



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



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

A **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** of the Borough of Castle Point will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley, on **WEDNESDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2016** at **7.30 p.m.**, and all Members of the Council, listed below, are hereby summoned to attend to transact the undermentioned business.

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

**Chief Executive**

---

## **AGENDA**

---

### **PART I**

#### **(Business to be taken in public)**

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

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Members' Interests**

**3. Minutes**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Ordinary Council held on 27th July 2016.

**4. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor will report at the meeting.

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

There are none.

- 6. Questions from Members of the Council of which Notice has been received**  
There are none.
- 7. To deal with any business from the last Council Meeting**  
There is none.
- 8. Any explanations for urgent decisions taken by Cabinet**  
There are none.
- 9. Consideration of recommendations from Cabinet:**  
At the Cabinet meeting on 21.9.2016, Cabinet is to refer recommendations on which the Cabinet reports are attached concerning:  
(a) Notice of Motions Referred from Council  
(b) The Corporate Plan
- 10. Any References from the Scrutiny/Policy and Scrutiny or Regulatory Committees**  
There are none.
- 11. Report from the Leader of the Council**  
The Leader is to report at the meeting.
- 12. Financial Results and Statement of Accounts 2015/16**  
The Council is asked to consider the financial out-turn results and audited Statement of Accounts for 2015/16 submitted for approval by Council. A report is attached.
- 13. Notices of Motion**  
None have been received.
- 14. Petitions submitted by Members of the Council of which Notice has been given.**  
No Notice has been received.



## ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES

**27TH JULY 2016**

MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the Borough of Castle Point held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley on 27th July 2016.

### **PRESENT:**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs W. Goodwin, G.I. Isaacs, Mrs J. King, B.A. Palmer, Mrs J. Payne and W.K. Sharp.

### **13. FORMER COUNCILLOR JACK KING**

All present stood in silence in memory of former District and County Councillor Jack King who had died recently and whose funeral had taken place earlier that day.

### **14. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were none.

### **15. MINUTES**

- The Minutes of the Ordinary Council held on 23rd March 2016 were taken as read and approved as a correct record. The Mayor signed the Minutes.
- The Minutes of the Annual Council held on 18th May 2016 were taken as read and approved as a correct record. The Mayor signed the Minutes.

### **16. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The Mayor reported that he was enjoying his first months in office and was impressed by the valuable work being undertaken by community groups across the Borough and the enthusiasm within the Borough's schools.
- The Mayor was honoured to preside over the Armed Forces Event which took place on Monday 20th June 2016 which was preceded by the dedication of the Sapper Ellison Way in memory of Sapper Ellison who was the first Benfleet resident to be killed in WW1 at the Battle of Mons.

- The Mayor was pleased to take part in the very successful Armed Forces Day event held on Canvey Island on Saturday 25 June 2016.
- The Mayor expressed thanks and appreciation for the efforts of all those involved in the successful Castlepoint Show held on Sunday 24th July. The Mayor requested the Chief Executive to pass on the Mayor's thanks to all staff involved in this happy family event which was enjoyed by the community.

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

There were none.

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

Councillor Dick had given notice of the following questions:

How is the Asset Management Group constituted?

Under what authority do they make operating decisions?

What, if any, opportunities do members have to influence decisions on Council assets?

Councillor Stanley Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources gave a comprehensive reply reminding the meeting that one of the key role of all Councillors as set out in the Constitution was to be the policy – makers.

The Council had an approved policy which dealt with the acquisition and disposal of council owned land which was subject to annual review to ensure that it complied with changes in the law and best practice advice and the wishes of Members.

This policy made the Asset Management Group, which comprised professional staff from the various services which were responsible for council buildings and land, the body which gave first consideration to any requests which were received by the Council to purchase, lease or licence council owned land.

According the AMG mostly dealt with transactions related to small strips or parcels of land which were surplus to requirement or which cost the Council money to upkeep or maintain and where a sale would reduce the financial burden placed upon the Council.

Councillor Stanley advised of requests which AMG would not consider these included land which had development potential or where the group considered should be referred to Members for a final decision. Any request to acquire possession or access over or rights to land owned by the Council which had an operational use or which was not surplus to requirements would be refused and any decisions related to major sites or buildings owned by the Council would be reported to Elected Members for consideration.

In addition to those matters reserved to Elected Members Councillor Stanley highlighted the opportunities Members had to influence decisions on Council Assets. These included through the annual budget setting process; through the reservation of certain applications for determination by the Development Control Committee and the ability to refer a decision to Council for determination.

Members also had the opportunity to influence decisions on Assets through the work of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees and Councillor Stanley cited a number of examples. He also referred to the protocol dealing with Councillors participation at Cabinet meetings and gave examples where Councillors had the ability to ask questions and be involved before decisions were taken by Cabinet.

Councillor Stanley thanked Councillor Dick for his questions.

**18a. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF WHICH NOTICE HAD BEEN RECEIVED**

Councillor Hurrell had given notice of the following questions to the Leader of the Council:

Bearing in mind the illegal nature of the Development Control Committee, does the Leader intend it should continue so?

Will the Leader give an update on "Devolution" in Essex?

Councillor Riley Leader of the Council responded indicating that he would reply to the second question in the Leader's Report later on the Agenda.

Regarding Question 1, the Leader referred to Minute 9 of the Annual Council Minutes which were before the meeting. The Development Control Committee had been legally constituted following a review of the allocation of seats to the political groups of the Council. As required by Section 15 of the Housing and Local Government act 1989 and in accordance with the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups )Regulations 1990.

As reported at the Annual Meeting the allocation of memberships had to be on the basis of the political proportions of the Council. The political proportions of the Council had changed following the Borough elections in May. Consequently, the seat that last year was available to be allocated by Council to an 'independent' Councillor had this year passed by application of law to the Canvey Island Independent Group on the Council.

As a result the Leader did not intend to take any action other than to reassure Cllr Hurrell, The Mayor and Councillors that the Committee was not illegal.

The leader thanked Councillor Hurrell for his questions.

**19. TO DEAL WITH ANY BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

There was none.

**20. ANY EXPLANATIONS FOR URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET**

There were none.

**21. CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET**

There were none.

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

There were none

**23. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Leader of the Council supported the response given by Councillor Stanley to the questions from Councillor Dick on Council assets.

The Leader stated that it was important that Council assets remained financially viable, supported by users and with hire charges reflecting market conditions.

The Leader referred to a Halls Review undertaken in 2005/6 as part of the Council's recovery programme. At that time the Swans Green Hall continued as the use by the Thundersley Community Church and other main hirers had kept income to an acceptable level. Unfortunately the hall's use had declined; the Council subsidy had increased which challenged the viability of the hall.

The Leader referred to similar challenges at other halls within the Borough. The Leader had asked that a review of community halls be undertaken by a Scrutiny Committee with Cllr Skipp to identify a viable plan for the future. The Leader confirmed that the review would not prevent the Thundersley Community Church group from making an offer for Swans Green Hall but that any offer must meet the minimum value agreed by the District Valuer.

The Leader supported the pledge of the new Government led by Theresa May to raise the standard of living for everyone's life style and the challenge to meet this in the face of future Government funding reductions. Referring to the potential impact on services the Leader suggested that the Council was well placed to respond nevertheless the Council would face more difficult decisions but these would be fully considered by the Cabinet, include the Scrutiny Committees and with officer support make the right choices moving forward.

In responding to Cllr Hurrell's earlier question on devolution, the Leader updated the Council on the recent meeting of Essex Leaders where it had been agreed to write to the Minister to confirm that Greater Essex Leaders wish to be included in the next round but without an elected Mayor. A meeting of the Essex Leaders was to take place on 8.9.2016 to progress this.

The Leader on behalf of the Council congratulated Rebecca Harris MP on her appointment as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for Communities and Local Government.

The Leader reported on recent meetings he had attend to represent Castle Point

The Leader announced that a Multi Agency Flooding Meeting had been arranged to take place on 11.8.2016.

#### Delegation to the Chief Executive – Summer Recess

In order that urgent matters could be dealt with during the August, the Leader requested Council to approve the delegation to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the respective Cabinet Member and Chairman of Scrutiny Committee of all powers relating to urgent matters under the jurisdiction of Cabinet which might arise during that period

Resolved – to note the report and agree the delegation

## **24. NOTICES OF MOTION**

Council considered the following Notices of Motion.

### **24a NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Dick had given notice of the following:

'Castle Point Borough Council urges all responsible agencies including the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Essex County Council, the lead flood authority and Essex County Council the Highway Authority to continue to work to together to urgently prepare a costed plan to place before the Government with a view to seek the necessary funding needed to eradicate flooding issues in Castle Point.

This proposal should be fully costed with a timetable of actions needed to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the Borough.'

The Motion was moved and seconded by Councillor Hart. Debate took place at the conclusion a vote was taken which was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and RESOLVED accordingly.

### **24b NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Sheldon had given notice of the following:

'Castle Point Council welcomes the implementation of the Government's Flood Re scheme and will use its active media, including the Castle Point Council website and Viewpoint magazine and twitter, to promote its availability to residents.'

The Motion was moved and seconded by Councillor Howard. Debate took place at the conclusion a vote was taken which was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and RESOLVED accordingly.

**24c NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Sheldon had given notice of the following:

'Castle Point Borough Council welcomes the restyling of the Chairman of Canvey Island Town Council as the Town Mayor as sanctioned under the Local Government Act 1972'.

The Motion was moved and seconded by Councillor Mumford. Debate took place at the conclusion a vote was taken which was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and RESOLVED accordingly.

**24d NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Varker had given notice of the following:

'In light of many incidents since the EU Referendum, will my fellow Councillors and Castle Point Council join me in condemning the recent racist and xenophobic attacks and make known that we have no place for such disgraceful acts in our Society.'

The Motion was moved and seconded by Councillor Bayley. Debate took place at the conclusion a vote was taken which was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and RESOLVED accordingly.

**24e NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Varker had given notice of the following:

'The UKIP Group would like it known that many of the pavements and roads throughout our borough are in a poor state of repair and that currently there are many weeds, grass and suchlike growing out of control in the pavements and gulleys and cracks, these will only continue to further damage the roads and pavements. Can we therefore request that a thorough cleansing and removal of all debris and growth in our roads and pavements throughout the borough take place at the earliest opportunity?'

The Motion was Moved, Seconded and ADJOURNED without debate to enable Cabinet to consider whether it wished to report on the matter Council Procedure Rule 13 Motions on Expenditure applied.

**24f NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Blackwell had given notice of the following:

'Canvey Island Independent Party calls upon Castle Point Council to reinstate the disabled parking bays outside the entrance of Waterside Farm Leisure Centre. '

The Motion was Moved, Seconded and ADJOURNED without debate to enable Cabinet to consider whether it wished to report on the matter Council Procedure Rule 13 Motions on Expenditure applied.



**24g NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Taylor had given notice of the following:

'We the Canvey Island Independent Party call upon Castle Point Council to contact Essex County Council via our two Essex County Councillors, to look into the reasons highway matters which are being reported on a regular basis are not being dealt with.

A procedural Motion Council Procedure Rule 15.10 was Moved, Seconded and CARRIED to proceed to next business as there were (five Essex County Councillors representing Castle Point and the subject of the Motion had already fully debated and addressed at the recent Cabinet meeting held on 20.7.2016.

**24h NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Mrs Watson had given notice of the following:

'We the Canvey Island Independent Party call upon Castle Point Council to look at the rubbish collections Calendar with a view to changing the collection dates to bring the side roads in line with the main roads. For example Link Road's black collection day is the side roads pink collection day.

I feel that if these collection days are brought in line to one colour it will stop the confusion on what colour /what week.'

The Motion was Moved, Seconded and ADJOURNED without debate to enable Cabinet to consider whether it wished to report on the matter Council Procedure Rule 13 Motions on Expenditure applied.

**24i NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Neville Watson had given notice of the following:

'We the Canvey Island Independent Party call upon Castle Point Council to explain why the grass cutting in the Borough has not been cut regularly for some time, also why the weeds have been left to grow out of control this has made our area's look untidy and an eyesore.'

The Motion was Moved, Seconded and ADJOURNED without debate to enable Cabinet to consider whether it wished to report on the matter Council Procedure Rule 13 Motions on Expenditure applied.

**24j NOTICE OF MOTION**

Councillor Howard had given notice of the following:

'Castle Point Borough Council is extremely disappointed to learn of the unilateral decision of the Board of Veolia UK to withdraw funding from the Veolia North Thames Trust (VNTT) after 18 successful years of work not only in Castle Point but also in Basildon, Thurrock and Havering and absorb VNTT into the Veolia Environmental Trust (VET).

This Council calls upon all three leaders of the Political Groups on Castle Borough Council to write collectively to the Chief Executive Officer of Veolia (UK) expressing the Council's disappointment with the decision by the Veolia (UK) Board to cease its support for the Veolia North Thames Trust without any consultation with stakeholders and consideration of the transitional arrangements which would need to be put in place. The failure to do this has disadvantaged the Council and other local community groups who have, or were in the process of submitting grant applications this year for much needed community projects.

And that this Council requests Veolia UK to reconsider and reverse its decision for the benefit of not only the residents of Castle Point but all those people served by the North Thames Trust'

The Motion was moved and seconded by Councillor Riley. Debate took place at the conclusion a vote was taken which was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and RESOLVED accordingly.

**25. PETITIONS**

There were none.

Mayor

**ORDINARY COUNCIL**

**28th September 2016**

**Subject: Consideration of Recommendations from Cabinet:-  
Notice of Motions Referred From Council**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Skipp - Environment, Street Scene & Halls  
Councillor Howard –  
Waste, Floods and Water Management**

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

**To present to Council the report and recommendations of the Cabinet to approve and adopt the Corporate Plan**

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

**The Motions to Council link with the Council's Corporate Plan priority "Environment".**

**3. Recommendations**

**Council is requested to consider the recommendations from Cabinet**

---

**4. Background**

Cabinet on 28.9.2015 considered a report on the Motions to Council on 27 July 2016 which were referred without debate in order for the Cabinet to consider whether to report on the on the impact of the propositions contained in the Motions in view of the potential impact on the Council's expenditure.

**5. Proposals**

A copy of the report before Cabinet is attached. Cabinet decided to recommend to Council to note the information contained in the report and refer the report to Council.

**CABINET**

**21st September 2016**

**Subject: Notice of Motions Referred from Council**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Skipp - Environment, Street Scene & Halls  
Councillor Howard - Waste, Floods and Water  
Management**

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

To report on the Motions to Council on 27 July 2016 which were referred without debate in order for the Cabinet to consider whether to report on the on the impact of the propositions contained in the Motions in view of the potential impact on the Council's expenditure.

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

The motions to Council link with the Council's corporate plan priority "Environment".

**3. Recommendations**

To note the information contained in this report and refer the report to Council.

**4. Motions to Council**

- 4.1** *"The UKIP Group would like it known that many of the pavements and roads throughout the borough are in a poor state of repair and that currently there are many weeds, grass and suchlike growing out of control in the pavements and gulleys and cracks; these will only continue to further damage the roads and pavements. Can we therefore request that a thorough cleansing and removal of all debris and growth in our roads and pavements throughout the borough take place at the earliest opportunity?" (Cllr Varker, seconded by Cllr Bayley).*

ECC as the Highways Authority is responsible for all matters relating to the maintenance of the highway and this includes the removal of weeds. The Borough Council has a legal duty to ensure the public highway is kept clean and free from litter and detritus.

