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Chief Executive

CABINET AGENDA

Date: **Wednesday 20th November 2013**

Time: **6.00pm – N.B. TIME**

Venue: **Council Chamber**

This meeting will be webcast live on the internet.

Membership:

Councillor Mrs Challis OBE (Chairman)	Leader of the Council
Councillor Stanley (Vice Chairman)	Deputy Leader of the Council Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance
Councillor Burch	Leisure
Councillor Dick	Responding to Challenge
Councillor Mrs B. Egan	Homes and Customer Engagement
Councillor Mrs Goodwin	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Howard	Waste Floods and Water Management
Councillor G. Isaacs	Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities
Councillor Riley	Environment and Street Scene
Councillor Smith	Economic Development & Business Liaison

Cabinet Enquiries:
Reference:
Publication Date:

John Riley, ext. 2417
5/2013/2014
Tuesday 12th November 2013

**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 16th October 2013

4. Forward Plan

To review the Forward Plan - *(Report of the Leader of the Council)*

5. Environment - Civic Pride

5(a) Leisure and Recreation Strategy

(Report of the Cabinet Member Leisure)

5(b) Christmas and New Year 2013/14 – Revised Waste Collection Arrangements

(Report of the Cabinet Member Waste, Floods and Water Management)

5(c) Flooding Update

(Report of the Cabinet Member Waste, Floods and Water Management)

6. Regeneration and Homes

6(a) Thamesgateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

Cabinet Member Economic Development & Business Liaison)

6(b) New Local Plan - Annual Housing Supply Evidence

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

Cabinet Member Economic Development & Business Liaison)

7. Improving the Council

7(a) Financial Update

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Corporate Policy Resources & Performance)

7(b) Local Council Tax Support (LSCT) - Update and Proposed Local Scheme 2014/15

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Corporate Policy Resources & Performance)

7 (c) Corporate Performance Score Card Quarter 2 2013/14

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Responding to Challenge)

8. Community Safety

8(a) Update on Safer Communities Initiatives

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities)

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

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

PART II

(Business to be taken in private)

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



CABINET

16TH OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Challis OBE,	Leader of the Council
Chairman	
Councillor Stanley	Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance
Councillor Burch	Leisure
Councillor Dick	Responding to Challenge
Councillor Mrs Egan	Homes and Customer Engagement
Councillor Mrs Goodwin	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Howard	Waste, Floods and Water Management
Councillor Isaacs	Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities
Councillor Smith	Economic Development & Business Liaison

APOLOGIES: Councillor Riley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Blackwell, Campagna, S.Cole, Hart, Mrs Iles, Ladzrie, May, Tucker and N.Watson.

Before commencing with the formal business of the meeting, all present stood in silent tribute to the memory of Valerie Wells, a former Councillor and Mayor of the Borough, who had passed away.

The Leader of the Council took the opportunity to make a statement about the Deanes School and confirmed that the Council had received re-submitted petitions signed by local residents for the School to remain open which would be passed on to the Essex County Council for attention.

The Leader reiterated that the Borough Council's position in its full support for governors, staff, parents and pupils in their campaign to retain the well respected Deanes School remained unchanged. The Council was doing all it could to make the strongest possible argument regarding the community requirements for a School in that location.

The Leader also stated that the Council acknowledged and supported the important work the school carried out in the field of special education, health and well being and sporting excellence.

The Leader explained that the Council wholeheartedly supported the efforts of the parents, pupils and the community in their Save Deanes School campaign but at the same time confirmed that Castle Point Borough Council had no funding for Schools within its budget. Essex County Council as the Education Authority received funding for schools in Essex and was entirely responsible for the future of the School.

The Leader of the Council also reminded Cabinet that this was Local Democracy Week and amongst other activities organised during the week, young adults had been invited to attend or to view this meeting online, The Leader extended a warm welcome to all young people who were taking an interest in the issues under discussion by the Cabinet.

47. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Smith disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5(a) – Off-Street Parking Charges and Waiting Restrictions - as a trustee of Richmond Hall.

48. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18.9.2013 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Further to Minute 34 – Severe Flooding in South Essex - Councillor Howard informed Cabinet that the further meeting of responsible agencies had taken place on Thursday 10 October and that as this had taken place after the publication of the agenda for this meeting, he would report on the outcome to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Councillor Howard reported on his actions, including the removal of flood water by pumping into tankers, in response to the heavy rainfall over the last weekend, which had led to a number of road closures on Canvey Island. He also informed Cabinet of his discussions with Essex County Council as lead flood authority and other agencies to address the cause of flooding problems at key locations by the clearance of drains and gullies.

The Leader of the Council explained that areas in Benfleet also required attention as drains had surcharged in the Hart Road area.

Members present debated flooding issues in various parts of the Borough.

49. FORWARD PLAN

To comply with regulations under the Localism Act 2011, the Leader of the Council presented the Forward Plan to the meeting which outlined key decisions likely to be taken within the next quarter 2013. The plan was reviewed each month.

Councillor Burch took the opportunity to advise that a report on a revised Leisure and Recreation Strategy would be submitted to the March 2014 meeting of the Cabinet.

Resolved – To note and approve the Forward Plan as amended.

50. OFF-STREET PARKING CHARGES AND WAITING RESTRICTIONS

The Cabinet received a report on modifications to the draft Off-Street Traffic Regulation Order in response to representations received during the public consultation period.

Councillor Stanley presented the report for Councillor Riley and explained that the Council had listened to the comments received from residents and businesses in the Borough. He outlined the main modifications to the Order and informed Cabinet that where town centre car parking charges were being introduced, the Council, in consultation with the public, had identified nearby car parks that could be used free of charge by visitors to those centres. Councillor Stanley also explained that the revised proposals took account of school drop off and collections.

Councillor Stanley also highlighted that income from car parking charges would be reinvested in improving the condition of the car parks over and above essential maintenance work. A further report on planned improvement and repair works to car parks would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet. Councillor Stanley in responding to a question advised that works to car parks would be undertaken in accordance with current specifications and would include marked parking bays for disabled drivers.

Members present debated the principles and details of the modifications.

Resolved:

1. To endorse the proposed modifications to the draft Traffic Regulation Order.
2. To authorise the Head of Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene to consider any representations received in response to public notice of the modifications.
3. To confirm its decision to proceed with the making of the Order.

51. HOUSING PROGRESS REPORT

The Cabinet received a quarterly progress report for the housing service for the quarter ended 30 September 2013.

Councillor Mrs Egan responded to a question by confirming that a number of local companies had been invited to tender for the housing improvement programme and contract works.

Resolved: To note the progress and achievements for the last quarter period and to request officers to provide future quarterly progress reports.

52. UPDATE ON REGENERATION MATTERS

The Cabinet received a report on strategic regeneration initiatives underway during the third quarter of 2013, as well as those activities which support local businesses in Castle Point.

The Leader of the Council and Councillor Smith noted the progress on Hadleigh Hall, the Canvey Town Centre Masterplan, the Hadleigh Town Centre Masterplan, the Business Forum, the Industrial Estates Improvements and the equipping of young people with appropriate skills to meet business opportunities.

Resolved: To note the progress underway on these initiatives and to request that a further update report is made to the cabinet for the next quarter.

53. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY MID-YEAR REPORT

The Cabinet received a report on treasury management activity for the first five months of the current financial year.

Resolved: - To approve the Treasury Management Activity Mid-Year report for 2013/14.

54. UPDATE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVES

The Cabinet considered an update report on the position concerning neighbourhood and safer community matters.

Councillor Isaacs responded to statements about speeding cars in West Canvey, crime statistics, the possibility of Canvey Town Centre being designated an alcohol free zone and the continued use of the bungalow at Waterside Farm Recreation Ground as a Legacy Cafe

Resolved:

To note the activities regarding neighbourhoods and safer community matters from the previous month as set out in the report.

55. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM/TO POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Item 5(a) Off-Street Parking Charges and Waiting Restrictions Environment Policy and Scrutiny review.

56. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM /TO THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES

There were no matters.



Castle Point Borough Council

Forward Plan

NOVEMBER 2013

CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

NOVEMBER 2013

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	Lead Officer(s)
Dec 2013 Feb/April 2014	<u>Regeneration Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Leader Economic Development	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
Nov/Dec 2013	<u>Community Safety Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Safer Communities	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
Dec 2013 Feb/April 2014	<u>Housing Progress Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Homes & Customer Engagement	Head of Housing & Communities
Nov 2013 Jan/March 2014	<u>Financial Update</u>	All	Cabinet	Deputy Leader of the Council	Head of Resources
Nov/Dec 2013	<u>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</u>	All	Cabinet Council /Dec	Deputy Leader of the Council	Head of Resources

Date	<u>Item</u>	Council Priority	Decision by Council/ Cabinet	Lead Member	Lead Officer(s)
November /December 2013	<u>New Local Plan Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Leader	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
December 2013	<u>New Corporate Plan</u>	All	Cabinet	Leader	Head of Performance & Service Support
February 2014	<u>Budget and Policy Framework</u> To consider and make recommendations to Council on the Council tax and budget setting	Improving the Council	Cabinet/ Council	Deputy Leader	Head of Resources
March 2014	<u>Resources Strategies :</u> <u>To note revisions</u>	Improving the Council	Council	Deputy Leader	Head of Resources
April 2014	<u>Leisure and Recreation Strategy</u>	Environment Civic Pride	Cabinet	Environment & Street Scene	Head of Environment

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Leisure and Recreation Strategy

Cabinet Member: Councillor Burch - Leisure

1. Purpose of Report

To outline proposals for the development of a Leisure and Recreation Strategy to the Cabinet.

To advise the Cabinet of external funding achieved by Leisure Services

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

'Improving the Council' – The Council is committed to investment in sports and community facilities and contributing towards reducing health inequalities in the Borough.

3. Recommendations

- 1. That Cabinet approves the preparation of a Leisure and Recreation Strategy and notes the timetable for development of the Strategy by July 2014.**
 - 2. That Cabinet notes the funding achieved for additional leisure and recreation provision.**
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4. Background

- 4.1 The Council's current strategy for Leisure was developed as a 5 year strategy, expiring in 2013.**
- 4.2 Involvement in sport and physical activity is often regarded as a matter of personal choice. However many people may be discouraged from taking part by a lack of opportunities or barriers. Tackling barriers, inequalities and opportunities creates a platform to increasing participation in sport and physical activity and improving health and well being for those who live or work in the Borough.**
- 4.3 The development of a new Leisure and Recreation Strategy will enable the Council to continue to develop its approach to Leisure and Recreation and address the needs of the Community over the next 15 years.**

5. Strategy Development

5.1 Purpose and scope of the Strategy:

The purpose of the strategy is to provide a framework for the prioritisation, provision and development of sports and recreation facilities in the Borough.

The strategy will be a comprehensive evidence based policy outlining the approach to sport and leisure provision in Castle Point. It will guide strategic choices regarding the delivery of new provision in the Borough, aligning resources to priority areas, working to defined outcomes, forward planning and providing a systematic base for creating and sustaining leisure and recreation opportunities in the community.

By highlighting deficiencies and opportunities for improvement it will set the context for decisions about the priority and delivery of local sports facilities for the next 15 years.

5.2 Link to Council Policies and Partnership working:

There are close links between the Leisure and Recreation Strategy and other Council strategies and policies such as:

- Sustainable Community Strategy for Castle Point 2007-2012
- Castle Point Borough Council Leisure Strategy 2008- 2013
- Castle Point Borough Council Play Strategy 2007-2012
- Corporate Plan 2010-2012
- Local Plan (draft)
- Open Spaces Appraisal update Sept 2012
- Playing Pitch Assessment May 2012
- West Wood Management Plan 2011-2031
- Playground Renewal Programme 2007-2012

Additionally the Leisure and Recreation Strategy will link with wider partnership strategies such as Active Essex– ‘Building an Active Essex - A strategic plan for sport and physical activity in Greater Essex’

5.3 Delivery of the Strategy:

A working group of Council Officers has been set up to steer the development of the Strategy. The Cabinet member responsible for Leisure will be consulted and briefed throughout the process.

The strategy will be prepared by the Council working in consultation with partner agencies including, but not limited to: Sport England, Active Essex, Active Rochford and Castle Point, CAVS, Public Health, Essex County Council, Canvey Island Town Council, Natural England, Pinnacle PSG, Education Authority, Local School academies, Environment Agency, Castle Point Wildlife Group, Essex Wildlife trust, RSPB, Aiming High for the Disabled, Health and Wellbeing Board and Sports National Governing Bodies,

5.4 Scope of the Strategy:

The proposed scope of the strategy is:

- Indoor facilities;
- Outdoor Sports facilities;
- Open Space, recreation and children's play; and
- Countryside and woodland access.

The scope has been determined by the working group and utilising the Sport England Castle Point Sport and Leisure Strategy Scoping Report.

