

APOLOGIES Committee Services  
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DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY,  
PERFORMANCE AND  
GOVERNANCE  
Paul Dodson

3 November 2021

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the;

**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

on **THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021 at 7.30 pm**

in the **Council Chamber, Maldon District Council Offices, Princes Road, Maldon.**

Please Note that due to social distancing and space limitations, we require any members of the public or press who wish to attend physically and observe or speak under Public Participation rules at this meeting to complete [a request form](#) (to be submitted by 12noon on the working day before the Committee meeting). This will be reviewed and managed according to capacity of the meeting and whether any other persons have already registered.

The Committee meeting will still be live streamed via the [Council's YouTube channel](#) for ease of viewing.

A copy of the agenda is attached.

Yours faithfully



Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

CHAIRMAN	Councillor R H Siddall
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Councillor C Swain
COUNCILLORS	R G Boyce MBE
	Mrs P A Channer
	M F L Durham, CC
	K W Jarvis
	K M H Lagan
	N G F Shaughnessy
	W Stamp, CC
	Mrs M E Thompson
	Miss S White





## **AGENDA STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

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**THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021**

1. **Chairman's Notices**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

3. **Minute - 16 September 2021** (Pages 5 - 72)

To confirm the Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on Thursday 16 September 2021, (copy enclosed).

4. **Disclosure of Interest**

To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 6 – 8 of the Code of Conduct for Members.

(Members are reminded that they are also required to disclose any such interest as soon as they become aware should the need arise through the meeting.)

5. **Public Participation**

To receive the views of members of the public, of which prior notification in writing has been received (no later than noon on the Tuesday prior to the day of the meeting).

Should you wish to submit a question please complete the online form at:  
[www.maldon.gov.uk/publicparticipation](http://www.maldon.gov.uk/publicparticipation).

6. **Budgetary Control April - September 2021** (Pages 73 - 88)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

7. **Supplementary Estimates, Virements, Procurement Exemptions and Use of Reserves: 1 September 2021 - 31 October 2021** (Pages 89 - 92)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

8. **2021 / 22 Half Yearly Treasury Management Update** (Pages 93 - 102)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources (copy enclosed).

9. **2021 / 22 Fees and Charges Policy** (Pages 103 - 108)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

10. **Climate Action Strategy** (Pages 109 - 138)

To consider the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance, (copy enclosed).

11. **Rural Settlement List** (Pages 139 - 142)

To consider the report of the Director of Service Delivery, (copy enclosed).

12. **Marketing and Communications Strategy Progress Update** (Pages 143 - 164)

To consider the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance, (copy enclosed).

13. **Any other items of business that the Chairman of the Committee decides are urgent**

14. **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To resolve that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

15. **Land Purchase / Development Projects: Project Approach and Governance Proposal** (Pages 165 - 170)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

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**NOTICES**

**Recording of Meeting**

Please note that the Council will be recording and publishing on the Council's website any part of this meeting held in open session.

**Fire**

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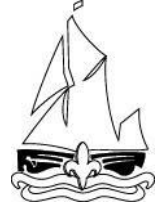
**Health and Safety**

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**Closed-Circuit Televisions (CCTV)**

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**MINUTES of  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
16 SEPTEMBER 2021**

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**PRESENT**

Chairman	Councillor R H Siddall
Vice-Chairman	Councillor C Swain
Councillors	R G Boyce MBE, Mrs P A Channer, M F L Durham, CC, K M H Lagan, N G F Shaughnessy, W Stamp, CC, Mrs M E Thompson and Miss S White
In attendance	Councillor C Morris

**274. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through some general housekeeping arrangements for the meeting.

The Chairman then made a brief statement, referring to the Council's newly established Equalities, Diversity and Inclusivity Working Group which had recently met and agreed an action plan to be presented to this Committee later in the year. He advised Members that his title at the Committee was Chairman although he preferred Chair but noted this was not a convention of the Council. The Chairman expressed concern regarding behaviour at the last meeting of this Committee where he was not shown respect as the Chairman and hoped this did not happen again.

In response to the statement from the Chairman, Councillor Mrs P A Channer asked that it be noted that she was not present at the last meeting of this Committee.

**275. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K W Jarvis.

**276. MINUTES - 15 JULY 2021**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 15 July 2021 be approved and confirmed.

**277. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Councillor R G Boyce declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7 - Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy as he was Chairman of an Almshouse Trust which may be affected by this item of business.

Councillor M F L Durham declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 7 - Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy as a Member of Essex County Council.

Councillor Mrs P A Channer disclosed that she was trustee of a Almshouse Charity which related to Agenda Items 7 - Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy and 8 - Local Development Plan Review Issues and Options.

Councillor Mrs W Stamp declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of Essex County Council.

## **278. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No requests had been received.

## **279. APPROVAL OF DUTY TO CO-OPERATE STRATEGY**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance seeking consideration of feedback received from the Draft Duty to Co-Operate Strategy (the Strategy) consultation and the changes considered necessary to address the feedback. Following consideration of this Members were asked to approve the Strategy to support the delivery of a lawful and sound Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP) Review.

The report provided background information regarding the Draft Strategy and subsequent consultation. A Statement of Consultation setting out the comments received and the recommended changes was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and was transposed into the final Duty to Co-Operate in Appendix 2. The Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager advised that since the report was written, further comments had been received from Braintree District Council, although these would not amount to any changes to the Strategy. The Officer also advised that Appendix 2 should refer to September 2021 and not June 2021 as detailed.

The Chairman put the recommendations as set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

In response to a question and following clarification, the Chairman advised that approval of the Maldon District Duty to Co-Operate Strategy would be a recommendation to the Council. The Chairman amended his earlier proposal to reflect this and the amendment was duly seconded.

The Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager, in response to a query, explained that the preparations for a Greater Essex Local Nature Partnership were underway, although Government approval was required, and how the Partnership would have a similar status in the planning arena to that of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).

### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the Committee notes the responses received to the Duty to Co-Operate Strategy targeted consultation and recommended changes as summarised in the Maldon District Duty to Co-Operate Statement of Consultation as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;

## RECOMMENDED

- (ii) that the updated Maldon District Duty to Co-Operate Strategy as set out in **APPENDIX 1** to these Minutes, be approved.

Councillor Mrs M E Thompson joined the meeting during this item of business.

### 280. AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND COMMUTED SUM STRATEGY

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance seeking adoption of the Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy (attached as Appendix 1 to the report).

Members were reminded that the Council did consider accepting financial contributions (commuted sums) from developers where it was justified that affordable housing could not be delivered on site or when the District's affordable housing needs could be better satisfied through this route. The Strategy had been brought forward to provide clarity and certainty for Developers, the Council and the General Public. It was not prescriptive but set out principles to be followed whilst undertaking viability assessments and determining an appropriate commuted sum.

The Chairman moved the recommendation as set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

A debate ensued and in response to questions raised, the Lead Specialist Place provided Members with further background information and the following:

- A requirement for any contribution to be provided in a specific village, Ward etc. would be against the Council's Planning Policy.
- The Council's Affordable Housing Policy was clear that to meet the needs of the District, Commuted Sums were not required to be used. To include this within the Strategy would conflict with the Council's Local Development Plan Policy.
- In respect of Development Management the Council's policy required on-site affordable housing but allowed Commuted Sums for exceptional circumstances. The Strategy would provide clarity for the Council's Housing Services as to how the policy could be interpreted and when a Commuted Sum may or may not be accepted. It was noted that this would not affect the planning process.
- Financial contributions were part of an adopted Supplementary Planning Document, facilitated through planning policies and the Strategy would not impact on the level of these it purely referred to them.
- A number of the elements highlighted within the Strategy had been brought forward from Housing Services in response to the work had they observed in relation to Affordable Housing.
- The Strategy would mean that the Council was able to defend itself (at Appeals etc.) and ensure it could provide housing for the residents of the District.

During the debate Councillor R G Boyce reminded Members of his earlier declaration of interest.

The Director of Resources clarified that any financial contributions received were externally audited and detailed within the Council's balance sheets.

The Chairman put the recommendation which was duly agreed. Councillor K M H Lagan asked that his dissent to this be recorded.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy attached at **APPENDIX 2** to these Minutes, be adopted.

## **281. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance seeking Members' consideration of the Issues and Options Document (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) with a view to it going out for public consultation. It was noted that this would support the delivery of a lawful and sound Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP) Review.

The report provided detail of the LDP Review agreed, the proposed timetable and work undertaken by Officers since the Review had been agreed. The report summarised the contents of the Issues and Options document and an equality impact assessment which had been prepared was attached at Appendix 2.

The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

The Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager, in response to a question, confirmed that consideration had been given to the consultation timeline and the Christmas period. Members were advised depending on when the consultation started, assuming approval by the Council, the minimum length of time it had to run for was six weeks but because of the Christmas period this could and should be extended. The Chairman confirmed that Christmas was therefore being counted as a non-working week for the purpose of the consultation.

A debate ensued and some Members raised a number of points regarding the consultation document including:

- Rail provision within the District;
- Incorrect reference to 'towns' in the east of the District as there was only one;
- No mention of railways stations outside the District in relation to settlements in the north of the District or connection with strategic routes such as the A12;
- Affordable housing in areas other than those details in the document'

In response the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager advised that the Planning Policy Working Group had discussed the Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Options on a number of occasions, as well as the Issues and Options Document. He suggested that Officers could reflect on the comments made and make changes to the document in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, prior to the document being agreed by the Council. It was noted that Members were not precluded from responding to the public consultation.

Further debate ensued and in response to further comments and questions, additional information was provided by Officers including:

- how in response to the Call for Sites the Council had received more land submitted than it had a need for. However, the Officer reminded Members that these were subject to further appraisal to determine whether they were suitable and sustainable. Officers were also expecting the Issues and Options document to generate more land submissions as part of the consultation.



- It was noted that Essex County Council (ECC) had commented it would not support 'pepper-potting' and the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager advised that 'pepper-potting' was an approach to growth used in the planning system that should at least be considered by the Council. Although ECC had indicated they would not support it, it would be able to make that point in its formal consultation response, hopefully with its detailed reasons behind this stance. When queried on the appropriateness of the phrase 'pepper-potting', he advised Members not to look to remove this terminology from the document as it was an easier way to describe a technical approach to the public in the consultation.
- Climate change considerations and questions were included in the document and there was ongoing work to determine how far the LDP Review could go to support the Council's complimentary work on its Climate Action Strategy.

The Chairman proposed that the recommendations be amended, and the Issues and Options document went back to the Working Group for their review and then to the Council. The Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance clarified however that this approach was not possible and therefore this proposal was not supported.

