up to the end of March 2020 (i.e. in April 2020 it is intended that 75% is rolled out nationally).

- 8.7 The Council is currently working with other authorities across Essex to compile a pilot bid. As in previous years, the Strategic Director (Resources) will ensure that the Cabinet Member for Finance is briefed and engaged in key financial decisions. Regular updates will be provided to Cabinet throughout the process. This practice was effective for both PAN-Essex projects which established the Essex Region Business Rates Pool and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. It is requested that authority to decide whether the Council should join a BRR Pilot is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy and Resources in consultation with the Strategic Director (Resources). A recommendation to this effect is included above.

9. Annual Statement of Accounts (SoA) – Outturn for 2017/18

- 9.1 As reported to Council on the 30th July, the closure process for the last financial year was completed within timetable. The External Auditor issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Council’s SoA and value for money opinion on 31st July.

10. Financial Risk Factors

The budget report presented to the Cabinet meeting in February and Council on the same night indicated some risk areas that the Cabinet should be mindful of until the position and risk relating to each has been clarified. These are shown below.

Adequacy of reserves – other local factors of significance

Equal pay review

- 10.1 A great deal of work has been undertaken on pay harmonisation and single status. However, the Council has not undertaken a full job evaluation exercise as required by the 2004 National Agreement. This carries a potential risk that the Council will need to use general reserves to defend and/or settle any successful claims made against the Council. Since a job evaluation exercise has not been undertaken, there is no information available that can be used to form a view on the estimated future likely costs that the Council could face.

Pension Fund Revaluation

- 10.2 The actuary undertook a valuation of the Pension Fund as at 31 March 2016 which indicated an improved deficit recovery period of 13.2 years, compared to 25 years predicted in March 2010. The implications included within the Council's financial forecast are based on the recommendations of the pension fund, effective from April 2017. The next valuation will be undertaken by the actuary in March 2019, effective for contributions from April 2020.

Potential for withdrawal of external or third party revenue income

- 10.3 The financial forecast currently assumes the continuation of a number of revenue streams from external organisations or third parties. Many of these organisations are striving to reduce their costs and it is possible that one or more of the aforementioned revenue streams may be lost.

Adequacy of insurance arrangements for major unforeseen risks

- 10.4 During 2003/04 it was discovered that no action was taken on written advice received from external consultants in April 2002 to close Waterside Farm Sports Centre in order to analyse and deal with a perceived asbestos problem. There was also a further issue relating to the premature opening of the centre before receipt of clearance certificates in respect of remedial work. No sums have been taken into account in assessing the minimum level of reserves for these potential costs.

Potential for the District Council to “step into” the void left by other public organisations

- 10.5 The combined pressure of reductions in funding and the increasing financial impact of welfare services and reforms on public organisations are significant. These organisations are striving to reduce their costs which may result in the discontinuation or reduction in some services to the public. As a consequence there may be political pressure or public expectation that the District Council will take on these discontinued functions.
- 10.6 Often, the organisation is much larger than the District Council and has undertaken its own review of functions and services, resulting in the displacement of those which it has determined to be lower priority.

- 10.7 The District Council must continue to be mindful of its own financial position and the significant funding gap predicted from 2019/20. Assuming delivery of additional and unfunded functions, particularly where the District Council has no legal responsibility for delivery will worsen the council's own financial position and be difficult to relinquish at a later date.

Potential for incurrence of costs as a result of “New Burdens”

- 10.8 As public sector / government organisations respond to their own funding pressures, there is a growing drive to devolve functions and responsibilities formerly undertaken by these organisations to local government. Conversely, centralisation of responsibilities formerly held by local government, to central government, intended to reduce costs at central government level may result in additional costs at a local level (e.g. Land Registry assuming responsibility for aspects of Local Land Charges, requiring local authorities to digitalise information previously held in hard copy form – potentially at their own expense.)

Potential for cost fluctuations in relation to service contracts

- 10.9 A significant element of the council's annual spend is transacted through contracts with other organisations. Fluctuations in markets (e.g. recycling) and changes in legislation (e.g. new living wage) can have a direct impact on the delivery costs of these contracts, necessitating an increase in the charge made to the Council. These changes are unpredictable.

Potential for incurrence of legal costs

- 10.10 There is potential for the Council to incur costs in relation to legal challenges including employment tribunals and planning appeals.

Impact of Welfare Reforms on demand for Council Services

- 10.11 These include the continuing freeze on Local Housing Allowance rates and the implementation of Dependant Child Limitation rules which affect residents on benefit who are in private rented accommodation and those with more than two dependent children, reducing in the amount of Housing Benefit they receive.
- 10.12 Universal Credit Full Service was introduced in Castle Point on 25th July 2018. Whilst it is too early to see any particular impact on services yet, it is anticipated that there may indeed be an increase in demand across Revenues, Benefits and First Contact in the short/medium term, as customers adapt to digital and budgeting aspects of the new benefit. A number of mitigating measures have been put in place to manage this.
- 10.13 Following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Bill in April 2018 numbers presenting as homeless appear to have plateaued, however with 100% occupation of its own housing stock, changes in the private rented sector, and the continuing low rate Housing Benefit Cap (£20k), the Council continues to experience difficulty in finding suitable temporary and permanent accommodation.
- 10.14 It is not possible to predict the full direct or indirect impact of these and other welfare changes on demand for Council Services, particularly Housing and Benefit advice longer term.