5.5 Timetable for delivery

Action	Outcome	Timescale
1. Define scope and purpose of strategy		
a) Review resources and identify team for strategy preparation	Scoping report including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work programme• Resources to deliver• Preliminary vision, aims and objectives• Strategy for consultation	Oct – Nov 2013
b) Determine vision, initial aims / objectives and timetable for delivery		
c) Secure elected member support		
2. Context review and understanding demands and needs		
a) Review national and local context	Summary of local leisure provision context including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantity• Quality• Accessibility• Impact	Nov 2013 – Mar 2014
b) Understand key issues the Borough faces		
c) Identify current supply of leisure and parks and open space facilities in the Borough including through partner organisations and other providers		
d) Understand services on offer in neighbouring boroughs		
e) Explore the potential for identifying external resources to fund preventative health and wellbeing measures		
3. Analysis of supply and demand and priority and objective setting		
a) Identify deficiency areas and opportunities for redressing them	Summary of demand and needs including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards for delivery• Planning policy linkage	Mar – Apr 2014
b) Identify standards for quantity, quality and accessibility		
c) Identify priorities for improvement		

4. Preparation of strategy and consultation		
a) Prepare draft strategy and action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Strategy produced • Consultation undertaken in line with strategy to consult • Cabinet ratification • Strategy produced 	Apr – Jul 2014
b) Policy and Scrutiny Committee for review		
c) General Consultation on draft strategy		
d) Policy and Scrutiny Committee to review consultation responses		
e) Cabinet approval of strategy		
f) Adopt Strategy		

6. Funding Streams

6.1 The Council has an excellent track record in recent years of securing external funding for leisure and recreational activities as can be seen in the table below:

Project	Funded amount	Funding Provider
Playground renewal	£100,000	Big Lottery Fund
Playground renewal	£275,000	Veolia Pitsea Marshes Trust
Playground renewal	£30,000	Aiming High for the Disabled (ECC)
Playground Renewal (Adizone)	£78,000	Adidas
Playground Renewal	£50,000	Playbuilder (ECC)
Olympics infrastructure	£12,000	Olympic Delivery Authority
Waterside Refurbishment	£430,000	Veolia Pitsea Marshes Trust
Free Family Football	£468	Active Castle Point Small Grants
Disabled pool and trampoline hoists	£20,000	Aiming High for the Disabled (ECC)
Inspired by the games Sports Festival	£2,800	Active Essex
Capacity Building	£1,500	Active Essex
Inspired Culture	£1,000	Active Essex
Inspired Street Games	£2,000	Active Essex
Sports Equipment	££4,420	Aiming High for the Disabled (ECC)
Sportivate	£1,340	Sport England

6.2 The funding has helped deliver a Borough wide playground renewal programme. It has additionally provided facilities for disabled users, enhancing their access to leisure facilities. It has also enabled the delivery of free taster sessions in goal ball, boccia, table tennis, judo, swimming and badminton, allowing over 520 children to access free sport initiatives. More than 200 children have been introduced to BMX, Skate boarding and laser tag with free taster sessions at the

Castle Point Show, and 48 families benefitted from free family football sessions during the school holidays.

- 6.3 The funding initiatives continue and there are further funding applications in the pipeline for Active Essex funding such as Commonwealth Games are Go!, Active Network Development Grant, Active Network Forums/ Network Events and Clubs and Hubs working with sports National Governing Bodies.
- 6.4 The Strategy will support the Council's priority to improve the health of our community through joint working with partners such as the National Health Service and the Health and Well Being Board and by providing activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.

7 Corporate Implications

a. Financial Implications

Delivery of the Strategy will be through existing Council resources and by necessity it may need to be reviewed and amended during its lifetime to reflect changing government policies and local government funding. Should new funding opportunities arise during its lifetime the Strategy will help add weight to future funding applications.

b. Legal implications

None

c. Human resources and equality

The Strategy will consider access to sport and recreation and areas of health inequalities in the Borough. The Strategy will consider national and local context and identify areas of deficiency in provision or inequalities in access. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken on the Strategy.

Report Author: Trudie Bragg – Head of Environment

CABINET

20th November 2013

**Subject: Christmas and New Year 2013/14 - Revised Waste
Collection Arrangements**
**Cabinet Member: Councillor Howard - Waste, Floods and Water
Management**

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the revised waste collection arrangements over the Christmas and New Year period.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

The proposal supports the Council's Environment - Civic Pride and Improving the Council objectives.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet notes the waste collection schedule for the Christmas and New Year period.

4. Background

Christmas collections are problematic because collections are governed by the opening times of the disposal facilities and there are three Bank Holidays and only two catch up Saturdays between the Christmas and New Year period.

In order to limit disruption and confusion to residents, it is the Council's policy to ensure that collections return to normal by the second week in January. Since the introduction of the weekly food waste collection service and the fortnightly collection service for non-recyclables it has been the Council's policy not to drop any collections over the holiday period.

5. Revised Collection Schedule

Christmas Day this year falls on a Wednesday. The table overleaf details the revised collection arrangements;

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day
Monday 23 December	Saturday 21 December
Tuesday 24 December	Monday 23 December
Wednesday 25 December	Tuesday 24 December
Thursday 26 December	Friday 27 December
Friday 27 December	Saturday 28 December
Monday 30 December	Monday 30 December
Tuesday 31 December	Tuesday 31 December
Wednesday 1 January	Thursday 2 January
Thursday 2 January	Friday 3 January
Friday 3 January	Saturday 4 January

Collections due on Monday 23rd, Tuesday 24th and Wednesday 25th December will be brought forward so that no collections will need to be dropped and normal service will resume from Monday 6 January 2013.

Arrangements for the country round which serves a small number of properties are different and will be as follows:

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day	
Tuesday 24 December	Tuesday 24 December	Pink
Wednesday 25 December	Friday 27 December	Green/food
Tuesday 31 December	Tuesday 31 December	Refuse
Wednesday 1 January	Thursday 2 January	Green/food

The revised collection arrangements will be communicated to residents in the normal way.

6. Financial implications

None, budgetary provision has already been made for collections due over the Christmas and New Year period.

7. Legal implications

There are no additional legal implications.

8. Human resources and equality implications

There are no human resource or equality implications.

9. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

Arrangements are in place to ensure the timely printing and delivery of the revised Christmas waste collection schedules.

10. Decisions Background Papers: None

Report Author: Trudie Bragg, Head of Environment

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Flooding Update

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Howard – Waste, Floods and Water
Management**

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet of plans for a Surface Water Engagement Day.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

Environment – Civic Pride and Improving the Council.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet notes the content of this report.

4. Background

Essex County Council and Maldon District Council have recently held a successful Surface Water Engagement event. Given recent flooding incidents in the Borough it was felt that residents would welcome the opportunity to meet the Essex Partnership for Flood Management and ask questions about surface water flooding.

5. Proposals

Plans are being made to hold a local engagement event in Castle Point to give residents the opportunity to meet with members of the Essex Partnership for Flood Management and ask questions about surface water flooding.

The following partner organisations have been invited to take part:

- Essex County Council - Flood & Water Management Team
- Essex County Council – Essex Highways
- Castle Point Borough Council–Surface Water Management Plans/SUDS

- Castle Point Borough Council – Parks and open spaces
- Castle Point Borough Council – Emergency Planning/Community Resilience
- The Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- Essex County Fire & Rescue Service
- Essex Civil Protection and Emergency Management
- MDA Community Flood Consultants

Final details on the arrangements for the event are to be confirmed and an update will be made at the Cabinet meeting.

6. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

Any costs associated with event will be met by Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

(b) Legal Implications

The Flood and Waste Management Act 2010 seeks to ensure a joined up approach to flood and water management. The Act requires ECC to fulfil the role of the Lead Local Flood Authority and the various risk management agencies e.g. Highways Authorities, water companies, Environment Agency and District Councils have a duty to co-operate with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

Human Resources

None associated with this report.

Equality Implications

None associated with this report.

6. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

A report will be made at the meeting on the final arrangements for the event.

Background Papers

None

Report Author: Ann Horgan Head of Civic Governance

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Mrs Challis OBE Leader of the Council
Councillor Smith – Economic Development & Business Liaison**

1. Purpose of Report

To seek the Cabinet's endorsement of the *Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy*.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

The *Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy* contributes directly towards the Council's *Regeneration and Homes* priority. Its development, through partnership working, contributes towards the objective of *Improving the Council*.

3. Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to endorse the *Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy* in order to enable the Planning and Transport Board to work effectively to deliver key regeneration and transport schemes across the South Essex area.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) Partnership has been established for 10 years, and has provided an important platform for joint working between the constituent authorities of South Essex on a range of matters including transport, the environment and housing.
- 4.2 A Transport Board has operated as part of the Partnership in order to support the delivery of transport improvements across South Essex and to promote the interests of South Essex in a collaborative and united way.
- 4.3 The introduction of the Duty to Co-operate by the Localism Act in 2011 resulted in the need for joint working across South Essex authorities on strategic planning matters also. As a consequence the remit of the Transport

Board was expanded, and it is now known as the Planning and Transport Board.

- 4.4 In order to guide the work of the Planning and Transport Board, helping to ensure that it brings about real and positive change in South Essex, a *Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy* has been prepared by the partners.

5. The Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy

- 5.1 The *Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy (the strategy)*, sets out the following vision:

To support the strategic objective to raise the overall prosperity levels of Thames Gateway South Essex to the average of the Greater South East, and provide a better quality of life for the population by developing and maintaining a sustainable transport system that promotes growth and strengthens provision for all users whilst minimising impact on the built and natural environments.

- 5.2 In order to achieve this vision it sets out four key objectives. These are:

Economic Growth - Facilitate sustainable employment, economic and housing growth focused on key regeneration areas in particular on the key urban centres of Southend-on-Sea, Basildon and Thurrock. Optimise the use of the existing transport networks through active management and making improvements to attract employment led development, regeneration across the area, and identifying and delivering new and improved transport connections across the area.

Environment - Minimise the impact of development and transport on the environment by making efficient use of the existing transport networks through active management, minimising carbon emissions, tackling congestion and promoting sustainable travel choices.

Accessibility - Enhance connectivity internationally, nationally and within TGSE to jobs, education and services and deliver reliable and predictable journey times by strengthening the networks for all modes across the sub-region to support the economy, major regeneration and promote more sustainable travel patterns.

Quality of Life, Safety and Health - To enhance the quality of life across TGSE by providing a sustainable transport system that helps to raise the prosperity levels of residents and workers within the area and promotes personal safety and healthier travel choices.

- 5.3 The strategy does not identify how these matters should be achieved at a local level, clearly stating that matters of growth should be determined at a local level through the preparation of local plans. It does however set out a series of shared principles that will enable effective joint working that supports local delivery. These principles are:

- Facilitating sustainable development across the sub-region in accordance with the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- Enhancing connectivity to the sub-region's economic and employment centres;
- Encouraging town centres and strategic employment areas across the sub-region to act as locations for investment and growth to fulfil and further develop their role in the local economy and to encourage policies and programmes to support this role;
- Encouraging the development of appropriate levels of new housing across the sub-region in the locations identified by local agreement and ensure that this is appropriately serviced by all transport modes at the time of delivery;
- Recognising and supporting the role of the sub-region as a location for recreation and leisure opportunities;
- Recognising the important areas of green open space within the sub-region, acknowledging as well as recognising the environment for its intrinsic value and reflecting this in all policies and delivery programmes;
- Encouraging sustainable patterns of movement and growth across the sub-region which can be fully serviced by walking, cycling and public transport networks and to support policies and programmes which give effect to this;
- Ensuring effective maintenance and management of the highway network;
- Ensuring that congestion is managed proactively and network resilience improved; and
- Reducing the number of casualties on the transport network.

- 5.4 The strategy is focused on the delivery of change. It recognises that there are a number of opportunities for regeneration and economic growth across South Essex, including the London Gateway Port, Southend Airport, Lakeside and town centre regeneration in the bigger towns of Basildon and Southend as well as in places such as Hadleigh and Canvey. It also considers the barriers to growth in these locations having regard to national barriers such as capacity issues at the Dartford Crossing, local capacity issues such as congestion and highway maintenance on the A13 and A127, and localised issues affecting the connectivity of town centres.
- 5.5 In order to enable growth, the strategy identifies a series of transport related schemes to be delivered in South Essex. These include highway improvement schemes, route management schemes and public transport improvements. Of significance to Castle Point are schemes focused on route management on the A13 and A127 which should deliver journey time reliability improvements for users once delivered.
- 5.6 It should be noted that due to the strategic nature of the strategy, covering all five South Essex authority areas, only schemes important across the area have been included in the strategy. This does not mean that localised transport schemes will not be delivered; however they will not be the focus of the collective efforts of the Planning and Transport Board.

6. Significance for Castle Point

- 6.1 Located at the heart of Thames Gateway South Essex, the strategy has some significance for Castle Point. Not only does it support route management schemes for the A13 and A127, helping to improve journey time reliability for local residents and businesses, it also forms the basis for joint working on strategic planning matters consistent with the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate.
- 6.2 In setting out the principles for joint working, the document forms the starting point for discussions around strategic issues such as the delivery of housing, economic and employment growth, and the delivery of green infrastructure, open space and recreation opportunities.
- 6.3 Furthermore, the strategy is underpinned by a strong relationship between transport and planning, ensuring that new developments are supported by the most appropriate transport infrastructure. This is important given the emphasis on transport improvements expressed by residents through the New Local Plan Issues Consultation undertaken in 2012.
- 6.4 Given the significance of this strategy to the plan-making process, it is recommended that the Cabinet endorse it and support its delivery by the TGSE Planning and Transport Board.

7. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The recommendations of this report carry no financial implications.

(b) Legal Implications

The Localism Act 2011 introduces a Duty to Co-operate, which requires local authorities to demonstrate that they are co-operating in order to address matters of a strategic nature, including but not limited to, housing, economic and employment growth, transport, the natural environment and green infrastructure provision.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

The Cabinet is being asked to endorse the strategy. In doing so, it should be satisfied that there are no equality implications arising from such an endorsement. An equality impact assessment does not support the original document; therefore a review has been undertaken. It is clear from this review that:

- a) The strategy does not discriminate against particular groups (equality characteristics or deprived groups) within the community; and

- b) The strategy does promote equality of access by encouraging greater provision of public transport, and by seeking to improve accessibility and promote quality of life, safety and health through its objectives.

(d) IT and Asset Management Implications

There are no IT or asset management implications associated with the recommendation of this report.

8. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

Early endorsement of this strategy will ensure that the Planning and Transport Board are well positioned to go about delivering the schemes set out within it.

9. Background Papers

- Thames Gateway South Essex Planning and Transport Strategy

Report Author: Amanda Raffaelli

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: New Local Plan – Annual Housing Supply Evidence

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Mrs Challis OBE Leader of the Council;
Councillor Smith - Development Control Liaison Member**

1. Purpose of Report

To advise the Cabinet on the findings of annual housing supply evidence, prepared to inform the preparation of the New Local Plan.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

The New Local Plan contributes directly towards the Council's Regeneration and Homes and Environment-Civic Pride priorities. The way in which it is delivered will contribute towards the priority of Improving the Council.