Following further discussion, the Chairman proposed that further feedback from Members be sent to the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager and Lead Specialist – Planning Policy and Implementation to allow them to make any amendments, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, prior to the updated document being put to the Council for approval. This proposal was duly seconded and agreed. The Chairman advised the Committee that any comments should be received by the end of the following week (Sunday 26 September) and all Committee Members would receive an email to remind them of this.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the progress made in the preparation of the Local Development Plan Review be noted;
- (ii) That Members of the Strategy and Resources Committee provide any further feedback to the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager and Lead Specialist – Planning Policy and Implementation by the end of Sunday 26 September and the Issues and Options Document be amended in consultation with the Chairman prior to its presentation to the Council for approval.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

- (ii) That subject to any amendments as detailed in (ii) above, the Regulation 18 LDP Issues and Options Document for public consultation in accordance with the Regulations and the Maldon District Statement of Community Involvement 2021 (as set out in **APPENDIX 3** to these Minutes) be approved.

#### **282. APPROVAL TO CONSULT ON THE WOODFIELD COTTAGES CONSERVATION AREA PROPOSAL AND THE DRAFT WOODFIELD COTTAGES LOCAL LISTED BUILDING CONSENT ORDER**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance presenting for approval the Woodfield Cottages Conservation Area Proposal and Character Appraisal (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) and Local Listed Building Consent Order (Appendix 2).

The report provided background information to Nos. 116 – 156 Woodfield Cottages, Heybridge and the initiatives proposed to help improve the character and condition of the cottages. Appendix 3 set out the support for these initiatives received from Historic England.

The Chairman thanked the Conservation and Heritage Specialist for his fantastic report which he commented showed the Officer's enthusiasm for conservation. These comments were reiterated by other Members of the Committee. The Chairman then moved the recommendations as set out in the report which were duly seconded.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Woodfield Cottages Conservation Area Proposal and Character Appraisal (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) is approved for public consultation;
- (ii) that the Draft Woodfield Cottages Local Listed Building Consent Order (attached as Appendix 2 to the report) is approved for public consultation.

#### **283. RESPONSE TO ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY LETTER - AUGUST 2021**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance seeking consideration of a request made under the Duty to Co-Operate from neighbouring Rochford District Council (RDC) concerning their development capacity and Maldon District's ability to help accommodate housing needs. The letter from RDC was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The report provided background to the request from RDC and set out the following matters for consideration:

- The Duty to Co-operate;
- Stage of plan-making in RDC and Maldon District Council'
- Green belt;
- Housing market area geographies;
- Existing agreement or protocols.

The Chairman moved the recommendation as set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

It was noted that the letter would be sent from the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance.

**RESOLVED** that the response to Rochford District Council's letter be approved as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

#### **284. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, VIREMENTS AND USE OF RESERVES**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources reporting Virements and Supplementary Estimates agreed under delegated powers where they were below the levels requiring approval by the Committee. The report also set out procurement exceptions granted and reported on the Use of Reserves during the year.

It was noted that there were no supplementary estimates, procurement requests or drawdown from Reserves in this period. Members attention was drawn to two Virements set out in the report, one requiring Committee approval and the other for information only.

The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report. This was duly seconded and agreed.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) That Virement 1) as set out below, be approved;
- (ii) That Virement 2) as set out below, be noted.

<b>Cost Centre To</b>	<b>Directorate/ Service</b>	<b>Cost Centre From</b>	<b>Directorate/ Service</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>
1) 172	Strategy, Performance and Governance (SPG) / Salaries	301	SPG / Local Development Plan (LDP) Project	£232,300	Separating out the salaries part of approved LDP budget.
2) 103	SPG / Communication	171	Resources/ Staffing	£9,600	Virement to correct miscoding.

## **285. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

## **286. LEASE AGREEMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery seeking Members' approval to enter into a 25-year lease with a Maldon Sports Club (the Club).

The report provided background information regarding the lease agreement and proposal to enter into a new lease.

The Chairman moved the recommendation as set out in the report and this was duly seconded.

Councillor Miss S White disclosed an interest in this item of business as she supported this type of sports club.

A lengthy debate ensued, during which a number of comments and questions were raised, including the terms and negotiations around proposed new lease, the benefits of the Club to the local community, costs required for the Council to breakeven. In response, the Commercial Manager and Director of Resources provided Members with further information.

Following further discussion the Chairman proposed an amendment that the annual rental figure be raised to £150 per annum and that the recommendations as set out in

the report be agreed subject to this change. This amendment was duly seconded and agreed.

Councillor R G Boyce asked that his abstention from voting on this item of business be recorded.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the Director of Service Delivery be authorised to enter into a 25-year lease with the Sports Club identified in the report on the terms contained within this report and subject to an annual rental figure of £150 per annum;
- (ii) That a figure of £7,000 is included within the 2022 / 23 budget to fund the one-off grant to the Club.

There being no other items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.29 pm.

R H SIDDALL  
CHAIRMAN

## **Maldon District Council**

### **Local Development Plan Review**

Duty to Co-operate Strategy

Temporary Cover

September 2021

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## 1. Our Strategy

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 established a legal duty on all local authorities and prescribed bodies as defined in Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012) to co-operate with each other to address strategic matters relevant to their areas.
- 1.2. This Strategy establishes MDC's commitment, as a 'strategic policy-making authority' to implement the Duty to Co-operate (DTC) for its Local Development Plan Review (LDP Review).
- 1.3. It sets out a framework of who we will make every effort to co-operate with, how we will seek to cooperate with them, when we will co-operate and what mechanisms we will put in place to record and ensure that co-operation occurs 'constructively, actively and on an on-going basis' as required by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.4. Although the DTC is not a duty to agree, the Council understands the value to the District and the wider geographic area of seeking co-operation on strategic and cross-boundary planning matters in a focused, positive and structured way.
- 1.5. Concurrently, MDC will continue to work 'constructively, actively and on an on-going basis' with nearby strategic policy-making authorities on their own statutory Local Plan preparation or reviews, as well as other prescribed bodies.

## Impact of Planning Reform

- 1.6. The Government's Planning White Paper: Planning for the Future was published in 2020 setting out a series of proposals to reform the planning system in England, with the intention on streamlining and modernising the planning process. Proposal 3 included removing the Duty to Co-Operate test, albeit that the Government announced that it would be giving further consideration to the way in which strategic, cross boundary issues can be adequately planned for. A new Planning Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech 2021.
- 1.7. For as long as there remains a legal duty to co-operate with other prescribes bodies, this Strategy will be the approach used to deliver those obligations so as not to delay plan-making in Maldon District. Any changes to legislation or national policy that follows as a result of planning reforms will be considered at a later date.

## Consultation

- 1.8. This Strategy was subject to a 6-week targeted consultation with all other bodies subject to the legal duty and the feedback received was used to shape the final strategy, as documented in its Statement of Consultation.

## 2. Our Approach

### Maldon District Corporate Plan

- 2.1. Maldon District Council's Corporate Plan 2021-2023 provides a renewed framework of council priorities. It sets out 19 outcomes that focus the council's work across four strategic themes – Place, Prosperity, Community and Performance & Value. Given its cross-cutting nature, many of the outcomes can be connected to the work of the LDP Review. Outcome 18: Meaningful Engagement establishes that MDC will “*use engagement with our residents, businesses, partners and staff to inform our decision-making*”.
- 2.2. The Corporate Plan also sets out Core Values which MDC will use at all times to deliver its outcomes, including “Collaborate to Deliver”. This demonstrates that by co-operating with others we already recognise the difference it can make to our communities.

### National Policy & Guidance

- 2.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out specific requirements or advice for how the DTC can be effectively discharged.
- 2.4. The DTC seeks to ensure that councils deliver effective strategic planning through their local plans by working with other councils beyond their administrative boundaries. This is to help to ensure that social, environmental and economic issues are addressed having considered the most relevant spatial scale, rather than just administrative boundaries. There is also recognition that the outcomes of the DTC for these issues require positive, constructive and continuous partnership working between councils.
- 2.5. MDC has taken the NPPF and PPG into account in preparing this Strategy including:
  - As a strategic policy-making authority, MDC will collaborate to identify relevant strategic matters to address in the LDP Review;
  - Recognising that effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy, determining where additional infrastructure is necessary and how development needs will be planned for;
  - Preparing, maintaining and publishing Statements of Common Ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in co-operating between bodies to address them.
- 2.6. The timetable for preparing the LDP Review and other policy and guidance is set out in the latest [Local Development Scheme](#) (LDS).
- 2.7. The NPPF identifies strategic policies (and therefore strategic issues) as those which set the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for:



- a. Housing (including affordable), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b. Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c. Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d. Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2.8. Strategic matters are therefore those which are larger than local issues that cannot be dealt with by one local planning authority alone.

### Purpose of Strategy

2.9. The Strategy therefore describes to neighbouring and nearby local planning authorities (See Map in **Appendix 2**) and prescribed bodies what co-operation and engagement arrangement they can expect from MDC on any strategic, cross boundary planning matters identified and how they can participate in ensuring they are adequately considered to ensure that they can positively influence the evolution of the LDP Review and shape the proposals as they emerge.

## 3. Our Audience

- 3.1. The Strategy is aimed at neighbouring and nearby local planning authorities, Essex County Council and a range of other prescribed bodies as defined in legislation and guidance. These are listed in **Appendix 1** and these bodies are reciprocally required to co-operate with MDC on strategic, cross-boundary planning matters of concern.
- 3.2. The Strategy should be helpful to other relevant bodies that MDC might need to co-operate with when preparing the LDP Review. These include the Local Enterprise Partnership, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and private sector utility and infrastructure providers as set out in **Appendix 1**. These other bodies could have a key role in supporting the Council in its LDP Review, developing the evidence base, testing development options and commenting on draft policies.
- 3.3. The Strategy is not aimed at other important LDP Review consultees such as statutory consultees (that are not Duty to Cooperate bodies) such as local residents, community groups, Parish & Town Councils, landowners, developers, utility providers or emergency services as these are not specifically listed as DTC bodies by Regulations. However, MDC will engage and consult these people and organisations on its LDP Review, Supplementary Planning Documents and when considering planning applications, it receives. How this will take place is set out in a separate statutory document called the [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (SCI).

## 4. Our Approach to Duty to Cooperate

- 4.1. Co-operation on preparing the LDP Review will be a two-way process between different authorities and bodies. Our timetables for strategic documents will not always be aligned and we must respect the differences in each other's organisation's responsibilities.

### Scoping Strategic & Cross-Boundary Issues

- 4.2. We will seek to scope out the strategic cross boundary issues facing the District as early as possible in the plan-making process. We will engage the Duty to Cooperate bodies individually and through any existing forums, as frequently as is necessary through formal meetings, informal meetings (virtual where possible), in writing and by commenting on plans and strategies developed by each other; so we can help shape each other's direction.
- 4.3. Throughout the LDP Review process, the list of strategic cross boundary matters and opportunities for joint working between prescribed bodies will be kept under review by MDC and influence the engagement and cooperation activities promoted.