VAT – Partial Exemption

- 10.15 The Council currently takes full advantage of the VAT concession in respect of input tax relating to VAT-exempt activities available to local authorities under the VAT Act 1994. The concession is only available provided this input tax remains below 5% of VAT on all expenditure.
- 10.16 Increased investment in the Council's assets, such as refurbishment of facilities, may result in the VAT partial exemption limit being exceeded. If this is the case, under normal circumstances, it is estimated that additional VAT would become payable to HM Revenue and Customs. A review of the Council's VAT position is undertaken annually.

11. Corporate Implications

a) Legal implications

This report is presented on behalf of the "section 151 officer" – the officer appointed to have responsibility for the Council's financial administration. It is their duty to ensure that the Council is regularly informed and updated on these matters.

Matters referred to above which require the establishment of agreements between organisations are routinely referred to the Council's Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

b) Human Resources and equality implications

There are no Human Resource or equality implications arising directly from this report.

c) Timescale for implementation and risk factors

Risk factors inherent in the forecast are set out above.

Report Author: Chris Mills, Strategic Director (Resources)

Background Papers:

- Policy Framework & Budget Setting 2018/19, incorporating the Financial Planning Strategy.

Annexe A – Medium Term Financial Forecast

Medium term financial forecast		2017/18 (out-turn)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Notes
Line	Current policies and service plans	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
1	Total net expenditure / estimated exp. for future years	13,868	10,367	9,940	12,843	10,691	Fluctuations year to year are predominantly caused by phasing of maintenance spend and other expenditure "offset" by earmarked reserves
1b	Changes to budget since February 2018		785	120	123	(95)	
1c	Current total net expenditure / estimated exp. for future years	13,868	11,152	10,060	12,966	10,596	
	Funding sources						
2	Council Tax	7,319	7,628	7,934	8,172	8,418	Subject to current consultation
3	Formula Grant - Revenue Support Grant / (tariff adjustment)	287	0	(515)	(528)	(541)	
4	Baseline Funding Level - Redistributed Business Rates	2,148	1,808	2,225	2,281	2,338	
5	Business Rates - Levy on retained income	(283)	(126)	0	0	0	Offset by a contribution from the NNDR equalisation reserve
6	New Homes Bonus	975	691	556	206	0	Legacy payment only
7	Capital grants and other grants and contributions	1,459	1,231	0	0	0	NNDR deficit offset by a contribution from the NNDR equalisation reserve
8	Net Collection Fund(s) surplus / (deficit)	192	5	0	0	0	
9	Transfer (to) / from General reserve	166	400	0	0	0	
10	Transfer (to) / from Earmarked reserves	1,605	(485)	(996)	1,886	(1,034)	
11	Total funding sources	13,868	11,152	9,204	12,017	9,181	
12	Budget / Funding Gap	0	0	(856)	(949)	(1,415)	
	General Reserve	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
13	Balance at start of year	5,839	5,673	4,953	3,897	2,748	Minimum recommended balance for General Reserves is £1.9m
14	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 9 & 12)	(166)	(400)	(856)	(949)	(1,415)	
15	Potential planning appeals & associated legal costs	0	(320)	(200)	(200)	(200)	
16	Balance / (deficit) at end of year	5,673	4,953	3,897	2,748	1,133	
	Earmarked Reserves	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
17	Balance at start of year	9,314	7,709	6,282	5,017	2,516	The precise timing of the use of earmarked reserves is, due to their nature, generally unknown.
18	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 9)	(1,605)	485	996	(1,886)	1,034	
19	Other expected usage of earmarked reserves - not allocated to the detailed budget	0	(1,912)	(2,261)	(615)	(544)	
20	Balance at end of year	7,709	6,282	5,017	2,516	3,006	Earmarked reserves are reviewed annually to ensure sufficiency and where need has diminished funds will be returned to General Reserves
	Council Tax						
21	Tax at band D	243.36	250.56	258.03	263.16	268.38	Target increases within Council Tax referendum limits. The tax at band D does not include the amount charged by Canvey Island Town Council.
22	Increase	1.96%	2.96%	2.98%	1.99%	1.98%	