3. Recommendations

The Cabinet are asked to include the following documents within the evidence base for the New Local Plan, and have regard to them in the plan-making process:

- **Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2013**
 - **Castle Point Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13**
-

4. Background

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Plans to be based on a robust evidence base. A key element of this evidence base is information on housing supply. Paragraph 47 requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specifically deliverable sites, and specific developable sites or broad locations for growth. Paragraph 159 is clear that this should be done through the preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). A SHLAA allows for the capacity to accommodate housing growth within an area to be established, having regard

to realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land.

- 4.2 Information on supply is intrinsically linked to information on housing completions, as any under supply affects the need for housing in the future. As a consequence, an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) has been prepared. Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare an AMR by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2011 as amended. As a minimum this must include information on housing completions as they relate to any established target for housing supply within an area. An AMR must be prepared annually and must be made publicly available as soon as reasonably practicable once the information is available.

5. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Update 2013

- 5.1 This document updates and replaces the SHLAA 2012. It assesses the availability of housing land in Castle Point in order to determine a) whether there is a five year housing land supply, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and b) the capacity of the borough to accommodate growth having regard to the suitability, availability and viability of sites.
- 5.2 The SHLAA Update 2013 considered 358 sites within the existing urban area of Castle Point and a further 42 sites within the current extent of the Green Belt.
- 5.3 The non-Green Belt sites have the capacity to deliver up to 2,469 homes over a 15 year period. The Green Belt sites meanwhile have the capacity to deliver up to a further 3,196 homes.
- 5.4 The non-Green Belt sites have the capacity to deliver up to 570 homes in years 0-5 (deliverable), and up to 1,343 homes in years 6-10 and 556 homes in years 11-15 (developable). The maximum rate of housing growth that can be achieved exclusively on non-Green Belt sites is 165 dwellings per annum.
- 5.5 As part of the SHLAA sensitivity testing has been undertaken, as sites will fall out of the supply for various reasons over time. Taking into account the sensitivity testing it is likely that a realistic level of supply achievable from non-Green Belt sites is 1,842 homes – 123 dwellings per annum.
- 5.6 These outcomes have been compared against various scenarios for housing growth emerging from the Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts work, and also from the Office of National Statistics Sub-national Population Forecasts and associated CLG Household Forecasts. This comparison demonstrates that there is insufficient land on non-Green Belt sites to meet the requirements of those forecasts that are likely to represent the objectively assessed need for housing (around 346 homes per annum). Additionally, there is insufficient land on non-Green Belt sites to deliver the housing target of 200 homes per annum agreed by the Council in December 2012. As a consequence additional sites from the Green Belt are required to address housing need.

- 5.7 A small number of sites, identified in the SHLAA as 'Agreed Green Belt' were identified by the Council in December 2012 as being suitable locations for housing development. These sites have a combined capacity of 258 homes. Sites with a further capacity of 1,174 homes are required in order to deliver 200 homes per annum for the period 2011 to 2028. Of these, 699 need to be deliverable – i.e. capable of delivery in the period 2013 to 2018.
- 5.8 Sensitivity testing indicates that this level of growth (200 dwellings per annum) is achievable based on the capacity of sites set out in the SHLAA, although development in the Green Belt is required. However, higher levels of growth closer to objectively assessed need (346 dwellings per annum) are beyond the capacity of sites identified within the SHLAA.
- 5.9 In order to deliver the target of 200 dwellings per annum a Green Belt Review is required in order to bring forward additional sites for development.

6. Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13

- 6.1 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2012/13 covers the period 1st April 2012 to the 31st March 2013. It reports on a range of matters including the plan-making process and indicators related to employment, retail and the environment as well as housing.
- 6.2 In terms of housing, the AMR details the level of housing completions that have been achieved year on year, compared to any housing target in place at the time. The AMR 2012/13 shows that there has been persistent under-delivery of housing against targets. Compared to the East of England Plan, which was in place until January 2013, there was under-delivery of the order of 1,189 homes in the period 2001 to 2013. This means that a buffer of 20% should be added to any five year housing supply requirement to ensure the supply of housing going forward (NPPF requirement set out in paragraph 47).
- 6.3 In December 2012, the Council agreed a housing target of 200 homes per annum (similar to that previously set out in the East of England Plan). However, in the period 2011 to 2013, only 125 homes in total were delivered in Castle Point (50 in 2011/12 and 75 in 2013). As a consequence delivery continues to be below target.
- 6.4 Evidence from appeal decisions, including the Glebelands Appeal, indicates that under-delivery should be made up in the first five years. Therefore, there is a requirement to make up the difference for these past two years over the next five, increasing the annual requirement from 200 dwellings per annum to 255 dwellings per annum. When the buffer of 20% is added to this, there is a need for 295 dwellings per annum to be identified for the each of the next five years – 1,475 in total.
- 6.5 Information from the SHLAA Update 2013 indicates that the supply of deliverable sites is currently 776 homes. There is therefore only 2.6 years worth of housing land supply at this time, and a need for sites with an additional capacity of 696 homes to be identified.

7. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The recommendations of this report carry no financial implications.

(b) Legal Implications

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 require the Annual Monitoring Report to be made publicly available as soon as reasonably practicable.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

Human Resources

The recommendations of this report can be delivered within the capacity of existing resources.

Equality Implications

This report recommends that evidence is made available for consideration in the plan-making process. It does not require a decision to be made in relation to planning policies. Therefore, there are not considered to be equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

(d) IT and Asset Management Implications

If the recommendation is agreed, the SHLAA and AMR will be made available upon the Council's website. This can be done without specialist IT support.

8. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

Subject to the recommendation being agreed, the completed documents will be made available on the Council's website on the 21st November 2013. Pending the Cabinet decision copies of the Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2013 and the Castle Point Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13 have been placed on deposit in the Members Group Rooms.

9. Background Papers

- Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update 2013
- Castle Point Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13

Report Author: Amanda Raffaelli

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Financial Update

Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance

1. Purpose of Report

This report presents the latest position in relation to the General Fund financial forecast for the period 2013/15 and contains the forecast itself at appendix 1.

This report is intended to:

- Provide Cabinet with the latest information on the future predicted cost of the Council's current spending plans.
- Inform Cabinet of performance in respect of the Council's current budget.
- Update Cabinet on developments of a financial nature, which may impact on the Council's financial forecast.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

This report is linked to the Council's "Improving the Council" priority. 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. Recommendation

That Cabinet note the report.

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 A full five year financial forecast is maintained by the Head of Resources for planning purposes, but due to the uncertainty around future government funding, only years up to and including 2014/15 are reported to Cabinet at the current

time. Once this uncertainty diminishes, reporting of the full five year forecast to Cabinet will resume.

4.3 The forecast shown at Appendix 1 is based on the budgets approved by Special Council on 20th February 2013, updated for subsequent necessary changes, reported to Cabinet in earlier Financial Update Reports (July & September 2013) and/or identified within section 5 of this report. The forecast shows:

- Line 7 – A balanced budget for the current financial year meaning that the Council is not reliant on the identification of savings or use of general reserves to support ongoing expenditure.
- Line 3 – That for years 2014/15 (and beyond) there is a need to identify cashable efficiency savings in order to balance the budget and maintain reserves at the minimum level recommended by the Head of Resources (£2.3m – see section 8 below).
- Line 28 – A Council Tax increase of **1.96%** for 2013/14 and an assumption of a **2%** increase for 2014/15. **2%** is adopted throughout the financial forecast and reflects the cap on council tax increases imposed by Government.
- Line 17 – General Reserves forecast at around **£3.2m** at the end of 2013/14.

4.4 Detailed estimates have been produced for the years shown, based on the level of external funding allocated to the Council. The Council's financial plan beyond that reported here assumes further reductions in external funding.

5. Changes to approved budgets

5.1 There are no new items to report under this section of the report.

6. Revenue/Capital Budgets “on-watch”

6.1 The following table highlights revenue or capital budgets, HRA or general fund, which are identified by the Head of 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 **£50k** and/or are felt to be of particular interest to Cabinet.

Description	Predicted year end budget variance £	Background and action being taken
Other Car Parks - Fees & Charges	TBA	Cabinet approved a new charging structure for Car Parks at its meeting in October 2013. The new charges, and repair programme, will be reflected in the financial forecast which will be presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2014 as part of the 2014/15 budget and council tax setting process.

Insurance Premium Costs	Impact 2014/15	<p>The Council's insurance brokers have recommended that the Council increase provision for insurance premiums from 2014/15 by 25%. The Council has budgeted for an increase of 10% which has historically been sufficient.</p> <p>An increase of 25% would translate to a General Fund financial impact of £85k compared to a currently budgeted uplift of £35k. There would also be a lower value impact on the HRA.</p> <p>Officers are currently exploring options to reduce this cost increase, which is purely a recommendation to increase the budget and not a real cost increase at the current time.</p>
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7. Key Financial Developments

Local Government Finance Settlement 2014/15 & 2015/16 – Technical Consultation

- 7.1 The outcome of recent consultation is awaited. Broadly the proposals, if adopted, may result in a further reduction in Revenue Support Grant of up to **£400k** for 2015/16 (on-going) and a reduction in funds received through the New Homes Bonus scheme of up to **£200k** for 2015/16 ongoing.
- 7.2 Implications arising from the outcome of the consultation will be reflected in the Council's financial forecast as part of the 2014/15 budget setting process.

Business Rates Pooling

- 7.3 Authorities across Essex, have collaborated on a piece of work which identified that an Essex Region Pool would be financially beneficial. An expression of interest is due to be submitted to DCLG by the deadline of 31st October 2013.
- 7.4 This work is being overseen by the Essex Strategic Leaders & Finance Officers Group (ESLF) and was the subject of a report to Cabinet in July 2013.
- 7.5 Current pool membership is proposed to include Braintree DC, Castle Point BC, Chelmsford CC, Colchester BC, , Epping Forrest DC, Essex County Council, Essex Fire Authority, Harlow DC, Rochford DC and Tendring DC.

Local Council Tax Support Scheme LCTSS

- 7.6 Subject to a separate report on this agenda relating to the proposed scheme for 2014/15.

Council Tax Technical Changes

- 7.7 Potential to revise a number of existing Council Tax for implementation from 1st April 2014. Subject to a separate report to a future meeting of Cabinet.

Efficiency work programme 2013/14

7.8 The Council has a target to identify ongoing financial efficiencies to the value of **£1m**, in order to close the budget gap predicted for 2014/15 and contribute to balancing the budget in years 2015/16 and beyond.

7.9 A programme of work is already in place to support delivery of the target and is progressing well.

8. Financial Risk Factors

8.1 The budget report presented to the Cabinet meeting on 20th February and Special 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 in the table below together with three new risks where the financial and/or operational impact on the authority is not yet known.

Description	Explanation
Insurance Related Risks	<p>Provision has been made within 2012/13 out-turn and the 2013/14 budget for the residual liability under a Scheme of Arrangement (SoA) entered into in 1994 following the demise of the Municipal Mutual Insurance Company.</p> <p>The Council has been notified that the SoA has been triggered but has not yet been requested to make payment.</p> <p>Other potential liabilities arising from insurance claims which may arise.</p>
Equal Pay Review	A full job evaluation exercise has not been carried out. No equal pay claims have been received by the Council.
<p>Potential for incurrence of legal costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning appeals & Associated costs - Property searches litigation 	<p>The Council anticipates an increase in the number of planning applications submitted. There is potential for a proportion of these applications not to be approved which may result in planning appeals and the incurrence of associated legal costs and expenses.</p> <p>Based on planning applications likely to come forward, the Council's financial exposure is potentially £1.3m. Provision has not been made within the financial forecast for these costs.</p> <p>The recommended level of minimum reserves was increased in September to reflect this significant risk.</p> <p>The outcome of litigation in relation to property searches – subject to strict confidentiality.</p>
Local Council Tax Support Scheme	This is the first year of the locally determined, replacement scheme for Council Tax Benefits, which sees all financial risk (arising from changes in caseload) falling to the

	<p>Borough Council and its precepting organisations (excluding the Town Council).</p> <p>As a result of the introduction of the scheme, a significant number of residents are required to pay a council tax bill, in whole or in part, for the first time.</p> <p>Performance of the new scheme at the end of the second quarter was satisfactory.</p>
Welfare Reforms	Anticipated to result in a change in demand for some council services.
Universal Credit	<p>Centralisation of the administration and payment of benefit from 2014 to the DWP. The Borough Council is required to support the process of implementation and work in partnership with the DWP when the new arrangement is in place. Precise detail regarding the Council's involvement is unknown.</p> <p>The Council has also seen a reduction in Benefits Administration Grant from Central Government – implying an expectation that the Council will reduce its resources.</p>
New Homes Bonus	<p>SR13 announced that £400m from the New Homes Bonus will be pooled within Local Enterprise Partnership areas to support strategic housing and economic development priorities. The Government plans to consult on the mechanism for requiring pooling which is intended to take effect from 2015/16.</p> <p>At the current time this Council, along with many others, uses funding from this source to support General Fund services. A requirement to pool may therefore mean a reduction in funding allocated direct to the Council.</p>

- 8.2 Based on the information above, the minimum level of general fund reserves to be maintained by the Council, as recommended by the s151 Officer, is **£2.3m**.

9. **Annual Budget Process 2014/15**

The annual budget process is progressing to timetable with submission of the Council's proposed budget for 2014/15 and council tax planned for February Cabinet and Council.

10. **Corporate Implications**

a) **Legal implications**

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

b) Human Resources and equality implications

There are no Human Resource/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, Head of Resources

Background Papers:

- Policy Framework & Budget Setting 2013/14, incorporating the Financial Planning Strategy.
- Budget monitoring statements for the period April to July 2013.
- Government spending round 2013 (HM Treasury).
- Financial Update to Cabinet 17th July and 18th September 2013 .
- Local Government Finance Settlement 2014/15 & 2015/16 consultation.
- Business Rates Pooling Cabinet Report 17th July 2013.
- LCTS Cabinet Report 17th July 2013.