### Engagement Arrangements

- 4.4. MDC will build-on existing and established joint working mechanisms that exist at an officer/member level (or both), as set out in **Appendix 3** and will only seek to establish a new engagement approach where there is a gap to ensure strategic issues are not disjointed from other strategic conversations.
- 4.5. Co-operation arrangements MDC propose to consider using include:
- Joint Member Meetings, Committees and Working Groups;
  - Joint Officer Meetings, Boards and Associations;
  - Commissioning of joint evidence base studies and reports;
  - Joint or aligned plans across Council areas;
  - Joint mechanisms for considering unmet housing or Gypsy & Traveller needs;
  - Memorandums of Understanding as a framework for co-operation;
  - Getting key decisions in writing from other authorities/ bodies;
  - Confirming understanding/ intentions in writing;
  - Partnership agreements or joint statements of policy/ strategy; and
  - Iteratively prepared Statements of Common Ground.
- 4.6. These arrangements will be undertaken in addition to statutory LDP Review and planning application consultations and any general correspondence issued by MDC.
- 4.7. MDC will seek to ensure that co-operation and engagement is undertaken by both Members and Officers. It will also ensure that arrangements for co-operation are fit for purpose and reasonable and will consider any feedback it receives from another prescribed body if they should feel that the co-operation is not being successful.

## Disagreement

- 4.8. MDC recognises that there may be future instances where an offer of co-operation from MDC to another party is declined, or agreement on shared-policy outcomes or approach cannot be achieved. Although the DTC is not a duty to agree, MDC will make every effort to ensure that strategic cross-boundary planning matters are properly identified and addressed as the LDP Review develops through its preparation stages and that any major disagreements are resolved, as far as practically possible, before submission to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 4.9. Where it is considered necessary, MDC will use an independent arbitrator to try to reach a resolution with other parties.

## 5. Demonstrating Compliance

### Comprehensive & Robust Evidence

- 5.1. The DTC is a legal requirement and is the first thing the Planning Inspectorate will assess before considering whether the Plan is sound. To do this, the Planning Inspectorate will require comprehensive and robust evidence to demonstrate that the duty has been met, which will be considered at the Examination in Public in 2022/2023.

### Statements of Common Ground

- 5.2. The PPG expects councils to prepare a single Statement of Common Ground covering all strategic-plan making authorities. MDC consider that in practice this could become a rather complex process to manage given the different discussions and strategic issues, vary authority to authority. To be pragmatic, where possible, MDC propose to have a common first section of the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG), which is shared between all strategic plan-making authorities<sup>1</sup>. This would be supplemented with all detailed strategic cross-boundary matters addressed issue by issue between individual authorities or groups of authorities.
- 5.3. For the remainder of the SOCGs, MDC will seek to use an iterative, three-phased steps to a SOCG as illustrated in **Appendix 4** to record its engagement in co-operating. SOCGs will detail key information, provide clear signposting and links to evidence on websites where at all possible.

1. **Scoping SOCG** – these will set out the initial parties in discussion, the geographic area covered, the governance arrangements that are available, the strategic cross-boundary matters that exist between the authorities and any existing cooperation arrangements that exist that could continue to apply. These would be developed during policy and evidence activities undertaken to support Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

2. **Draft SOCG** – these will be version-controlled documents building on the Scoping SOCG and establish the matters agreed, outstanding matters, the process that are proposed to be used to seek a resolution or reach an agreement where possible, any potential additional signatories whose help may be needed to address the strategic issue and when the review of the SOCG can be expected. These would be developed during policy and evidence activities undertaken to support Regulation 18 and 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

3. **Final SOCG** – these will be the version which sets out the matters agreed, any matters which cannot be agreed, the governance arrangements to manage them into the future and all signatories party to them. These would be developed during policy activities undertaken to support Regulation 22 and 24

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<sup>1</sup> The Marine Management Organisation will only be an additional signatory

of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.

5.4. It is proposed that the final versions of SOCG will:

- Describe and show on a map the geographical areas the statement applies to;
- Set out the key strategic matters addressed;
- Set out the plan-making authorities and signatories responsible for joint-working arrangements;
- Detail the governance arrangements for the cooperation process and how it will be kept up to date;
- Set out how strategic cross boundary issues concerned with development needs of the District, the capacity of the area to meet those needs and the proposed distribution. If there is any unmet need, it will set out the extent and what agreement has been reached (or not) about how needs could be redistributed;
- Set out how the strategic cross boundary issues which relate to environmental or infrastructure assets regulated, owned or maintained by other public bodies subject to the DTC have been considered in the context of development needs and whether any agreements have been reached on the principles of mitigation or long-term management;
- Include a record of where agreement have or have not been reached on key strategic matters, including the process used to reach them; and
- Confirm whether each Statement relates to any other Statements covering the same or part of the same area.

5.5. SOCG will remain in draft form until they are signed by all signatories, which may mean they are not published until the submission of the Local Development Plan or its Examination in Public. Drafts will be water-marked to aid clarity.

## Record Keeping & Reporting

5.6. MDC will regularly record and report on co-operation and engagement activities, what decisions have been reached and why and what outcomes have been reached for LDP Review. These will be reported in summary form annually in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) and may be reported through other formal mechanisms, such as to through reports to the Strategy & Resources Committee or Council.

5.7. For the LDP Review, this evidence will be set out in a DTC Statement of Compliance submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the LDP Review. This will highlight to the Planning Inspector how preferred strategic approaches and policies have resulted from effective cooperation and joint-working.

## Appendix 1 – Relevant Duty to Cooperate Bodies

1.1. The following 'Duty to Cooperate' bodies as set out in the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) are relevant to the preparation and implementation of the Maldon District Local Development Plan Review:

- Essex County Council
- Neighbouring and Essex local planning authorities including Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester, Rochford, Tendring, Uttlesford, Basildon, Castle Point, Harlow, Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock, Brentwood and Epping Forest;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- NHS Mid & South Essex Clinical Commissioning Group;
- Environment Agency;
- Essex County Highways Authority;
- Highways England;
- Historic England (as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England)
- Homes England;
- Natural England;
- NHS England (as the National Health Service Commissioning Board);
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Mayor of London (Greater London Authority);
- Office of Road and Rail; and
- Transport for London.

1.2. In addition, Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph 030 Reference ID: 61-030-20190315), whilst Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the duty, LPAs, county councils and prescribed bodies must cooperate with them. LPAs must also have regard to their activities when they are preparing their Local Plans, so long as those activities are relevant to plan-making.

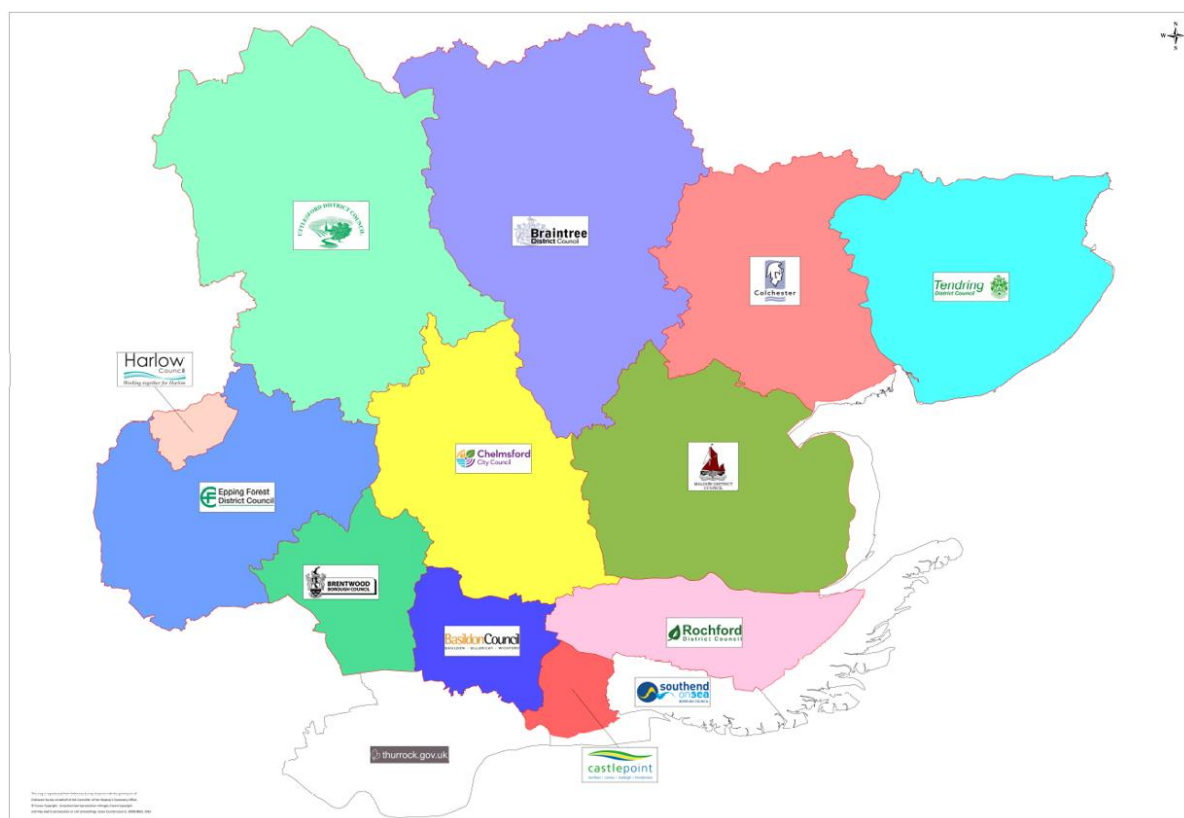
1.3. Therefore, to comply with the PPG, MDC will also cooperate with the:

- Greater Essex Local Nature Partnership<sup>2</sup>; and
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

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<sup>2</sup> Once it is formally established by the Government

## Appendix 2 – Strategic Policy Authorities Context Map



(Source: Essex County Council)

## Appendix 3 – Existing Co-Operation Governance Mapping

Public Body	Name of Existing Cooperation Arrangements	Level (Member/Officer)	Strategic Cross Boundary Theme <sup>3</sup>
<b>Essex County Council</b>	MDC & ECC LDP Review Strategic Liaison Group (SLiG)	Officer	ECC statutory functions relating to highways, public transport, minerals and waste planning, flood risk, education, public health & adult social care.
	MDC & ECC Transport Coordination Group (TCG)	Officer	Highways and Public Transport project coordination and delivery
<b>Neighbouring and other Essex Local Authorities</b>	Essex Partnership Board	Member & Officer	Local Government Administration
	Essex Chief Executives' & Leaders' Group (15 LAs)	Member & Officer	Local Government Administration (including Planning, Housing, Economy, Transport, Regeneration) etc.
	Essex Planning Policy Portfolio Holder & Chairman's (14 LPAs and ECC)	Member	Planning, Growth, Design, Infrastructure, Housing
	Essex Planning Officers' Association (14 LPAs and ECC)	Officer	Planning, Growth, Design, Infrastructure, Housing
	North Essex Economic Board (Uttlesford, Chelmsford, Maldon, Braintree, Tendring and Colchester)	Member & Officer	Economy
	Transport East (LGA)	Member & Officer	Strategic Road and Rail Connections & Investment
	Essex Coastal Forum	Member & Officer	Coastline Management & Essex RAMS
	Essex Flood Partnership Board	Member	Flood Risk, Drainage & Investment
	Essex Air Quality and Pollution Group	Officer	Environmental Pollution
	Superfast Essex Steering Board	Member	Broadband Investment