Annexe B – HRA Capital programme update

Annual programmes for replacement and repair and new developments	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Current Estimate	2018/19 Updated Estimate
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Disabled adaptations to council properties	137	120	120
Central heating replacement	475	324	302
Kitchen replacement and improvements	359	186	200
Environmental Improvements	0	100	100
Roofing maintenance	160	15	76
Structural repairs	52	0	0
Electrical rewiring	21	134	86
Replacement doors	23	200	200
Bathroom replacement and improvements	121	65	88
Maintenance and redevelopment of communal areas	226	15	35
UPVC fascias and soffits	134	156	185
Wall finishes	0	231	14
Affordable housing	16	10	10
Fire and CO detector installation	0	35	175
Unallocated provision	0	91	91
New build at Lawns Court	280	20	20
New build at Church Close	0	0	70
	2,004	1,702	1,772
Note: The overall increase in 2018/19 from the current estimate is due to £70k for commencement of works relating to the new development at Church Close			

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Annual Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators 2017/18

Cabinet Member Councillor Stanley – Cabinet Member for Finance, Policy and Resources

1 Purpose of Report

The annual treasury report is a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures. It covers both the treasury activity and the actual Prudential Indicators for 2017/18.

The report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes through Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.

2 Links to Council's priorities and objectives

The scrutiny and approval of the Council's Treasury Management activity is linked to the Council's objective of Improving the Council through sound financial management.

3 Recommendation:

1. That following scrutiny, the Treasury Management Activity Report for 2017/18, including prudential indicators reported in Annexe D, is approved.

4 Background

- 4.1 The 2017/18 Treasury Management Strategy summarises the Council's obligations defined in the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- 4.2 During 2017/18 the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements.

5 Treasury Report for 2017/18 and scrutiny of treasury activity

- 5.1 As required by the Code, the activity report for 2017/18 is submitted at Annexe A for scrutiny by Cabinet.
- 5.2 It is important to ensure that the Council's treasury management activities are subject to a robust process of scrutiny. This report provides Members with information on treasury management activity and variances in order to fulfil this process. The report has already been scrutinised at Audit Committee on 26 July.

6 Corporate Implications

a Legal implications

This report is the responsibility of the Strategic Director (Resources) – the Officer appointed by the Council as “section 151 Officer” to have responsibility for the Council's financial administration. Submission of such a report is a requirement of CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

Under the revised Code of Practice, Cabinet was nominated at Special Council 16th February 2010 to ensure effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

b Financial implications

There are no new implications.

c Human resources and equality implications

There are no new implications.

d Timescale for implementation and risk factors

No new targets applicable.

Report Author: Robert Greenfield - Accountant

Background Papers:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy: *Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services*.

CPBC: *Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2017/18*.

CPBC: *Working paper: external loan calculation 2017/18*.

Treasury Management Activity Report for 2017/18

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the Council's treasury management activity for 2017/18 and compares actual interest transactions with the revised estimates set for 2017/18.
- 1.2 The Council must comply with the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services, issued by CIPFA and updated in 2011. The code requires the Council to annually set a Treasury Management Strategy. The Strategy for the 2017/18 financial year was approved by Council on 15 February 2017.
- 1.3 This report confirms that all Treasury Management activity during the year was undertaken in accordance with this strategy and in consultation, where appropriate, with our external advisers, Capita.

2 The Economy

- 2.1 **Short-term interest rates.** The Bank of England base rate remained at just **0.50%** from March 2009 until August 2016 when it reduced to **0.25%** and then returned to **0.50%** in November 2017. The Council therefore continues to earn very low rates on its investments, while facing the challenge of increased counterparty risk, resulting in a significantly reduced number of counterparties that the Council can use.

3 Borrowing

- 3.1 A summary of external borrowing at 31st March 2018 is in Annexe B. The principal amounts are shown in this annexe but in the statement of accounts the amounts for borrowing also include interest outstanding.
- 3.2 The Council operated within treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and annual Treasury Strategy Statement throughout the year. The outturn for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Annexe D.
- 3.3 There was no change in borrowings during 2017/18.
- 3.4 Annexe B shows that interest paid on borrowings was exactly as budgeted.

4 Investments

- 4.1 The Council's investment policy is governed by CLG Guidance, which was implemented in the annual Investment Strategy approved by Council on 15 February 2017. The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Council had no liquidity issues.
- 4.2 Annexe C summarises the Council's activities for the year relating to the temporary investment of surplus funds. The average daily balance was **£30.0m** in 2017/18 (**£29.0m** in 2016/17). Only the principal amounts are shown in this

annexe but in some areas within the Statement of Accounts investment balances include interest outstanding.

- 4.3 Annexe C also shows that the amount of interest received on these investments was over budget by **£15,353** (22%). The variance was due to prudent budgeting and average interest rates and balances being moderately higher than estimated. The average interest achieved was 0.28% compared to the 7-day LIBID average of 0.22%.