Medium term financial forecast		2013/14	2014/15	Notes
Ref	Current policies and service plans	£'000s	£'000s	
1	Detailed estimates	14,400	12,335	Draft budgets supported by detailed workings
2	Budgets rolled forward from previous financial year	1,448		
3	Savings and/or additional revenue income/grant funding to be identified		(513)	Required in order to deliver a balanced budget and maintain reserves at the minimum level recommended
4	Changes to base since budget set in Feb 2013	(19)	(259)	
5	Total net expenditure	15,829	11,563	
6	Contribution to/(from) Earmarked reserves	(3,296)	(1)	Includes application of reserves against backlog maintenance and movement between years as well as Waterside Farm refurbishment project
7	Contribution to/(from) General reserves	150	0	A balanced budget was set for 2013/14. See also line 3
8	Net Budget before funding	12,683	11,562	
9	Collection Fund adjustment	(58)		
10	Capital and other grants and contributions	(1,562)	(1,116)	
11	New Homes Bonus (NHB)	(533)	(533)	
12	Council Tax support grant 2011/12	(184)	(184)	Funding in respect of Council Tax freeze for 2011/12 (4 years)
13	Formula Grant & Retained Business Rates	(3,775)	(3,027)	As notified for 2013/14 and based on recent announcements for future years
14	Council Tax Requirement	6,571	6,702	
Ref	Reserves	£'000s	£'000s	
15	General Reserves at start of year	3,021	3,171	
16	Contribution (to)/from General Fund	150	0	
17	General Reserves at year end	3,171	3,171	Minimum year end balance for General Reserves is £2.3m
18	Earmarked reserves at start of year	4,246	24	
19	Contribution (to)/from General Fund	(3,296)	(1)	The identification of savings and/or additional revenue income will be necessary in order to deliver a balanced budget and maintain reserves at or above the minimum recommended level, in years 2014/15 and beyond
20	Leaders priority fund	(14)		
21	VAT - partial exemption	(425)		
22	Grants received	(85)		
23	Priority initiatives fund	(346)		General Reserves will be applied in years where the budget is not balanced
24	Local Development Scheme/Local Plan	(56)		
25	Earmarked reserves at year end	24	23	
Ref	Council Tax			
26	Permitted yield	6,571	6,702	
27	Tax at band D	234.09	238.77	Based on an increase of 1.96% in 2013/14 and target increases of approximately 2% in future years.
28	Increase	1.96%	2.00%	The tax at band D does not include the amount charged by Canvey Island Town Council

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Local Council Tax Support (LSCT) – Update and Proposed Local Scheme 2014/15

Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance

1. Purpose of Report

To provide an update to Cabinet in respect of:

- **The results of consultation on proposed changes for 2014/15.**
- **Recommended changes to the Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2014/15.**

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

- **Sound and strategic financial management - Improving the Council**

3. Recommendations

- 1. That Cabinet note the summary of responses to the consultation.**
- 2. That Cabinet recommend to Council the changes to the Local Council Tax Support scheme as set out in this report.**

4. Background Information

- 4.1 This report follows earlier reports to Cabinet which set out the requirement for the Council to approve future year's Local Council Tax Support schemes before January 31st each year, even if no changes are made.**
- 4.2 At its meeting in July, Cabinet noted proposed arrangements for consulting with residents on a range of possible changes to the existing scheme. The consultation has now concluded and a summary of responses is provided at Appendix A.**

5. Consultation responses

- 5.1 The consultation period ran from 30th August until 10th October 2013. During this period flyers were inserted with all Council Tax Bills and Benefit Notifications posted out, publicity material and consultation forms were displayed at local libraries, Twitter messages were posted, a Press Release was issued, and information was prominently displayed on the Council's website to raise awareness and encourage participation in the consultation exercise.
- 5.2 Partners from the Benefit Information Network and Local Strategic Partnership were also invited by email to take part in the consultation and were encouraged to raise awareness amongst their customers.
- 5.3 48 responses were received in total. This was significantly lower than last year but in line with a general decline in response rates seen across most of the Essex Authorities.
- 5.4 The consultation questions covered a range of changes to existing elements of the scheme which would either increase or decrease entitlement for some or all groups.
- 5.5 Understandably those consulted did not agree with changes that would lead to a decrease in support and agreed with protecting certain vulnerable groups from changes that might reduce support.
- 5.6 A summary of responses from the consultation exercise are contained in Appendix A to this report.
- 5.7 ECC, Essex Police and Fire were consulted in relation to the scheme and have raised no objections through the consultation process.

6. Proposed Changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Castle Point Borough Council

- 6.1 The following aspects are all incorporated in the current scheme for Castle Point:
 - 1 The scheme is cost neutral, meaning that the cost to the Council and each pre-cepting authority does not exceed the funding notified by central government.
 - 2 As directed by central government, all pensioners are protected, meaning that the financial impact of the scheme falls solely on working age households.
 - 3 The scheme is means tested and contains weightings in the form of Premiums, Disregards, and Applicable Amounts to enable protection for working age vulnerable groups and households with children and/or disabilities.
 - 4 The scheme incentivises work by disregarding £25 per week of earned income.

- 5 Child benefit is regarded in full as income.
 - 6 The scheme does not contain any mechanism to allow awards to be back dated for working age households.
 - 7 The scheme, as far as possible, allows for expected growth in demand and is easy to claim and administer.
 - 8 There is no entitlement to Second Adult Rebate within the scheme for working age claimants. Second Adult Rebate was benefit which could be awarded where a single Council Tax payer has an adult friend or relative who lives with them and that second adult has a low income.
 - 9 The savings limit is £6,000, meaning that claimants with capital to a value exceeding £6,000 are not entitled to Local Council Tax Support.
 - 10 There are no Non-Dependant deductions for working age claimants. Non Dependant deductions were made from Council Tax Benefit where the claimant had another adult, who was not their partner, living in their household.
 - 11 The Council's 'Local War Pensioner' provisions have been retained, meaning incomes received in respect of War Pensions for disablement or bereavement are fully disregarded when calculating support.
 - 12 Support is capped at 70% of Council Tax liability, meaning all working age households are required to pay a minimum of 30% of their weekly council tax bill.
 - 13 Support is capped at Council Tax Band D, meaning all working age households living in properties banded E to H will have their entitlement assessed as though they were living in a Band D property.
 - 14 There is no requirement to calculate and award 'underlying entitlement' when overpayments occur.
 - 15 A small sum is available to provide additional assistance in accordance with the Council's Exceptional Hardship Policy.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the scheme should not be changed for 2014/15.

7. Corporate Implications

a. Financial Implications

The Council and its preceptors receive a grant from central government in respect of the local council tax support scheme. The current scheme is designed to be fully funded by this grant, and is therefore cost neutral to the Council.

Approximately half of the government grant for the scheme is included within the RSG element of the Council's main funding settlement. RSG for 2014/15

has significantly reduced but the Council has chosen to maintain funding for the local scheme at the level provided for 2013/14.

The calculation of the Council's minimum level of general reserves currently includes an element to cushion the authority from any financial risk arising during the first year of the scheme. This provision will be reviewed during the budget cycle for 2014/15.

b. Legal Implications

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 S33(1)(e) gave effect to a policy of localising council tax support by abolishing council tax benefit from a date appointed by the Secretary of State. On the 31st October 2012 the Local Government Finance Act 2012 inserted a new section 13A and Schedule 1A into the Local Government Finance Act 1992 whereby the Council had to make a scheme specifying reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable in respect of dwellings situated in its area by persons whom the Council considers to be in financial need or persons in classes consisting of persons whom the Council considers to be in general financial need.

Before making a scheme the Council must:

- (a) Consult any major pre-cepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it;
- (b) Publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit and
- (c) Consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme

And having made a scheme, the Council must publish it in such manner as the Council thinks fit.

Failure to consult on the scheme or on any significant changes may put the Council at risk of legal challenge by those affected by the scheme.

Adoption of a local scheme is a statutory requirement and failure to do so will lead to a default scheme being imposed by the government for which there is insufficient funding.

The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (the Regulations) make provisions as to the billing, collection and enforcement of council tax. These Regulations were amended to take into account penalties under the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013. The Regulations enable HM Revenue & Customs to supply information to billing authorities relating to council tax.

Department for Work and Pensions have plans to establish a Single Fraud Investigation Service which it is understood would investigate all benefit and tax credit fraud. This would have an impact on the Council's benefit fraud team.

Human resources/equality/human rights

A stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment for the current scheme was undertaken in 2012 and is appended at Appendix B of this report.

c. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

The local scheme needs to be finalised by 31st January 2014. The new scheme must be operational from 1st April 2014.

Key project milestones are as follows:

Milestone	Timeframe	Purpose
Formal Public/Stakeholder Consultation	Aug 13 – Oct 13	Pre-cepting organisations & Residents
Grant Published	Nov 13 – Dec 13	
Cabinet Report	20.11.2013	Consultation outcome
Report to Council	11.12.2013	Proposed scheme to be recommended to Council
Final Scheme in place	31.01.2014	Final scheme approval
Schemes in operation	01.04.2014	Adoption and Implementation
		Operation

Appendix A Consultation Summary Report

Appendix B Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

8. Background Papers:

Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2014/15 update – report to Cabinet 18th September 2013

Report Author:

Eddie Mosuro – Community Support Manager

Castle Point Borough Council

2014/15 Proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Consultation Summary Report

General comments and observations about the data

In total there were 355 'hits' registered on the council's consultation webpage and 109 'hit's' to the actual consultation form.

Of the 109 people who accessed the survey, 48 completed the survey whilst 61 skipped through the consultation without leaving any responses.

Of the 48 who responded, 28 were residents and 20 did not answer the question to indicate whether they were residents or organizations.

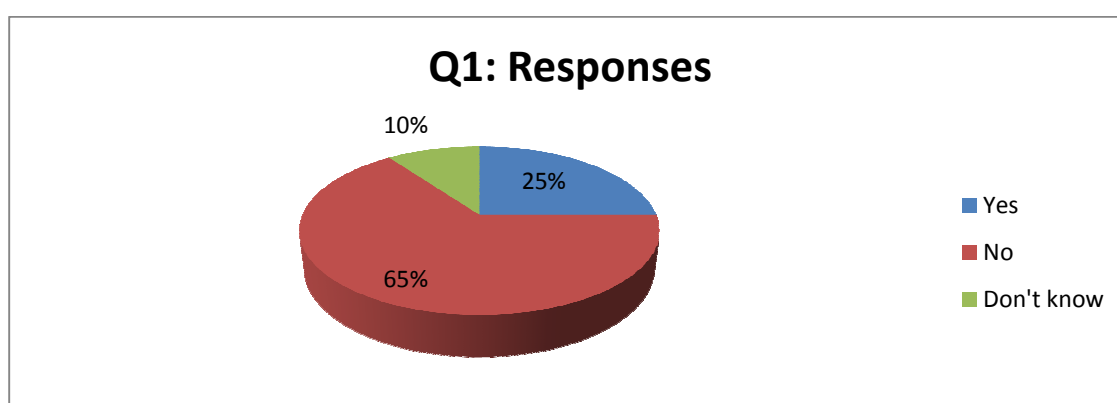
Respondees were asked to indicate if their household receives Local Council Tax Support. This question was optional. 30 people responded, 27% were in receipt of Local Council Tax Support whilst 73% were not.

The form contained a diversity data section, however this was optional and not all respondents answered this section of the survey.

Consultation Responses

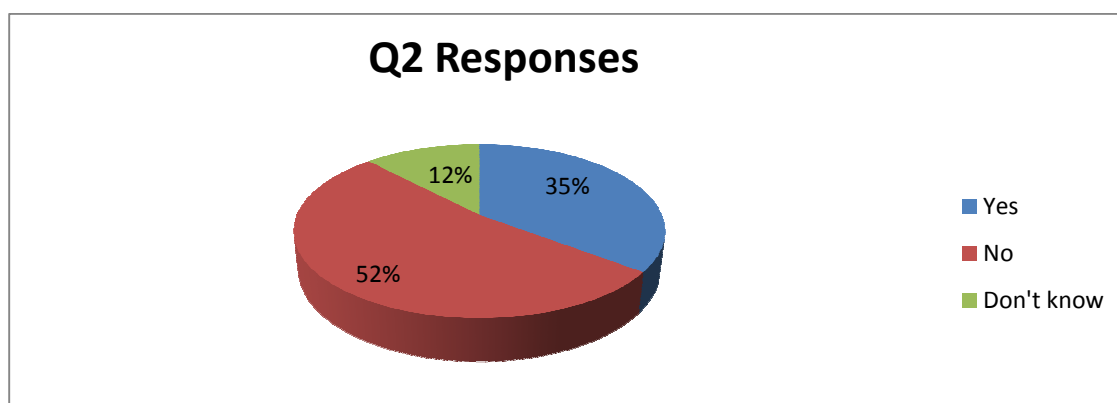
Q1: Currently all working age Council Tax Payers in receipt of Council Tax Support must pay at least 30% of their council tax bill themselves. If the Council has to make changes to the scheme should this % be increased?

There were 48 responses to this question. Results below indicate that most people do not agree that the % should be increased.