<sup>3</sup> Not intended to be exhaustive – all strategic cross boundary issues relevant to MDC will be set out in Statements of Common Ground



Public Body	Name of Existing Cooperation Arrangements	Level (Member/Officer)	Strategic Cross Boundary Theme <sup>3</sup>
	Health & Wellbeing Forum	Member & Officer	Public Health
<b>Civil Aviation Authority</b>	n/a	n/a	Airport Regulation & Airspace Management
<b>Environment Agency</b>	Essex Flood Partnership Board; Maldon District Strategic Flooding Projects Group	Member & Officer	River Catchment Management, Shoreline Management, Water, Flood Risk Mitigation
<b>Essex Highways Authority</b>	Local Area Highways Panel	Member	Highways
<b>Highways England</b>	A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme Regional Delivery Partnership	Member & Officer	A12/A120 Strategic Routes
<b>Homes England</b>	MDC & Homes England Liaison Meetings	Officer	Housing, Regeneration, Development, Investment
<b>Historic England</b>	None	n/a	Historic environment
<b>Local Nature Partnership</b>	TBC	n/a	Natural environment
<b>Natural England</b>	None	n/a	Natural environment
<b>NHS England</b>	None	n/a	Public Health
<b>Mid &amp; South Essex NHS Clinical Commissioning Group</b>	Maldon Operational Group Maldon & MSE CCG Liaison Meetings	Member & Officer	Primary and Acute Health Care
<b>Marine Management Organisation</b>	None	n/a	Marine Planning
<b>Mayor of London (Greater London Authority)</b>	Wider South East Political Steering Group (LGA)	Member	Opportunities & impacts of Greater London on Wider South East
<b>Office for Road and Rail</b>	None	n/a	Road and Rail Regulation
<b>SELEP</b>	Essex Business Board	Member	Economy
	Coastal Communities Working Group	Officer	Coastal Communities
	Rural Working Group	Officer	Rural Communities
<b>Transport for London</b>	Wider South East Political Steering Group (LGA)	Member	Opportunities & impacts of Greater London Transport system on Wider South East

## Appendix 4 – Model Final Statement of Common Ground

<p><b>Front Cover</b></p> <p>Maldon District Local Development Plan Review Statement of Common Ground</p> <p>Signatories Logos</p>
<p><b>1. Main Parties:</b> <i>A list of bodies which have engaged in the SOCG – short summary of each body to aid contextual understanding)</i></p>
<p><b>2. Applicable Strategic Geography</b> <i>including a map, short description and justification for the strategic planning area that covers the SOCG.</i></p>
<p><b>3. Strategic Matters Considered</b> <i>Define and agree on the strategic/ cross boundary issues</i></p> <p><i>Establish the matters where a policy approach has been <u>agreed</u>, including any support for evidence or complimentary projects or initiatives, or additional partners.</i></p> <p><i>Establish any matters that are <u>outstanding</u>, noting the implications for strategic/cross boundary context and what process will happen to seek to resolve them before the SOCG is finalised, including any arbitration.</i></p>
<p><b>4. Governance Arrangements</b> <i>Define any specific governance arrangements that will be used to make decisions on delivering activities set out in the SOCG</i></p>
<p><b>5. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation</b> <i>Establish a target date for agreeing the SOCG or when a review may need to be considered.</i></p> <p><i>Establish how strategic issues will be managed on an ongoing basis after plan adoption, any specific mechanisms or partnerships that will be used and how it will be monitored by all signatories.</i></p>
<p><b>6. Signatories</b></p> <p><b><i>Name of Lead Officer and Lead Committee/ Cabinet Member/ Board Member of each Organisation.</i></b></p>

## Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of Maldon District Council's (MDC) Affordable Housing Policies and guidance is to ensure the development of balanced and integrated communities and to deliver good quality affordable housing. The need for subsidised, affordable housing provision has long been recognised. The cost of good quality private sector housing in the right location means that significant numbers of households lack the income to meet the market cost of housing. Without subsidised housing, these households can fail to obtain housing of an acceptable standard.
- 1.2 This strategy explains MDC's approach to the delivery of affordable housing where these homes cannot be delivered as part of a development on-site, or where the delivery of the affordable homes elsewhere is more sustainable than on-site. In these circumstances a monetary alternative is provided to fund this off-site provision as a commuted sum. In accordance with the NPPF this guidance is not prescriptive, rather it sets out principles which should be followed whilst undertaking viability assessments and determining an appropriate commuted sum. This provides flexibility when dealing with housing proposals that vary significantly in location, scale, type and tenure.
- 1.3 Acceptance of a commuted sum has been a very rare occurrence for the council as affordable housing has generally been delivered on-site. There is a likelihood that in the future commuted sum payments will happen on a more regular basis and, whilst individually these sums may be relatively small, the total value of commuted sum receipts will continue to grow.
- 1.4 A legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (S.106) may require the council to spend, or commit to spend, commuted sums received within a specified timescale. If they have not been used or allocated for use, a developer may, after the specified period, seek a return of a commuted sum payments. As a non-stock holding authority, affordable housing in the District is provided by Housing Associations who rely on public subsidy towards the capital costs of development; this adds an additional layer of complexity to the use of any commuted sums received.

## Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy

- 1.5 It is therefore important for the council to have an agreed approach to enable timely and appropriate use of these monies.
- 1.6 The provision of affordable housing is considered to be in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan (2021-2023); particularly 'Deliver the housing the District needs' and 'Deliver sustainable growth and new infrastructure through development'.

## 2. Definition of Affordable Housing

- 2.1 The NPPF Annex 2 defines Affordable Housing as:

*"Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:"*

*"a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable);(b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent)."*

*"b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's*

**Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy**

*eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.”*

*“c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.”*

*“d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.”*

- 2.2 Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
- 2.3 Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

## **Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy**

- 2.4 Affordable rented housing is let by private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- 2.5 Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

### **3. Definition of Commuted Sum**

- 3.1 A commuted sum is an amount of money, paid by a developer to Maldon District Council, where the size or scale of a development triggers a requirement for affordable housing, but it is not possible to deliver affordable housing on site. The sum will be used to provide affordable housing on an alternative site in the local authority.
- 3.2 The requirement for a commuted sum to be paid in lieu of on-site delivery of affordable housing is secured S.106 legal agreement. It is necessary to adhere to any specific constraints such as a time limit for the sum to be spent, or restrictions around locality for alternative provision.
- 3.3 The council can, in appropriate circumstances seek a legal agreement as part of a planning permission for a development. The Local Planning Authority must ensure that a S.106 obligation meets the relevant tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (CIL).
- 3.4 It must be satisfied that the obligation is necessary to make the development is:
- Acceptable in planning terms;
  - Directly related to the development and fairly; and

## Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy

- Reasonably related in scale and kind.

### 4. Maldon District Council's Affordable Housing Policy

- 4.1 The Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) seeks to deliver market and affordable housing that meets the needs and aspirations of existing and future residents, of different demographic groups and needs, over the plan period (2014-2029). Specifically, the affordable housing policy positions is defined by LDP Policies H1: Affordable Housing, Policy H2: Housing Mix, H3: Accommodation for 'Specialist' Needs and both the 'Specialist Needs Housing Supplementary Planning Document' and 'Affordable Housing and Viability' Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.2 All housing development of 10 or more units or 1,000m<sup>2</sup> are required to contribute towards affordable housing provision to meet the identified needs of the District. Policy H1 of the LDP sets out the affordable housing requirements for each sub-area in the District. These are shown in the table below as the percentage of affordable required in each development where required:

Sub-area Requirements	
North Heybridge Garden Suburb:	25%
North of Heybridge - S2(d)	40%
North of Holloway Road - S2(e)	40%
West of Broad Street Green Road - S2(f)	40%
South Maldon Garden Suburb	40%
Strategic Allocations at Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch	40%
All other developments:	
Northern Rural, Maldon Central and South and Rural South	40%
Maldon North and Rural South East Higher	30%
Rural South East Lower	25%

- 4.3 Since adoption of the Local Development Plan, the Government has set a national threshold of 10 units and maximum combined floor space of 1,000 sqm, beyond which, contributions to affordable housing provisions can only be

## Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy

sought. This is a material consideration that MDC gives significant weight to through the Development Management process.

- 4.4 The Council does consider accepting financial contributions (commuted sums) from developers where it is justified that affordable housing cannot be delivered on-site or when the District's affordable housing needs can be better satisfied through this route.

### Examples of where Commuted Sums may be acceptable

- 4.5 The Council expects on-site affordable housing to be provided on-site. Applicants should not automatically assume that a financial contribution in lieu of on-site affordable housing will be acceptable. However, it is accepted that, at times, it may be more beneficial to accept a financial contribution to better meet the District's affordable housing need. It is considered that these situations will include:
- The location of the proposed development is not in a sustainable suitable location (in relation to access to local services e.g. health, education and public transport).
  - The location of the site is not considered appropriate for affordable housing.
  - Delivery of on-site affordable housing in an area where there is already a dominance of a particular tenure of affordable housing.
  - Where the applicant can demonstrate that no registered provider is interested in purchasing the proposed affordable housing element.
  - There is a limited demand for this type of accommodation in the area, the type or tenure is considered to be unfavourable, there would be an overconcentration of a specific type or tenure of accommodation
  - When the contribution would make up part of a flatbed block and/or when the size of the units may be unattractive to a registered provider (This would normally only be relevant when considering the conversion of an existing building rather than the provision of a new development).



## Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy

- It can be demonstrated by the applicant that delivery is not possible because of viability constraints (an accompanying viability assessment will be required).