Weed control in the Borough is managed through the process of weed spraying which is undertaken by Essex Highways, and either sweeping or removal of weeds by hand which is undertaken by the Council's Street Cleansing Contractor and our Highway Ranger Team respectively. Weed removal is easier to achieve when the weed is dead, following the weed spraying process.

Essex Highways weed spraying regime provides for the spraying of the kerb edge and back edge of the public highway three times per year. It does not include the spraying of pavements or road surfaces. Our own observations are that weed spraying is not programmed taking into consideration ground or weather conditions.

The weed spraying process and programme used by Essex Highways is not robust enough to deal with the level of weed growth in the Borough and concerns about the effectiveness of the weed spraying regime have been raised with ECC officers.

This Council, via its street sweeping activities and the Highway Rangers, will continue to remove weeds where we are able to. The Council will continue to look at ways of improving our processes in an effort to ensure a cleaner and safer Borough.

As the prime responsibility for the proposition in this Motion rests with Essex County Council it is suggested that this Motion be referred to the County Council for attention.

4.2 ***“Canvey Island Independent Party calls upon Castle Point Council to reinstate the disabled parking bays outside the entrance of Waterside Farm Leisure Centre”. (Cllr Blackwell, seconded by Cllr Neville Watson).***

Prior to the refurbishment of the Waterside Farm leisure Centre, disabled bays were provided at the front of the leisure centre. To access these bays users were provided with a fob in order to access the barrier control area. The arrangement was problematic because fobs were often lost (and were expensive to replace) or passed on inappropriately to third parties. The dropped kerbs in this area are located in between the marked coach bays so accessing them was less than ideal when coaches were parked in the parking bays.

When the leisure centre was refurbished the disabled parking bays were moved to the publically accessible area of the car park adjacent to the fitness suite. A dropped kerb was installed adjacent to each disabled bay giving direct access onto the footpath leading to the entrance to the centre without the need to negotiate traffic movements. Locating the disabled bays in this location means that all blue badge users are now able to use them, unlike the previous arrangement whereby only those members issued with fobs could use them.

A customer satisfaction survey was undertaken earlier this year and there were no adverse comments received about parking provision for disabled users of the Waterside Leisure Centre at that time. Any user of the facility who has any specific difficulties accessing the centre should speak to centre staff who will do their best to accommodate their needs.

There have recently been issues with some non blue badge holders parking in the disabled bays which the Centre staff are seeking to address with the assistance of the South Essex Parking Partnership.

The parking at the front of the building is reserved for staff and coach parking and deliveries to the centre. Many of the Leisure Centre staff start work early in the morning and finish late at night. The staff car park is located at the front of the building for the safety of those staff.

Consideration has been given to moving the disabled bays back to the front of the building but all things considered the current arrangements are deemed to be the safest and most appropriate.

In any case, it would be difficult to justify the cost of relocating them which would require additional expenditure based on the feedback from users of the centre.

- 4.3 ***“We the Canvey Island Independent Party call upon Castle Point Council to look at the rubbish collections Calendar with a view to changing the collection dates to bring the side roads in line with the main roads. For example, Link Road's black collection day is the side road's pink collection day. I feel that if these collection days are brought in line to one colour it will stop the confusion on what colour/ what week”. (Cllr Mrs Grace Watson, seconded by Cllr Mrs Sach).***

It is inevitable that there will always be areas where one round finishes and another starts which potentially can lead to confusion. The refuse rounds will be reviewed as part of the wider operational changes to the waste management service. It is acknowledged that the Link Road area is particularly problematic and it will be our intention to ensure that the collections from the properties on Link Road and the adjoining side roads are aligned. Any changes will be communicated to residents by a variety of means in due course.

As the proposition in this Motion is the subject of a service review, the Motion is being addressed.

**4.4     *“We the Canvey Island Independent Party call upon Castle Point Council to explain why the grass cutting in the Borough has not been cut regularly for some time, also why the weeds have been left to grow out of control. This has made our area's look untidy and an eyesore”. (Cllr Neville Watson, seconded by Cllr Mrs Grace Watson).***

The responsibility for the cutting of grass verges on adopted highways rests with ECC as the Highways Authority. They pay this Council £28k each year for the cutting of grass verges on adopted highways. This contribution is not inflation linked. It is intended to cover the cost of approximately 1.5 cuts per year in order to ensure sight lines are not obscured and do not cause road safety issues. This Council subsidises the service to the tune of £256K each year in order to achieve a grass cutting regime which is more acceptable to local residents.

Pinnacle, the Council's Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing Contractor is contracted to maintain grass verges at no higher than 100mm. To do this they aim to cut each road in the Borough on a three weekly basis. As part of their continuing improvements to the service they introduced annualised hours this year with staff working more hours in the summer and less hours in the winter to ensure that more resources are available during the peak period for grass growth. They have also made some changes to the grass cutting rounds. Overall these have been successful and have resulted in more cuts being undertaken this year than in previous years of the contract.

It is recognised though that some further round amendments are required as one round in particular struggled to complete its work schedule within the allotted time. However it should be noted that the weather conditions this spring and early summer provided the ideal conditions for rapid grass growth and therefore made adherence to the grass cutting schedules even more challenging than usual.

There will be a review of this year's arrangements at the end of the summer to see what further improvements can be made to improve grass cutting standards across the Borough.

As well as responding to reported matters the Street Scene team proactively undertake inspections to ensure compliance with contract conditions. There are mechanisms in the contract to ensure contracted standards are maintained and where necessary default notices have been served.

As the proposition in this Motion will be the subject of a review, the Motion is being addressed.

## **5.     Corporate Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

To date this year 18 default notices relating to verge grass cutting have been served. Each default notice carries a financial penalty of £50.

**Legal implications**

ECC as the Highways Authority have a duty to maintain the public highway. The Borough Council has a duty to ensure the public highway is maintained in a clean condition and free from litter and detritus.

**Human Resources and Equality Implications**

There are no adverse implications associated with this report.

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

Not applicable

**Background Papers:**

None

**Report Author:** Trudie Bragg, Head of Environment



**ORDINARY COUNCIL**

**28th September 2016**

**Subject: Consideration of Recommendations from Cabinet: The Corporate Plan**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Riley, Leader of the Council and Councillor Stanley – Finance and Resources /Deputy Leader of the Council**

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

**To present to Council the report and recommendations of the Cabinet to approve and adopt the Corporate Plan**

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

**3. Recommendations**  
**Council is requested to consider the recommendation from Cabinet to consider and approve the Corporate Plan.**

---

**4. Background**

Cabinet on 28.9.2015 considered a report on the draft Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan is an important document for the Council. It sets out the strategic direction for the organisation as well as how the Council will achieve its aims and priorities through appropriate action planning

**5. Proposals**

A copy of the report before Cabinet is attached. Cabinet decided to recommend to Council to consider and approve the Corporate Plan.

**CABINET**

**21st September 2016**

**Subject: Corporate Plan**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Riley, Leader of the Council**

---

**1. Purpose of Report**

**1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed draft Corporate Plan.**

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

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

**3. Recommendations**

**3.1 That Cabinet considers the Corporate Plan set out in Appendix 1 and agrees to forward it to full Council for further consideration.**

---

**4. Background**

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

**4.2** Each year the Corporate Plan is subject to an annual refresh to consider a new set of annual objectives that are linked to the Council's medium term priorities. This includes a consultation process with Cabinet members and a draft has also been sent to all Councillors. Service planning with managers and staff is developed to ensure it underpins the corporate plan.

**5. Report**

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

Public Health & Wellbeing  
Environment  
Transforming our Community

## Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed services

5.2 These priorities are based on an analysis of needs and issues for the Borough (summarised in chapter 2 of the Corporate Plan) as well as consultation results which are set out in chapter 5. The consultation results are now three years old, and it is good practice to not use consultation information older than this. Consequently, a more detailed review of the Corporate Plan is proposed to be undertaken in the Autumn which will include public consultation and more detailed consideration by the Policy and Scrutiny Committees.

5.4 The Corporate Plan also includes an annual report, which starts on page 30, detailing the Council's achievements over the last year. There are a number of significant outcomes, ranging from the creation of a soft play area and a nature trail at Waterside Farm to the construction of 3 new homes at St Christopher's Mews, the first new council housing constructed by the Council in many years. Significant challenges remain, such as progressing the Local Plan, which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate last month.

## 6. Corporate Implications

### a. Financial implications

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

### b. Legal implications

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

### c. Human resources and equality

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

## 7. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

This is set out in the Corporate Plan.

## 8. Background Papers:

Corporate Plan 2016/18

Report Author: Craig Watts; Telephone: 01268 882419 [crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk)

2016

## Draft Corporate Plan



castlepoint

benfleet | canvey | hadleigh | thundersley

Craig Watts

CPBC V1.1

8/31/2016

Castle Point Borough Council  
Corporate Business Plan  
2016 – 2018

**‘Turning  
Opportunities  
into Reality’**

## Foreword

The Council recognises that the ongoing impact of Austerity means we that we continue to face acute challenges with the continual need to find efficiencies and cost savings in a climate where good public services for our community must continue to be our priority. The Council has a track record of success and has reduced costs substantially over the last few years. For example the overall net cost of Council services in 2014/15 was £117.89 per head of population compared to an average for all District Councils of £121.43. This represents a significant decrease since 2009/10 when the figure was £176.83 per head. Although we have been decreasing costs, we have taken on new challenges, and for example, this year has seen the Council build its first new Council homes for many years

However, there remains a serious challenge to the Council in future years as we need to find further savings to counter the expected cuts in grant funding we will receive from the government in the future. The Council's financial forecast currently indicates that its budgets are largely balanced for 2016/17 and 2017/18. However, significant budget gaps of £1.1m and £1.9m are forecast for 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively.

This year will see significant transformation of Council Services. We will be reviewing the way we work and will be targeting further cost savings wherever possible. Two important services will be reviewed and we will obtain further cost savings by implementing modern working practices and developing the way we deliver services. However, we will ensure that all our front line services operate as you would expect and will continue to look at ways of enhancing these services. For example, we have ambitious plans to provide a new gym facility at Runnymede swimming pool.

We will be exploring the use of ICT and smarter procurement and working practices to cut costs to the bone. We will also be investigating different ways of using our assets to increase revenue.

We remain ambitious and the regeneration of our town centres at Hadleigh and Canvey continues to be a key priority. We will continue to work with partners to develop a vision for Town Centre regeneration which will bring much needed new facilities to those areas.

Finally we are aware how important the Local Plan is to our community and will ensure that it is progressed to encompass the views of the community as much as possible whilst delivering a long term sustainable approach to future development.

Councillor Colin Riley  
Leader of the Council  
September 2016

David Marchant  
Chief Executive  
September 2016

## **Contents**

<b>Chapter 1 The Strategic Framework</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Our Values</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Safeguarding Policy Statement</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Castle Point Golden Thread</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Chapter 2: A summary of the challenges faced by the Borough and the Council</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Our Vision for the Borough</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Chapter 4: National Framework and Legislation</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Consulting with our Communities</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Our Vision, Medium Term Aims &amp; Targets</b>	<b>Page 20</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Our Annual Objectives for 2016/17</b>	<b>Page 24</b>
 <b>Addendum</b>	
<b>1. A Short Profile of Castle Point</b>	<b>Page 28</b>
<b>2. Annual Report</b>	<b>Page 30</b>
<b>2(a) Financial Report</b>	<b>Page 38</b>
<b>3. Further Information</b>	<b>Page 45</b>

## Chapter 1: The Strategic Framework

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

National	Sub National	Local
Sustainable Communities Plan	Essex Partnership	Corporate Business Plan
Localism Act	Community Strategy	Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Delivery plans
National Planning Policy Framework	Local Enterprise Partnership	Local Plan (in development)
Health and Social Care Act		
Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) / Welfare Act		Other cross cutting strategies and plans
Welfare Reforms		
Energy Act		Medium term financial forecast
National Housing Strategy		
National Waste Strategy	Thames Gateway Housing Strategy	Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy
Equality Act 2010		

## Our Values

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

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

**Equality:** fair treatment for all

**Respect:** respect each other

**Integrity:** integrity in all of the work we do

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

**Innovation:** seeking new, improved and sustainable ways of working

**Teamwork:** valuing everyone's contribution

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



## **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

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

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

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

## The Castle Point 'Golden Thread'

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



## **Chapter 2:**

### **A summary of the challenges faced by the Borough and the Council**

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

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

#### **2.1 Things we need to do in partnership with others:**

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

- Regenerates our Town Centres
- Helps create more local employment;
- Increase the level of affordable housing.

Lack of affordable housing remains a significant issue in Castle Point, for example 44.86% (November 2012) of first time buyers cannot afford a flat or maisonette based on a mortgage at 3.0 times their income. House prices are now increasing and for example lower quartile prices in Castle Point were £163,000 in February 2013 increasing to £193,000 in February 2015, a percentage increase of 18.4% in two years. Affordable Housing is a generic term and includes rented social housing provided by a local authority or housing association, as well as schemes such as shared ownership and rent to buy (known as intermediate housing) to help people get on the property ladder.

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

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

We need to regenerate town centres and improve the quality of social housing and of the Parks and Open Spaces to be able to:

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

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

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

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

## **2.2 Things we need to do ourselves or through services we commission:**

We need to maintain and improve the local Environment by:

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

We need to help transform our community by:

- Developing a local plan in consultation with our community that helps to regenerate our town centres whilst ensuring Castle Point is a place of choice to live, work and play.
- Developing more effective ways of engaging with our communities to strengthen our decision making and also to encourage them to become more involved in issues that affect the local community; and by
- Developing our approach to the way we manage our estates to enable the regeneration of sheltered housing and to explore how our estates can be further developed for affordable housing.
- Considering the needs of our residents in the design and delivery of services.

We need to develop wellbeing in the Borough by:

- Encouraging healthy lifestyles with a range of leisure activities and by encouraging more people to undertake regular exercise either by using our leisure facilities or by utilising the natural attractions in the area to walk, cycle and run.
- Improving the quality of housing, both Council and privately owned
- Working to support more vulnerable residents for example by facilitating the access to greater social activities of sheltered housing for elderly people that may live nearby.

- Ensuring that businesses operating in the Borough do so in a safe manner and comply with all relevant legal requirements.

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

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

## **Chapter 3: Our Vision for the Borough**

This is an exciting time for the Borough. The Council is working hard with partners to regenerate the Borough and improve it as an area to live, work and play. We want to see a re-vitalised Borough with the development of town centres at Canvey and Hadleigh with improved infrastructure, more housing and better employment opportunities. Our vision is:

“To help reduce social inequality, improve the health of our communities and develop the economy by working closely in partnership with other agencies. We want to improve the wellbeing of our community with clean streets, pleasant open spaces and good quality housing. We will nurture community resilience and work closely with our partners to help the community help itself and to enable greater participation in decision making.”