5 Benchmarking

- 5.1 Three benchmark indicators for 2017/18, explained in the Annual Treasury Management Strategy, are reported as follows:

- **Security – Weighted Credit Rating Score for the year of 5.9 exceeded the target of 4.**
- **Liquidity – Weighted Average Life was at a highly liquid level, averaging 33 days over the year.**
- **Yield – Interest received on investments – income was over budget, as reported in paragraph 4.3 above.**

6 Regulatory Framework, Risk and Performance

- 6.1 The Council's treasury management activities are regulated by a variety of professional codes, statutes and guidance, including:
- The Local Government Act 2003, and associated Statutory Instruments;
 - The CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
 - The CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.
- 6.2 The Council has complied with all of the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements which require the Council to identify and, where possible, quantify the levels of risk associated with its treasury management activities. In particular its adoption and implementation of both the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice for Treasury Management means both that its capital expenditure is prudent, affordable and sustainable, and its treasury practices demonstrate a low risk approach.

Summary of Loan Transactions and Interest Payable (accrued daily) for the year to 31st March 2018

Loan transactions activity for the year

	Amount o/s 01/04/2017 £000's	Loans Repaid £000's	Amount o/s 31/03/2018 £000's
Public Works Loan Board			
General Fund	5,250	0	5,250
HRA	36,451	0	36,451
Totals for the Council	41,701	0	41,701

Interest payable Comparison of estimate with actual

Budget Profile to 31/03/2018 £000's	Actual Interest to 31/03/2018 £000's	Variance 31/03/2018 £000's
207	207	0 0.0%
1,087	1,087	0 0.0%
1,294	1,294	0 0.0%

Interest rates for the year

	Range of loans From	To	Average
General Fund	3.70%	4.10%	3.95%
HRA	2.31%	3.49%	2.98%
Totals for the Council	2.31%	4.10%	3.10%

Base rate history

08/01/2009	1.50%
05/02/2009	1.00%
05/03/2009	0.50%
04/08/2016	0.25%
02/11/2017	0.50%
31/03/2018	0.50%

Summary of Temporary Investments and Interest Received (accrued daily) for the year to 31st March 2018

Type of Borrower	Amount Invested 01/04/2017 £000's	Made in the Year £000's	Repaid in the Year £000's	Amount Invested 31/03/2018 £000's
Investments by Value:				
Treasury bills	3,397	5,991	6,394	2,994
Local Authorities	4,000	15,500	12,000	7,500
Money Market Funds	19,320	83,883	89,773	13,430
Notice accounts	1,500	500	0	2,000
Bank deposits	500	500	1,000	0
Total	28,717	106,374	109,167	25,924
Number of Investment Transactions:				
	Number	Number	Number	Number
Treasury bills	5	6	8	3
Local Authorities	2	8	6	4
Money Market Funds	51	155	181	25
Notice accounts	2	0	0	2
Bank deposits	1	1	2	0
Total	61	170	197	34

Interest Received on Temporary Investments for the year to 31st March 2018

	£000's
Actual Interest Received	85
Revised estimate	70
Variance	15 22%

Temporary Investments

	£000's
Average Balance for the Year	29,957
Average Interest Rate for the Year	0.28%
Benchmark: Average 7-Day LIBID Rate	0.22%

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Corporate Plan

Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Finance, Policy and Resources

1. Purpose of Report

To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed draft Corporate Plan.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

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

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet considers and recommends to Council to adopt the Corporate Plan attached to this report.

4. Background

4.1 The Corporate Plan is an important document for the Council. It sets out the strategic direction for the organisation as well as how the Council will achieve its aims and priorities through appropriate action planning.

4.2 The Corporate plan has been subject to significant development. This includes a number of Policy and Scrutiny sessions during 2017 and in early 2018. It has also been subject to public consultation and has been circulated to partner organisations. Service planning with managers and staff was developed to ensure it underpins the new Corporate Plan.

5. Proposals

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

Environment

Housing and Regeneration

Health and Community Safety

Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

- 5.2 These priorities are based on an analysis of needs and issues for the Borough as well as consultation results which are set out in chapter 3 of the plan. The plan also considers partner priorities and recent legislation which impacts on the direction the Council needs to take. The plan details both medium term priorities and annual objectives with a range of targets and actions. One of the most important targets being the submission of a legally and technically compliant local plan to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April 2019.
- 5.4 The Corporate Plan also includes an annual report, which starts on page 40, detailing the Council's achievements over the last year. Finally a financial report is set out on page 43. The progress in achieving the actions set out in the plan will be monitored throughout the year through reports to Cabinet and highlight reporting to Corporate Management Team.

6. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

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

(b) Legal Implications

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

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

Human Resources

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

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

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

Full details are shown in the Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

This is set out in the Corporate Plan.