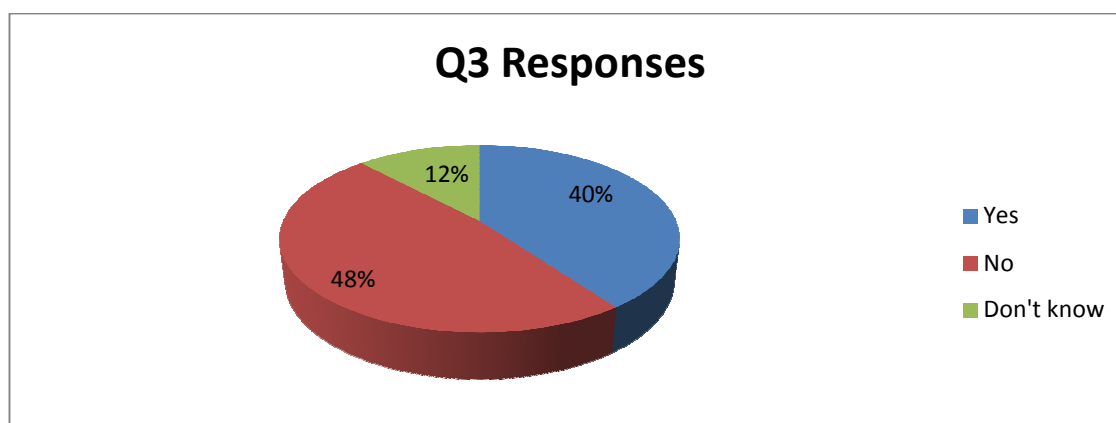
Q2: Currently anyone of working age that lives in a property with a Council Tax Band E, F, G or H will have their support calculated as if their property was in band D. If the Council has to make changes, should the level of support be further reduced so that anyone of working age that lives in a property with a Council Tax Band D, E, F, G or H has their support calculated as if their property was in band C?

There were 48 responses to this question. Results below indicate that most people do not want the Band restriction element of the current scheme reduced further to Band C.



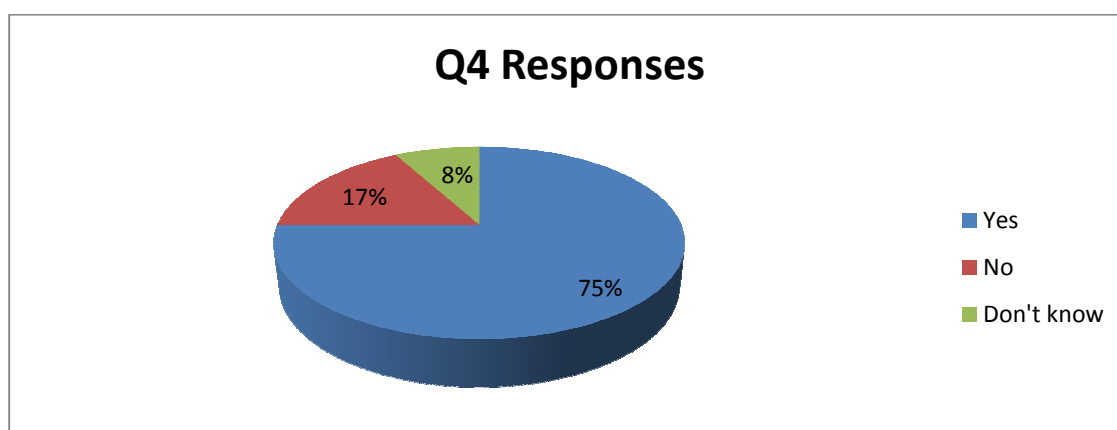
Q3: Currently there is no minimum award level for Council Tax Support. This means someone could be entitled to as little as 1p per week in support. If the Council has to make changes, should they introduce a minimum level of weekly Council Tax Support? This would mean that anyone currently entitled to less than the minimum level would no longer receive any support at all.

There were 48 responses to this question. Results below indicate that most people do not want to see a minimum award level introduced to the scheme. It is noted that this question scored the highest 'Yes' response rate from questions 1 to 3 – questions which were focused on different ways in which support could be reduced if necessary. This suggests that, if further reductions to the scheme were necessary, introducing a minimum award value might be regarded as a preferred way to do this.



Q4: Should people who can't work due to sickness or disability be protected from these proposed changes to the scheme?

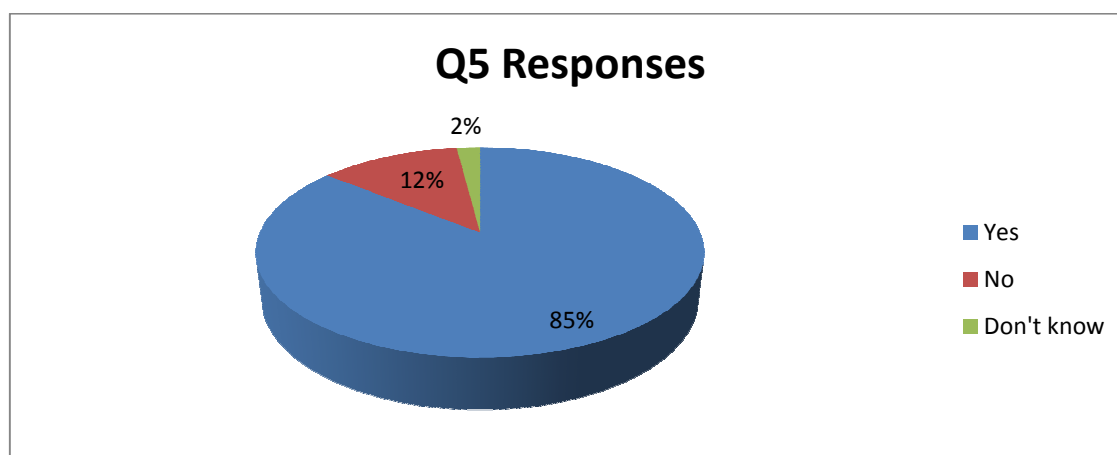
There were 48 responses to this question. Results below indicate that most people would like to see those who can't work due to sickness or disability to be protected from any changes to the scheme which would reduce support.



Q5: Should people who can't work because they provide care for a sick or disabled relative be protected from these proposed changes to the scheme?

There were 48 responses to this question. Results below indicate that most people would like to see those who can't work because they provide care for a sick or disabled relative to be protected from any changes to the scheme which would reduce support.

This question had the highest majority response rate of all the questions asked in the survey. It also scored a higher 'Yes' response rate than Q4 and scored the lowest 'Don't know' rate of all the questions asked. This suggests that protecting support for Carer's is generally a big concern for most residents and a topic for which most people have a clear view. It also suggests that protecting Carer's is seen as a slightly bigger concern than protecting sick or disabled residents.



Summary of 'free text' comments collected from the survey:**General Disapproval (5 comments);**

"Your proposed changes appear to be to increase your revenue by targetting those least able to afford it. If an increase in revenue from Council Tax IS necessary the changes should be made across the board and not aimed at those least able to afford it."

"Poor people should not pay council tax making them poorer to pay for the detritus on the council is shameful. We should have had a question to reduce the 30% down to nought."

"Why no 05 to pay. nothing in castle point is worth paying for. Because of you people i know attempted suicide this year you are Evil."

"enough is being taken from the poor. cut back else where."

"How many suicides do you want to be responsible for?"

General Support (1 comment);

"I fully support these changes and anything that encourages work. People of a working age with no disabilities should not be able to just claim benefits. Work should be more financially attractive than staying on benefits."

Disabilities/Carers/Vulnerable (4 comments);

"ALL DISABLED PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WHO ARE OVER 65 SHOULD BE EXEMPT"

"Please protect the carers and the disabled in Castle Point. They have already seen a marked increase in the amount they have to pay. This has had a direct effect on their disposable income and they should not be asked to pay more. Savings and cuts should be made elsewhere."

"As retired pensioners, we have always, and still pay relevant council tax. However, my daughter, who has Downes Syndrome has to pay Council Tax out of her benefits. I think this is appalling! My daughter would like to work but her disability prevents her from doing so!"

"It's time that the sick and disabled and the people that look after them are not punished for being how they are. What the hell is happening to this country."

Lone Parent/Families/Single People (1 comment);

"Single people who work low pay should be allowed to earn at least £120 before being stopped. Also why students, armed forces are exempt council tax or allowed to earn more. Those on apprenticeships while single person has to survive who works , but on a

low income has to live on £71.00 per week were as above can earn more not be. have to pay more if any council tax as single person i have to pay more i dont have enough to live on i work but earn below living wage but still being penalised. 1. single 2. low incomewhich is unfair and against basic human rights."

Pensioners (1 comment);

"Council Tax should be lowered for state pensioners!"

Financial Concern/Debt/Poverty (4 comments);

"I am a single mother & i am looking for work. The changes have made me borrow to be able to afford living. I am sinking further and further into debt."

"30% deduction is a lot of money coming out of £70.70 jsa, no further cuts on the poor are fair."

"Until I read this questionnaire I hadn't realised how much you have already cut back on Council Tax Benefit. You are taking money from those who are already struggling to make ends meet - no wonder our food banks cannot keep up with the demand from people who can no longer afford to eat! This is a result of the Government who have demonised those unfortunate enough to be needing welfare benefits. It is a morally indefensible policy when those who are poor are suffering from the irresponsibility of the bankers and the wealthy are hardly affected by the cutbacks in the economy."

"Reducing the Council Tax band level will act to see low income families and those on benefits increasingly concentrated in lower value parts of the borough. This has the potential to exacerbate deprivation in certain areas, and make being poor and/or unemployed the norm... what will children growing up in these areas aspire to. Are we at risk of creating a downward spiraling cycle of deprivation that will take years to undo? In setting a minimum award level the Council should consider a) what it costs to make a payment; and b) what will make a real difference to people's quality of life. My sense would be that £5 per week (£20 per month) seems like the right level."

Clarity of Survey/Scheme Information (3 comments);

"I lectured at London University yet it has taken me an hour and a half to try to understand what an earth you are talking about. I have reported you to the plain english campaign hopefully someone will be fired over this nonsense. "

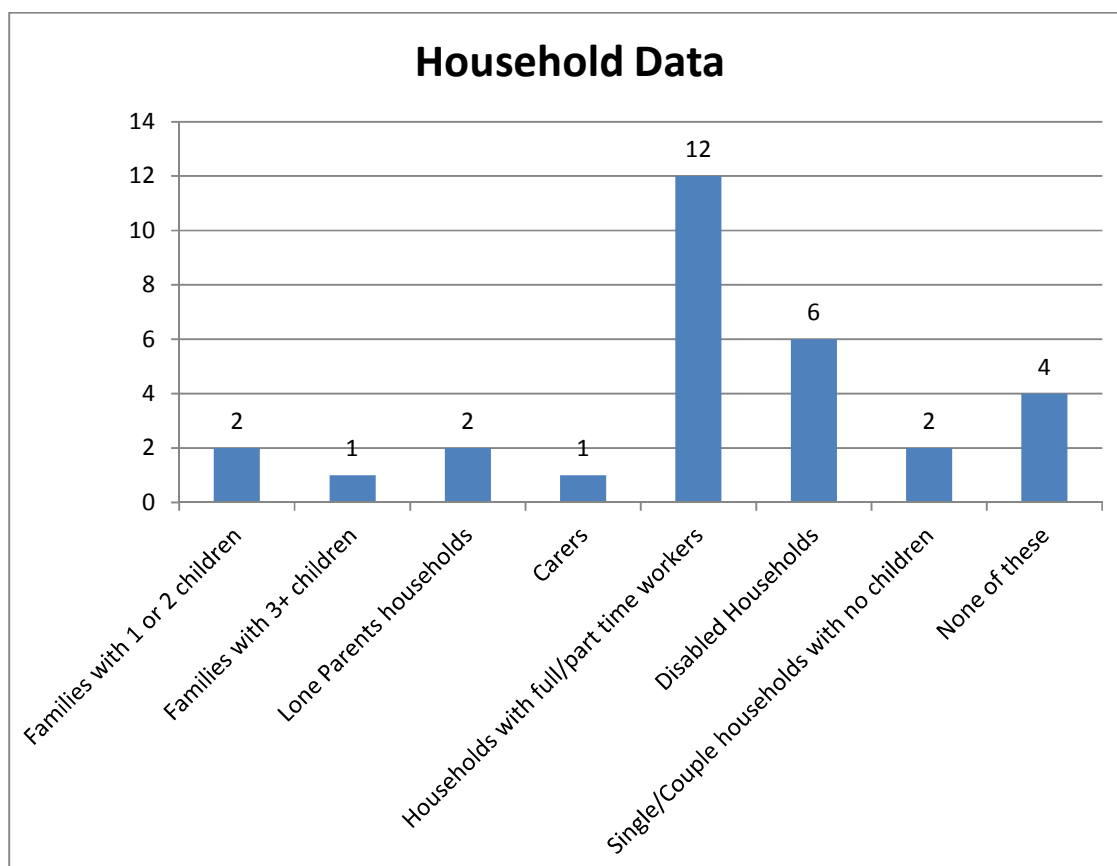
"It's hard to understand how you sleep at night wasting our money asking questions no one can manage understanding."