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

### **3.1 Local Enterprise Partnership**

The partnership consists of the upper tier and unitary authorities of Essex, Kent and East Sussex. It has the mission to ‘Create the most enterprising economy in England’ through four strategic objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1: Secure the growth of the Thames Gateway

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote investment in our coastal communities

OBJECTIVE 3: Strengthen our rural economy

OBJECTIVE 4: Strengthen the competitive advantage of strategic growth locations

### **3.2 Essex Partnership Board**

The Essex Partnership Board is the wider strategic partnership for Essex, including all district councils, the County Council as well as partners such as the Police, Fire and Health services and from the voluntary sector. The partnership has several priorities, and recent focus includes the Whole Essex Community Budget (WECB) pilot. The pilot was one of four awarded nationally. Essex was the only large complex rural county chosen with mixed governance arrangements that included two Unitaries and twelve District/Borough Councils.

This partnership focuses on six themes. These are:

- Domestic Abuse
- Reduce Re-offending
- Family Solutions
- Strengthening Communities
- Social Investment
- Skills

Programme arrangements are in place to implement the key themes. For example a Family Solutions Project has developed a county wide approach with 8 multi-disciplinary teams placed within the districts of Essex to focus support to families with complex needs. Work is also being undertaken through partnership arrangements via the Local Strategic Partnership. For example work to reduce re-offending and domestic abuse is being undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership.

### **3.3 Thames Gateway South Essex**

The Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) partnership is a significant strategic partnership that includes Castle Point, Southend, Thurrock, Rochford and Basildon. The partnership is based at Castle Point, and is independently resourced from contributions from the five partners as well as some Registered Social Providers (RSP's). Key achievements included a wide variety of work ranging from the joint commissioning of a recent strategic housing market assessment to securing £5.88m grant funding to support Decent Homes and Empty Homes initiatives in the region. The partnership focuses its work on Strategic Housing issues for the sub region.

### **3.4 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Chapter 4: National Framework and Legislation**

### **4.1 National Performance Management Framework**

Since the election of the coalition government in 2010, a new approach has been taken to the regulation of local government with significant changes. These include:

- The dissolution of the national performance management framework.
- Significant reductions in requirements to collect performance indicators and information
- The cessation of national targets
- The cessation of the Audit Commission inspectorate
- Reduced national role for external audit with the focus on financial regularity
- Abolition of the Standards Board for England with more locally focussed arrangements

Furthermore instead of setting targets, the coalition government used financial incentives or restrictions to effect government policy, whilst giving authorities some freedoms in the implementation. For example:

The New Homes Bonus is paid each year for 6 years. It's based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new-build homes, conversions and long-term empty homes brought back into use.

The coalition government has also reduced the amount of Council tax benefit paid to each local authority by 10%. Councils have some freedom in the criteria to be used

to apply this to residents by devising their own local council tax scheme, but there are restrictions to the criteria. For example, the elderly and vulnerable are protected. Castle Point Council adopted its own local council tax scheme for 2014/15 in January 2014.

## **4.2 Austerity**

One of the greatest challenges faced by all local authorities is the need to find substantial savings. The Council's financial forecast currently indicates that its budgets are largely balanced for 2016/17 and 2017/18. However, significant budget gaps of £1.1m and £1.9m are forecast for 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively. This means that the Council can continue to work towards delivering the savings that are required in order to balance future years in a measured way.

This is not a new concept to local government and since 2010 this Council has delivered savings in response to reductions in government funding of some £3m, which is a reduction of 53% of the overall funding.

## **4.3 Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act is an important piece of legislation that impacts on all councils in England. It helps underpin the government's vision for a 'Big Society' and the commitment to provide greater freedoms to Councils. It has a number of provisions aimed at local government and the community.

# **Chapter 5: Consulting with our Communities**

## **5.1 Public Consultation**

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

In the summer of 2013 a public consultation was held on the corporate plan and members of the public were asked to complete a questionnaire which asked questions on the relative importance of council services, service objectives and service satisfaction. There were about 500 responses, and the results are consistent with previous consultations as summarised below:

**Table 1 – Top 5 Most Important Services**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service</b>
1	Refuse collection
2	Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse
3	Environmental Health Services
4	Parks & Open Spaces
5	Working with the Police to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour



**Table 2 – Top 5 Least Important Services**

Rank	Service
1	Events like the Castle Point Show and Fireworks Fiesta
2	Land Charge services
3	Local Meetings with Councillors
4	Easter & Summer out of school activities for young people
5	Benefits payments

It is clear from the results that the most important services relate to Environment, including Refuse Collection and Recycling and Street Scene. Community Safety is also an important service, as is Council Tax collection. Conversely the least important services relate to Events and Neighbourhood Meetings. Some statutory services such as Land Charges and Benefit payments also feature. When asked what the priorities for improvement were, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour as well as having a well run council featured strongly:

**Table 3 – Priority Areas for Improvement**

Rank	Priority Area
1	Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in partnership with the police and other agencies.
2	Having a well run Council that looks to provide value for money services with improvements in service quality whilst keeping costs down.
3	Provide better quality sheltered housing for older people.
4	Work with other organisations to improve services.
5	Develop opportunities for residents to have more say in Council decisions such as through community events.
6	Work more closely with the business community to help develop opportunities for businesses in the borough.
7	Use new technology to be more efficient and reduce bureaucracy.
8	Work with volunteers and community groups to improve 'hotspots' for example with community litter picks.
9	Improve access to homes for local people with low household incomes.
10	Improve the health of our community through joint working with partners and by providing activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.
11	Work with the community to improve the Town Centres of Canvey and Hadleigh.
12	Give responsibility to local community organisations to run services where

	possible.
13	Only provide support to charities and the voluntary sector where Council services are being enhanced.
14	Improve the way the Council communicates with its community such as using e-mail, twitter, facebook and the internet?

It is also clear that residents see having more say in Council decisions as important, as well as better quality sheltered housing for older people.

## 5.2 Service Satisfaction

A service satisfaction survey was also undertaken in the summer of 2013 for a range of services:

Rank	Service	Percentage Satisfied or Very Satisfied
1	Recycling facilities	95.8
2	Waste collection service	94.9
3	Overall satisfaction with Council Services	90.4
4	Parks and Open Spaces	86.1
5	Benefits Service	85.2
6	Playground facilities for young children	82.7
7	Events such as the Castle Point Show and Fireworks display.	81.6
8	Sports and Leisure facilities	78.1
9	Keeping land clear of litter and refuse	73.5
10	Building Control services	67.8
11	Planning services	67.7
12	Dealing with Complaints	66.8

There is strong satisfaction with recycling and waste collection services. Furthermore satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces is strong and overall satisfaction with Council services is high.

There is weaker service satisfaction for planning and building control. It is likely that there are a range of explanations for this..

The Council has used results of the service satisfaction survey to help develop and improve services. This includes, for example, the refurbishment of Waterside Farm as well as procuring a new grounds maintenance and street cleansing contract.

## 5.3 Place Survey

In 2013, Essex County Council commissioned a place survey, which looked at issues such as satisfaction with the local area and Council as well as issues of feeling safe after dark for all districts in Essex. A report was provided to Castle Point in December. A total of 371 people in Castle Point were surveyed with the following results:

## **Satisfaction with the Area as a Place to Live**

Across the twelve districts, residents living in Maldon (91.2%), Chelmsford (87.9%), Uttlesford (87.7%) and Rochford (86.4%) are more likely to be satisfied with levels of overall satisfaction significantly higher than the county average (80.7%). There are lower levels of satisfaction in Harlow (69.1%), Basildon (74.5%), Castle Point (76%) and Colchester (77.2%) than elsewhere.

The Council has a key role to play in how residents perceive their local area. In addition to providing value for money, well-run services, where residents also feel that the Council is promoting the interests of their community then satisfaction with the area is higher. The physical and social aspects of the local area also play a part in satisfaction – feeling safe, living in a clean and litter free environment and among people who respect others all appear as influences on satisfaction with the area.

There are also a number of environmental and social factors which affect the perception of an area for which the Council may not have a significant impact; this includes for example, the amount of historical buildings and architecture, the density of households as well as the availability of pleasant countryside. In a recent national survey (March 2013) the historic town of Harrogate scored very highly. The lowest score was for East London.

## **Satisfaction with Local Council**

A total of 63.2% of Castle Point Council residents were satisfied with the way their local council runs things. The average for all Essex districts was slightly higher at 64.5%. The highest scores were for Rochford (75.4%) and Maldon (71.6%) whilst the lowest scores were Harlow (53.75) and Colchester (55.7%). Some care needs to be taken when viewing these figures as some County Council services (such as highways) can be confused with some of the local services provided by the Council.

## **Neighbourhood Belonging**

A total of 72.3% of Castle Point residents felt that they belonged to their local area. This was above the Essex average (68.8%) and significantly higher than Harlow (55.7%) and Basildon (57.5%) residents. Areas with the highest score included Maldon (78%) and Rochford (75.6%).

## **Feeling Safe**

Levels of perceived safety after dark vary considerably by area. Perceived safety is significantly lower than average in Harlow (36.7% feel safe), Basildon (48.4%). It is the more rural areas of areas of Uttlesford (74.7%) and Maldon (67.7%), where people feel most safe after dark. Castle Point's score of 49.4% is relatively low and below the average for Essex at 58.5%. This may be partly explained by a population which is significantly older than most other district council's in Essex.

## **5.4 Consultation for the Local Plan**

As part of the preparation of the Local Plan, a detailed and extensive consultation exercise was undertaken in the winter / spring of 2012. Questionnaires were sent to

39,911 residential and business addresses. A total of 3,798 responses were received, giving a response rate of 9.52%.

The leaflet invited all residents and businesses to attend a neighbourhood meeting, a coffee morning and/or the business forum. Officers also attended the Youth Conference and two Age Concern lunches, meeting a number of local residents falling within the younger and older age categories.

### **What is good about where you live / operate your business in Castle Point?**

This question was answered by 3,048 (80.27%) of the respondents to the questionnaire. The top 10 ranked responses are set out below:

<b>Question 1 – What is Good (Strengths)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Green / Open Space	1
Shops – access	2
Bus Service	3
Quiet	4
Community Facilities	5
Rail Connectivity	6
Seafront / Coastal	7
Woodland	8
Green Belt	9
Community Spirit	10

Environmental factors are clearly seen as important to residents, and this also fits with the importance given by residents to Council services that are Environmental in nature.

### **What needs improving where you live / operate your business in Castle Point?**

This question was answered by 3,125 (82.3%) of the respondents to the questionnaire.

<b>Question 2 – What needs improving (Weaknesses)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Road and Pavement Maintenance	1
Traffic Congestion	2
Town Centre / Shops	3
Street Cleaning / Litter / Dog Fouling / Weeding	4
On – Street / Illegal Parking	5
Public Transport	6
Too much building	7
Lack of Police	8
Car Parking	9
Lack of Youth Provision	10

The questions above differ for the questionnaire used to help develop the corporate plan because the corporate plan is more focussed on services provided by the Council. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that a significant element of the written feedback received for the corporate plan refers to Road and Pavement maintenance, and in the consultation used for the local plan, this appears as the top issue that needs improvement. Street Scene is also a significant area for improvement.

**Imagining the future, what issues do you think might affect your quality of life or business success?**

This question was answered by 3,060 (80.59%) of the respondents to the questionnaire.

<b>Question 3 – future impacts (Threats)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Development causing congestion	1
Development causing over development / over population	2
Traffic congestion	3
Loss of Green Belt	4
Development impacting on infrastructure capacity	5
Development causing a loss of open space	6
Policing / Crime	7
Lack of variety of Shops	8
Empty / Closure / Lack of Shops	9
Road proposals in Hadleigh Masterplan	10

The impacts of development were a key concern for the future amongst residents. Residents were of the view that development was likely to result in additional congestion, over development, a loss of Green Belt, impacts on infrastructure capacity and a loss of open space. All these concerns featured in the top 10 concerns for the future in Castle Point. There have also been a significant number of concerns raised in this area during the consultation for the corporate plan.

**What services and infrastructure are needed to make Castle Point better for residents and businesses?**

<b>Question 4 – Services and Infrastructure (Opportunities)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Improved road network	1
Third Road	2
Improved public Transport	3
Town Centre Improvements	4
Road & Pavement Maintenance	5
Improved Policing / Safety	6
Improved Environmental Services	7
Improved Youth Provision	8
Free / Improved Parking	9
Lower rates, business support and growth	10

There is a considerable resident view of the need to improve the infrastructure of the borough, particularly for transport. These issues will need to be carefully considered in the development of the Council's Local Plan.

## 5.5 Core Business Considerations

When considering the results of consultation, a number of factors need to be further considered as set out in Chapter 2. Key issues include the following:

**Limitations of consultation work.** It is not always easy to explain different concepts such as 'improve the health of our community' in a survey questionnaire and it is possible that respondents will have different ideas about what this means. As a result they may respond in different ways.

**Political priorities.** This includes the commitments given by members as part of the election process and is a key feature of democratic accountability. For example, commitments provided to improve the housing and leisure services, to refurbish Waterside Farm and to keep bureaucracy to a minimum.

**Cost effectiveness.** For example, whilst events are not a high priority in the citizen's panel survey, they are enjoyed by a significant proportion of the population in Castle Point. As a result, the Council has managed the service provision of events to be largely cost neutral. I.e. the cost of managing and maintaining events is offset by the income raised.

**Partner priorities.** For example, there is a requirement for schools to teach children to swim. As there are no swimming pools at Canvey Schools, it is important for schools to have access to good quality public swimming pools within a reasonable distance. There are also important partner priorities for regeneration and vibrant town centres is an element in ensuring a sustainable community.

**Statutory business functions.** There are a number of statutory services which may not necessarily be a priority from resident surveys but which are a legal requirement to be provided and important for the sustainability of the community. Examples include Building and Development Control, Environmental Health, Licensing and the Benefits Service.

## Chapter 6

### Our Vision and Medium Term Aims and Targets

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

- **Public Health and Wellbeing**
- **Environment**
- **Transforming our Community**
- **Efficient and Effective Customer Focused Services**

#### **Aim: Public Health and Wellbeing**

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

#### **Our Targets:**

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

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

**Increase the proportion of people participating in physical activity by:**

- **At least 200 additional older people participating in leisure and social activities provided by the sheltered housing service. (March 2017)**



**Implement the Leisure and Recreation Strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.**

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

## **Aim: Environment**

The environment is consistently a high priority for residents, who want to see well maintained parks and open spaces, and streets that are clean and free from litter, refuse, graffiti and fly posters. We want to improve and maximise any positive impacts on the environmental quality of the Borough with high quality parks and open spaces and by encouraging a reduction in waste production and participation in our recycling services as well as promoting energy efficiency. We will continue to promote our services and facilities and to ensure that outsourced services or facilities maintained by voluntary groups are delivered to the required contract standard or in accordance with the approved management plans.

### **Our Targets:**

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

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

**At least 85% satisfaction with parks and open spaces (March 2017)**

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

**At least 80% satisfaction with Council's efforts to keep public land clear of litter and refuse (March 2017)**

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

## **Aim: Transforming our Community**

We aim to transform our community to ensure we provide a sustainable future for all who live, work and play in the Borough. We will do this by setting the right planning framework in place, in consultation with our community, which allows for a sustainable future and the regeneration of town centres. We will also contribute to the regeneration of the Borough by ensuring our services are fit for purpose now and in the future. This includes making the most of our assets to help ensure cost effective services which meet the needs of our community. We will work with others to achieve lasting benefits for the Borough. We will work with the community and with partners to develop community resilience and to help the community help itself.