8. Background Papers

Briefings to Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Consultation Results

Equality Impact Assessment

Report Author:

Craig Watts, Head of Housing and Communities

Corporate Plan 2018 - 2021



castlepoint

benfleet | canvey | hadleigh | thundersley

Castle Point Borough Council Corporate Plan 2018 – 2021

Foreword

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

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Norman Smith
Leader of the Council
September 2018

David Marchant
Chief Executive
September 2018

Our Medium-Term Priorities and Targets

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

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

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

Priority: Environment

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority: Housing and Regeneration

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority: Health and Community Safety

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

Increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity by:

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

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

Priority: A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Contents

Chapter 1 The Strategic Framework	Page 8
Our Values	Page 8
Safeguarding Policy Statement	Page 9
Castle Point Golden Thread	Page 10
Chapter 2: A Profile of Castle Point	Page 11
Chapter 3: Consulting with our Communities	Page 16
Chapter 4: The Impact of Legislation and National Priorities	Page 22
Chapter 5: Our Partner Priorities	Page 27
Chapter 6: Developing our Priorities	Page 29
Chapter 7: Our Vision for the Borough	Page 32
Chapter 8: Our Medium Term Priorities and Targets	Page 33
Chapter 9: How our Priorities link with our Community Strategy Ambitions	Page 38
Chapter 10: Our Annual Objectives for 2018/19	Page 39
 Addendum	
1. Annual Report	Page 42
2. Financial Report	Page 45

Chapter 1: The Strategic Framework

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

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

Our Values

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

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

Equality: fair treatment for all

Respect: respect each other

Integrity: integrity in all of the work we do

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

Innovation: seeking new, improved and sustainable ways of working

Teamwork: valuing everyone's contribution

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

Safeguarding Policy Statement

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

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

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

The Castle Point 'Golden Thread'

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



Chapter 2

A profile of Castle Point

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

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

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

The Borough has a number of challenges:

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

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

Key Facts:

Area 45.08 km² (17.41 square miles)

Rural Land Area 60%

Population 88,900 (2014 Estimate)

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

Households 36,730 (2015)

Workforce 46,900 (2015)

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

Ethnicity:

White 96%

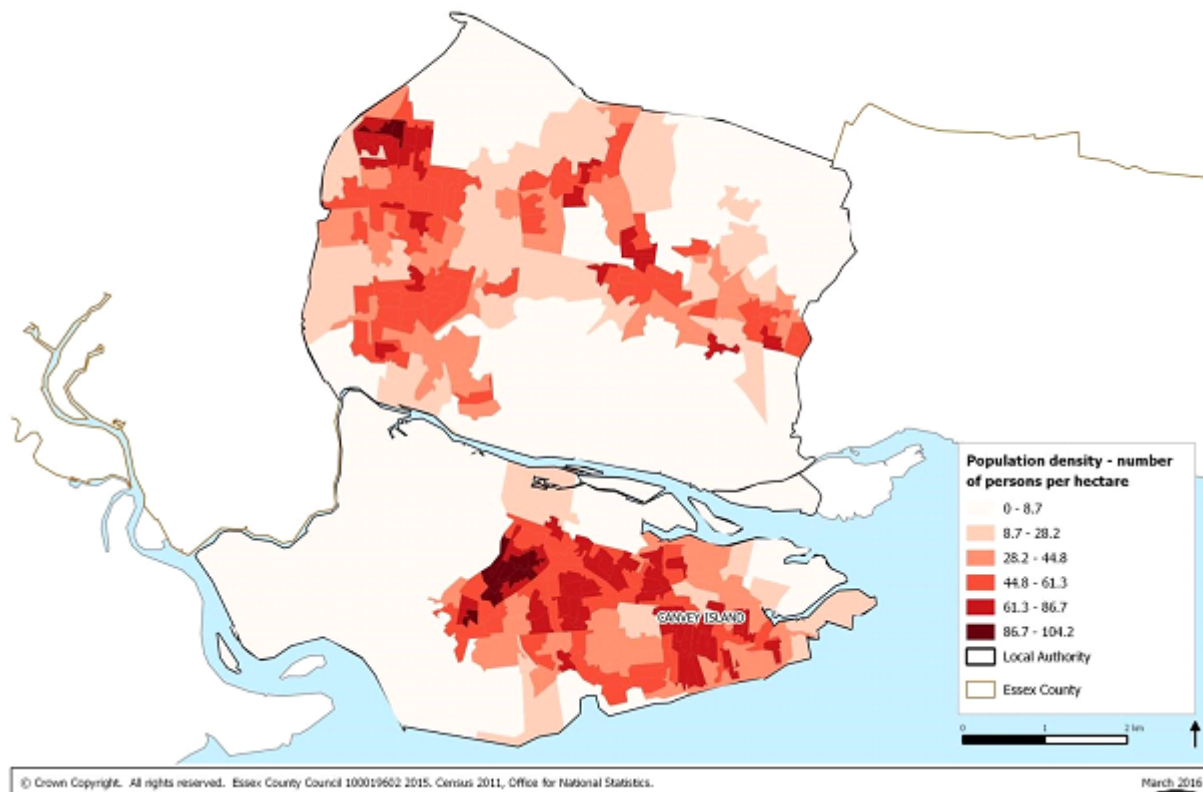
Asian 1.5%

Black 1.1%

Population Density

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

Population Density in Castle Point, 2011



Housing

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

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

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

3 times income

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

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

Energy Usage and Pollution

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter 3 – Consulting with our Communities

