

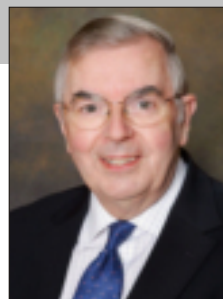
Chelmsford City Council Corporate Plan



Contents

Foreword by the Leader and the Chief Executive	1
Challenges and opportunities	3
Our priorities	5
Attracting investment and delivering infrastructure	6
Facilitating suitable housing for local needs	7
Providing high quality public spaces	8
Promoting a more sustainable environment	9
Promoting healthier and more active lives	10
Enhancing participation in cultural activities	11

Foreword by the Leader and the Chief Executive



Roy Whitehead
Leader of the Council



Steve Packham
Chief Executive

This Corporate Plan builds upon the work of previous Corporate Plans and sets out clearly our priorities. It builds upon our long-term vision for Chelmsford to enhance the economic, cultural, leisure and retail heart of Essex and to become a leading regional centre in the East of England. It is a vision for the future of the city and its people.

Some things we can be proud of

Over the last few years we have achieved many things that we are rightly proud of:

- In 2010, Chelmsford was designated an 'International Safe Community' by the World Health Organisation - this designation was the first in the UK. Chelmsford joined more than 190 communities from 26 countries in the International Safe Community Network, which shares best practice and research to promote community safety and injury prevention activities and deliver a better quality of life to residents.
- The Council has bucked economic trends by continuing to attract inward investment into the area, with major retail developments including John Lewis, Primark and Waitrose agreeing plans to open stores in the city.
- Chelmsford's Local Development Framework (LDF), a series of planning

documents setting out the Council's policies and development opportunities in the city, is one of the most advanced in the country and has now been completed.

- The first phase of a new state-of-the-art Customer Service Centre was completed in January 2011. It allows customers to access a range of services through a single point of contact and hosts drop-in sessions by a range of local partners including the Citizens Advice Bureau and Council for Voluntary Services.
- The Council is the first 'Investors in People' Gold authority in the eastern region and is an IIP Champion authority. IIP is a national standard that sets a level of good practice for developing an organisation's performance through its people. In November 2011, the Council's Internship Scheme was voted Best Public Sector Programme in the Training Journal Awards.



Chelmsford recognised as an 'International Safe Community' by the World Health Organisation



Chelmsford City Council achieves Gold standard Investors in People recognition

- We are the lead authority for the pioneering South Essex Parking Partnership, launched in April 2011 to deliver on-street parking enforcement across six local authority areas.
- A programme of major improvements to Riverside Ice and Leisure Centre was completed in early 2011. These included expanding the Excel gym and exercise studio, modernising the ice rink and refurbishing the areas around the ice rink and swimming pools.
- Chelmsford is a regional leader in providing parks and green spaces of high quality. In 2011, our parks were awarded eight Green Flag Awards, three Green Heritage Awards and two Green Flag Community Awards - the most awarded in the East of England and the South East.
- In May 2011, Chelmsford was selected as 'Host Community for the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay' - one of only 66 towns and cities across the UK that will host a spectacular evening celebration, three weeks before the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Games.
- The Council has continued to deliver a wide range of exciting arts, culture and entertainment for its residents and visitors at its theatres and through events including the V Festival, ESSEXstreetdiversions, the Fling and the 3 Foot People Festival.
- In 2010, a new extension doubled the size of Chelmsford Museum, allowing the inclusion of 'Bright Sparks', an exhibition about Chelmsford's world-beating industries, and major improvements to the Essex Regiment Museum.
- In 2012, the Council was a finalist for the prestigious Local Government Chronicle Awards 'Council of the Year' category.
- In March 2012, Chelmsford was granted city status as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Chelmsford became the first city in the county of Essex. This honour is expected to further instill local pride and enable Chelmsford to continue its endeavour in attracting inward investment to promote growth in the heart of Essex.



Chelmsford City Council's new state-of-the-art Customer Service Centre

Challenges and opportunities

National Deficit

Following the change in Government in 2010, there has been a significant shift in policy. The Government is striving to reduce the country's deficit, with the main burden borne by reduced spending rather than increased taxes. In October 2010, the Chancellor published the Comprehensive Spending Review which set out a major programme of public spending cuts which directly impact local government and the services that it provides.

Budget Cuts

Preparing a balanced budget during the past few years has been the toughest challenge that the Council has ever faced and some difficult decisions had to be made. Customer expectations for quality services are also increasing and yet satisfaction with our services remains high. We have been providing more efficient services, with £8.1m of efficiency savings having been achieved over the last five years as well as reducing our workforce by 27 per cent. However, there are many factors which pose a significant challenge including some of our income streams being under severe pressure and greater usage of some of our free or low cost services.