## **Our Targets:**

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

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

### **Encouraging the regeneration of Hadleigh and Canvey Town centres through the planning process and effective partnership working with the public and private sectors (March 2017).**

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

### **Review our assets and identify significant efficiencies and savings as well as opportunities to increase revenue and enhance service delivery.**

*Rationale: The Council owns a range of assets including offices, parks, leisure centres, halls and car parks. There are opportunities to rationalise and develop assets to cut costs and increase revenue.*

### **Work to continue a sustainable approach to house building**

*Rationale: The Council has begun to acquire and build new social housing but the changes to the Housing Revenue Account and reduction of tenant's rents has meant that a new approach to programming construction needs to be made with housing acquired from Section 106 agreements as well as the sale of Housing Revenue Account assets which can help with the costs to develop new social housing..*

## **Aim: Efficient and Effective Customer Focused Services**

There is a challenging economic climate and the government has taken action and will continue to take action to reduce public expenditure. At the same time the demand for good quality customer focused public services remains high and there are a range of improvements required by elected members and residents. To deliver this challenging agenda, Council services must be as lean as possible with as little bureaucracy as necessary. We will achieve this by reviewing our services and will explore working practices and utilise new technology to maximise efficiency and working practices. We will seek to provide services in the most cost effective way and will work with partners in the private, public and with the wider community to secure the best value for money service provision.

## **Our Targets**

**Savings identified and delivered to achieve a balanced budget in current and future years. (Ongoing).**

**Undertake service reviews and utilise ICT and new working practices to identify significant efficiencies and cost savings to help ensure balanced budgets up to 2019/20**

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

## **Objectives**

### **How we develop, agree and monitor our objectives**

**Draft objectives are developed as part of the service planning process in the autumn of each year**

**Key corporate projects are also assessed and any relevant objectives determined.**

**Draft objectives are discussed with Cabinet portfolio holders and Heads of Service.**

**Progress in the achievement of the objectives is monitored by Policy and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet as required. This includes a quarterly corporate scorecard report to Cabinet.**

**The Corporate Plan, including the annual objectives, is annually considered by full Council before the end of March and in time for the coming financial year.**

## Chapter 7:

### Our Annual Objectives for 2016/17

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

#### Aim: Public Health and Wellbeing

##### Annual Objectives:

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

##### **Outcomes to be measured by:**

- Satisfaction with Leisure Services
- The percentage of adults aged 16 or over participating in sport at least once a week.
- Progress construction of a new Gym facility at Runnymede Swimming Pool

**Rationale:** Consultation results and comments demonstrate that leisure is important for residents and following the significant investment in Waterside farm, further investment in Runnymede should help encourage more people to participate in Sport and Leisure activities, whilst also reducing costs with a new chargeable gym provision.

#### Aim: Environment

##### Annual Objectives:

2. **Provide an efficient and reliable refuse and recycling collection service which encourages the prevention or reduction of waste, re-use and recycling.**

##### **Outcome to be measured by:**

- Percentage of waste recycled or composted
- Total kg waste arising per household

**Rationale:** Waste recycling and reduction is an important issue for energy efficiency and waste is subject to increasing costs for disposal. It is therefore essential that the Council maintains satisfactory recycling rates as well as encouraging residents to reduce the amount of waste produced.

#### Aim: Transforming our Community

##### Annual Objectives:

3. **Progress development of the Local Plan for the Borough**  
**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Submission of Local Plan to planning inspectorate and facilitate examination of the plan.

**Rationale:** In both the Corporate Plan survey and the Local Plan survey, the importance and concerns of development, the protection of the green belt and the development of infrastructure such as roads and Town Centres were very high priorities for residents. These complex issues need to be considered as part of the rigorous development of the local plan and associated planning framework.

#### **4. Clarify approach to Town Centre Regeneration.**

**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Planning application in partnership with developer to bring forward development of Hadleigh Town Centre Island Site.
- Create a Canvey Town Centre Management Team with public, private and voluntary sector representatives to take forward a programme of initiatives and projects to enhance the town centre.

**Rationale:** The issues for this objective are similar to the issues for the development of the corporate plan. There is very significant public interest in the development of these two Town Centres with complex issues which must be resolved through the careful development of master planning.

#### **5. Increase the number of affordable homes constructed in the Borough.**

**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Construction of 3 new affordable homes at St Christopher's Close
- Obtain planning permission for the development of two bungalows at Lawns Court

**Rationale:** There remains an acute shortage of affordable homes and there is an opportunity to develop homes in Brownfield sites. The recent funding restrictions on the Housing Revenue Account means that there needs to be careful planning and work to ensure sufficient capital receipts are in place to fund future projects.

### **Aim: Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed services.**

#### **Objectives:**

#### **6. Reduce costs and improve value for money of services through services reviews, improved Asset Management and enhanced ICT and target a balanced budget for 2017/18.**

**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Completion of service reviews for Development Control and Revenues and Benefits and savings identified.

- Progress in review of assets to obtain greater value for money from asset management

**Rationale:** The Council continues to face austerity and will be required to make further budget cuts and/or increase income streams over the coming years. We recognise there is a need to be more commercially focussed to enable priorities to be achieved in a viable and sustainable way. Consequently a service review programme is in place undertake significant work to transform working practices through the introduction of modern working methods linked to the improved use of IT systems and software. Our assets will also be reviewed to see if we can obtain greater value for money and reduce the costs in the way that we manage our assets.

The results of the public consultation demonstrate that there is a need for the Council to be as efficient and effective as possible.

## **7. Strengthen Core Governance Arrangements.**

### **Outcome to be measured by:**

- Improvements in governance arrangements to strengthen decision making and improve communication for both members and staff.
- Development of a new Corporate Plan

**Rationale:** As the Council implements change it is necessary to have strong governance and good communication throughout the organisation. Members and officers will work closely to develop a new corporate plan with new priorities for 2017 and beyond.

## **8. Clarify approach to deal with the impact of Austerity and Welfare Reforms on the community.**

### **Outcome to be measured by:**

- Development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy

**Rationale:** The impact of Austerity means the Council has to be mindful of any changes in services or costs and how tis impacts on the most vulnerable groups. Consequently an Anti-Poverty Strategy will be devised to help minimise the impact.

## **9. Work with partners to implement arrangements which secure greater value for money and help progress devolved governance.**

### **Outcome to be measured by:**

- Progress towards a combined authority for Essex

**Rationale:** The way we work in partnership with others can have an important impact on our ambitions for the area as well as help save costs. The Council is currently working with other Council's in Essex to explore the possibility of a combined authority with extra powers for issues such as transportation and skills. This work will continue as an integrated approach throughout Essex will help deliver infrastructure improvements and improve community services across Essex and at Castle Point and can result in significant efficiency savings.

**10. Ensure the Council is fit for purpose by meeting national and local requirements to agreed timescales and to optimum performance standards.**

**Rationale:** Council services undertake a range of core services which are important to customers and residents and need to be maintained.

DRAFT

## Addendum

### 1. A Short Profile of Castle Point

Welcome to Castle Point. We are located in South Essex at the heart of the Thames Gateway South Essex sub-region between Basildon and Southend.

Just over 60% of Castle Point's land area is designated as Green Belt, and there are a number of important wildlife areas in the Borough including a special protection area and six sites of specific scientific interest. As a result, most of the Borough's population of 88,600 people live within one of four towns:

Benfleet 22%  
Canvey Island 43%  
Hadleigh 14%  
Thundersley 21%

There are a number of factors that characterise the area of castle point:

**Contrasting Towns** - Castle Point is a Borough located on the north bank of the Thames Estuary. It is a Borough most easily characterised by its contrasting features. Castle Point comprises two urban areas of Canvey Island and the mainland towns of Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley. These towns have different landscapes, built environments and social conditions. This presents both issues and opportunities when developing a vision for the future.

**Diverse Natural Environment** - Castle Point's urban area is tightly bound by the Thames Estuary and the metropolitan green belt and as a result the Borough benefits from a diverse natural environment including six Sites of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area and wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. These nationally and internationally important sites are threaded together by local wildlife sites that are distinctive to the varying landscape in Castle Point and include marshland, grassland and ancient woodland. The diversity of the natural environment is a very important attribute of the Borough due to its location in the urbanised Thames Gateway South Essex Sub-region.

**Low Skilled Economy** - The level of out-commuting both impacts on and is influenced by the quality of local employment opportunities. Jobs within the Borough are typically low skilled and are provided by small businesses that are less able to invest in high quality premises or training and development of their staff. For example the percentage of people possessing qualifications equivalent to NVQ level 3 and above is 38.8% in Castle Point, and 57.4% for the UK (December 2015). As a result, local jobs are largely located in rundown employment areas and pay is comparatively low at about £457.60 per week compared to an average for UK of £529. The average salary increases to £565.90 per week when the salaries of commuters are also considered, and the bulk of employment for local people is outside of the Borough.

**Town Centres in need of vitality** - Due to the high level of out-commuting from Castle Point, the local town centres lose a substantial proportion of the residential spend to other centres, particularly Basildon, Southend, Lakeside and Bluewater because people are more willing and used to travelling for what they need and want. As a



result, the town centres in Castle Point are in need of regeneration in order to make them more attractive to existing residents and as business and housing locations in order to enhance their vitality. Regeneration is necessary to address the significant under investment in public space that has occurred within town centres in Castle Point.

**Ageing Population** - The population of the Borough is ageing with the proportion of people over the age of 65 expected to increase to 30% by 2030. This has implications for accommodation provision and healthcare services in particular and should be reflected in plans for the future of the Borough.

**Young People** - Young people (under 20 years) will continue to make up over 20% of the population and it is important that their educational and social needs in particular are met. The under 15 age group is expected to decrease by 6% over the next 5 years. There is currently a perception that young people do not have enough to do, resulting in crime and anti-social behaviour. This issue needs to be addressed in order to achieve greater community cohesion.

**Ethnicity** - The diversity of the population in Castle Point is not extensive. Approximately 95% of the population regards themselves as white British. The next highest ethnic group is Asian at about 1.7% of the population. There are no particular concentrations of ethnic population in districts within the Borough.

**Impact of the Recession** - Castle Point Council are monitoring the current economic climate, and ensuring our anti poverty strategy and working practices are realigned to minimise the impact of the current recession. Economic activity and the employment rates are volatile. Some key facts provided by government agencies are set out below:

**Key Facts:**

Area 45.08 km<sup>2</sup> (17.41 square miles)

Rural Land Area 60%

Population 88,900 (2014 Estimate)

Population Density 1,921.2/km<sup>2</sup> (4,976 / square mile)

Households 36,730 (2015)

Workforce 46,900 (2015)

Unemployment: 1% receiving Jobseekers allowance (December 2015). A total of 3.7% of the working population are not working. The national average is 5.2% for all non-working people and 1.6% for those receiving Job Seekers allowance.

Ethnicity:

White 96%

Asian 1.5%

Black 1.1%



## **2. Annual Report 2015/ 2016**

Our achievements are set out under our corporate priorities and annual objectives for 2015/ 2016 as follows:

### **Public Health and Wellbeing**

**Implement the Leisure and Recreation Strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and develop further social, recreational and sport opportunities for local residents.**

Since the opening of Waterside Farm Leisure Centre in August 2013 the facility has experienced increased usage, and remains very popular amongst local residents.

The council has continued investing in the leisure service which has seen a number of new initiatives, activities and facilities at both Waterside Farm Leisure Centre and Runnymede Swimming Pool. These include:

- A new soft play and gymnastic provision funded by the Veolia North Thames Trust opened in September 2016. Free soft play sessions are being offered with adult swims, also available without a swim for just £1.00 per child. The soft play area has attracted over 2,000 people since opening.
- A new £17k play area has been installed at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre. The new area was a joint initiative with funding from the Veolia North Thames Trust and Castle Point Council. The area is a natural wood adventure trail free for families to use and enjoy.
- The council has invested in new Inclusive fitness Initiative (IFI) equipment is in the Fitness Suite at Waterside Farm and allows for all types of disability including wheel chair use & the partially sighted.
- Waterside Leisure Centre had extended the free weights area matting to allow for the installation of new resistance machines and free weights equipment.
- 2 new Power mill climbers have been installed in the Fitness Suite. They are designed to be an excellent workout for users of all fitness levels and additionally can connect with the most popular fitness apps, to enhance the customer experience and link with current technological trends.
- New vibrant artwork installed within the Fitness Suite and Spinning Studio at Waterside.
- The decoration of the Skate Park café, introduction of beverages and snacks, and the installation of external concrete seating.
- A new coffee shop has been introduced at Runnymede Swimming Pool. Income has increased as a result, a range of refreshments and sandwiches are on offer and it has improved the customer experience at the centre.
- The council has Invested in new pool covers at Runnymede Swimming Pool to reduce carbon omissions and reduce energy expenditure at the facility.

The continued investment and tangible achievements in leisure has seen increased centre usage, and continued high satisfaction levels in surveys undertaken in the 2015 / 2016 financial year:

- A high base of loyal customers, with 89% likely to recommend us to a friend or family member.

- Events held by leisure have very high satisfaction levels of 95% or over, and attendance at all events has been very high.

The service has recently up skilled their employees to deliver a number of vocational recognised qualifications. Including First Aid at Work, Pool Plant Operations, Defibrillation training and Health and Hygiene. The uptake of courses has been high, with some enrolees travelling as far away as Northern Ireland to attend.

In addition the service has introduced a number of physical activity and health and wellbeing projects to improve the health and wellbeing of the Borough. These include:

- Waterside Farm Leisure Centre has been selected to pilot Walking Netball in partnership with the national governing body England Netball. Walking netball is a slower version of the game at walking pace. The session started in May and has been very popular. The sessions are aimed at those aged 50+ or those in need of a gentler approach to improving their physical health and wellbeing. Walking Netball is a funded project with Sport England and the National This Girl Can campaign.
- Waterside Farm Leisure Centre has signed a partnership agreement with Concord Rangers Beach Boys in the Community. The partnership includes the delivery of Walking Football at the Leisure Centre. Walking football is a slower version of the game at walking pace. The new sessions are aimed at those aged 50+ or those in need of a gentler approach to improving their physical health and wellbeing. The sessions started in May and have proven a great success.
- Southend United FC 'Kicks Programme' funded by the PCC take place each and every Tuesday and Thursday with an average of 60 -100 children aged between 11 – 18 years of age per session.
- The service is working in partnership with Provide and UK Active to refer those who need to improve their physical health to Waterside and Runnymede Pool. A concessionary membership and pay as you go scheme is currently being offered for a maximum of 12 weeks which will provide access to the fitness suite, group fitness session and classes.
- Active Colleagues project funded by Sport England are running in partnership with Rochford Council. Aimed at workplaces in the Borough it is a free opportunity for major workplaces to promote an active and healthy lifestyle to their staff. The project has attracted 600 participants so far, with 130 new participants since January this year.
- A corporate games event for local employees is being organised currently and will be run at the Hadleigh Park venue in September 2016.
- We have introduced a new project targeted at reducing obesity and preventing diabetes across the Borough. We are working in partnership with UKActive and Provide to deliver the project. Participants in the scheme have initial health checks with the partner groups and are then signposted to Castle Point Leisure where they get the personal attention of a fitness expert, motivational phone calls in between visits and health and dietary advice to help reduce the likelihood of those at risk becoming diabetic and having all the associated health concerns.