3.1 Essex Place Survey 2016

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

3.1.1 Satisfaction with the Area as a Place to Live

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

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

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

3.1.3 Satisfaction with Public Services

The Essex Survey also found the following results in 2016:

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

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

3.1.4 Accessibility of Services

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

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

3.1.5 Satisfaction with Local Roads and Transport

The results are illustrated in the table overleaf:

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

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

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

3.1.6 Views on the Council

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

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

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

3.1.7 Fear of Crime

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

3.2 Public Consultation undertaken by Castle Point Borough Council

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

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

Table 1 – Top 5 Most Important Services

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

Table 2 – Top 5 Least Important Services

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

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

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

Table 3 – Priority Areas for Improvement

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

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

3.3 Service Satisfaction

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

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

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

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

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

3.4 Further Views

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

Chapter 4: The Impact of Legislation and National Priorities

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

4.1 Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Act sets out the following:

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

4.2 Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

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

4.3 Housing and Planning Act 2016

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

4.4 Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016

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

4.5 Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016

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

4.6 Deregulation Act 2015

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

4.7 Infrastructure Act 2015

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

4.8 Earlier Legislation and Guidance

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

4.8.1 Localism Act 2011

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

4.8.2 National Housing Strategy 2011

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

Increasing Supply: More Homes, Stable Growth

Social and Affordable Housing Reform

A Thriving Private Rented Sector

A Strategy for Empty Homes

Quality of Housing Experience and Support, including

- Homelessness
- Tenant Empowerment
- Empowering Independence

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

4.8.3 The National Planning Policy Framework

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

4.8.4 Welfare Reform Act 2012

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.9 Austerity

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Work streams which are currently in progress include:

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

Chapter 5 Our Partner Priorities

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

5.1 Local Enterprise Partnership

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.2 South East Essex 2050

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

5.3 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter 6

Developing our Priorities

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

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

6.1 Things we need to do in partnership with others:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We need to maintain and improve the local Environment by:

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

We need to help transform our community by:

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

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

We need to develop wellbeing in the Borough by:

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

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

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

Chapter 7

Our Vision for the Borough

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

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

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

Chapter 8

Our Medium-Term Priorities and Targets

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

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

Priority: Environment

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

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority: Housing and Regeneration

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

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priority: Health and Community Safety

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

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

Increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity by:

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

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

Priority: A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

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

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

Our Targets:

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

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

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

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

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

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

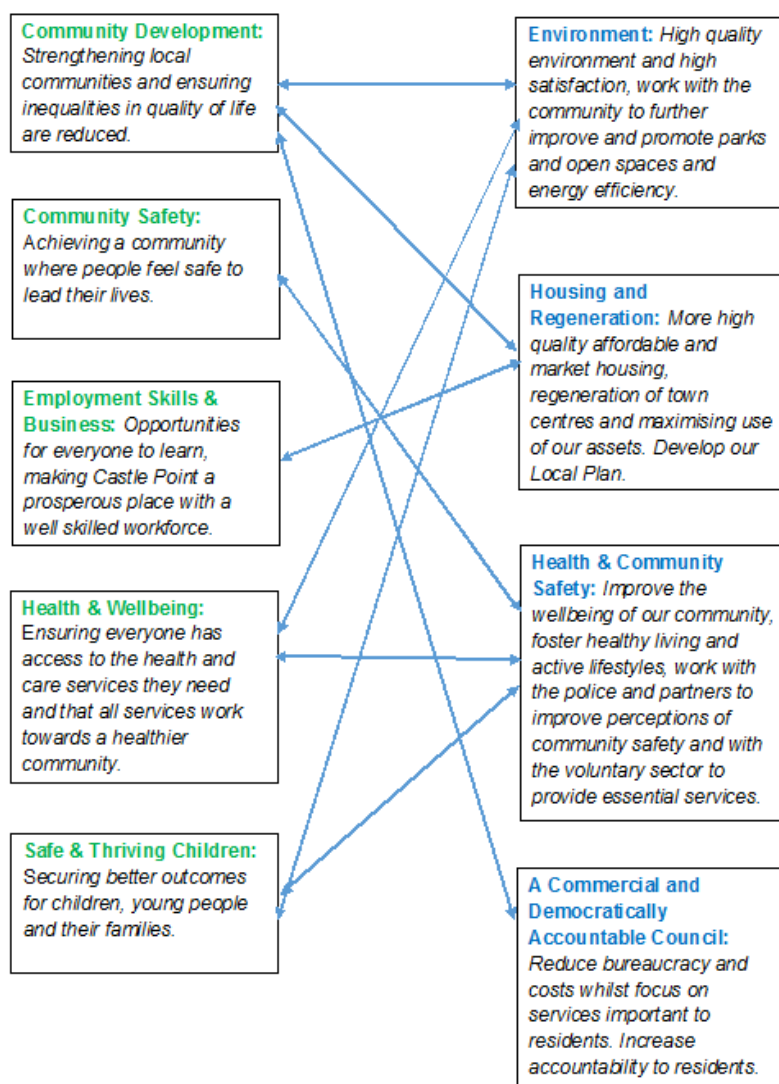
Chapter 9

How our Priorities link with our Community Strategy Ambitions

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

Community Strategy Ambitions

Corporate Plan Priorities



Chapter 10

Our Annual Objectives for 2018/19

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

Overarching Objective

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

Responsibility: Chief Executive / Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