Welfare Reforms

The Welfare Reform Bill legislates for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years. The Bill's aim is to deliver fairness to those claiming Benefit and to the taxpayer. However, many of the measures within the Bill are likely to put strain on our most deprived residents. For example, in early 2013, there are proposals for an overall 10 per cent reduction in Council Tax Benefit. Pensioners will be protected from this but there will be a disproportionate effect on the working age population. Unfortunately, as a local Council we have no ability to directly influence this

policy. However, the Council is doing everything within its powers to ensure its residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life.

Growth and Change

In Chelmsford, the population is projected to grow by 21,000 over the next 10 years. As a forward thinking authority, we prepare plans and policies to ensure there is sufficient employment and housing as well as the infrastructure to support this growth. We have a clear and ambitious strategy for growth and change. The challenge for the next few years will be about how we deliver this, given that existing funding streams available to local authorities have reduced, and given the uncertainty surrounding the availability of new funding.



4,000 new homes to be built on the north eastern edge of Chelmsford



ESSEXstreetdiversions, the festival of international outdoor performance, drawing audiences of 10,000 people to the city centre

City Status

In celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, it was announced that Chelmsford was granted city status. Chelmsford has now become the first city in the county of Essex. As a newly established city, we have a unique opportunity to build on our excellent credentials and develop our ambitious plans to promote future growth, for the benefit of our businesses and residents.

Localism

The Localism Act aims to shift power from central Government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils. The Act puts into place reforms that the Government believes will facilitate the Big Society such as powers for communities to take over local public services, buy community assets, and influence planning and housing decisions.

Even though Chelmsford is relatively affluent, inequalities do exist across areas of the community. Many local people will have been hit hard by the recession; unemployment, cuts to public services, and changes to the Benefits system are just some of the challenges ahead. As a result, the risk of fuel

poverty and homelessness are real threats for some of our residents. Different communities will be facing different challenges and our task is to work with our partners to help residents overcome these. We have set priorities which recognise these challenges, and at the same time aim to move forward and realise our long-term vision for the city and its people.



The 3 Foot People Festival, the only event of its kind in the UK, exclusively designed for children aged under 5

Our priorities

The Corporate Plan is a medium term strategy and is themed on 'People' and 'Place', setting out our top priorities for the area and our residents.

Attracting investment and delivering infrastructure	How we will attract investment and deliver infrastructure to support the growth of the city.	Facilitating suitable housing for local needs	How we will ensure that there is suitable housing available for all sectors of the community.
Providing high quality public spaces	How we will ensure that we provide and maintain high quality public spaces for people to enjoy which are clean and safe.	Promoting a more sustainable environment	How we will reduce waste and energy consumption whilst protecting and enhancing our natural resources.
Promoting healthier and more active lives	How we will encourage our community to improve their health, well-being and quality of life.	Enhancing participation in cultural activities	How we will encourage people who live, work and visit the city to take part in cultural activities.

The Plan and its priorities will be monitored by actions and measures which are set out in the Corporate Action Plan. It is available to view online so you can see how progress is being made over time.

Our priorities are underpinned by two core principles. Firstly, we want local people to have the opportunity to help shape the services that they receive and the communities in which they live, work and visit so that we can meet the needs of different people and provide excellent services to them. We will encourage residents, businesses, visitors and partners to get involved and influence how services are delivered in Chelmsford by ensuring that consultation and engagement opportunities reach out to all groups of the community and are a positive and rewarding experience.

Secondly, in a climate of public spending constraints and with many households feeling the pinch, we will try to meet the expectations of residents, by building stronger communities and improving the accessibility of our services, whilst maintaining the financial stability of the organisation. We will seek new, innovative and cost-effective ways of delivering services, and will seek to work with other organisations to improve service provision.

We are mindful of the difficult times ahead for many of our residents and our priorities and principles will focus on helping those in most need.

Attracting investment and delivering infrastructure

How we will attract investment and deliver infrastructure to support the growth of the city...

We will support the growth of infrastructure, the building of new homes, new transport links and new facilities, to accommodate the city's growing population which is projected to grow to 192,000 by 2020. Chelmsford is the largest employment centre in Essex with around 80,000 jobs and 6,000 businesses and we will continue to promote Chelmsford as a first-choice location for investment, to create jobs for all age groups and sectors and support the local economy.

What we will do?