How will the Commuted sum be calculated

- 4.6 On sites where the Council has decided to take a financial contribution the Council will calculate the payment to be made. The formula used to work out the commuted sum is set within Maldon District Council's 'Affordable Housing and Viability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)'. All contributions will be based upon this formula:

**Developer contribution:  $A = B \times C$**

**A:** the affordable dwelling payment.

**B:** the average price for an affordable dwelling (by size and tenure).

**C:** policy requirement number of units.

## 5. How will the Commuted Sums be spent

- 5.1 The Local Authority will use financial commuted sums in a number of ways and will require the flexibility to do so to be reflected in its approach and in the s.106 agreement. Where the contributions are accepted they will be used to provide an additional affordable housing enabling tool aimed at meeting the housing needs of the District. Commuted sums will be earmarked to enable the provision of affordable housing through a variety of means such as:

- To support and facilitate the delivery of affordable housing led development;
- To support the delivery of new build affordable housing;
- To create additional, larger or a different tenure mix within the existing affordable housing provision;
- To provide funding in order to make it possible for a higher proportion of affordable homes on a site than is required by policy;

**Affordable Housing and Commuted Sum Strategy**

- To fund extra units of affordable housing on alternative sites or additional units outside of those secured under the S106 agreement;
- For the deliver of affordable housing schemes that meet the specific hosing needs of the residents of the District;
- Acquisition of single dwellings that can be used for affordable housing units when opportunities arise.
- Secure long-term temporary accommodation.

**6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 Commuted sums provide a valuable opportunity for the councils to ensure that where delivery of affordable housing on a site is not possible, alternative provision can contribute towards the councils' aims of delivering affordable homes to meet local need.
- 6.2 There is a need for guidance to be approved for the spending of commuted sums, which allows for the appropriate and timely use of these payments to provide new-build affordable housing that meets the housing needs of the District.

**MALDON DISTRICT  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

**REGULATION 18**

**ISSUES AND OPTIONS DOCUMENT**

**DRAFT JULY 2021**

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## 1.0 ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Maldon District's Local Development Plan (LDP)

All councils have to prepare a Development Plan called a Local Plan; this document is, along with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) used in the determination of planning decisions. It sets out how an area can meet its growth needs for things such as new housing and employment development. All local plans include a spatial strategy which directs where this growth will go and allocates land so that it can be developed. They also contain more detailed policies to guide how councils will make decisions on planning applications. The plan covers all types of development, from housing to employment, shops, infrastructure (roads, schools, green spaces) and community facilities, with a few exceptions including how waste and minerals related development will be catered for.

Maldon District Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) was approved following an Examination in Public by the Planning Inspectorate in 2017 and it covered the period 2014 to 2029. The LDP applies to the whole of Maldon District.

### 1.2 Why does the LDP Need Reviewing?

Policy S3 in the approved LDP had a trigger set out in it for an early review, in para 2.16 of the LDP it states;

*"The Council will monitor housing delivery against the housing trajectory for the District using the indicators specified in the Monitoring Framework set out in the LDP. If the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) demonstrates that the Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations deliver less than 75% of their projected housing completions in three consecutive years (based on the trajectories set out in Figure 4 of this Plan), the Council will undertake a partial review of this Plan. In undertaking this review, the Council will ensure that sufficient infrastructure capacity is available and that the potential allocation of additional housing sites will not prejudice delivery of the infrastructure required by the Plan."*

The council has also been monitoring development every year since the LDP was approved. Monitoring in 2019/2020 showed that the trigger had been met for the first time.

Additionally, the evidence base, which supports the LDP is now becoming out of date and the District does not have a 5 year supply of housing land which helps residents with choice in their accommodation needs. National policy has also been amended since the LDP was approved and there are some aspects which are no longer in conformity with it, which reduces its effectiveness in managing development in the District. Finally, in February 2021, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and many of the policies in the LDP do not provide the best foundation from which to help manage and mitigate the effects of climate change on the District.

It is therefore considered an appropriate time for a review of the document. The reviewed LDP will start to carry some weight as it progresses through the plan making stages and on adoption will carry full legal weight and fully supersede the current LDP.

### 1.3 Timetable for the Review of the Local Plan

The updated Plan will cover the period up to at least 2038, fifteen years from the expected date of adoption in 2023. The council has published a timetable for updating the Plan in its statutory Local Development Scheme. The timetable is outlined below:

DOCUMENT TITLE	REVIEW OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Role and Content	To provide an update to the Adopted Local Development Plan 2014 – 2029 this will provide a planning policy framework and development strategy for Maldon District up to 2038
Coverage	Maldon District
Timetable	Consult on Issues and Options – Autumn 2021 Consult on the Preferred Strategy LDP (Reg 18) – Summer 2022 Publish Draft LDP (Reg 19) – Early Spring 2023 Submit to the Secretary of State for Examination – Late Spring 2023 Adoption – Late Autumn 2023
Chain of Conformity	Relevant Planning Acts and Regulations National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance Maldon District Corporate Plan Local Development Plan Evidence base
Resource	Local Plans team; Other Council Officers; Co-operation with neighbouring local planning authorities; Co-operation with relevant stakeholders including infrastructure providers; Use of technology and web-based communication to assist with consultation; and Consultancy support to develop, review and update the evidence base and aid with the Examination.

#### 1.4 **Why are the Council consulting on an Issues and Options document now?**

As outlined in the timetable above, the LDP update process has a number of formal statutory stages to pass through which will take place over the next few years. This includes consultation on draft versions of the Plan. This Issues and Options document is the first formal but non-statutory consultation in the plan making process. Its main purpose is to ensure that the Plan had identified the main key issues for those parts of the Plan that the Council are reviewing and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered. This is your opportunity to feed into the LDP Review process at an early stage and help shape the future changes to the Plan.

#### 1.5 **Will the Review of the Local Plan Impact on Neighbourhood Planning?**

For some Parish Councils in Maldon District, Neighbourhood Planning has enabled them to come together to produce a statutory plan for their local area to influence how development should be managed. Neighbourhood Plans have the same status in the planning process as Local Plans, but they must be in conformity with the Local Plan and also legislation, national planning policy & guidance.

Whilst any Neighbourhood Plans that have been formally 'made' (that is, they have been brought into effect for use in the District's planning policy framework) will continue to form part of the Development Plan for their areas, the most up to date plan takes precedence and therefore the LDP Review may supersede parts of Neighbourhood Plans which do not comply with it.

It is recommended that new and developing Neighbourhood Plans should, as far as it is possible, take into account the LDP Review as they are developed and that any 'made' Neighbourhood Plans may need to be reviewed themselves by Parish Councils in light of any changes coming forward. The council will support communities through this process.

#### 1.6 **Making Comments on this Consultation**

The consultation will run from XXXX to 5.30pm on the XXXX.

Representations should arrive no later than 5.30pm on XXXX. All representations received will be made available to view publicly.

The consultation document and supporting documents can be found on the council website at: [www.maldon.gov.uk/Issues-and-Options](http://www.maldon.gov.uk/Issues-and-Options)

If you would like to make comments, please reference specific questions, sections or paragraph numbers and be as specific as possible. You are not required to comment on all of the questions in the Issues and Options document and you can complete as many questions as desired.

Please send your comments in one of the following ways:

XXXXXX

## 2.0 **THE DISTRICT OF MALDON - A SPATIAL PICTURE**

- 2.1 The District covers an area of 36,000 hectares and has over 70 miles of unique coastline. Compared to other locations in Essex, the District has a relatively low crime rate, good quality housing stock, a unique retail offer with quality high streets in both Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch. The District's natural landscape is dominated by the

two estuaries and the extensive flat and gently undulating alluvial plain along the Rivers Blackwater and Crouch and their relationship with the North Sea. The area has strong associations with fishing and marine trades, and more recently sailing.

- 2.2 The District has strong spatial connections with a number of important regional growth areas including, the Haven Gateway, the Thames Gateway, London, Chelmsford, the M11 corridor, M25; as well as Stanstead and Southend Airports.
- 2.3 The settlements of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch are important drivers for the local economy. The District is home to approximately 27,500 jobs generated from 3,681<sup>1</sup> businesses. The villages and rural areas also make a considerable contribution to the District's economy with a high performance in agricultural and farming related activities, including viticulture. Historically, the economy was based on agricultural production, coastal trade and manufacturing. However, in recent decades there has been a shift towards a mixed economy with an increased service sector, tourism and advanced engineering and manufacturing businesses.
- 2.4 Tourism is an important sector in the wider Essex economy contributing £3.4bn of value. Maldon District is an important contributor of this diverse appeal with its offering of heritage, unique landscapes, recreation areas and marine culture all within close proximity to London and the wider region. These qualities have made the District increasingly attractive to the TV and film industry as a production location, which itself is attracting more people to the area as they search for the places they see on their screens. To the Maldon District, tourism contributes around 17% of all employment and brings over £178m in visitor spend to the local economy<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.5 The District has a unique heritage including a maritime heritage with more than 1,000 entries on the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest, 21 Scheduled Monuments, one Registered Park and Garden, and one Registered Battlefield. There are also 14 designated Conservation Areas which incorporate the historic cores of towns and villages, eight miles of waterway incorporating the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and the 24 buildings and open space of a nationally important World War One Aerodrome in Stow Maries.  
  
The District is 211th (out of 317 English local authority areas) in terms of its overall ranking in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. However, its score with regard to barriers to housing is lower with 149 out of the 317 English Local Authorities, which is most likely an indicator of the high cost of housing and the lack of rental housing supply especially in the south of the District.
- 2.6 In 2021, the District of Maldon had a population of approximately 65,800. By 2038, this is estimated to have increased to approximately 72,000. Whilst the District's population has doubled over the last 40 years, it still has one of the lowest population densities in Essex at approximately 182 residents per square kilometre. As with other locations in Essex, the population of the District is ageing and it is projected that between 2021 and 2038, the population aged between 65 and 84 years is expected to increase by approximately 45%; whilst those aged over 85 years is expected to double. There is also projected to be a decline in the ratio of working age people, which could have a future impact on employment vacancy rates.

<sup>1</sup> Cambridge Economics within the Maldon District Economic Study – Hatch 2020

<sup>2</sup> Destination Research – Economic Value of Tourism 2020



2.7 The District's natural landscape is dominated by the two estuaries and the extensive flat and gently undulating alluvial plain along the Rivers Blackwater and Crouch, these areas have fragile habitats and biodiversity with many of the areas being of international, national and local importance and subsequently have been designated as Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserves (NNR). There are significant areas of semi-natural habitat that make an important contribution to the area's diverse landscape character and offers key landscape views across the estuaries. The presence and distribution of these habitats is strongly influenced by geology and landform and include woodland, grassland, estuary, salt marsh, mudflats, and freshwater and open water habitats.

2.8 The District is geographically split into three distinctive areas which are the Central Area (Maldon and Heybridge), the North and West Area and the South and East Area. The areas are described in more detail below and illustrated on Map X. (to be inserted)

### 2.9 The Central Area (Maldon and Heybridge)

Maldon and Heybridge are interdependent in terms of how residents use their services and facilities, though the River Blackwater runs between the two, connecting them by Fullbridge and the A414. These two settlements have a combined population of approximately 23,000 and account for over a third of the District's population. They have an important commercial, retail, leisure and service centre function that serves the whole District, assisting the growing tourism sector with museums, places of architectural interest and parks, including the renowned Promenade Park.