"I have never seen Council Tax Support Scheme explained anywhere"

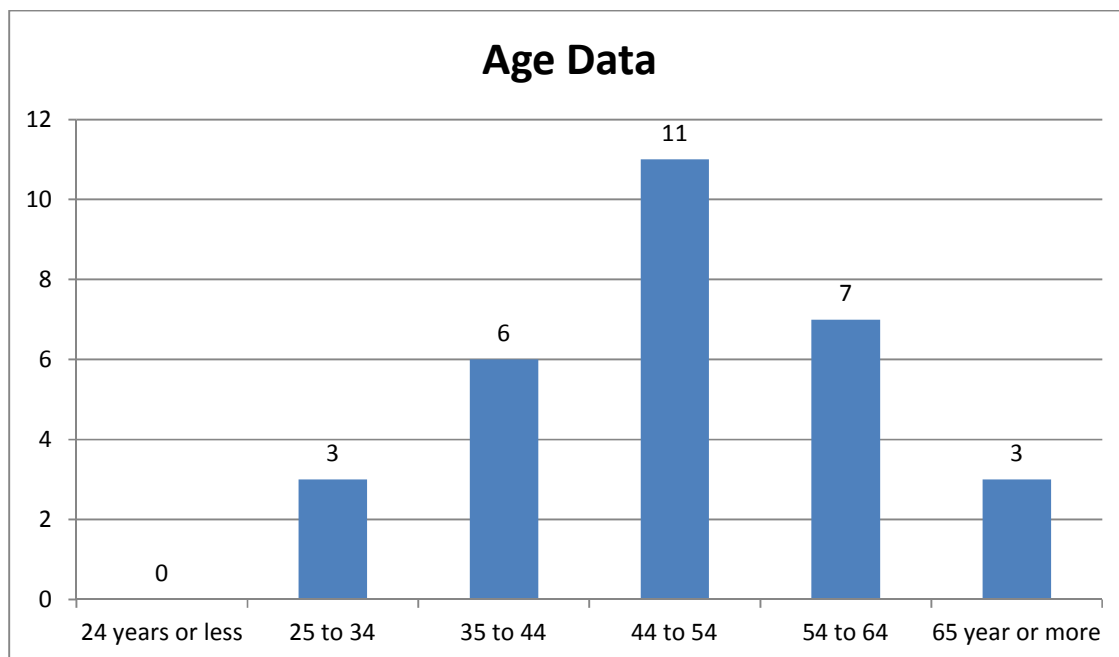
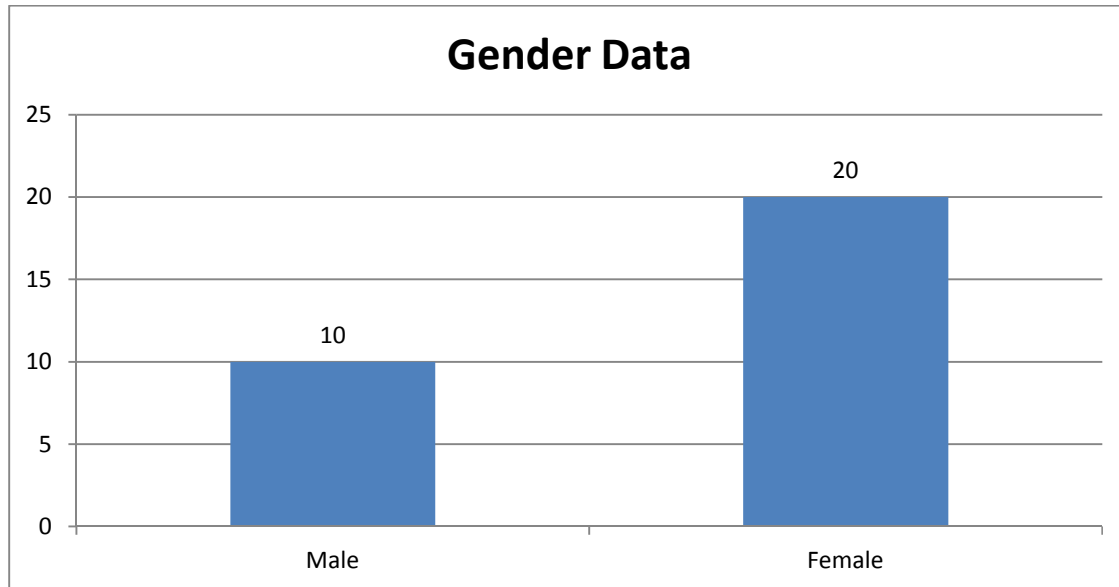
Diversity & Equality Data

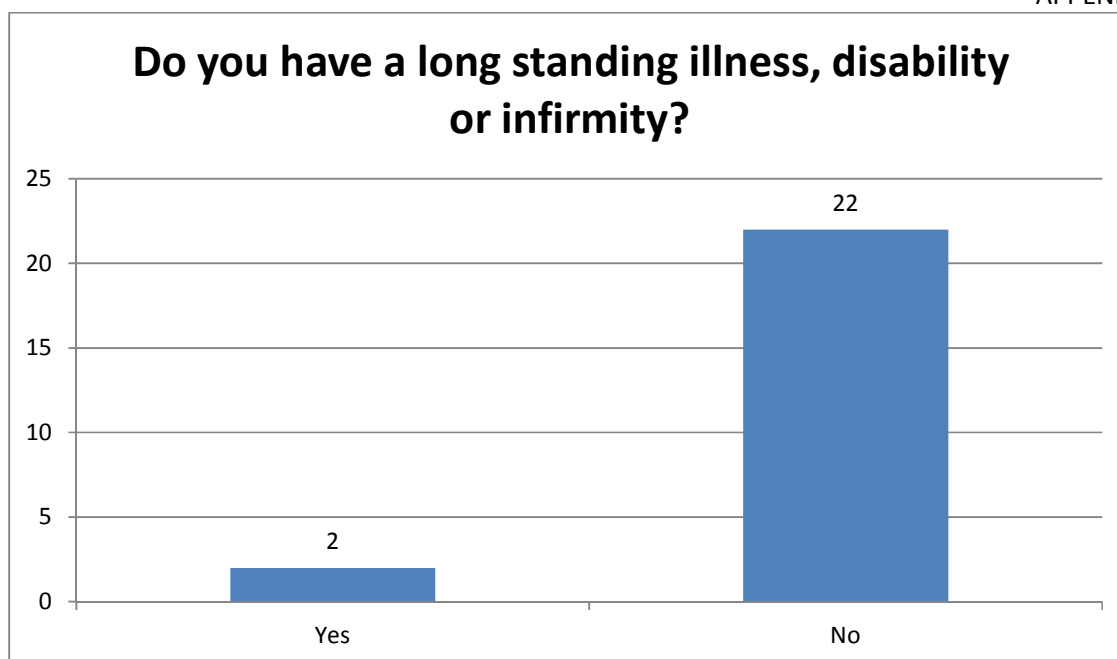
Figures shown on the tables are the number of responses, not percentages.

Not all respondents answered all the questions so the response total varies from question to question.

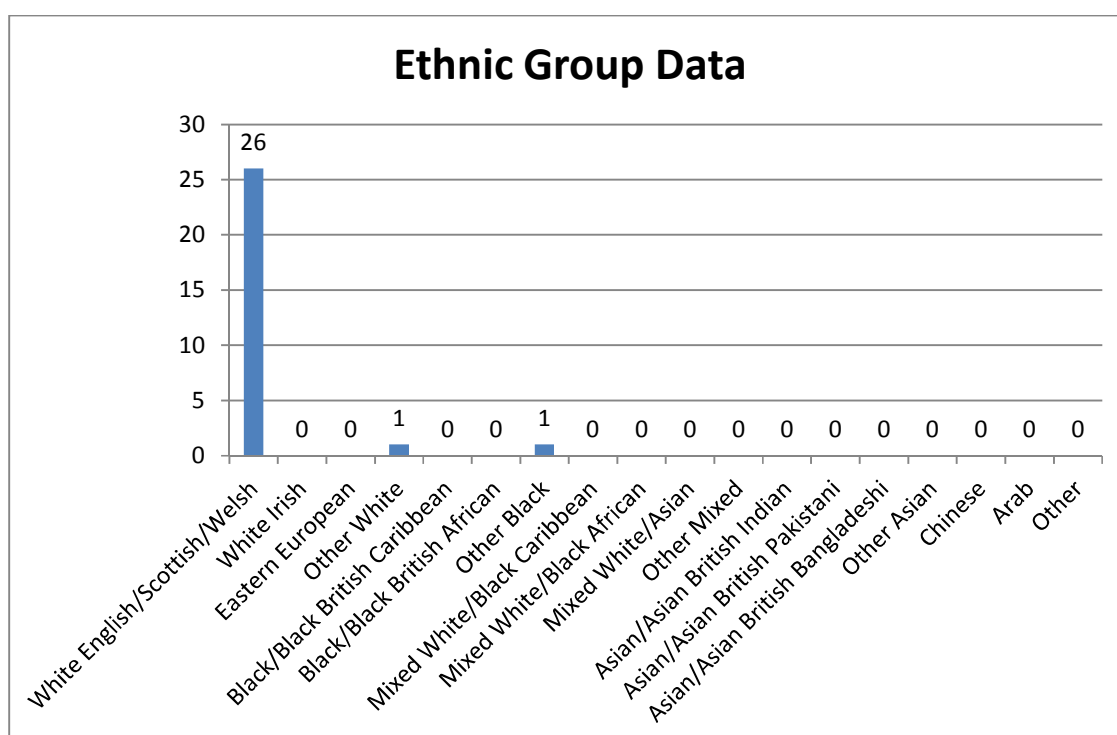


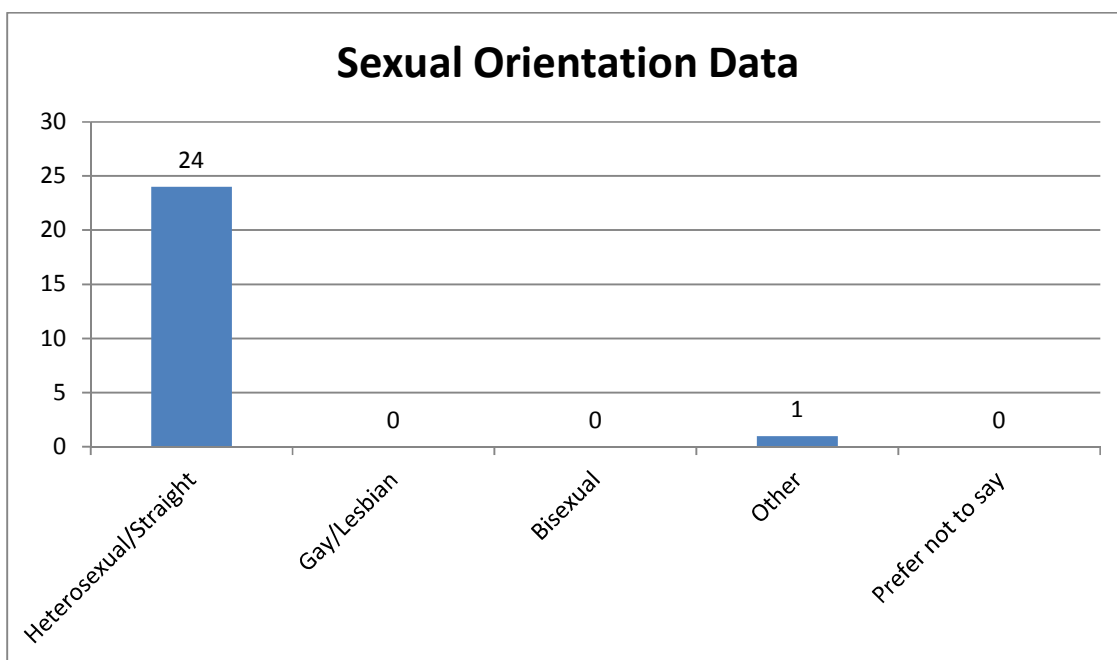
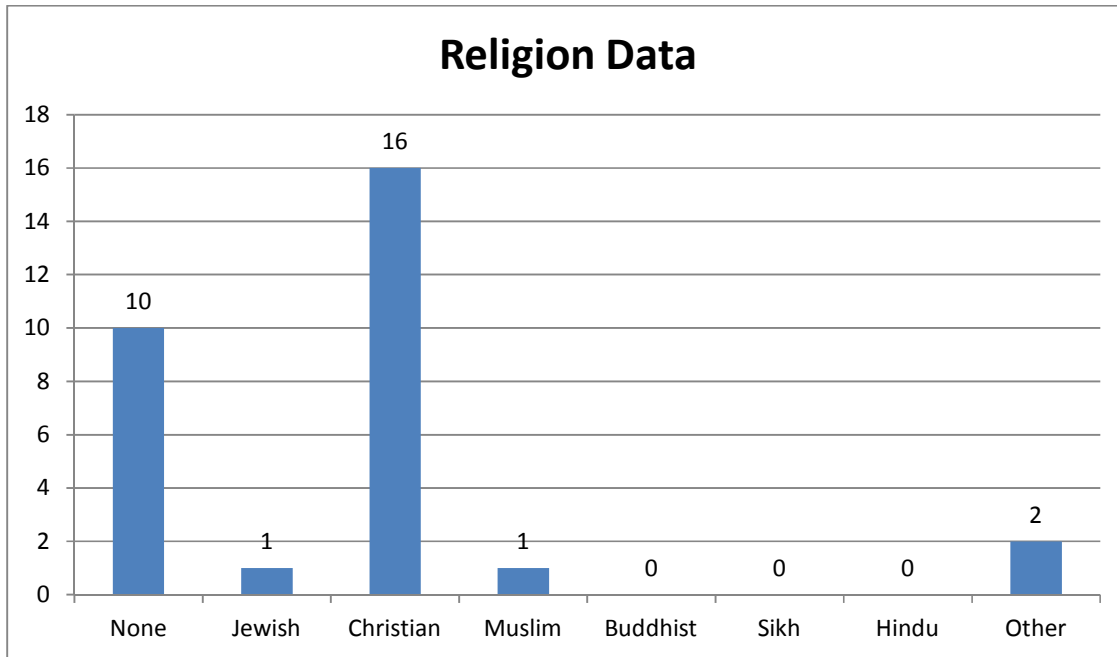
Respondents were asked to select only one category that best describes their household.





'Long standing' was described in the question as meaning 'anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time'.







Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

2012

Strategy and Policy EqIA

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

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

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

Title of strategy or policy:	Local Council Tax Support Scheme
Person undertaking EqIA:	Eddie Mosuro
Head of Service:	Wendy Livings
Department:	Housing & Communities
Date EqIA completed:	28.10.13

Strategy and policy overview

Strategy and policy overview	
What is the strategy or policy intending to achieve?	To fulfil the Local Authorities legal obligation under the Localism Act to provide a Localised Council Tax Support Scheme with effect from 1.4.14
What are the summary aims and objectives of the strategy or policy?	To implement a scheme which is cost neutral to the Council whilst achieving the savings required under the reduced Grant provisions and implement a scheme in accordance with prescribed legislation.
Who will benefit from implementing the strategy or policy?	The scheme benefits those on low incomes by providing them with support to pay their Council Tax. In particular it provides full protection to Pensioners (as prescribed within the requirements of the Localism Act) and includes locally determined protections for vulnerable groups and incentives to encourage people into work.
What are the links to the Council's corporate priorities?	This Policy supports the Council's corporate priority of Improving the Council by ensuring sound and strategic financial management and focussing on the needs of our customers, including minority and vulnerable groups.
What are the links to other Council strategies and policies?	Corporate Debt Recovery Policy Exceptional Hardship Policy Homelessness Review and Strategy Action Plan

What are the links to other community strategies and policies?	National Strategy for tackling child poverty under the Coalition Government: https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/CM%208061
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Equality Act 2010

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

- **Socio-economic duty:**

- Have due regard when making strategic decisions to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage

- **Single (integrated) equality duty:**

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not

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

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

- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Initial screening

This initial screening template will determine whether or not the strategy or policy requires a full EqlA

If any of the answers to the 6 screening questions is “yes”, then a full EqlA will be required.

Initial screening		
Does the strategy or policy aim to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage?	Yes / No	The Policy fundamentally aims to provide financial assistance in meeting Council Tax costs for those disadvantaged by socio-economic factors.
Does the strategy or policy aim to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	Yes / No	The scheme is prescribed for pension age people, however the scheme for working age people is less prescribed. Guidance has been given on treatment of vulnerable groups and work incentives. The design of the working age scheme has sought to eliminate discrimination.
Does the strategy or policy aim to advance equality of opportunity?	Yes / No	The Policy fundamentally aims to provide support with Council Tax for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged whilst also encouraging people into work.

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		It has been recognised that in this regard opportunities for some groups may not be equal and therefore the Policy has been designed to provide protection for those groups where advancement of equal opportunity would be restricted.
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Initial screening (continued)		
Does the strategy or policy aim to foster good community relations?	Yes / No	No evidence available – not applicable.
Does the strategy or policy have the potential to make a negative contribution to equality?	Yes / No	The scheme may fundamentally make a negative contribution to equality for certain groups – children, families, lone parents etc.
Does the strategy or policy make a positive contribution to equality?	Yes / No	Pension age people are specifically protected under Government Regulations.
Initial screening outcome	Full EqlA is required	

Full assessment

Information gathering	
What quantitative and qualitative information is there?	Initial worked case studies were reported in Appendix C of the 18.7.12 Cabinet Report. These case studies outlined four possible options for delivering a scheme for working age people and outlined the effects on different households, including those containing people with protected characteristics.
What additional information is required?	<p>From caseload data in 2012 we knew that 7693 people were in receipt of Council Tax Benefit and that 3502 of these were working age households.</p> <p>Lone Parent households accounted for the highest portion of Council Tax Benefit expenditure (40.28%) whilst families with children accounted for 19.09%.</p> <p>Households with children (whether lone parents or families) made up the largest portion of the caseload and further modelling and analysis of the effects of the % liability cut level (which affects all households) and the inclusion of Child Benefit as income (which affects households with children) was conducted to inform the final 2013/14 scheme.</p> <p>Caseload data in 2013 shows that there are currently 6994 households in receipt of Local Council Tax Support, and that 3004 (43%) of these are of working age.</p>
What are the outcomes of any internal and/or external consultation with stakeholders?	<p>Consultation was undertaken between 30.8.13 and 10.10.13.</p> <p>48 responses were received. There were no responses from organisations.</p> <p>The mix of respondents is believed to be representative of diversity within the wider local community.</p>

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<p>What further consultation is required?</p>	<p>Consultation questions focussed on a range of changes to existing elements of the scheme which would decrease entitlement. The consultation also asked whether certain groups should be protected from such decreases in support.</p> <p>Generally respondents did not agree with any of the changes that would lead to a decrease in support whilst agreeing that certain groups should be protected from any such changes.</p> <p>Responses also showed that introducing a minimum award value to reduce support and protecting those who are unable to work due to providing care for a sick or disabled relative were generally regarded as more palatable options, should further reductions need to be made to the scheme.</p> <p>Free text responses indicated that there was general concern for how people will be able to financially manage if support was further reduced.</p> <p>There is no requirement to conduct further consultation.</p> <p>Members will be required to consider the Consultation results when deciding on the final scheme for 2014/15.</p>
<p>What examples are there of existing good practice?</p>	<p>Some elements of the proposed working age scheme design (i.e. Band restriction, % liability reduction, removal of Second Adult Rebate) have been agreed as part of the overarching Pan Essex scheme – other elements have been designed to meet specific needs within Castle Point.</p> <p>Guidance provided by DCLG, outlining good practice with regards to treatment of vulnerable groups (http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/lsc/vulnerablepeople) and incentives to work (http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/lsc/workincentives),</p>

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	<p>has been considered in designing the scheme.</p> <p>The Local Government Finance Bill: Localizing Support for Council Tax – Updated Impact Assessment is also available here: http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/lgfblocalisingcounciltax</p> <p>Each Local Authority is required to adopt their scheme by 31.1.14.</p> <p>It is currently too early for schemes to be held up as examples of good practice however it is noted that most Local Authorities adopted similar ‘means tested’ schemes during 2013/14 and most are intending to maintain this type of scheme in 2014/15.</p>
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Making a judgement	
How will the strategy or policy eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?	<p>Higher Rate Disability Benefits will continue to be disregarded thereby protecting those with specific long term conditions. People with disabilities will continue to receive additional premiums as part of the calculation of their award and also may receive additional financial support through the Exceptional Hardship Fund. Without these elements the policy could potentially be discriminatory to those who fall within the ‘disability’ characteristic group.</p> <p>No other impacts on protected groups have been identified.</p>
How will the strategy or policy advance equality of opportunity?	<p>The Policy is compliant with specific Government Regulations on protection for Pension Age people. This advances equality of</p>

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	<p>opportunity for those who fall within the 'age' characteristic group (specifically those of Pension age) who would otherwise be disadvantaged by the schemes fundamental incentives to work.</p> <p>Parents will continue to receive a child allowance and family premium as part of the calculation of their award, which is consistent with the Council's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All working parents will receive a disregard of their earnings to reflect childcare costs incurred. This advances equality of opportunity for those who fall within the 'age' characteristic group (specifically those aged 0 to 17, families and lone parents with children, pregnant women) who would otherwise be disadvantaged.</p> <p>Higher Rate Disability Benefits will continue to be disregarded thereby protecting those with specific long term conditions. People with disabilities will continue to receive additional premiums as part of the calculation of their award and also may receive additional financial support through the Exceptional Hardship Fund. This advances equality of opportunity for those who fall within the 'disability' characteristic group who would otherwise be disadvantaged and may have less opportunity to improve their financial circumstances through work.</p> <p>No other impacts on protected groups have been identified.</p>
How will the strategy or policy foster good community relations?	No impacts on protected groups identified – not applicable

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Making a judgement (continued)	
<p>Does the strategy or policy have the potential to make a negative contribution to equality?</p> <p>If so, which groups with “protected characteristics” will be affected and what are the reasons?</p>	<p>17 year olds may be disadvantaged indirectly if their parents have to pay more as a result of this policy.</p> <p>People aged over 18 and of working age will be required to pay more.</p> <p>People with disabilities who are below pensionable age will need to pay more.</p> <p>Careful consideration has been given to the overall impact of the inclusion of Child Benefit as an income on protected groups. The restricted grant funding has meant that it is not financially possible to completely protect all protected characteristic groups from the full effects of this scheme unless the Local Authority decides to not to adopt a cost neutral scheme. However, the proposed design of the scheme does afford these groups some level of protection, advancing equality of opportunity between those with protected characteristics and those without.</p>
What can be done to address any contribution to inequality caused by the strategy or policy?	17 year olds may be disadvantaged indirectly if their parents have to pay more as a result of this policy:

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	<p>Parents will continue to receive additional allowances, which is consistent with the Council's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.</p> <p>People over 18 of working age will be required to pay more:</p> <p>The Council is enhancing it's current arrangements for providing directly, or signposting customers to, information and advice on income maximisation, financial capability, and debt management. Incentives to work have been included in the scheme design.</p> <p>People with disabilities who are below pensionable age will need to pay more:</p> <p>Higher Rate Disability Benefits will continue to be disregarded thereby protecting those with specific long term conditions.</p> <p>A discretionary local Exceptional Hardship Policy is available to provide additional assistance to those who are particularly vulnerable and are suffering exceptional financial hardship.</p>
What can be done to assist understanding of the strategy or policy?	<p>Details of the existing (2013/14) scheme were widely publicised both before and during Annual Billing in 2013. 'Easy read' and 'detailed' information on the current scheme is available online and in hard copy format (upon request). This information will be refreshed again once a decision on the 2014/15 scheme is made.</p> <p>An on-line 'Calculator' is available to assist those who want to find out if they would be entitled to Support and resources are available to explain the scheme to any individuals or</p>

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	organisational groups who require assistance. Members of the Benefit Information Network will be briefed before April on the 2014/15 scheme.
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The real value of completing an EqlA comes from the actions that will take place and the positive changes that will emerge through conducting the EqlA.

The action plan should be SMART and feed directly in to the strategy or policy itself and any associated Service Plan. In addition, it should be consistent with any corporate equality actions.

The action plan should only include the main actions likely to have the greatest impact. It need not be a comprehensive list of all the possible things that might provide positive outcomes. It is unlikely that any action plan will have less than 6 to 8 actions but an action plan that runs to several pages may not provide sufficient focus and deliverability.

Action plan					
Equality objective	Action(s)	Lead responsibility	Resources	Timescale(s)	Outcome(s)
Assist understanding of the Policy	Refresh website and hard copy information once 2014/15 Final Scheme formally adopted.	Community Support Manager	Staff time & printing costs.	Jan – Mar 2014	All affected groups fully aware of the Policy and how it will affect them.
Assist understanding of the Policy	Engage with local advice and support groups through the Benefit Information Network Group.	Community Support Manager	Staff time.	Jan – Mar 2014	All local advice and support groups fully aware of the policy and how it will affect their customers.

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Advancing equality of opportunity.	Proactively identify suitable cases for Exceptional Hardship awards by drawing on case study information developed in 2013/14.	Benefit Manager & Revenues Manager	Staff time, provision of discretionary funding pot	Jan 2014 – Mar 2015	Reduce impact of the scheme on those suffering exceptional financial hardship.
Advancing equality of opportunity.	Maintain and develop a range of support services and referral arrangements to provide assistance with financial capability, budgeting, and/or debt management advice.	Revenues Manager/First Contact Manager	Staff time, funding pot for services, additional staff resource.	Jan 2014 – Mar 2015	Customers adequately supported and equipped with skills to manage financial impact.

Finally....

- Sign the EqlA
- Ask your Head of Service to sign the EqlA
- Save a copy of the EqlA in the “N” drive folder for strategy and policy EqlAs:

<N:\Diversity\Diversity records from September 2009\EqlAs - strategies and policies>

- Publication
 - Council website

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- Make copies available for e-mail distribution, in hard copy format and by other means as appropriate (e.g. large print, Braille, CD, other languages, etc.)
- Internal communication to appropriate colleagues
- Agree arrangements for monitoring, exception reporting and review/refresh

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Corporate Performance Scorecard Quarter 2 2013/14

Cabinet Member: Councillor Dick - Responding to Challenge

1. Purpose of Report

To set out the cumulative performance figures for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for quarter 2, 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

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

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet agrees the inclusion of two further indicators set out in section 4.1 of the report for future monitoring and considers any performance issues set out in Section 5 of this report and directs officers accordingly.

4. Background

4.1 The indicators for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for 2013/14 were discussed and approved by Cabinet in July. During the discussion it was also considered that it would be appropriate for an additional indicator to assess the effectiveness of grass verge cutting, and this report includes initial performance for two new indicators:

- Number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting;
- Number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting rectified within 72 hours

4.2 The performance for these two indicators is just for the month of September as before this the mobilisation of the new contract with Pinnacle was being implemented and the new performance management regime was being introduced.

- 4.3 In addition the Audit Committee meeting held in September considered that it would be appropriate for additional performance monitoring to be undertaken for complaints. It is therefore proposed to monitor the number of level 3 complaints recorded and resolved, and a proposed additional indicator is included for this quarter period.

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. Overall performance is good with 10 of the 14 indicators at or above target, a further three are near target and just one indicator is not on target. Performance is set out against the new proposed priorities in the draft corporate plan as follows:

Public Health and Wellbeing

The Council has continued to work well with the Police and other agencies to reduce crime across the Borough. Work has been successful in reducing crime although there has been small increase in antisocial behaviour. The number of incidents of crime recorded for the second quarter represents a decrease of 85 incidents when compared to the same period in the previous year. Incidents of anti-social behaviour increased slightly to by 8 incidents when compared to the previous year. The Community Safety Partnership will continue to work to monitor crime and anti-social incidents and target hotspot areas.

Food hygiene standards across the Borough as measured by the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme continues to perform well as 386 of the 412 establishments registered (93.7%) scored at least 3 points which indicates broad compliance with food hygiene law.

Environment

Household waste recycled is currently exceeding target and the annual target of 30% waste is expected to be met. The Green Waste (garden and food waste) collection rate at the end of quarter 1 at 28.6% is less than targeted. However, the amount of waste collected is affected by seasonal factors and this year saw a cold spring and hot summer which affects seasonal growth and composting.

Over half (58%) of the household waste collected continues to be recycled or composted rather than being sent to landfill.

The September performance information for street cleanliness, fly tipping and grass verge cutting demonstrates strong performance. This is only for a one month period but shows evidence that the new contractual arrangements are proving effective. Performance will continue to be monitored.

Transforming our Community

Tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance at 81.8% satisfaction has significantly improved through working closely with the contractor.

The contractor's performance for voids completion did not achieve target although this has improved when compared to the first quarter as working practices are improved. Performance is therefore expected to continue to improve.

The percentage of planning applications processed within target times has improved significantly as a result of a review of the service by re-directing resources and by obtaining temporary support, as well as by reviewing working practices and procedures. Performance in the future will continue to be closely monitored.