- Carry out Chelmsford public realm improvements including developments to the High Street, Chelmer Waterside and High Chelmer
- Become one of the first local authorities in the country to implement the Community Infrastructure Levy, which will allow funding secured by new development to be used to fund infrastructure that both the Council and local community want
- Work with Network Rail to make improvements to Chelmsford Railway Station and the surrounding area
- Create a significant urban extension to the north of the city, with a new railway station, community and business park, including the MedTech campus
- Develop a portfolio of sites and premises to meet modern business needs
- Actively promote Chelmsford as England's newest city and the opportunities to invest in our future
- Create new public green spaces and improve access to existing green spaces to balance major housing and commercial growth

What will success look like?

- More businesses attracted to locate to Chelmsford increasing the number of jobs available
- Improved transport options for people living, working or visiting Chelmsford
- More people choosing Chelmsford as a place to live, work and visit
- More residents having access to high quality public services
- New communities with facilities built in

Linked Strategies

Local Development Framework
Core Strategy and Development Control Policies
Site Allocations
Chelmsford Town Centre Area Action Plan
Chelmsford Town Centre Public Realm Strategy
North Chelmsford Area Action Plan

Facilitating suitable housing for local needs

How we will make sure that there is suitable housing available for all sectors of the community...

We will work with partners to provide a range of new housing for our communities including affordable homes for those householders unable to buy or rent in the private market. We will continue to improve existing homes, provide advice and assistance to residents who need help to find suitable solutions to their housing issues, and support the housing needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.

What we will do?

- Ensure that a range of affordable homes, to meet the needs of our communities, is provided on the city's major development sites
- Review our approach to allocating social housing within the city to make best use of the limited social housing available
- Work with town and parish councils and local communities wanting to see affordable homes built in their villages
- Review land and property owned by the Council and identify potential sites for residential development
- Provide expert housing advice and tailored housing options to residents in housing need to reduce the number of people in temporary accommodation and to prevent homelessness
- Work with home owners and landlords to ensure existing homes in the city are of a good standard and are warm and safe to live in

What will success look like?

- Increased availability of good, genuinely affordable homes for purchase and for rent
- Residents living in safer and healthier homes
- Homelessness is reduced as a direct result of our Housing Advice work
- Vulnerable residents, including older people and those with a disability, living in housing that suits their needs

Linked Strategies

Local Development Framework
Private Sector Housing Strategy
Homelessness Review and Strategy
Housing Strategy Statement
Public Health Strategy
Asset Management Strategy

Providing high quality public spaces

How we will make sure that we provide and maintain high quality public spaces for people to enjoy which are clean, attractive and safe...

We recognise that the quality of our public spaces directly affects the quality of life of our residents. We will provide clean, safe and accessible streets, parks and other public spaces which will help Chelmsford remain a place of choice for people to live, work and visit, and for businesses to invest.

What we will do?

- Increase the capacity, frequency and effectiveness of cleaning operations in the city centre
- Reduce anti-social behaviour such as fly posting, fly tipping, littering and dog fouling
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime within the city by delivering a series of initiatives and campaigns
- Achieve quality accreditation for the care and maintenance of our parks and green spaces
- To complement major city centre developments and as part of the programme to improve the public realm, implement a phased development plan for Central Park and adjacent public spaces to improve access and the range and quality of facilities available
- Produce and implement a new long term car parking strategy to provide prime location car parking facilities which also supports the aims of Park and Ride
- Maintain our accreditation for safe car parks and parking facilities

What will success look like?

- Public places and green spaces that are clean and attractive places
- Parks and green spaces that are well maintained and extensively used
- More community involvement in keeping places clean, tidy and safe
- Less litter being discarded and removal of fly posting, graffiti and dog fouling is effectively managed
- Fewer incidents of anti-social behaviour and fear of crime is reduced
- Positive feedback received from local people, with high levels of satisfaction
- Suitable parking provision for the varying needs of businesses, workers, shoppers and visitors using the city
- Car parks providing a safe and clean environment to park

Linked Strategies

Street Care Strategy and Improvement Plan
Parks and Green Spaces Strategy
Chelmsford Car Parking and Land Use Strategy

Promoting a more sustainable environment

How we will reduce waste and energy consumption whilst protecting and enhancing our natural resources...

We are committed to helping to create a more sustainable future for our city, working proactively to reduce any adverse social, economic and environmental impact that climate change may have on our local communities and businesses. The focus of our efforts will be on reducing our waste, reusing resources and lowering our carbon emissions, whilst enhancing the quality and beneficial impact of our natural environment. We will explore opportunities for alternative, renewable energy sources and will encourage other businesses and individuals within the city to follow our lead.

What we will do?

- Reduce the volume of waste sent to landfill by increasing the proportion of waste that is re-used, recycled or composted
- Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and explore opportunities for the possible development and use of alternative, renewable energy sources
- Increase woodland and tree cover in the city and promote 'carbon offset' measures to support sustainable housing and economic growth
- Implement the first phase of works to reduce the risk of flooding in Chelmsford and put in place plans for the second phase of works to protect the key city centre development sites
- Implement the Council's air quality action plan

What will success look like?