2.10 Maldon is a medieval market town that was first mentioned in AD 913 in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle. As one of the oldest towns in Essex, its rich history is reflected in the quality of its architectural heritage. There are 185 Listed Buildings in the Maldon Conservation Area alone. Maldon is also known internationally for its sea salt production and as a centre for Thames Sailing Barges. Unfortunately, its two railway stations were closed in the 1960s and some parts of the old railway line have since been built over.

Maldon is also home to the South Maldon Garden Suburb which was allocated for strategic growth in 2017 and is currently being built in phases, which will include new community facilities, including an NHS health hub, a new primary school and relief road.

Heybridge has two distinctive parts, a large urban area and the riverside area of Heybridge Basin. The urban area is characterised by its manufacturing heritage, which has had an important impact upon the urban grain and architecture of the area. The Basin area is quite different and is characterised by its relationship to the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation that was opened in 1797. Many of its buildings can trace their links back to a maritime heritage and date from the development of the commercial waterway in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with some twentieth century replacement buildings.

### 2.11 The North and West Area

2.12 In this area lies the settlements of Great Totham, Great Braxted, Purleigh, Tollesbury, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Wickham Bishops, Woodham Mortimer and Woodham Walter, Little Totham, the Broad Street Green area and the area of Beacon Hill, Tollesbury, North Fambridge, Cold Norton, Stow Maries, and Cock Clarks.

- 2.13 This area is characterised by its distinctive settlements, ponds, reservoirs and wooded areas. North Fambridge is located in the south of the area and has its own railway station on the Southminster branch line that terminates at Wickford with onwards services into London Liverpool Street and Southend Victoria. There are golf courses, wooded walks, a linear country park along the route of the former Maldon to Witham railway line and the settlement of Stow Maries includes an important World War One Aerodrome.

Tollesbury is an historic settlement with a strong relationship with the River Blackwater and its economy was traditionally based on oyster dredging and agriculture. The hinterland is mainly comprised of marshland and saltings.

- 2.14 The Broad Street Green area, because of its close connection with the main settlement of Maldon and Heybridge was one of the areas the LDP allocated for strategic growth in 2017 and will in the future be the location of the North Heybridge Garden Suburb with its associated new community facilities, including a GP practice and primary school.

#### 2.15 **The South and East Area**

- 2.16 In this area lies the following settlements; Burnham-on-Crouch, Southminster, Dengie, Bradwell-on-Sea, Asheldham, Bradwell Waterside, Mayland, Maylandsea, St Lawrence, Althorne, Tillingham and Steeple.

- 2.17 This area incorporates the Dengie Peninsula with its rural character, open big skies, tranquillity, marshland and mudflats. This area also incorporates Burnham-on-Crouch which is the second largest town in the District, after Maldon and Heybridge, connected to other places with a railway station. Burnham-on-Crouch is predominantly known for its coastal trading history and sailing activities. It is associated with its maritime connections including oyster trading and yachting, with a number of clubs which include the Crouch Yacht Club, the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club and the Royal Burnham Yacht Club.

- 2.18 The settlement of Southminster also lies in this area and contains several historic buildings including St Leonard's Church. The settlement also has its own railway station, which is the terminus of the Crouch Valley branch line.

- 2.19 A third railway station is located at Althorne, though the station is physically separated from the main settlement, which lies instead on a rise in the land and this gives it wide open views to the River Crouch and its landscape.

- 2.20 Bradwell-on-Sea on the Dengie Peninsula is a settlement with a history of national significance. It contains the remote Chapel of St Peter-on-the-Wall, which is one of the oldest chapels in England being constructed in AD 654 from Roman ruins when St Cedd was sent from Lindisfarne to spread the Gospel in East Anglia.

**Would you agree with the above spatial picture of the District?**

### 3.0 NATIONAL CONTEXT

#### 3.1 Planning System & National Issues

The Government has highlighted its ongoing commitment to the plan-led system, seeing it as a key way of delivering many of its objectives including an increase in house building nationally and raising the standard of design in new developments. By law, the LDP Review will need to be in conformity with new legislation including national policy and guidance and take account of any changes that the Government makes to the system whilst the LDP Review is evolving.

Alongside the Planning Bill, proposed in HM The Queen's Speech 2021, other topical issues that could affect the Maldon District as the LDP Review is delivered include:

- The introduction of the Future Homes Standard meaning a ban from installing fossil-fuel boilers in domestic properties from 2025;
- The introduction of a Future Buildings Standard to the Building Regulations, to improve the energy efficiency of non-domestic buildings;
- The ban on new petrol and diesel engines by 2040 and the need to increase alternatives; and
- The roll-out of Biodiversity Net-Gain schemes via development.

#### 3.2 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

It is important to remember that not all planning decisions are determined by Maldon District Council. Some projects, which are deemed by the Government to be in the national interest are instead planned and determined through a separate policy and determination process called National Policy Statements (NPSs), Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Development Consent Orders (DCOs).

There are two NSIPs currently underway for the Maldon District. These are:

- Bradwell B New Nuclear Power Station
- A12 Junction Upgrade and Widening Scheme

##### Bradwell B New Nuclear Power Station

Maldon District has been identified by the Government as the location for a potential new nuclear new build site at Bradwell on-Sea, known as Bradwell B. Bradwell is no stranger to nuclear development and is also the site of the decommissioned Bradwell A Magnox power station. Whilst the current developer promoting the project paused work on the Development Consent Order (DCO) in January 2021, Bradwell-on-Sea is still an identified site in the National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure (EN-6)<sup>3</sup>, which the LDP Review cannot change and according to the Government it remains available and potentially suitable, in principle, for nuclear energy development.

3.3 Planning policies for NSIPs are set out in NPSs and do not form part of the LDP. The Council does however have to give them consideration when reviewing the LDP.

3.4 When determining DCO applications for NSIPs the Government will consult the Council. The Council will then prepare a Local Impact Report, to which the Planning

<sup>3</sup> [National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-policy-statements-for-energy-infrastructure)

Act 2008 states that the Secretary of State must have regard to when determining the DCO. The LDP Review can therefore play a crucial role in helping to inform the Local Impact Report along with any other evidence and considerations.

- 3.5 The Council will, however, be the decision-maker for any ancillary development linked to the NSIP (but not included in the DCO) under its powers as LPA. Any such development will be considered against the LDP and the NPS.
- 3.6 There may also be occasions where supporting or preliminary work for NSIPs is required before the DCO work. If this happens any proposals will be considered in line with the policies in LDP.
- 3.7 **The A12 Junction Upgrade & Widening Scheme**  
On the north-west of the District is a proposal by Highways England to upgrade a stretch of the A12 between Chelmsford and Colchester (junction 19 Boreham Interchange to junction 25 Marks Tey Interchange). Some very small stretches of the road are physically in the Maldon District.
- 3.8 MDC has been engaged in the process since 2017 and together with our Highway Authority partners in Essex County Council and our neighbouring authorities, we have been working to identify ways to improve road conditions on connections into the A12 which Maldon District residents and businesses use.

#### 4.0 KEY ISSUES FOR MALDON DISTRICT

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##### 4.1 District Wide

It is important in the review to reconsider the issues that face the District and ensure that they are still relevant. These should be short and high level and relate to matters that relate to the District. In the current LDP approved in 2017, the main issues that were to be addressed were as follows;

- 4.2 **Housing** – In-migration and lack of supply meant that demand was significantly higher than the amount of housing that was being built. This increased the affordability issue of housing, meaning more people were finding themselves not being able to afford to continue to live in the District and some who had lived here all their lives were moving out to find somewhere more affordable to live. This was exacerbated by the fact that a large proportion of the working population out-commuted to London and there was a difference in the wages between those that worked locally. There was a high need for affordable housing across the District exacerbated by a lack of supply with an imbalance in the requirement against the delivery of the type and size of housing. There was also a growing requirement for the delivery of additional Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- 4.3 **Economy** - With the exception of few large-scale companies, the economy of the District was generally defined by a large number of small firms. Whilst there was overall prosperity across the District, there was a skills shortage with a high proportion of the working age population possessing no qualifications and a significant proportion of the population out-commuting to work. This resulted in a disparity in income levels of local workers, versus those who commuted, exacerbating issues of affordability and quality of life.

- 4.4 The Natural and Built Heritage** - The Maldon District was characterised by a diverse and distinct natural, historic and built heritage which made a significant contribution to the quality of life in the area. There was a need for the planning policy framework to optimise these assets whilst maintaining an appropriate balance with the requirement to also meet development needs. Due to the coastal and low-lying topography around the estuaries, the District was considered to be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and flooding. The vulnerability of new development needed to be minimised to ensure that this risk was not worsened for future generations.
- 4.5 Accessibility** - The District has direct links to the A12 trunk road via the A414 and the B1019. Many roads within the District comprised B and C class country roads. There is one railway branch line (the Crouch Valley Line) along the south of the District connecting Southminster, Burnham-on-Crouch, Althorne and North Fambridge to South Woodham Ferrers (in Chelmsford City area) and onto London, via Wickford. Bus and taxi services were the only other transport option for the rest of the District and there were issues around the level and frequency of bus service provision in some rural locations, though 78% of the District's settlements have either a shopper or commuter bus service. The rural character and relatively poor accessibility across the District impacted upon the ability of individuals, particularly young people without access to their own transport to access things like education, work and social activities, which also affected older people's access to key services.
- 4.6 People and Communities** - The provision of infrastructure and facilities was considered to be a vital component in addressing the sustainability and well-being of communities and all new development needs were planned to be supported by the provision of adequate infrastructure. Facilities such as village shops, post offices, community halls and pubs located in the more rural settlements had a key role in securing the cohesiveness of the local communities. Engaging people through sports, arts, leisure and cultural activities was recognised to strengthen communities and was considered that it could help to reduce problems of anti-social behaviour and exclusion. All parts of the District needed to have the opportunities to access activities and facilities and there was a need for investment in strategic community infrastructure across the District to enable and improve provision.