Efficient and Effective Customer Services

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 3,175 of the 44,474 calls received were transferred.

There are very few complaints which progress to the third stage of the complaints procedure which is demonstrated by only one complaint being considered under this stage at this quarter. A wider review of complaints monitoring at stage 1 and 2 is currently being undertaken to ensure a greater consistency in complaints monitoring for these stages.

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 (e.g. higher recycling leads to a reduction in payments for sending waste to landfill)

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 2013/14 (Public Health & Wellbeing)

Quarter 2: 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013



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	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
PHW1 Number of incidents of overall crime Service Manager: Head of Partnerships & Safer Places	745	1579	Q2 Target 1664 or less Annual Target 3,311 or less		The Community Safety Partnership has set its targets in line with the Police and Crime Commissioner's revised targets for crime and anti-social behaviour figures across Essex. The new target is to not exceed last year's figure or where possible reduce levels of crime, but there is no specific figure for reduction. This performance indicator is, at this stage of the year, on target.
PHW2 Number of incidents of Antisocial Behaviour Service Manager: Head of Partnerships & Safer Places	526	1148	Q2 Target 1140 or less Annual Target 1,882 or less		The target set by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for reducing the number of incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is also set in light of the Police and Crime Commissioner's requirement not to exceed last year's figure or where possible reduce levels of crime. The number of recorded cases of anti-social behaviour at the end of quarter 2 saw a slight increase when compared with the same period in 2012/13.

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
<p>PHW3: Percentage of inspected 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>	91.7%	93.7%	Annual Target 90%		<p>Of the 412 premises registered on the scheme, 386 have been awarded a score of at least 3 which indicates broad compliance with food hygiene law.</p> <p>The remaining 26 premises which do not meet this standard are categorized in terms of risk and would normally be subject to active intervention to ensure compliance with regulatory standards.</p>




Corporate Scorecard 2013/14 (Environment)


Quarter 2: 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013



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	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
ENV 1 Percentage of Household Waste Recycled Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	28.9%	29.7%	Q2 Target 28% Annual Target 30%		<p>The recycling rate at the end of quarter 1 2013/14 was 28.7% of all household waste collected.</p> <p>The 2013/14 annual target for household waste recycling is 30% which on the basis of performance so far this year (and projected performance based on previous years) is likely to be met.</p> <p>The Council has set itself a combined target for recycling and composting (including food waste) of 56%.</p>
ENV 2 % of Household Waste Composted (including food waste) Service Manager: Operational Services Manager	28.2%	28.6%	Q2 Target 32% Annual Target 26%		<p>The Green Waste (garden and food waste) collection rate at the end of quarter 2 2013/14 28.6% was composted. The amount of waste collected is affected by seasonal factors and this year saw a cold spring and hot summer which affects seasonal growth and composting.</p> <p>It is nevertheless envisaged that the combined target for recycling and composting will still be met.</p>

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
<p>ENV 3 Percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory using Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse methodology.</p> <p>Service Manager: Contracts Manager</p>	N/A	7.5%	Less than 10%		Being above target shows a positive start to the new Contract with Pinnacle. We will use this information to encourage the Contractor to improve the figure further going forward.
<p>ENV 4 Flytips removed within one working day</p> <p>Service Manager: Contracts Manager</p>	N/A	100%	90%		The 100% clearance rate is good to see and helps us to improve the cleanliness of the Borough
<p>ENV 5 Number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting.</p> <p>Service Manager: Contracts Manager</p>	N/A	10	50		The figure, whilst only covering one month of the Q2, shows that the new working practices brought in by Pinnacle under the new contract are having the desired effect.

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
<p>ENV 6 Number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting rectified within 72 hours.</p> <p>Service Manager: Contracts Manager</p>	N/A	100%	90%		<p>The figure, whilst only covering one month of the Q2, shows that the new working practices brought in by Pinnacle under the new contract are having the desired effect.</p>


Corporate Scorecard 2013/14 (Transforming our Community)

Quarter 2: 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013



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	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
TC1 Overall tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance. Service Manager: Tenancy Services Manager	73%	81.8%	80%		We are working closely with the contractor to ensure an improving satisfaction position with repairs & maintenance is received from the tenants.
TC2: Percentage of Voids completed within target time. Service Manager: Tenancy Services Manager	79.2%	83%	95%		The trend is improving following some changes in working practices set out in the last report. We are working towards achieving the target by the end of the year, however 34 voids were completed during Q2 with 5 received back late in the period. If the reported figure was not cumulative it would have shown an improvement on the last quarter to 89%.

TC3: Percentage of planning applications processed within target time limits for major, minor and other applications	0%	100%	Major 70%		The Development Control Service was dealing with a considerable backlog of work during this period, created by the need to service a significant planning inquiry in later part of 2012, and the need to re-appoint staff to vacant posts.
	21.9%	41.46%	Minor 65%		Action has been taken to reduce the backlog and improve performance by re-assessing process and procedures, by temporarily redirecting resources from planning policy and by engaging temporary support.
Service Manager: Development Control Manager	21.5%	79.31%	Other 80%		This work is having a significant impact and performance demonstrates strong improvement in quarter 2.


Corporate Scorecard 2013/14 (Efficient & Effective Customer Services)



Quarter 2: 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013

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	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
EE1 Percentage of calls taken from customers by First Contact that are dealt with without the need to transfer to the back office Service Manager: Community Support Manager	93%	93%	Annual Target 92%		Cumulative data for Q1 and Q2 shows that 44,474 calls were handled across the two First Contact Teams with just 3175 transferred to back office.

PI Code & Short Name	Q1 Value	Q2 Value	Target	Status	Comments
EE2 Number of third stage complaints responded to within 25 days. Service Manager: Cabinet & Electoral Services Officer	N/A	100%	Annual target 95% of stage 3 complaints responded to within 25 working days		The number of stage 3 complaints remains at a low level. In Q1 no such complaints were received and in Q2 one complaint was resolved.

CABINET

20th November 2013

Subject: Update on Safer Communities Initiatives

**Cabinet Member: Councillor G Isaacs
Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is to update the Cabinet on the position with neighbourhood and safer community matters.**

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

- 2.1 The initiatives described in this report are directly linked to the Council's Community Safety priority – reducing levels of crime by working with the police and other parties – and the Improving the Council priority by engaging the community in local decision-making.**

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the Cabinet notes the activities regarding neighbourhoods and safer community matters from the previous month as set out in the report.**

4. Background

- 4.1 The Council is an integral partner in a number of key partnerships across the Borough.**
- 4.2 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Castle Point and Rochford works as an overarching strategic body ensuring the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. In particular the "Feeling Safer" ambition involves the police, probation officers and other partners.**
- 4.3 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory partnership established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is a partnership between the police, local authorities, the probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector, local residents and businesses. The Council is a leading partner in the Castle Point and Rochford Community Safety Partnership.**

5. Progress and activities

- 5.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Nick Alston held a public meeting at The Paddocks, Canvey Island on Thursday 7th November from 6.30pm to 8.30pm.
- 5.2 The meeting was well attended with senior officers from the Police and other community safety representatives on hand to answer questions from the audience.
- 5.3 A briefing sheet was circulated at the meeting, giving details of the crime statistics and items for discussion. This is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 5.4 As the PCC reaches the end of his first year in post, he is inviting residents to give their views and experiences of policing and crime in the county and to consult on the priorities that were set out in the Police and Crime Plan. The consultation is open until 6th December and can be accessed via the PCC website www.essex.pcc.police.uk.

6. Corporate Implications

a. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

b. Legal implications

- 6.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

c. Human resources and equality implications

- 6.3 There are no human resource or equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

- 6.4 The projects described in this report are on-going matters.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Council continues to carry out regular engagement on a variety of matters to ensure the safety of communities in Castle Point.

Background Papers: None

Report Author: Melanie Harris - Head of Partnerships and Safer Places

Castle Point Public Meeting

7th November 2013

Briefing information

Canvey Island Police Station is open to the public from Monday to Saturday 12:00hrs to 18:00 (excluding bank holidays). The district Neighbourhood Policing Team operates from this police station seven days a week, between 08:00 and 24:00.

The Castle Point district has experienced a continued reduction in recorded crime and Anti-social behaviour in successive years since 2010.

Crime Data for Castle Point

Comparing reports for 1st September 2012 to 31st August 2013 with those from 1st September 2011 to 31st August 2012 the areas of note are as follows:

- 'All crime' has reduced by 11.2% (401 fewer offences)
- Criminal damage has reduced by 26.3% (169 fewer offences)
- House burglary has increased by 18.2% (62 more offences)
- Burglary in other than houses (e.g. sheds, outbuildings) has reduced by 25.3% (66 fewer offences)
- Theft and taking of motor vehicles has increased by 7.8% (10 more offences)
- Theft from vehicles has reduced by 3.2% (9 fewer offences)
- Other violence against the person has reduced by 4.8% (32 fewer offences)
- Other theft and handling has reduced by 17.1% (64 fewer offences)
- Anti-social behaviour incidents have reduced by 7.7% (171 fewer offences)

1) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Roscommon way

Vehicle based anti-social behaviour reports were received of drivers misusing Roscommon Way, Canvey Island, driving at excessive speeds and racing. Concerns were raised regarding the safety of other road users and large number of spectators attracted to these incidents.

As a result of these reports, sustained police operations have been conducted since January 2013. Specialist roads policing resources from the Essex Police Casualty Reduction Unit were deployed with specialist equipment to target the drivers of these vehicles, supported by local officers from the Castle Point Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Social media sites were also monitored and used to convey messages that the police operation was going to take place in an attempt to dissuade people from attending.

This operation has significantly reduced the number of reported incidents and such large gatherings have not occurred since the operation was concluded.

Comparing reports for 1st September 2012 to 31st August 2013 with those from 1st September 2011 to 31st August 2012, all Anti-Social Behaviour incidents in the Castle Point District have reduced by 7.7% (171 fewer offences).

2) Alcohol policy in Canvey Town

Residents have recently expressed concern regarding individuals who appear to be drunk in Canvey town centre and are seen drinking from cans whilst sitting on a wall near to the Knightswick shopping centre.

Local traders fear they are bad for business. A recent article in the local Echo newspaper has been raised by a local councillor calling for an imposed alcohol free zone for Canvey Island.

Canvey Island town centre does not have a high incidence of alcohol-related crime or experiencing problems with begging or vagrancy.

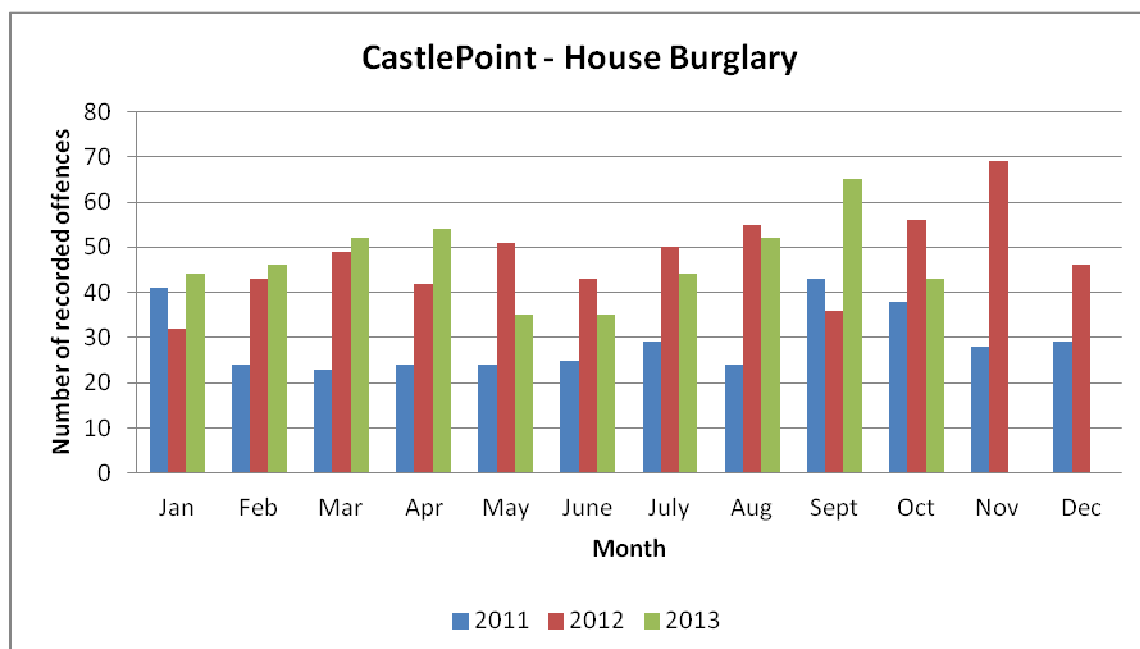
3) Burglary

During the period October 2012 to September 2013, burglary and attempted burglary of homes in Castle point increased by 18.2% (62 more offences) when compared to the same period during the previous year.

A local policing operation is in place to combat house burglary, and high visibility patrols are undertaken in identified areas with the aim of preventing potential criminal activity.

Burglary offences are monitored daily and crime analysts identify any trends or series. This together with community information contributes to intelligence-led policing activity, targeting areas of concern and the suspects believed to be responsible for these offences.

The police work closely with partners under the Community Safety Partnership for which house burglary reduction is a key objective.



Your feedback is most welcome.

Should you wish to contact the PCC about this meeting or any other matter please e-mail:

pcc@essex.pnn.police.uk

or write to:

Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex
3 Hoffmanns Way
Chelmsford, CM1 1GU

News alerts will usually be tweeted via the Essex PCC Twitter account:

<https://twitter.com/essexpcc>

You can learn more about the PCC's work at:

www.essex.pcc.police.uk

The neighbourhood policing teams will always act on intelligence received from the community. If you have information regarding any criminal activity please either call your local team or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Crimestoppers is an anonymous line where you can report any criminal activity.