Service Planning Objectives

Environment

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

Performance measures

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

Responsibility: Head of Environment

Housing and Regeneration

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

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

Responsibility: Head of Housing and Communities

Performance Measures

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

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

Responsibility: Chief Executive

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

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

Responsibility: Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

5. Develop and agree a robust Local Plan

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

Responsibility: Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser

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

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

Responsibility: Head of Housing and Communities

Health and Community Safety

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

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

Responsibility: Head of Licensing and Safer Communities

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

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

Review completed by March 2019

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

A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

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

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

Responsibility: Head of Resources

Performance Measures

Balanced budget at commencement of each new financial year.

Minimum level of reserves exceeded.

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

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

Responsibility: Head of Governance

Annexe 1.

Annual Report 2017/ 2018

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

Public Health and Wellbeing

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

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

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

Group Exercise feedback – 95% very happy

Swimming Lesson Feedback – 96% very happy

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

Environment

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

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

Transforming the Borough

3. Progress development of the Local Plan for the Borough

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

4. Clarify approach to Town Centre Regeneration programme.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Developing effective VFM customer focussed Housing Services

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

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

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

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

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

Annexe 2. Financial Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

Efficiency work programme and savings identified

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

Funding of priority projects

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

Cost pressures and other increases

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

Revenue spending plans

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

Revenue Spending Plans

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

Table 9.1 Funding of priority projects & other discretionary expenditure included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast

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

Table 9.2 Cost pressures & budget increases (Growth) identified and included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast

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

Table 9.2 Cost pressures & budget increases (Growth) identified and included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast

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

3. Corporate and Service Action Planning

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

CABINET

19th September 2018

Subject: Corporate Performance Scorecard Quarter 1 2018/19

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

1. Purpose of Report

To set out the cumulative performance figures for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for quarter 1, 1st April 2018 to 30th June 2018.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

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

3. Recommendations

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 2018/19 were discussed and approved by Cabinet in June 2018.

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 fifteen indicators reported, nine are at or above target and one is near the target. Four indicators did not meet the target. One indicator is new and a target cannot yet be set until a baseline of performance over the year has been established. Trend in performance shows that there is improving performance for four indicators, similar performance for a further six and declining performance in three measures. Two indicators cannot be evaluated as they are new.

Performance is set out against the priorities in the corporate plan as follows:

Environment

Although the recycling figure is a little of target, when combined with composting the combined performance for household waste recycled or composted is 53.8% and exceeds the target of 49%.

The performance information for street cleanliness did not meet targets and decreased from the previous year from 9.7% of streets deemed unsatisfactory to 11.4%. However, a new street cleaning process was introduced in mid-May and early signs are that there is an improvement in litter levels.

Fly tipping and grass verge cutting Indicators generally demonstrates strong performance and that the contractual arrangements are continuing to be effective.

Housing and Regeneration

Tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance at 98.3% is strong and continues to demonstrate continuous improvement from last year's good performance. The rate for voids completion was 27.6 days, which is below target and results primarily from minor difficulties incurred on 4 properties. Performance is expected to improve.

The percentage of planning applications processed within target times has three measures for this indicator. Performance has exceeded target in two and demonstrates strong improvement. For major applications the performance was only affected by just one application being out of time, but this was part of a section 106 agreement that has since been agreed with a significant affordable housing contribution.

Performance in progress against the milestones set out in the Local Development scheme is strong at 100%. This includes the completion of public consultation between the 4th July and the 15th August.

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

Health and Community Services

The next indicator is a new one to the corporate scorecard and measures the relative success of preventing households from becoming homeless. This was recently established following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act in April. It replaces the indicator set out in the June Cabinet report as it is a different definition and the previous indicator is no longer collected by new information management systems that collate revised data requirements set out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

During the quarter period, a total of 15 households were prevented from becoming homeless out of 37 households accepted for prevention from becoming homeless, under the new prevent duty. The other households could still be prevented later on. It is currently not possible to develop a target for this measure until performance has been analysed over the year period so the intention is to establish a baseline of performance.

The percentage of food premises that are awarded a score of at least 3 on the food hygiene rating scheme was 92% and exceeded the target of at least 90% which is strong performance.

A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council

The Council's First Contact team has again been very successful in limiting the number of calls that they have to transfer to the back office to be dealt with; just 4% of calls received transferred.