The leisure centre actively promotes the activities on offer into the wider community, at community events, with direct leaflet drops and through regional press, free papers and a significantly increased use of social media. In addition the leisure service has developed and designed a new website.

The marketing campaigns organised by the service and uptake of new members continues to remain high, with an average membership base rate of 2,500 members last year.

**2. Improve community cohesion and implement 'hub and spoke' policy with social activities undertaken by the Sheltered Housing service opened to non-residents.**

The sheltered housing service has begun working with partners to promote and implement an approach to involve people who do not live in residential homes but live nearby to participate in social events and classes.

Social activities are essential for older people to improve their physical health and mental wellbeing. It helps to get rid of depression, concentration problems and memory loss. It adds to confidence and gives a sense of independence.

The Council is looking to pilot a social calendar to help older people meet new people who want to socialise and take part in a variety of social activities. The different sort of activities envisaged may include:

- Tea and Coffee Mornings
- Quiz's
- Bingo
- Communal dinner
- Exercise classes
- Educational classes – e.g. local history talks
- Craft and skills workshops

The project is expected to be implemented in March 2017.

**Aim: Environment**

**Annual Objectives:**

**3. Ensure effective street scene cleansing is delivered through pro-active monitoring and rectification.**

**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory using Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse methodology
- Target 90% of flytips removed within 1 working day
- Number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting

Performance was strong in this area as demonstrated by the following performance indicator results:

- a) Percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory using Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse methodology was 7.6% in 2015/16 compared to a target of 10%. Performance last year was 6.7%.
- b) Flytips removed within one working day in 2015/16 was 100% compared to a target of 90% and performance in 2014/15 was the same.
- c) The number of Rectification Notices served in relation to Highway Grass Verge cutting was 13, which compares well to the target of under 50 and was a similar performance to last year.

This robust performance generally demonstrates that the contractual arrangements are continuing to be effective. There has been a slight dip with the percentage of streets inspected which are deemed to be unsatisfactory which has increased a little. This is attributed to the clampdown on contaminated sacks by our Recycling Team. This process has increased the amount of litter as contaminated sacks that have not been collected have become split. However, it is considered that performance will improve over time as promotion work to reduce contaminated waste has an effect.

**4. Provide an efficient and reliable refuse and recycling collection service which supports the waste management hierarchy and encourages the prevention or reduction of waste production in the first instance, re-use and recycling**

**Outcome to be measured by:**

- Percentage of waste recycled or composted
- Tonnage of waste collected

The combined performance for Household waste recycled or composted is estimated to be 48.6% for 2015/16 which is a decrease in last year's performance of 53%, and below the target of 55%. The contamination of recyclable waste has become a more significant issue and efforts have been made to help tackle the problem with the non-collection and stickering of obviously contaminated pink sacks, the delivery of a leaflet to all households advised what can and cannot be put in the pink sacks and the promotion of the website recycle for Essex on the Council's web page. This includes a focus on recycling waste food and waste minimisation.

**Aim: Transforming our Community**  
**Annual Objectives:**

**5. Progress development of the Local Plan for the Borough**

Much work has been undertaken to develop the Local Plan and a member working group has been working through all the proposals and analysis in considerable detail. Following further considerations by councillors at several meetings of the full Council, a draft Local Plan was agreed for consultation with the wider community in March 2016. The plan will now be subject to public

consultation before submission to the planning inspectorate later in 2016 when it will then be subject to a public examination.

**6. Clarify approach to Town Centre Regeneration.**

There has been significant progress in formulating plans for the development of Hadleigh Town Centre. Following a tender process, Hollybrook developers have set out a plan with proposals that include a new library, a new town square, retail space and flats. The new library is envisioned to be incorporated into a wider community hub which will include a public meeting space and a variety of public services. A separate facility for artists who are currently based at the Old Fire Station is also envisaged. The Council is working closely in partnership with Essex County Council to progress the plans and locate the significant capital investment required with the public and private sectors.

Proposals for large scale regeneration of Canvey island's town centre have been in place for a number of years, with plans which included creating a town square and new shops on the site of the Knightswick shopping centre car park, as well as community facilities at the Paddocks area. However, funding the development remains an issue and the Council is currently examining individual sites and liaising with partners to elicit the potential possibilities for each. Funding is also being explored with the EU to see if grant funding can be obtained for the development of a market at Canvey.

**7. Progress greater affordable housing development whilst minimising impact on the green belt and ensure at least one garage site is developed and replaced with 3 new affordable homes.**

Significant work has been undertaken throughout the year and 3 homes in St Christopher's Close are due for completion in July 2016. These three bed room homes are the first new council houses in many years and will help provide much needed accommodation for people on the Council's housing needs register. They meet modern energy efficiency requirements and are well insulated and include photovoltaic panels on the roof to help reduce energy consumption. Each new home has been carefully designed and has helped transform and regenerate an old parking area. This can be represented by the following pictures showing the site before and after:

### **Before the Development**



### **After the Development**





During the year the Council also purchased and refurbished a house and converted it into 8 bedsits for homeless people. The refurbishment was undertaken to a high standard and includes a separate laundry room, office and CCTV and door entry system.

Further work by the Housing Service included a survey of all flat blocks resulting in a programme of improvement works in areas such as car parks, bin stores, communal lighting and doors. The Council has also worked closely in partnership with the Canvey Big Local with projects to help improve the environment through planting and landscaping as well as the construction of a parking area which is now used to provide mobile youth services.

The Council plans to elicit further funding opportunities and undertake further development of garage sites in the future.

### **Aim: Efficient and Effective Customer Focussed services.**

#### **Objectives:**

#### **8. Implement an effective approach to dealing with Austerity and secure savings with a Strategy on Austerity and the 'Commercial Council**

Significant work has been undertaken to secure further savings for the Council. For 2015/16 this included:

An estimated £163k additional revenue income arising from extension of "council tax revenue share-back" agreement between Castle Point Borough Council and major precepting organisations.

£127k net increase in car parking income. The extra income will also be partly used to fund £100k for second phase of improvement works at School Lane Car Park.

Increase in Development Control Fees & Charges also resulted in an additional revenue of £110k.

Overall the Council identified savings of £603k for 2015/16. However we recognise that we cannot be complacent and will be undertaking and implementing a number of service reviews during 2016/17 in order to identify further savings. The Council plans to integrate its approach to austerity and the Commercial Council and will be undertaking this through a comprehensive re-development of this corporate plan in the Autumn of 2016.

#### **9. Maintain essential services to deal with the impact of Austerity and Welfare Reforms on the community.**

Whilst costs have been reduced, the Council has maintained services to help the vulnerable in the community. For example:

- The average time to process new housing benefit claims was 22 days during 2015/16, compared to 24 days in 2014/15.

- The average time to process change of circumstances for a Housing Benefit was 8 days in 2015/16, compared to 9 days in 2014/15.

In addition the Council provided grant funding for a range of voluntary organisations, including:

- a) £59k for the Citizen's Advice Bureau which provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities in a range of areas including housing, debt management, benefits, employment etc.
- b) £34k for Carers Choice, which Provides Respite Services in the Home and in Specialist Day Centres supporting adults with disabilities and those living with Dementia
- c) £41k to Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services – an umbrella organisation which provides support and assistance to a range of voluntary sector organisations, for example assisting in successfully applying for grants.
- d) £10k Contribution to Community Transport Scheme in conjunction with ECC and Wyvern, providing transportation for elderly and disabled.

## **10. Review the effectiveness of partnership working.**

Work to review the effectiveness of partnership working is continuing and the Council has been involved in assisting a county wide project to investigate the possibility of a combined authority with further powers devolved from central government. Some regions have already successfully established these and the common key benefits include:

- Opportunity of a better connected region
- Integrated approach to planning of road, rail and digital connectivity alongside land for new housing and business
- Double Devolution of powers to local areas taking responsibility for housing and infrastructure delivery in their own areas
- Responsibility for a local transport budget and a new key route network of local authority roads
- Powers over strategic planning and housing, including significant ring fenced funding to deliver new homes and boost growth
- Area-based review of 16+ skills provision
- Work with the government to co-design the new National Work and Health Programme

The Council is continuing to work with all Essex Council's to formulate an approach to a combined authority and will also be developing a strategy for partnership working in the future.



## **2(a) Financial Report**

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

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

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

3. The Government announced the local government grant settlement for 2016/17 in February 2016. This also included allocations for 2017/18 to 2019/20.

4. The key steps in the process of producing the base budget for 2016/17 were:-

- A review of 2015/16 estimates to arrive at a core no-growth base budget for 2016/17 and 2017/18 to 2019/20 (provisional), driven by current service plans. This includes where applicable, increases for inflation of costs relating to pay, employer's pension fund contributions, contracts, rates, utilities and insurances. Controllable service costs have been carried forward at existing levels except in any case of inescapable increase.
- Service providers were then required to review their services to identify options for reductions in net expenditure (without reducing service levels).
- Income from fees and charges has been reviewed and recalculated against latest trends, taking account of any proposed price increases and the impact of the current economic climate.
- Provision has been made for any costs or savings expected to arise from known and proposed changes in legislation.
- The forecasts for year 2019/20 is based on 2018/19 rolled forward with adjustments for known changes and assumptions around future years funding, including the government allocation referred to above.

### **Efficiency work programme and savings identified**

5. The efficiency work programme for 2015/16, supported by service and budget holder reviews has identified general cost reductions and efficiency savings relating to the current and future financial years, which have been incorporated into the financial forecast at table 1.

### **Funding of priority projects**

6. Table 2 sets out some of the priority projects that the Council continues to fund during the Period of the forecast. These have been reflected in the financial forecast.

## **Cost pressures and other increases**

7. Cost pressures and essential service increases identified during the course of the budget process are summarised in table 3 and these are reflected in the financial forecast.

## **Revenue spending plans**

8. The resultant proposed net summary revenue spending plan for the General Fund, which incorporates the savings and cost reductions, is shown in the financial forecast at 1. Service summaries, which have been based on Directorate and Service/Team Action Plans, are shown at tables 4 and 5.

DRAFT

Table 1 Medium term financial forecast							
		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Notes
Line	Current policies and service plans	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
1	Total net expenditure / estimated exp. for future years	9,649	12,883	12,673	10,266	10,745	Fluctuations year to year caused by phasing of maintenance spend and other expenditure "offset" by earmarked reserves (line 10)
	Funding sources						
2	Council Tax	6,862	7,094	7,305	7,523	7,747	
3	Formula Grant - Revenue Support Grant / (tariff)	1,716	917	287	0	(515)	
4	Baseline Funding Level - Redistributed Business Rates	2,059	2,046	2,112	2,174	2,244	
5	Business Rates - Levy on retained income	(122)	(159)	0	0	0	Offset by a contribution from the NNDR equalisation reserve (line 10)
6	New Homes Bonus	820	1,172	774	485	351	Subject to consultation currently underway
7	Capital grants and other grants and contributions	933	738	336	0	0	Includes transitional grant in respect of withdrawal of RSG
8	Net Collection Fund(s) surplus / (deficit)	(119)	(839)	0	0	0	Separate funds for council tax and business rates
9	Transfer (to) / from General reserve	(285)	(286)	0	0	0	
10	Transfer (to) / from Earmarked reserves	(2,215)	2,200	1,853	(974)	(970)	
11	Total funding sources	9,649	12,883	12,667	9,208	8,857	
12	Budget / Funding Gap	0	0	(6)	(1,058)	(1,888)	
	General Reserve	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
							Minimum recommended balance for General Reserves is £2.7m
13	Balance at start of year	4,887	4,966	3,883	3,677	2,419	
14	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 9 & 12)	285	286	(6)	(1,058)	(1,888)	
15	Potential planning appeals & associated legal costs	(206)	(1,369)	(200)	(200)	0	Based on assessment of potential appeal costs for 2015/16 & 2016/17 and indicative amounts for future years.
16	Balance / (deficit) at end of year	4,966	3,883	3,677	2,419	531	
	Earmarked Reserves	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
17	Balance at start of year	5,289	6,089	2,886	250	1,224	The precise timing of the use of earmarked reserves is, due to their nature, generally unknown.
18	Contribution (to) / from General Fund (line 10)	2,215	(2,200)	(1,853)	974	970	
19	Other expected usage of earmarked reserves - not allocated to the detailed budget	(1,415)	(1,003)	(783)	0	(100)	Earmarked reserves are reviewed annually to ensure sufficiency and where need has diminished the reserve will be returned to General Reserves.
20	Balance at end of year	6,089	2,886	250	1,224	2,094	
	Council Tax						
21	Tax at band D	234.09	238.68	243.36	248.13	252.99	Target increases of approximately 1.96% in future years (assuming a 2.0% referendum limit remains in place). The tax at band D does not include the amount charged by Canvey Island Town Council.
22	Increase	0.00%	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%	1.96%	

**Table 2 Funding of priority projects & other discretionary expenditure included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast (table 1)**

Ref.	Description of priority or discretionary item	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
	<b>All services, Central &amp; Corporate areas</b>				
1	Production of one issue of external newsletter "Viewpoint" per year	8	8	8	24
	<b>Housing &amp; Communities</b>				
2	Funding towards the support of the Women's Refuge in Basildon	8	8	8	24
3	Funding of discretionary portion of business rates relief to charities and other bodies - percentage of overall relief cost applicable to this Council	41	42	42	125
	<b>Environment</b>				
4	Festive lighting across the Borough	19	17	17	53
5	Public Conveniences across the Borough (net direct cost excluding recharges and capital charges)	41	44	44	129
	<b>Regeneration &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>				
6	Running costs of CCTV installed at various public locations around the Borough including car parks, the Dutch Cottage, the seafront and specific residential areas	19	16	16	51
7	Funding for local and voluntary organisations:				
	• Citizens Advice Bureau	59	59	59	177
	• Carers Choices (Formerly Crossroads Care)	34	34	34	102
	• Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services	42	42	42	126
8	Contribution to Community Transport Scheme in conjunction with ECC and Wyvern, providing transportation for elderly and disabled residents of the Borough	10	10	10	30
9	Community events such as the Fireworks Fiesta, Castle Point Show and Easter & Summer activities (net direct cost excluding recharges)	12	8	8	28
	<b>Total funding of priority projects and discretionary expenditure</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>869</b>

**Table 3 Cost pressures & budget increases (Growth) identified and included in line 1 of the Financial Forecast (table 1)**

Ref.	Description of cost pressure/budget increase item	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
	<b>All services, Central &amp; Corporate areas</b>				
1	Discontinuation of grant funding in respect of changes to electoral registration	0	25	25	50
2	Apprenticeship levy from April 2017	0	0	27	27
3	Estimated increase in salary cost due to government introducing a new National Living Wage of over £9 an hour by 2020. Cost includes staff charged through grounds maintenance and street cleansing contract	0	31	40	71
4	Establishment of earmarked reserve for future pension deficiency payments, in expectation of making a 3 year lump sum contribution in 2017/18 to achieve savings of approximately <b>£400k</b> across 3 year period	1,200	600	0	1,800
5	Domestic Homicide Review – appointment of statutory Chairman	0	21	0	21
	<b>Housing &amp; Communities</b>				
6	Reduction in costs recovered through court action	65	65	65	195
	<b>Environment</b>				
7	Extension of Thorney Bay Car Park as reported to January 2016 Cabinet meeting	45	0	0	45
8	Castle Point's contribution to the cost of the Essex Waste Partnership review programme	4	11	0	15
9	Decrease in recycling income resulting from reduced tonnage	71	33	31	135
10	Additional budget required for ongoing cost of playground & equipment maintenance	28	10	10	48
11	Environmental projects to ensure visible improvements to communities	0	50	0	50
	<b>Regeneration &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>				
12	CPBC regeneration Service Level Agreement with Essex County Council	0	19	19	38
	<b>Resources</b>				
13	Upgrade of central accounting system to latest version. Current version due to be de-supported summer 2016	0	32	0	32
	<b>Total cost pressures/budget increases</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>2,527</b>