#### **Question - Are These Issues Still Relevant?**

#### **4.8 Strategic & Cross Boundary Issues**

In September 2021, the council approved a Duty to Cooperate Strategy that stipulates how it meet its legal obligations with other specific bodies that it must cooperate with on strategic and cross-boundary matters. These include organisations such as Essex County Council, Highways England, the NHS, the Marine Management Organisation, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Thematically these strategic and cross boundary issues can be summarised as:

##### **Highways**

- A12 widening and junction improvements at Hatfield Peverell, Rivenhall and Witham
- Delivery of local highway infrastructure identified in the current LDP including the South Maldon and North Heybridge Relief Roads

**Environment**

- Synergy between the South East Marine Plan and the LDP Review
- Impacts of continued growth in Maldon & Heybridge on Air Quality Management Area in Maldon & Danbury (within Chelmsford City area)
- Impact of residential growth on protected habitats in Essex
- Impact of growth on the water cycle

**Housing**

- Housing market area changes - Maldon is now in a Housing Market Area with Chelmsford and Braintree
- The need and provision of Gypsy & Traveller Transit Sites in Essex

**Education**

- Primary and secondary education provision and capacity due to growth

**Health**

- Delivery of strategic infrastructure projects including NHS Health Hubs, GP surgeries and relief roads for Maldon and Heybridge

**Question - Do you consider these to be the extent of strategic and cross boundary issues applicable for the Maldon District?****4.9 LDP Review - The Issues**

- 4.10 The previous LDP issues as set above may be still relevant, however there is the need to take into account that whilst the District has been building more housing in recent years, there is still a shortfall between the amount needed and the pace of delivery. There is also still a shortage of affordable housing and the out-commuting levels are still very high. The previous issues did not reflect the climate change emergency that the Council declared in February 2021, though they were considered in the LDP's accompanying Sustainability Appraisal but not emphasised as strongly in policy development.

- 4.11 A revision of the key issues are considered to be the following;

**1) Reducing emissions and adapting to climate change**

- New development is not doing enough to reduce emissions and adapt to the climate change increasing the amount of development that contributes to unsustainable travel patterns, resource usage and increased emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases.
- Human interaction has the potential to increase flood risk, air, water and soil pollution which could have damaging consequences for the residents of the District.
- Lack of funding could compromise the ability of the Council and other Risk Management Authorities to bring forward viable flood risk mitigation schemes that could support existing and new communities.
- Whilst strategically, new partnership arrangements with other Essex authorities are building funding opportunities for mitigating development pressures on the most protected coastal habitats including those in the Maldon District, new developments are failing to bring forward genuine local mitigation measures to help improve the natural environment.



- Maldon District is in one of the driest areas of the country, water resources are scarce and require greater consideration in the planning process to reduce water wastage and capture and improve water efficiency in new development.

#### **4.12 2) Resident-centred places to live**

- The District possess' very attractive qualities for people living locally and as the District grows, it needs to ensure that by both design and delivery, the new places to live are resident focused.
- Median housing prices to earnings ratio is 11.87 (2019) which is the highest in Essex, this is considerable up from 4.2 in 1997 when the ONS started collecting this data and 10.82 in 2017. This is continuing to put a strain on affordability across the District.
- Because of the extensive rural nature of the District, there is a limited supply of brownfield land for development, which will inevitably mean that whilst the priority should continue to see land that has previously been developed brought forward for new places to live to be built, development will have to take place on more greenfield sites in the future.
- There are some settlements in the District which are much more isolated in terms of their distance from bigger settlements and their services and facilities. This places pressure on those settlements which are nearer in terms of location and public transport connectivity to take more growth.
- There remains an over-reliance on larger-scale developments to bring forward housing, which with hindsight may have contributed to some of the supply issues the District now sees, where those developers that have multiple sales outlets in the area are managing their construction resources differently than first intended, or where enabling works to larger sites are taking time to come to fruition. This will mean that going forward the council will need to consider allocating more smaller sites that could be built out by small-medium size builders that are not always constrained by the same issues.
- There is a continued need to support different types and sizes of housing, including perpetual First Homes, self-build/custom build homes and Gypsy & Traveller pitches.

#### **4.13 3) A stronger, more resilient and inclusive local economy**

- Population change in the District is driven by net-inward migration with some net international migration. The population is ageing with an expected decrease in the working-age population aged between 16 – 64, which could lead to an increasing labour shortage to local businesses by 2040. If nothing changes, this could see some sectors currently based in Maldon District relocate, or see a further increase of in-commuting into the District for work, which could increase congestion and pollution.
- There is growing competition for employment growth from larger employment centres around Maldon District such as Basildon and Chelmsford, whilst this could reduce land pressures, it could increase commuting and pollution.
- The District has a proliferation of smaller niche businesses but the LDP Review needs to be flexible enough to encourage and support them to grow-on when

they want to, as they provide valuable jobs many of which have higher wage offerings.

- Though 78% of settlements are connected by either a shoppers or commuters bus service, there is a perceived lack of a robust, interconnected multi-modal public transport system which leads to an increase in car usage, and a disconnect between where residents can live, work and access services. This could be affecting quality of life, business investment and the environment. It also means the District's lucrative and growing tourism industry is overly reliant on private vehicles as the means of travel.
- Whilst agriculture and tourism remain dominant employment sectors, both of these can be influenced by seasonal variations and this can undermine the number of full-time jobs available in the District. It is predicted that there will be a fall in agricultural jobs during the plan period, in line with national trends, but with 4 million visitors a year, tourism is a growing sector of the District's economy. Nevertheless, a lack of accommodation, restaurants and activities that maximise the District's coastal and estuarine location could hold it back from sustained growth as this lack of facilities does not encourage people to stay longer than a day.
- The current LDP allocated land equivalent to 11 football pitches for new employment development, however, the land that has been allocated employment land is not being built out as quickly as it could have been, which means it could become at risk of being lost to employment land uses if demand for other land use increases. This would mean the District would be at risk of not being able to react as well to the demand fluctuations expected in economic cycles, nor attract inward investment when opportunities arise.
- Our residents' qualifications profile is lower than the rest of Essex and the national average. The lack of skilled workers available locally can therefore deter inward investment and does not help to encourage aspiration in careers and jobs in our younger residents. This in turn limits their ability to rent or purchase homes and exacerbates out migration.
- The present LDP does not do enough to support small and medium sized construction firms who are more likely to be local and support local employment, economy and the local supply chain. It is estimated that for every dwelling built 3.1 local jobs are generated and through policy choices the LDP Review could look to diversify the share in the future.

#### **4.14 4) Thriving, Distinctive Rural Communities for all ages**

- There is a conflict between respecting the distinct character of the District's rural communities, whilst supporting improvements to rural housing, services and the economy
- The affordability of housing in rural communities leads to a lack of housing for younger people and families meaning they may have little choice but to move out to where they can afford. This has the effect of ageing the rural population, increasing isolation and leading to a decline in rural services and facilities if it is not more proactively managed.



- The perceived lack of a robust multi-modal public transport for both shoppers and commuters leads to more rural isolation and disconnectivity to settlements which support greater levels of employment and service provision.
- Many of the niche businesses in the District lie within our rural area and there is a forecast loss of manufacturing jobs during the plan period, this means there could be an impact on the rural economy.

#### **4.15 5) Protecting and Enhancing our Diverse Natural Environment**

- There are 211 kilometres of shoreline in Maldon District. The area of coastal designated sites is 7,815 hectares, representing 18 % of the total land area of the District. There are two National Nature Reserves (NNRs); with the Blackwater Estuary composed of the Tollesbury Flats and Old Hall Marshes. The Flats are an important feeding area for waterfowl and are an important habitat for a number of invertebrates. The Old Hall Marshes are also known to be a breeding ground and over-wintering site for waterfowl and are home to a number of important plant and invertebrate species. Sea level rise is having a serious impact on our coastal habitats due to coastal squeeze and the erosion of salt marsh.
- The unique biodiversity of the District is under pressure from climate change, land use and coastal squeeze – we move forward by ensuring development has the least impact as possible and invests in habitat improvement and biodiversity net-gain where it can be a success.
- The District has a reasonable level of ancient woodland concentrated in the west of the District; which plays host to numerous flora and fauna and is an important source of biodiversity which is under threat nationally.
- There are large numbers of prominent landscape areas and features within the District, with distinct contrasts between the well-wooded, higher land to the west and the flat marsh and pasture landscape of the valleys to the east. The natural rural environment is generally tranquil and undisturbed in character with a sense of remoteness, tranquillity and big dark skies which can be eroded by development.

#### **4.16 6) Making the Built Environment Beautiful**

- Much of Maldon District's archaeology, particularly that located along the coast, is susceptible to erosion due to sea level rise and climate change. This places these remains at significant risk.
- A Historic Environment Characterisation Project was undertaken in 2008 which identified 59 Historic Landscape Character Zones. We can already see the majority of zones have the potential for deposits, as well as being susceptible and sensitive to change. This means we need to take extra caution when looking at development locations and also consider where development could bring opportunities to understand and record our heritage for future generations...

- The unique heritage assets of the District can become at risk where they fall into disrepair or from nature forces; there are at present 7 sites on the Historic England at Risk Register.
- Whilst growth is an inevitability to ensure that future residents have good quality housing in sustainable rural communities and a robust economy, it is even more important that the design and setting of that growth enhances the rural and urban environments, otherwise the District is at risk of looking and feeling the same as everywhere else.

#### 4.17 7) Ensuring that infrastructure meets residents, visitors and business needs

- There is a shortfall on infrastructure funding from what was forecast to be available in the previous LDP, which has led to delays to key infrastructure in Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch. We need to be realistic when developing the LDP Review that we choose a growth option that can better support infrastructure delivery.
- Maldon District has a higher than average ageing population and this brings with it issues around accessibility and access to health services. With the District being largely rural in nature the needs of the private vehicle will always be important. Parts of the District are more isolated from access to public transport infrastructure, leading to rural isolation. This can place pressure on wider services which have to service more residents remotely or over a broader area.
- With a continuing increase in population comes an increased pressure on existing infrastructure and public service delivery leading to a conflict between infrastructure delivery and growth. We need to work with infrastructure commissioners and providers to ensure that the District's growth options have affordable and viable solutions for upgrades where they are needed to continue to serve peoples' needs.

**Q1. Are these key issues the right ones or are there any key issues that you think have been missed?**

## 5.0 SPATIAL VISION

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5.1 In the 2017 Local Development Plan the Vision was set out as follows:

*The District's unique heritage and countryside will be protected by maintaining high design standards and adhering to the principles of sustainable development. Over the Plan period the District will grow sustainably to meet objectively assessed housing needs, taking into account environmental and infrastructure constraints. This approach will maintain the quality of life for the community and ensure the delivery of new affordable homes and infrastructure. It will also protect our local services, provide for our District's business needs, and retain the identity of our villages.*

*Growth will be concentrated in the most sustainable, accessible and appropriate locations taking into account constraints and the need to protect valued local countryside. The District's strong associations with the coast and our natural, historic and built heritage will make it a location of choice for people, businesses, day visitors*

*and tourists. We will ensure the sustainable growth of the tourism sector by protecting our designated sites, internationally important wildlife, our estuarine environment, salt marshes, unique heritage, beautiful countryside and picturesque towns and villages. Our economy will be based on a highly productive skilled workforce ensuring success in the local, national and global economy. Maldon Town will be a focus for regeneration in order to ensure its continuing success as the District's main economic, social and cultural hub.*

- 5.2 This vision was originally created in 2014 and though as set out above the issues within the District have not altered significantly, there has been a global pandemic and the impact that has had on both the national and local economy, a change of emphasis and direction for the Council, moving climate change higher up the corporate agenda. Affordability and the delivery of housing has become a higher priority and there is now a greater national emphasis on building beauty into development. Therefore, it is proposed to amend the Vision for the review of the LDP to reflect the global, national and local issues and line the Vision up with the issues in the District. It is also proposed to set the vision out more clearly and succinctly so that success can be measured more accurately against it and the delivery objectives.