The sickness rate of 8.7 days exceeds the corporate target of 8 days. Whilst sickness for the month of June was comparatively low, as this indicator records the last year period it is still affected by the higher sickness absence recorded during the winter months.

5.1.2 Further 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







Report Author: Craig Watts ext. 2419 crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk

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

Appendix 1: Corporate Scorecard 2018/19 (Environment)

Quarter 1: 1st April 2018 to 30th June 2018

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









PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value 2017/2018	Q1 Value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
OPS4 Percentage of Household Waste Recycled Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	23.3%	22.3%	Annual Target 25%			Unaudited estimated figures Recycling slightly below target, following a UK-wide trend of recycling rates going down.
OPS 5 Percentage of Household Waste Composted (including food waste) Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	27.8%	31.5%	Annual Target 24%			Unaudited estimated figures High levels due to Q1 being the main growing, will reduce as the year goes on.
SS2 Percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory using Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse methodology. Service Manager: Contracts Manager	9.7%	11.4%	Less than 10%			Pinnacle introduced a new street cleansing process in mid-May and early signs are that it has shown an improvement in litter levels. Whilst this quarter does not match last years it shows lower levels of litter as opposed to the last three quarters.




PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value 2017/2018	Q1 Value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
ENV 4 Flytips removed within one working day Service Manager: Contracts Manager	100%	100%	90%	↔	✅	Pinnacle continue to remove fly tips within 24 hours, and the number of fly tips is the lowest for the 1st quarter since 2015-16.
SS4 Number of rectification and default notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting. Service Manager: Contracts Manager	1	17	Under 50	↓	✅	A total of 3 Rectifications and 14 Defaults were served in the 1st Quarter.
SS5 Percentage of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting rectified within 72 hours. Service Manager: Contracts Manager	100%	88%	90%	↔	⚠️	A total of 15 of the 17 default notices served were rectified within 72 hours.

Corporate Scorecard 2018/19 (Housing and Regeneration)

Quarter 1: 1st April 2018 to 30th June 2018

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

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value 2017 / 2018	Q1 Value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
HOS1 Overall tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance. Service Manager: Housing Services Manager	94.3%	98.3%	97%			Performance continues to be high improving further on last year's good performance.
HOS6 Average Void Turnaround Time. Service Manager: Housing Services Manager	18 Days	27.6 Days	18 Days			Minor difficulties on 4 properties over the quarter have impacted on performance in quarter 1. These have been analysed and steps taken to address performance for quarter 2.
DC2 to DC4: Percentage of planning applications processed within target time limits for major, minor and other applications Service Manager: Planning & Development Enforcement Manager	100% 97% 100%	67% 100% 100%	Major 60% Minor 65% Other 80%	  		For major applications just one application was out of time. This was part of a Section 106 agreement which eventually resulted in a significant affordable housing contribution.

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value 2017 / 2018	Q1 Value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
<p>Progress against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). Percentage of Milestones delivered within 3 months.</p> <p>Service Manager: Local Plan and Regeneration Adviser.</p>	N/A	100%	80%	N/A		The LDS approved by Council on 6 th June 2018 set out a requirement for public consultation on the nature of a local plan to be carried out between 4 th July 2018 and 15 th August 2018. This was carried out and completed.
Percentage of Building Control applications processed within statutory time limits.	100%	100%	100%			All applications processed within time limits.

Corporate Scorecard 2018/19 (Health & Community Services)

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value 2017 / 2018	Q1 Value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
<p>HLess 10 Percentage of prevent decisions discharged against the number of prevent decisions issued</p> <p>Service Manager: Housing Options Manager</p>	N/A	40%	TBC	N/A	N/A	<p>Under the new legislation, the Housing Options Team issued 37 "Prevent" duties and during the same quarter period, 15 of those duties were discharged as the applicants' homelessness were successfully prevented.</p> <p>Since 3rd April 2018 we have only had to issue two section 184 full homeless decisions. As this is a new system for recording information we cannot provide a target yet until we have had further time to undertake an analysis of performance.</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>	90%	92%	90%	↔	✓	<p>A total of 403 of 437 premises rated under the food hygiene rating scheme were found to be broadly compliant with the food hygiene regulations and awarded 3* or above.</p>

Corporate Scorecard 2018/19 (A Commercial and Democratically Accountable Council)

Quarter 1: 1st April 2018 to 30th June 2018

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

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 2017/18 Value	Q1 value 2018 / 2019	Target	Trend	Status	Comments
FC1 Percentage of calls taken from customers by First Contact that are dealt with without the need to transfer to the back office Service Manager: Revenues & Benefits Transformation Manager	95.9%	96%	Annual Target 95%	↑	✓	The First Contact service continues to maintain strong performance in this area.
Average number of days Sickness absence per FTE staff for all Council Services (rolling year) Service Manager: Human Resources Manager	8.7 Days	8.7 Days	8 Days	↔	●	Sickness for the month of June was at the lowest level during the rolling year. Performance remains above target because of the high sickness recorded in January 2018.