No	Table 4 General Fund revenue summary	Note	2014/15 ACTUAL	2015/16 ESTIMATE	2015/16 REVISED	2016/17 ESTIMATE	2017/18 ESTIMATE	2018/19 ESTIMATE
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>							
1	Central and corporate services	1	1,815	3,584	2,287	4,005	2,686	2,642
2	Housing and Communities	1	1,180	1,749	1,665	1,886	1,922	1,973
3	Environment	1	4,740	6,136	6,041	6,041	5,289	5,412
4	Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	1	1,312	1,435	1,350	1,475	1,411	1,380
5	Resources	1	71	91	83	85	86	88
	<b>Total Net Service Expenditure</b>		<b>9,118</b>	<b>12,995</b>	<b>11,426</b>	<b>13,492</b>	<b>11,394</b>	<b>11,495</b>
6	Savings and / or additional revenue income / grant funding to be identified	2	0	0	0	0	(91)	(1,149)
7	Total Other Operating Expenditure	3	1,054	481	590	534	477	473
8	Total Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	4	1,113	1,538	1,552	1,304	1,332	1,349
9	Total Net Statutory Adjustments	5	(1,418)	(2,967)	(3,688)	(2,211)	(295)	(2,815)
	<b>Total to be met from government grants, earmarked reserves and Council Tax</b>		<b>9,867</b>	<b>12,047</b>	<b>9,880</b>	<b>13,119</b>	<b>12,817</b>	<b>9,353</b>

#### Notes

- 1 See table 5
- 2 The amount required in order to deliver a balanced budget and maintain reserves at the minimum level
- 3 Includes a discount applied to all salaries estimates to take account of vacant periods, allowances for future National Living Wage changes, the precept payable to Canvey Island Town Council from additional Council Tax collected from Canvey residents, allowances for repairs and maintenance programmes, and other miscellaneous items
- 4 Includes interest payable and receivable, and statutory pensions adjustments based on information from ECC and the pension actuary
- 5 Various statutory adjustments and reversals, to ensure that the Council Tax requirement amount is not affected by income and expenditure relating to non-current assets, such as depreciation, and other items such as the payment of capital receipts to central government. Also includes revenue contributions to fund capital expenditure

No	Table 5 General Fund Net Service Expenditure	2014/15 ACTUAL	2015/16 ESTIMATE	2015/16 REVISED	2016/17 ESTIMATE	2017/18 ESTIMATE	2018/19 ESTIMATE
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	<b>Central and corporate services</b>						
1	Strategic directors	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Chief Executive / Performance and Service Support	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Internal audit	0	2	0	0	0	0
4	Civic Governance and Democratic Representation	1,090	1,273	1,238	1,329	1,249	1,328
5	Legal services	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Other corporate costs	725	2,309	1,049	2,676	1,437	1,314
	<b>Net total - Central and corporate services</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>3,584</b>	<b>2,287</b>	<b>4,005</b>	<b>2,686</b>	<b>2,642</b>
	<b>Housing and Communities</b>						
1	Homelessness and Housing advice	445	406	483	406	406	411
2	Strategic housing and Housing management	10	10	10	10	10	10
3	Revenues and Benefits	744	1,321	1,262	1,446	1,481	1,524
4	Local land charges	(19)	12	(90)	24	25	28
5	Concessionary travel	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Net total - Housing and Communities</b>	<b>1,180</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>1,665</b>	<b>1,886</b>	<b>1,922</b>	<b>1,973</b>
	<b>Environment</b>						
1	Environmental health	644	996	861	824	730	751
2	Street scene and operational services	1,166	1,353	1,348	1,340	1,249	1,263
3	Refuse & recycling	1,033	1,435	1,264	1,401	1,453	1,463
4	Parks & open spaces	843	889	1,196	872	791	778
5	Leisure centres, golf course and community centres	1,266	1,715	1,616	1,984	1,537	1,622
6	Public conveniences	117	132	118	129	129	130
7	Parking	(329)	(384)	(362)	(509)	(600)	(595)
	<b>Net total - Environment</b>	<b>4,740</b>	<b>6,136</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>5,289</b>	<b>5,412</b>
	<b>Regeneration and Neighbourhoods</b>						
1	Development control	420	575	469	549	552	567

### **3. Further Information**

Further information regarding the corporate plan can be obtained by contacting Craig Watts, Head of Performance & Service Support on 01268 882419 or by e-mail:

[crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:crwatts@castlepoint.gov.uk)

DRAFT



**ORDINARY COUNCIL**

**28th September 2016**

**Subject: Financial Results and Statement of Accounts for 2015/16**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Stanley – Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources**

**Note for Members:** it is requested that any questions on the Statement of Accounts are submitted in advance of the meeting in order to ensure that replies are available at the meeting. Please submit questions to Chris Mills – Head of Resources.

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report submits the financial out-turn results and audited Statement of Accounts for 2015/16, for approval by Council.
- 1.2 The statement of accounts is supported by separate annexes and a summary version of the accounts intended to aid interpretation.

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

The scrutiny and approval of the financial results and the Council's Statement of Accounts is linked to the Council's objective of Improving the Council through sound financial management.

**3 Recommendations:**

That following scrutiny:

- 1. The financial results for 2015/16 and explanations of budget variances and significant items are noted.
- 2. The audited Statement of Accounts is formally approved.

**Resolution required.**

**4 Background**

- 4.1 Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council has a duty to approve and publish an Annual Statement of Accounts within statutory timescales. The regulations require that:

**30<sup>th</sup> June**

The un-audited Statement of Accounts is signed by the Council's responsible financial officer to certify that the accounts give a true and fair value of the Council's financial position and financial performance, and published.

**30<sup>th</sup> September**

Subsequent to the independent audit by the Council's external auditors, the accounts are re-certified by the responsible financial officer, approved by Council Members (by way of resolution at a meeting) and subsequently published.

- 4.2 The Statement of Accounts must be prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and proper accounting requirements, as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16, and the associated Guidance notes for Practitioners, both published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

## **5 Public inspection, audit and publication of the Statement of Accounts**

- 5.1 The Statement of Accounts was audited by the Council's external auditors, Ernst and Young, during August 2016. There were also rights of public inspection of the accounts and relevant supporting documents during the period 13 June to 22 July 2016. Draft unaudited accounts were published on the Council's website prior to the start of the inspection period. Subsequent to formal approval at this meeting, the Statement of Accounts will be published on the Council's website.

## **6 Scrutiny of the Statement of Accounts**

- 6.1 The Statement of Accounts is an important document and is subject to a robust process of scrutiny prior to approval. It is recognised that the accounts and supporting notes are complex and therefore to assist Council Members in fulfilling the process of scrutiny, Officers have produced the following additional guidance:

- **Annexe A** - A summary of 2015/16 financial results for the Council's three main funds: the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme, including details of unspent budgets carried forward to 2015/16 and comments on budget variances. The Annexe is split into 5 separate sections.
- **Annexe B** - Supporting information for the benefit of Members including explanation of changes to the format of the financial statements and an analysis of figures and disclosures presented in the accounts. It is recommended that this annexe is considered alongside the full Statement of Accounts to aid interpretation.
- **Summary Financial Information 2015/16** - Presenting highlight information taken from the full Statement of Accounts.

- 6.2 The actual Statement of Accounts 2015/16 is the final annexe of this report.

- 6.3 A separate report to Audit Committee in June 2016 and Cabinet in July 2016 summarised the Council's Treasury Management activity for 2015/16.

## **7 Corporate Implications**

### **a) Legal implications**

As set out in sections 4 and 5 above. The Council's Financial Procedure Rules reserve approval of the Statement of Accounts to full Council.

### **b) Financial implications**

Prompt closure of the accounts gives the major advantage of knowing last year's out-turn at an early stage in the new financial year, usually around late May. It is most important that the General Fund underspend achieved in 2015/16 is

considered in relation to the Financial Planning Strategy and Medium Term Financial Forecast. The same requirement applies to the Housing Revenue Account underspend, in relation to the long term HRA business plan.

**c) Human resource and equality implications**

No new implications.

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

The timescale for approval and publication of the Statement of Accounts is summarised as follows:

- May/June 2016 – Un-audited Statement of Accounts signed and certified by the Head of Resources, and published on the Council's website.
- August 2016 – Ernst and Young external audit of the Statement of Accounts performed.
- September 2016 – Audited Statement of Accounts re-certified by the Head of Resources.
- 28 September 2016 – Audited Statement of Accounts approved by Council.
- By 30 September 2016 – Audited Statement of Accounts published.

**Report Author:** Ian Stapleton, Financial Services Manager

**Background Papers:**

CIPFA: Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16, and associated Guidance Notes.

**2015/16 Summary financial results**

**1 Overview**

1.1 Annexe A provides a summary of the 2015/16 financial results for the Council's three main funds: the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme.

1.2 The annexe has the following sections:

**Section 1** A summary of the year end position for each main Fund.

**Section 2** A summary of budgets approved by the Head of Resources for carry forward into the 2016/17 financial year or transfer into earmarked reserves.

**Section 3** Variances on the General Fund in excess of **£10k**, including comments on the variances.

**Section 4** Variances on the Housing Revenue Account in excess of **£10k**, including comments on the variances.

**Section 5** Variances on the Capital Expenditure programme in excess of **£10k**, including comments on the variances.

**2 General Fund (GF)**

2.1 The General Fund Revenue Account is the account that is charged with all expenditure incurred on delivering the Council's services or meeting its day to day expenses, except those relating to the Housing Revenue Account (as described below), and credited with income generated through those services. The net of this expenditure and income is funded by grants and contributions from Central Government and from Council Tax collected from residents.

2.2 The year end position on the General Fund after unspent budgets approved to be carried forward was an underspend of **£287k** compared to the revised budget for the year. The balance on the main General Fund reserve at 31 March 2016 was **£5.274m**. Any allocation of reserves above the recommended minimum level of **£2.7m** must be considered in the context of the Financial Planning Strategy and Medium Term Financial Forecast.

2.3 Annexe A Section 3 shows General Fund variances in excess of plus or minus **£10k** after approval of budgets transferred into earmarked reserves or carried forward into the 2016/17 financial year, including comments on the variances.

**3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

3.1 The Housing Revenue Account records the income and expenditure relating to the Council's stock of dwellings and garages. Income received from tenants of these properties is receipted into the HRA. The Council is required to maintain the HRA as a separate account, distinct from the General Fund.

- 3.2 The final year end position on the HRA after unspent budgets approved to be carried forward was an underspend of **£257k** compared to the revised budget for the year. The balance on the main HRA reserve at 31 March 2016 was **£2.357m**. Any allocation of reserves above the recommended minimum level of **£476k** must be considered in the context of the long term HRA business plan.
- 3.3 Annexe A Section 4 shows HRA variances in excess of plus or minus **£10k** after approval of budgets carried forward into the 2016/17 financial year, including comments on the variances.

#### **4 Capital Programme**

- 4.1 The Capital Programme records the acquisition or enhancement of non-current (long term) assets, which are assets with a usable life of greater than 1 year, such as property, land, vehicles and equipment. The programme covers non-current assets relating to both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.
- 4.2 The year end position on the Capital Programme after unspent budgets approved to be carried forward was an overspend of **£170k** on General Fund expenditure, mostly due to reclassifying expenditure from revenue to capital and fully funded by revenue. HRA expenditure was on budget as all unspent amounts were rolled forward.
- 4.3 Annexe A Section 5 shows variances in excess of plus or minus **£10k** after approval of budgets carried forward into the 2016/17 financial year, including comments on the variances.

**Summary financial results statement 2015/16**

<b>General Fund (GF) revenue expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>	
Actual net expenditure	(3,545,554)	
Budget carried forward to 2016/17 (Annexe A section 2)	267,500	
Budget transferred to earmarked reserves (Annexe A section 2)	180,000	
Other transfers to earmarked reserves	2,712,400	
Net total	(385,654)	
Revised budget surplus	(99,044)	
<b>Final variance</b>	<b>(286,610)</b>	Underspend
Variance as a percentage of the gross expenditure and gross income budgets (£127.9m).	-0.22%	
See annexe A section 3 for an explanation of the General Fund variances.		

<b>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>	
Actual net expenditure	(1,432,502)	
Budget carried forward to 2016/17 (Annexe A section 2)	263,300	
Other transfers to earmarked reserves	924,000	
Net total	(245,202)	
Revised budget deficit	12,000	
<b>Final variance</b>	<b>(257,202)</b>	Underspend
Variance as a percentage of the gross expenditure and gross income budgets (£15.4m).	-1.67%	
See annexe A section 4 for an explanation of the HRA variances.		

<b>Capital Expenditure Programme - GF</b>	<b>£</b>	
Actual gross expenditure	1,161,181	
Budget carried forward to 2016/17 (Annexe A section 2)	133,000	
Gross total	1,294,181	
Revised gross budget	1,124,400	
<b>Final variance</b>	<b>169,781</b>	Overspend
Variance as a percentage of the GF Capital Programme budget	15.10%	
The majority of this variance is due to the reclassification of IT expenditure from revenue to capital. See annexe A section 5 for an explanation of the General Fund capital variances.		

<b>Capital Expenditure Programme - HRA</b>	<b>£</b>	
Actual gross expenditure	1,980,753	
Budget carried forward to 2016/17 (Annexe A section 2)	263,300	
Gross total	2,244,053	
Revised gross budget	2,244,100	
<b>Final variance</b>	<b>(47)</b>	Underspend
Variance as a percentage of the HRA Capital Programme budget.	0.00%	

**Budgets carried forward to 2016/17**

In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, the following budgets have been approved by the Head of Resources for carry forward into 2016/17 or transfer into earmarked reserves.

£

**General Fund****Central and Corporate Services**

1	Audit and Investigations Unit	2,800
2	Democratic Services and Elections	4,000
3	Legal Services	900
4	Other Corporate Costs	30,200
		<u>37,900</u>

**Communities and Housing**

5	Revenue Services and Benefits	20,000
		<u>20,000</u>

**Environment**

6	Street Scene and Operational Services	21,900
7	Refuse and Recycling Collection	8,300
8	Parks and Open Spaces	87,300
9	Leisure Centres, Golf Course and Halls	72,000
		<u>189,500</u>

**Neighbourhoods and Regeneration**

10	Planning Services	21,000
11	Partnerships and Community Engagement	7,900
		<u>28,900</u>

**Resources**

12	Information Technology Unit	157,000
13	Facilities and Asset Management	14,200
		<u>171,200</u>

**Total**

<b>General Fund total:</b>	<u><u>447,500</u></u>
----------------------------	-----------------------

Of the above total £79,600 (17.8%) relates to unspent external grant funding.