- Residents and businesses expressing high levels of satisfaction with first class recycling and waste collection services
- People living and enjoying healthier, more sustainable and environmentally responsible lifestyles
- Council buildings using energy more efficiently whilst maintaining the comfort of the building occupants
- Residential and commercial properties protected from flooding
- Greater tree cover reducing the risk of flooding, providing natural cooling and improvements to air quality

Linked Strategies

Local Development Framework
Tree Management Policy
Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan
Strategy and Improvement Plan for Recycling and Waste Collection Services
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Promoting healthier and more active lives

How we will encourage our community to improve their health, well-being and quality of life...

The Government's public health reforms will see local authorities take more responsibility for improving levels of public health. Studies show that living a healthy lifestyle and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of developing chronic disease, improves quality of life and increases life expectancy. We are responsible for many factors which impact on mental and physical health, including sports and leisure provision in the area, environmental health, green spaces and housing standards. We aim to support our residents and encourage health improvements by implementing the new Public Health Strategy alongside the Council's new Sports and Arts Strategy 2012-2016.

What we will do?

- Through the Public Health Strategy reduce health inequalities by promoting healthier behaviours, more physically active lifestyles and addressing the causes of poor health and well-being
- Play an active role in the emerging Health and Well-being Board for Essex and establish local arrangements for Chelmsford to ensure that our priorities are addressed
- Modernise, refurbish and maintain Council owned sports and leisure facilities to ensure that they continue to be of a high standard for users
- Extend and improve the sports and recreation facilities at Melbourne Park, including its dedication as the Queen Elizabeth II Park, as part of the 'Fields in Trust' Diamond Jubilee programme
- Tackle obesity levels throughout the city by enhancing exercise and fitness opportunities
- Maximise the benefits of Leisure Plus to encourage greater participation in sport and the arts
- Use London 2012 to create a lasting Olympic & Paralympic legacy amongst local people

What will success look like?

- Residents will have access to high quality, modernised sports, leisure and recreation facilities
- Greater participation in informal recreation, sport and the arts
- Positive feedback received from people, with high levels of satisfaction
- More people leading healthier, more active lifestyles with less prevalence of obesity
- A strong Olympic & Paralympic legacy from London 2012 built and sustained in Chelmsford

Linked Strategies

Community Plan
Public Health Strategy
Sports and Arts Strategy
Development Plan for Melbourne Park
Allotments Strategy

Enhancing participation in cultural activities

How we will encourage people who live, work and visit the city to take part in cultural activities...

We are keen to provide people who live, work and visit the city with opportunities to enrich their cultural experiences and celebrate Chelmsford's heritage. We will work with partners to promote cultural opportunities and events, to conserve local heritage and to encourage participation in cultural activities. Through this work we will aim to develop a strong identity for Chelmsford as a place and encourage individuals, groups and communities to be proud of where they live.

What we will do?

- Make further improvements to Chelmsford Theatres to increase their use and improve visitor experience
- Sustain a high quality and broad programme offer for Chelmsford Theatres
- Promote a range of events and activities to increase the accessibility and use of public spaces and to enhance the image and attraction of the area as a cultural destination
- Complete the second phase of the redisplay of the Chelmsford Museum
- Work to establish a new country park along the Chelmer River Valley
- Refresh the management and strategic development plan for Hylands, to enhance visitor facilities and services, realise new business opportunities
- Agree the next five year Cultural Events Strategy 2013-18

What will success look like?

- More residents and visitors enjoying their experience at our theatres
- Positive feedback and high levels of satisfaction received from people who visit our parks, green spaces and museums
- Increased use and animation of public spaces
- Chelmsford positioned as an attractive host and destination for major events and cultural investment

Linked Strategies

Cultural Events Strategy
Sports and Arts Strategy
Hylands Estate 10 Year Management and Maintenance Plan 2006-2016

Chelmsford was awarded city status as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Here are some of the photographs from the city bid application:



Hylands House and Estate

Dating from 1730, Hylands House is a stunning Grade II* listed property, situated in 574 acres of historic landscaped parkland.



Chelmsford Museum

Chelmsford Museum, incorporating the Essex Regiment and Essex Yeomanry displays, has recently undergone a £5 million re-development project.



V Festival, Hylands Park

The annual two-day festival attracts 170,000 music lovers, and brings an estimated £8.2 million into Chelmsford's economy.



Chelmsford Cathedral

This 15th century cathedral is the centre of the Church of England's second largest diocese. The building was awarded the coveted Grade I listed status in 2011.