£

**Housing Revenue Account****Other Operating Income and Expenditure**

1	Capital and Other Adjustments	263,300
		<u>263,300</u>

**Total**

<b>Housing Revenue Account total:</b>	<b><u>263,300</u></b>
---------------------------------------	-----------------------

**Capital Programme****GENERAL FUND****General Fund Housing Services**

1	Disabled Facilities Grants and other grants	133,000
---	---	---------

<b>General Fund total:</b>	<b><u>133,000</u></b>
----------------------------	-----------------------

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)**

3	Total annual programmes for replacement and repair	191,700
---	--	---------

<b>HRA total:</b>	<b><u>263,300</u></b>
-------------------	-----------------------

**Total**

<b>Capital Programme total:</b>	<b><u>396,300</u></b>
---------------------------------	-----------------------



## General Fund

Comments on variances in excess of £10,000 between actual expenditure and revised budget after approval of budgets carried forward into 2016/17, or transferred into earmarked reserves.

		Variance Over/(under) £	Commentary
<b>Central and Corporate Services</b>			
1	Audit and Investigations Unit	(14,863)	Underspend due to staff vacancies.
2	Democratic Services and Elections	(16,374)	Underspend on election expenses and postages, with grant received greater than budgeted.
3	Legal Services	(15,799)	Underspend due to staff vacancies.
<b>Communities and Housing</b>			
4	Homelessness & Housing Advice	60,998	Combination of an overspend on private sector leased accommodation and an increase in bad debt provision required, due to reduction in rent collection level.
5	Revenue Services, Benefits and Tax Collection	33,575	Overspend on Housing Benefit payments with regards to Rent Rebate tenants. The impact of this is mitigated by small underspends within the Revenues and Benefits departments, largely as a result of staff vacancies.
6	Land Charges	(16,392)	Additional income combined with a number of small underspends.
<b>Environment</b>			
7	Street Scene and Operational Services	(32,716)	Variance primarily due to £44k of additional car parking income, partly offset by an increase in vehicle maintenance costs.
8	Refuse and Recycling Collection	71,252	Variance mainly from a shortfall of £62k in recycling income due to reduced tonnages collected.
9	Leisure Centres, Golf Course and Halls	(80,335)	Variance mainly due to savings on utilities costs (£46k) and equipment costs (£15k) and also additional income (£16k).
<b>Neighbourhoods and Regeneration</b>			
10	Planning Services	(96,855)	Additional Development Control income (£42k) and Building Control income (£25k) received compared to budget, along with a number of small underspends.
11	Partnerships and Community Engagement	(20,955)	Unspent growth budget.
<b>Resources</b>			
12	Information Technology Unit	(140,855)	Underspend primarily due to recategorisation of £136k of expenditure as capital - see Annexe A Part 5.
13	Facilities and Asset Management	(32,692)	Accumulated underspend on staffing and building maintenance budgets.

**General Fund**

Comments on variances in excess of £10,000 between actual expenditure and revised budget after approval of budgets carried forward into 2016/17, or transferred into earmarked reserves.

	<b>Variance Over/(under) £</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Other Operating Income and Expenditure</b>		
14 Other Operating Income and Expenditure	10,290	Variance primarily due to additional income from shareback arrangement with other Essex precepting authorities (£98k) and from business rates pooling arrangement (£52k). Also a variance in overall value of recharges between the General Fund and HRA. Offset by £136k contribution to capital - see annexe A5.
Net total of all other variances	5,111	
<b>Net General Fund Over / (Under) spend</b>	<b><u>(286,610)</u></b>	

## Housing Revenue Account

Comments on variances in excess of £10,000 between actual expenditure and revised budget after approval of budgets carried forward into 2016/17.

	Variance Over/(under) £	Commentary
<b>Income</b>		
1 Rents	(24,558)	Reduced void levels.
<b>Expenditure</b>		
2 Supervision and Management	(54,091)	Underspend due to staff vacancies.
3 Repairs and Maintenance	(56,258)	Offsetting variances on reactive maintenance, but achieved greater value for money than anticipated on the planned maintenance painting programme with a higher amount of works being completed at a reduced cost. Asbestos removal costs were also lower than anticipated.
4 Other Service Expenditure	(57,911)	Principally underspends on Rents, Rates and Taxes expenditure and lower than anticipated bad debt provision required.
<b>Other Operating Income and Expenditure</b>		
5 Capital items and other adjustments	(52,251)	Primarily due to reduced recharges from the General Fund to the HRA.
Net total of all other variances	(12,133)	
<b>Net HRA Over / (Under) spend</b>	<b>(257,202)</b>	

**Capital Expenditure Programme**

Comments on variances in excess of £10,000 between actual expenditure and revised budget after approval of budgets carried forward into 2016/17.

	<b>Variance Over/(under) £</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>General Fund</b>		
<b>Central and Corporate Services</b>		
1 ICT expenditure	136,488	£136k of ICT revenue expenditure was reclassified as capital expenditure at the end of the financial year. However this has been funded by a contribution from revenue.
<b>Communities and Housing</b>		
2 Housing Property purchase	33,397	Additional repairs works discovered during the refurbishment of the property that were outside of the agreed contract including replacement roofing, additional security and fire alarm works and upgrading of utility supply.
Total of all other variances	(153)	
<b>Capital Programme Over / (Under) spend</b>	<b>169,732</b>	

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

---

### Introduction and overview

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2015/16, based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) (“the Code”), and the associated Guidance Notes for Practitioners, as well as the Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP) 2015/16, as published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

These accounting practices are not optional and are intended to ensure that similar transactions are treated in the same manner within the accounts of all organisations.

The Statement of Accounts is a lengthy and extremely detailed document, therefore the purpose of this document and that of the Summary Accounts is to:

- Provide answers to potential items of interest arising from the accounts;
- Present information in a less technical way to aid understanding; and
- Explain the purpose of each of the key financial statements.

It is intended that this document be referred to alongside the full Statement of Accounts, which includes supporting notes required by the code as well as the Summary of Significant Accounting Policies, on pages 32 to 45 of the Statement of Accounts. These policies set out the accounting treatments which have been adopted by the Council in producing the Statement of Accounts. The Explanatory Foreword that opens the main Statement of Accounts document also provides further supporting information to assist users of the accounts.

### Changes of significance shown within the Statement of Accounts

For the 2015/16 accounts there was one change in relation to the adoption of IFRS 13 – Fair Value Measurement. This primarily affects the valuation of non-current assets, in particular Investment Properties, and is covered under accounting policy AP11 on page 36. It also results in changes to the Financial Instruments Note to the Accounts.

The Explanatory Foreword at the start of the main Accounts document is now referred to as the Narrative Report, with additional information provided within it than previously.

### Key financial statements

There are 4 core financial statements and 3 supplementary financial statements included within the full Statement of Accounts.

#### Core financial statements:

- Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) – pages 22 and 23;
- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&ES) – pages 24 and 25;
- Balance Sheet – pages 26 and 27, and the
- Cash Flow Statement – pages 28 and 29.

#### Supplementary financial statements:

- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income and Expenditure Statement – page 92;
- Movement on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Statement – page 93, and
- Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account – pages 96 and 97.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

---

The statements are supported by a series of notes as prescribed by the Code and these notes are indexed on the face of each core and supplementary financial statement as appropriate.

### **Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) – Pages 22 and 23**

The Movement in Reserves Statement summarises the changes in the financial year across each of the reserves and balances held by the Council. These arise both from incurring expenses and generating income through the Council's services, as well as from changes in the fair values of assets held by the Council, and changes in the pension fund liability.

The MIRS is split between Usable and Unusable Reserves. The difference between these 2 categories is described on page 21 of this annexe.

### **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&ES) - Pages 24 and 25**

This statement reports the net cost for the year of the revenue functions for which the Council is responsible, and shows how that cost has been financed from general government grants, income from local taxpayers and re-distributed non-domestic rates.

For all of the Council's revenue services, on both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account, the surplus or deficit for the financial year represents the degree to which income is greater or less than expenditure. The total surplus or deficit amount includes accounting entries such as:

- those representing the use of Non-current assets (land and property) in the provision of services;
- revaluation and impairment losses and adjustments of those assets, and
- the projected value of retirement benefits earned by employees in the year.

These entries are required in order to comply with the Code, and to represent the financial results for the year on an accounting basis. However, as these items do not form part of the charge made to local taxpayers and rent payers, they are removed for the purposes of calculating the Council Tax. These reversals, along with other statutory entries are reported through the "Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations" line on the Movement in Reserves Statement. They are also analysed in full in note 1 to the Core Financial Statements, on pages 46 to 49 of the Statement of Accounts.

The narrative on the following pages of this annexe provides an analysis of the movements between 2014/15 and 2015/16 on the amounts reported on the CI&ES. A summary of variances against revised budgets for 2015/16 with explanations can be found in Annexe A.

Members are advised that the changes mentioned below relating to capital accounting entries, internal recharges and pension costs generally have no impact on the charge made to Council Taxpayers for the General Fund and to Housing Rents for the Housing Revenue Account.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

<b>Central Services to the Public:</b>	£000s
A net increase of £139k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in internal recharges	213
• Changes in election expenses	18
• Changes in land charges costs	(13)
• Changes in grants and contributions received	(62)
• Net total of all other changes	(17)
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>139</b>

<b>Cultural Services:</b>	£000s
A net increase of £538k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pension costs	111
• Changes in premises and land costs, including utilities and repairs / maintenance	344
• Changes in capital related costs	410
• Changes in income from fees and charges, rents, etc	(97)
• Changes in grants and contributions received	(227)
• Net total of all other changes	(3)
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>538</b>

<b>Environmental and Regulatory Services:</b>	£000s
A net increase of £256k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pensions costs	(44)
• Changes in premises and land costs, including utilities and repairs / maintenance	15
• Changes in internal recharges	41
• Changes in capital related costs	(43)
• Changes in refuse and recycling income and expenditure (excluding staffing costs)	261
• Changes in income from fees and charges	(49)
• Changes in grants and contributions received	60
• Net total of all other changes	15
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>256</b>

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

<b>Highways, Roads and Transport Services:</b>	£000s
A net decrease of £32k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pensions costs	39
• Changes in premises and land costs, including utilities and repairs/maintenance	19
• Changes in internal recharges	(31)
• Changes in income from fees and charges, rents, etc	(77)
• Changes in grounds maintenance and street cleansing contract costs	14
• Net total of all other changes	4
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>(32)</b>

<b>Planning Services:</b>	£000s
A net decrease of £62k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pensions costs	(39)
• Changes in internal recharges	29
• Changes in capital related costs	(35)
• Changes in income from fees and charges, rents, etc	(108)
• Changes in planning contracts, appeals costs and similar items	120
• Changes in grants and contributions received	(21)
• Net total of all other changes	(8)
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>(62)</b>

<b>Other housing services (General Fund housing services):</b>	£000s
A net increase of £363k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pensions costs	24
• Changes in internal recharges	72
• Changes in grants & contributions received (insurance refund in 2014/15)	131
• Changes in net homelessness costs	(99)
• Changes in net housing benefits expenditure and subsidy	219
• Net total of all other changes	16
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>363</b>



## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

<b>Corporate and Democratic Core:</b>	£000s
A net decrease of £4k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in internal recharges	(16)
• Changes in members allowances	10
• Changes in bad debts provisions	(13)
• Net total of all other changes	15
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>(4)</b>

<b>Non Distributed Costs:</b>	£000s
A net increase of £575k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in pensions costs	536
• Changes in internal recharges	39
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>575</b>

<b>Local Authority Housing: Housing Revenue Account (HRA):</b>	£000s
A net decrease of £3,730k is reported against this heading, as follows:	
• Changes in staffing costs, including agency and pensions costs	14
• Changes in premises costs, including utilities and repairs / maintenance	(125)
• Changes in internal recharges	16
• Changes in capital related costs (primarily relating to movements in housing stock valuations)	(3,599)
• Changes in income from fees and charges, rents, insurance repayments, etc	43
• Changes in rents, rates and other taxes costs	(25)
• Changes in HRA contracts and similar items	(28)
• Net total of all other changes	(26)
<b>Total change from 2014/15 to 2015/16</b>	<b>(3,730)</b>

See pages 22 and 23 of this annexe for further commentary on the HRA.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

### Other operating expenditure:

#### **(Gain) / loss on disposal / derecognition of non-current (long term) assets:**

Two types of transaction are reported in this line:

- The first is the gain or loss on disposal of non-current assets, for example properties sold to residents through the Right to Buy scheme. These transactions take into account the carrying value of the asset sold compared with the sale proceeds.
- The second type of transaction relates to a specific requirement under IFRS. When carrying out works to enhance non-current assets, the Council must remove (de-recognise) from the asset an estimated amount equal to the previous value recorded for that part of the asset that has had enhancement works performed.

These adjustments are recorded in 2015/16 in relation to works which took place during the year on the Council's housing stock.

The above transactions are reversed through the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS) and therefore have no impact on Council Taxpayers or Housing rents.

#### **Payment of Housing Pooled Capital Receipts to the Government Pool:**

The Council is required to pay part of the capital receipts received from the sale of council houses to the Government. The transaction is reversed through the MIRS and therefore has no impact on Council Taxpayers, or Housing rents.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

**Financing and Investment income and expenditure:****Interest payable on debts and finance leases, and similar charges:**

This is primarily interest paid by the Council in respect of debt held with the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB), but also includes the interest element of re-payments made for leases on three refuse and recycling freighters.

**Interest and investment income receivable, and similar income:**

The average interest rate for 2015/16 was 0.48%. The average funds invested during the year were £22.4m. A separate item to Audit Committee in June and Cabinet in July reported on Treasury Management activity for the financial year.

**Investment Properties - income, expenditure, changes in the fair value of assets, and (gains)/losses on disposal or derecognition:**

Investment properties are those assets of the Council which are rented out under leasing and similar arrangements, or are being held for capital appreciation purposes, as opposed to those used by the Council in the provision of services. The expenditure relates to structural repairs undertaken by the Council as part of the relevant rental agreements. Investment properties are revalued on an annual basis, and the changes in value are also reported in this line, as well as disposal and derecognition adjustments similar to those included in the Other Operating Expenditure category above for non-current assets. These amounts are reversed through the Movement in Reserves Statement.

**Pensions – net interest on the defined benefit liability:**

This line reflects the interest costs of financing the pension deficit for the Council, partly offset by the expected return on pension investment activities throughout the year (based on information provided by Essex County Council and the pension fund actuaries). These transactions are reversed through the Movement in Reserves Statement and therefore have no impact on Council Taxpayers and Housing rents.

**Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure:**

The Council's income from Council Tax, National Non-domestic Rates (NNDR), and general Central Government grants are reported in this section. (Central Government grants which are specific to an individual service are reported within the relevant service line).

This section also includes Capital grants. However these grants are reversed through the Movement in Reserves Statement and therefore have no impact on Council Taxpayers and Housing rents.

**Other comprehensive income and expenditure:**

The two items reported in this section represent other gains and losses that impact on the net worth of the Council as shown in the Balance Sheet. However although both are required to be reported on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement neither is actually recognised in the General Fund or Housing Revenue Account, so as a result neither directly affects the level of Council Tax or Housing rents.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

### Balance Sheet - Pages 26 and 27

The Balance Sheet summarises the assets and liabilities held by the Council as at the end of the financial year, i.e. at 31 March 2016. It shows the value of the assets in the Council's ownership, the money owed to and by the Council and the level of reserves held by the Council at that date.

#### **Non-current (long term) assets:**

Revaluations of non-current assets (excluding council houses and investment properties) are carried out on a rolling five-year programme. Investment properties and council houses have been re-valued as at 1 April 2015. Changes in the values of the Council's non-current assets are reflected in this section of the Balance Sheet as well as in the Total Reserves section of the statement. They represent unrealised gains, so form part of Unusable Reserves, until such time as any assets are disposed of. Revaluations do not impact on the charge made to Council Taxpayers or Housing rents.

#### **Current assets:**

##### **Short term investments:**

Within the day-to-day cash management no distinction is made between revenue cash and capital cash. Investments held by the Council at the end of the financial year increased by £4.278m, including accrued interest.

##### **Short term debtors:**

The amounts included in short term debtors are analysed into categories in note 11 on page 73 of the Statement of Accounts.

The Council follows prudent procedures for the recovery of debt and does not write any debt off until it has exhausted all options for recovery. The Council maintains a provision for bad debts in line with best recommended practice.

#### **Current and non - current liabilities:**

##### **Short term creditors:**

The amounts included in short term creditors are analysed into categories in note 13 on page 74 of the Statement of Accounts.

##### **Revenue and Capital Grants Receipts in Advance:**

This line represents grants received or receivable by the Council that have outstanding conditions which could require the grants to be repaid back to the grant providers if those conditions were not complied with. When the grant conditions are satisfied the grants are transferred into either the relevant service line or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

**Current and non - current liabilities (continued):****Provisions:**

Current provisions include insurance repayments, National Non-Domestic Rates appeals and Land Charges income repayments. Further information can be found in Note 17 on page 88 of the Statement of Accounts.

**Short Term and Long Term Borrowing and Finance Lease Liabilities:**

Borrowing is divided between long and short-term debt on the Balance Sheet and represents amounts borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb), and accrued interest payments.

The two lines also include the outstanding liability on three five-year leases on recycling freighters.

**Liability related to defined benefit pension scheme:**

This line shows the underlying commitment that the Council has in the long run to pay future retirement benefits. It is offset by the Pensions Reserve line within the Total Reserves section of the Balance Sheet. There is no impact on Council Taxpayers or Housing Rents.

**Total Reserves:**

Reserves are reported in two categories:

- **Usable Reserves** are those reserves that the Council may use to provide services and meet future expenditure, both revenue and capital in nature. These are subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and also any statutory limitation on the use of specific reserves (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt).  
General Fund and HRA reserves represent those sums set aside to cushion the Council against future possible events based on the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Council.  
The total Usable Reserves as at 31 March 2016 is £20.052m.
- **Unusable Reserves** are those reserves that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets were sold, and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line "Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations." These represent the differences between the outcome of applying proper accounting practices, and the requirements of statutory arrangements for funding expenditure from Council Tax and Housing Rent receipts.  
The total Unusable Reserves as at 31 March 2016 is £62.582m.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

### Cash Flow Statement - Pages 28 and 29

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities.

Cash and cash equivalents, as shown on the Cash Flow statement and also within Current Assets on the Balance Sheet, are those sums held for the purposes of meeting short term cash commitments, as opposed to those sums held for investment and other purposes. There are no strict criteria set in the Code for local authorities to follow relating to the nature and maturity of items treated as cash equivalents. Therefore it is down to local authorities to determine a suitable policy themselves. The Council's policy for determining the composition of cash and cash equivalents is as follows:

- Cash and cash equivalents shall include the Council's net balance or overdraft on its current and call accounts with Lloyds Bank. These play an integral part in the Council's cash management procedures; and
- Cash and cash equivalents shall also include any amounts held in petty cash floats.

The total movement in cash and cash equivalents during 2015/16 was an increase of £642k.

### Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Income and Expenditure Statement – Page 92 & Movement on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Statement – Page 93

The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement details the income and expenditure on HRA services, expenditure in accordance with accounting practices. These items are generally also included in the whole Council Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, as described above. The Movement on the HRA Statement reports the adjustments necessary to arrive at the final balance on the HRA for the year.

#### Income:

##### Gross dwelling rents and non dwelling rents:

The year on year increase in income from dwelling rents is primarily due an increase in average weekly rents of £1.94 to £90.89, whilst a reduction in void loss of 42% to 0.84% also contributed to the increase in income.

##### Charges for services and facilities:

Direct income from charges for services and facilities in 2015/16 increased from 2014/15. However included in this line for 2014/15 was income from insurances of £283k in respect of flood damage, which leads to the apparent significant reduction in income. With this excluded the increase in income would be £33k.

## Supporting information for the benefit of Members

### **Expenditure:**

#### **Repairs and maintenance:**

Repair and maintenance expenditure was £169k lower than the previous year. This is primarily because of there being additional expenditure in 2014/15 due to the costs of flood repairs works that were subject to the insurance claim detailed above. The reduction in expenditure in 2015/16 for this was reason partly offset by an increase in planned maintenance work.

#### **Supervision and management:**

The cost of supervision and management for the year remained consistent with costs from the previous year.

#### **Rents, rates, taxes and other charges:**

There was a reduction in costs of £25k compared to the previous year, as a result of reduced utility costs and reduced void levels.

#### **Interest Payable:**

This represents the annual interest cost of the debt taken out in March 2012 as part of the self financing reform of HRA.

#### **Depreciation, revaluation and impairment of non-current (long term) assets:**

This category represents the capital cost of providing housing assets for the year, and consists of annual depreciation charges as well as any revaluation or impairment increases or decreases which have been applied to the HRA rather than to the revaluation reserve. The valuer advised an 8% increase in the value of the Housing Stock at 31 March 2016 and this increase is reflected within this line.

Changes in valuation are currently reversed through the Movement in Reserves Statement, and do not therefore impact on HRA reserves or Housing rents.

Within the full Statement of Accounts further information can be found in Note 3 to the HRA, on page 95.

#### **Change in provision for bad debts:**

The value of this provision is recalculated annually on tenant's arrears in accordance with CIPFA guidelines and for 2015/16 has increased by £7k with the provision for former tenant arrears rising substantially and that for current accounts remaining consistent.

### **Housing Revenue Account surplus carried forward:**

The minimum level of reserves recommended by the Head of Resources at 31 March 2016 was £476k. At that date HRA reserves exceeded this level, at £2.357m, with an overall increase of £509k during the year.

A summary of HRA variances to revised budget for the year with explanations may be found in Annexe A section 4.

**Supporting information for the benefit of Members**

---

**Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account – Pages 96 and 97**

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for the Council, as a billing authority, to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and Central Government of Council Tax and National Non-domestic Rates (NNDR).

At the end of 2015/16 the Collection Fund reported a surplus on Council Tax of £2.0m and a deficit on National Non-Domestic Rates of £2.5m. These amounts will be shared between the Council, Central Government and the other major precepting authorities (Essex County Council, Essex Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex) in subsequent years. Any balance on the fund is restricted to being used to lower or increase the amount required from local Taxpayers in future years.



# Castle Point Borough Council

## Summary Financial Information

### 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

These pages provide summary information on key figures taken from the Council's Statement of Accounts. All figures are reported to the nearest thousand pounds (£000s).

Revenue spending and income in the year	£000s
General Fund spending	42,150
General Fund income	(33,419)
Council Tax income	(7,005)
Business Rates income	(1,673)
Grants from Government and others	(3,599)
Transfers to and from specific reserves	3,160
<b>General Fund total for the year</b>	<b>(386)</b>
Housing Revenue Account spending	6,319
Income from rents and other sources	(7,752)
Transfers to and from specific reserves	924
<b>HRA total for the year</b>	<b>(509)</b>

The General Fund is the main fund of the Council and covers all of the services the Council provides, except for council houses and garages. These are managed separately in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Council's accounts are prepared under precise accounting rules and regulations, and details of these can be found within the main Statement of Accounts.

Amounts are transferred to and from various reserves, and these are described on page 3.

#### Council Tax and Business Rates

The Council budgeted to collect £45.2 million of Council Tax from residents during the year. It keeps around £6.9m of this (15%). The rest is passed on to Canvey Island Town Council, Essex County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex, and Essex Fire Authority to fund the services they provide.

The Council also budgeted to collect £15.1 million of Business Rates from organisations in the borough during the year. It initially keeps around £6.0m of this (40%) and the rest is passed on to the Government, Essex County Council and Essex Fire Authority. However the Council is also required to pay a further £3.9m to the Government, so only actually keeps around £2.1m (14%).

Other adjustments are made to both of these income sources to reach the final amounts recorded above.

Capital spending in the year	£000s
<b>General Fund</b>	
Computer hardware and software	165
New vehicles	39
Disabled facilities grants and other grants	519
Property purchase	438
<b>Housing Revenue Account (Council houses)</b>	
Purchase and development of new properties	285
Improvements to existing properties	1,696
<b>Total Capital spending for the year</b>	<b>3,142</b>

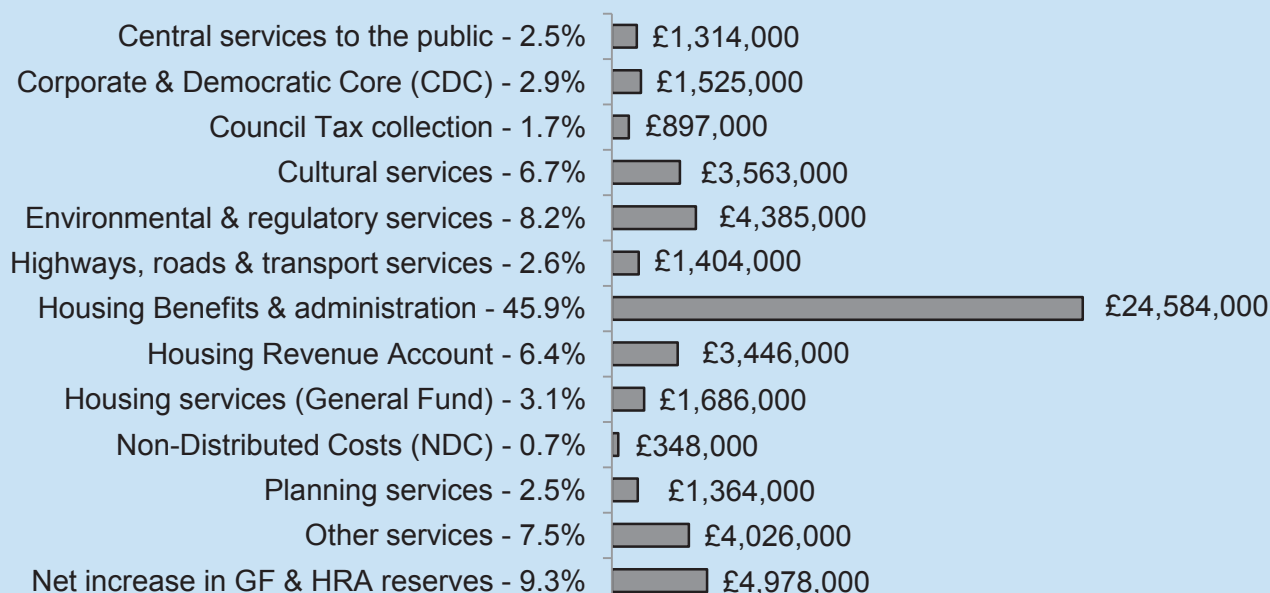
Capital spending generally represents money spent by the Council on purchasing, upgrading and improving assets that it owns, such as buildings. It also includes payments to private homeowners, mainly for disabled adaptations.

The Council receives the benefit from capital spending on its assets over a long period of time.

Some capital spend is paid for by grants from the Government and other organisations, some is covered by receipts from selling council houses and other assets, and the rest by contributions made from the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

## Services the Council spends its money on

This chart shows in broad terms the different services that the Council's money was spent on during the year. These figures cover the revenue spending of both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. They represent an alternative simplified version of the Council's spending compared to the more detailed entries required to be used in the full Statement of Accounts.



### Central services to the public:

The cost of elections, emergency planning, land charges and grants and donations to voluntary and other organisations.

### Corporate and Democratic Core (CDC):

The costs of Members' activities and other corporate activities which enable the infrastructure that allows services to be provided.

### Council Tax collection:

The cost of collecting and administering Council Tax and National Non-domestic Rates.

### Cultural services:

The cost of leisure centres, community centres, allotments, parks and open spaces, sport and the arts.

### Environmental and regulatory services:

The cost of food safety, animal & public health, pollution control, licensing, refuse collection and recycling, public conveniences, street cleaning and cemeteries.

### Highways, roads and transport services:

The cost of car parks and public transport schemes.

### Housing benefits and administration:

The cost of all Housing Benefit payments made to claimants, and the cost of administering the Housing Benefit function.

### Housing Revenue Account:

The cost of the management and maintenance of the Council's own housing stock.

### Housing services:

The cost (to the General Fund) of statutory homelessness and housing options functions, as well as other strategic housing functions.

### Non-Distributed Costs (NDC):

Costs which are not allocated to a specific service, and include pension costs for past employees and properties not used as part of the Council's normal activities.

### Planning services:

The cost of building control, development control, planning policy and economic development.

### Other services:

Payments of interest, the payment to Canvey Island Town Council of their share of Council Tax, and contributions towards capital spending. This relates to both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

## Castle Point Borough Council - Summary Financial Information

<b>Balance Sheet at 31 March 2016</b>	<b>£000s</b>
Council houses and garages	96,118
Other land and buildings	45,105
Vehicles and other equipment	1,448
<b>Total assets owned by the Council</b>	<b>142,671</b>
Stocks of items	91
Bank accounts and investments	21,217
Money owed to the Council	5,564
Money owed by the Council	(9,005)
Borrowing	(41,701)
Liability related to pension scheme	(36,203)
<b>Total</b>	<b>82,634</b>

The Balance Sheet summarises the assets and liabilities held by the Council as at 31st March.

These include:

- The value of the assets owned by the Council;
- Monies owed to and from the Council;
- Amounts held by the Council in bank accounts and other investments;
- Amounts borrowed from the Government, and
- The long term deficit balance on the pension scheme.

<b>Reserves at 31 March 2016</b>	<b>£000s</b>
General Fund reserve	5,274
Housing Revenue Account reserve	2,357
Earmarked reserves	11,706
Capital reserves	715
Unusable reserves	62,582
<b>Total</b>	<b>82,634</b>

The Balance Sheet amounts in the box above are then matched off by amounts held in various reserves.

These include:

- The balances on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account;
- Earmarked reserves which are monies set aside to be used in the future on various specific projects;
- Capital reserves, which include income from sales of council houses and other assets. These can only be used on new capital spending.
- Unusable reserves, which are mainly in relation to statutory accounting entries such as revaluing assets owned by the Council. As the name suggests, these cannot be spent. They also include the pension scheme liability.

The Statement of Accounts will be approved at a meeting of Special Council in September 2016.

For more detailed information please refer to these full accounts which can be found by searching for "accounts" on the homepage of the Council's website or from this link: <http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/accounts>

If you require a copy of this document in another format, or have any views and comments on it, please contact:  
Ian Stapleton, Financial Services Manager, Castle Point Borough Council,  
Council Offices, Kiln Road, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 1TF.