5.3 **A proposed amended Vision is as follows;**

*By 2043 Maldon will be a district with;*

- 1) A commitment translated into local action which adapts to and reduces the risks of climate change, including supporting the transition to a low carbon economy.*
- 2) A network of sustainable, inclusive and healthy communities where all residents are able to enjoy a high quality of life, and where new housing and economic development balances the needs of communities, the economy and the environment.*
- 3) A diverse and competitive economy which supports the existing employment base but also delivers growth opportunities across a range of sectors that reduces the need for out-commuting, attracts and retains people of working-age and raises overall levels of aspiration and attainment for young people.*
- 4) A high-quality environment that protects the special merits of the District, particularly the historic environment, open landscapes, protected natural environment and unique biodiversity and geodiversity.*
- 5) Joined-up infrastructure in the right place and at the right time to increase overall connectivity and mobility for the needs of both residents, business and visitors.*

## 6.0 OBJECTIVES

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- 6.1 To achieve the Vision of the Local Development Plan it will deliver the following objectives.

- 6.2 1) *A commitment translated into local action which adapts to and reduces the risks of climate change, including supporting the transition to a low carbon economy.*

*We will;*

- Ensure that new development will be as energy efficient as possible in its design, materials and local energy sources in order to reduce emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases.

- Reduce the impact of flood risk, air, water and soil pollution.
- Ensure new development is water efficient to reduce and mitigate against the effects of climate change and drought.
- Support development that minimises traffic generation and provides for sustainable transport solutions without compromising the ability of our rural communities who still need to use cars to access essential services and facilities to thrive and prosper.
- Positively support renewable energy development where it can support the District's move to carbon neutrality and net zero emissions.

6.3 *2) A network of sustainable, inclusive and healthy communities where all residents are able to enjoy a high quality of life, and where new housing and economic development balances the needs of communities, the economy and the environment.*

*We will;*

- Define a pattern of settlements and identify broad areas for growth.
- Allocate sufficient housing to meet the District's housing needs to 2043.
- Increase and support the supply of affordable housing, including affordable home ownership.
- Provide housing choice through self-build and custom build housing and housing to meet the differing needs of the District's residents.
- Develop where possible on previously developed land.
- Support the work of communities in neighbourhood planning.
- Ensure that development positively contributes to improving places and spaces for all and that "beauty" high quality and inclusivity is reflected in the design of the built environment.

6.4 *3) A diverse and competitive economy which supports the existing employment base but also delivers growth opportunities across a range of sectors that reduces the need for out-commuting, attracts and retains people of working-age and raises overall levels of aspiration and attainment for young people.*

*We will;*

- Maintain a diverse, competitive and resilient economy, underpinned by an ambitious and skilled local labour force.
- Encourage business start-up, expansion, diversification and investment opportunities.
- Encourage development that supports the enhancement of education, skills and employment opportunities for all residents, with a particular focus on those furthest from the labour market.
- Facilitate the development of rural and coastal businesses and protect and enhance rural community and service provision across the District.
- Ensure the delivery of regeneration and enhancement of the Central Area (incorporating Maldon Central, The Causeway Regeneration Area and the Leisure Quarter).
- Protect, enhance and where necessary reinvigorate the town centres within the District to broaden their appeal as attractive places for residents, businesses and visitors.

- Develop and support sustainable tourism that builds on the unique natural assets of the District's countryside, coast and estuarine location, including supporting accommodation, restaurants and visitor attractions.

6.5 *4) A high quality environment that protects the special merits of the District, particularly the historic environment, open landscapes, protected natural environment and unique biodiversity and geodiversity.*

*We will;*

- Protect and enhance the distinctive natural, and historic environment of the District.
- Improve and manage the natural environment to ensure that the impact of any development is offset by mitigation opportunities.
- Support the linking of areas of biodiversity importance to assist in the preservation of habitats and provide an improved network of green infrastructure.
- Ensure the protection of strategic gaps between development areas and settlements to safeguard their unique character and wider natural landscape setting.
- Work with owners, partners and developers to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

6.6 *5) Joined-up infrastructure in the right place and at the right time to increase overall connectivity and mobility for the needs of both residents, business and visitors.*

*We will;*

- Work with partners to maintain, improve and co-ordinate public transport provision, and promote sustainable modes of transport and movement where all users feel equally safe.
- Facilitate and work in partnership with commissioners and providers for the delivery of new infrastructure to meet the needs of all residents, business and visitors
- Ensure through our development choices we can maximise what infrastructure is provided at the right time to cater for changing demands.
- Ensure that the residents of new development can safely access education and health services and facilities.

- 1) **Do you agree with the objectives for the review of the LDP?**
- 2) **Are there other objectives that the LDP needs to aim to achieve?**

## **7.0 POLICIES TO BE REVIEWED AND WHY**

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- 7.1 National Planning Policy has changed since the adoption of the current Local Development Plan, paragraphs 20, 21, 22 and 23 of the NPPF lays out how local plans should be set out. They should consist of strategic policies which set the overall

strategy of pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for housing, including affordable housing, employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development. Strategic policies should also cover infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, flood risk and coastal change management, conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

- 7.2 Strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters which should be set out in non-strategic policies. Most of the policies within the current Local Development Plan were non-strategic with some strategic policies throughout the Plan. The review of the LDP will look different because it has to incorporate this change in national policy.

## 8.0 MEETING THE HOUSING NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

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- 8.1 The 2021 NPPF (paragraphs 60-67) requires local authorities to meet locally established needs. This should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, (LHNA) conducted using the standard method in national guidance unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. It also requires local authorities to take into account any needs that cannot be met from surrounding local authorities.
- 8.2 It is therefore necessary, as the NPPF indicates, to establish the appropriate scale of development for the next plan period 2023 – 2043. A key piece of evidence in this determination has been the “Maldon District Local Housing Needs Assessment” published in July 2021, this document is available on the Councils website at [www.maldon.gov.uk](http://www.maldon.gov.uk) (put the one that links to the document in). This study was independently conducted on behalf of the Council by ICENI utilising the methodology requirements described by the NPPF and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance. The report looks at the anticipated requirements for both economic development and housing. The technical details of the data below are fully described within the report. One of the conclusions in the document is that Maldon District lies within a Housing Market Area with Chelmsford and Braintree. National guidance requires us to take account of any unmet housing need of neighbouring authorities within Housing Market Areas. At present there is no evidence of any unmet housing need in these neighbouring local authority areas which would potentially need to be considered as to how it might be addressed.
- 8.3 The Government’s current standard method for assessing housing need takes the 2014 – based Household Projections and applies an upward adjustment based on the median house price to earnings ratio. Applying the standard method in Maldon District results in a minimum local housing need of 308 homes per annum. A review of the recent demographic data, including up-to-date projections and a range of data about past trends does not suggest that there is a strong case for the Council to move away from the standard method figure (in either an upward or downward direction).
- 8.4 Since the start of the current plan period in 2014 to 2021, the District has delivered 1,909 homes. The target for the same period was 2,170 homes, leaving a shortfall of 261 homes. Any housing shortfall should be carried over into the next plan period. It is also important to include a contingency figure or buffer on top of minimum amount of housing growth. This is to ensure that there is a range of different types of sites, large, medium and small and that there is a continuous



supply of housing over the plan period and beyond. Using the 308 homes annual target from the standard method as set out in paragraph 8.3 above the District will need to ensure that there is the potential for housing growth as a minimum for a further 4,492 homes from 2023 to 2043. This figure can fluctuate depending on the number of housing completions and permissions granted up to the moment of the submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State for its examination. It is also important to include a contingency figure or buffer on top of minimum amount of housing growth. This is ensure that there is a range of different types of sites, large, medium and small and that there is a continuous supply of housing over the plan period and beyond.

**Table 1 – Proposed Housing Figure for the Period 2023 - 2043**

<b>2023 - 2043</b>	
308 homes per annum	6,160
Plus 20% buffer	1,232
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7,392</b>
Less existing commitments	-3,161
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>4,231</b>
Plus, shortfall on completions from 2014	+261
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,492</b>

1) Do you agree with the Council using the standard methodology in the calculation of its housing target for the period 2023 – 2043.

2) Should the Council have a contingency or buffer figure in its housing target to ensure that it always has a continuous supply of housing over the plan period and if so what should that buffer be?

3) Should the plan period be longer than 15 years, should the period be 20 years, so that infrastructure can be planned in over a longer period

## **9.0 OPTIONS FOR GROWTH**

### **9.1 The Settlement Pattern**

9.2 As part of the work for the review of the Local Development Plan, the Council has prepared an updated Settlement Pattern which lists the settlements within the District in order of the how sustainable they appear to be, in terms of their available services and facilities, their location to other settlements which provide services and facilities, and their links to public transport networks.

9.3 The Settlement Pattern is a snapshot in time of the Districts' settlements and forms a baseline as to how they function and relate to one another. It is also a golden thread that runs through the plan in terms of clarity and what development is going to be supported in which tier of the pattern.

- 9.4 It is important to note that where a settlement is in the pattern does not necessarily dictate where growth is going to go in the future. This is because the policies in the LDP should do that, but it can help to see how successful those policies are. So, for instance if a policy sets out that a settlement is going to grow and provide additional services and facilities, it should in time, if the policy is positively working, move up the settlement pattern. Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch are the District's two towns and therefore do not feature in the table below. The updated Settlement Pattern is listed below and the details behind it can be found on the Council's website at [www.maldon.gov.uk](http://www.maldon.gov.uk) – out the right link in ;

SETTLEMENT NAME
<b>Large villages</b>
Southminster
Tollesbury
Maylands
Latchingdon
Wickham Bishops (including Beacon Hill)
Tillingham
Tolleshunt D'Arcy
Great Totham South - clusters with Great Totham North
Cold Norton
Purleigh
<b>Medium Villages</b>
Bradwell-On-Sea
Althorne
Woodham Walter
St.Lawrence
Langford
Tolleshunt Knights
North Fambridge
Heybridge Basin
Steeple
Goldhanger
<b>Small Villages</b>
Tolleshunt Major
Great Totham North - clusters with Great Totham South
Little Totham
Great Braxted
Ulting
<b>Hamlets</b>
Woodham Mortimer
Stow Maries
Dengie
Mundon
Southminster - Old Heath Road
Asheldham
Hazeliagh
Little Braxted
Bradwell Waterside
Cock Clarks



**1) Do you agree with the updated Settlement Pattern and how the settlements in the District have been grouped together?**

**2) If you do not agree, how should they be grouped and on what basis?**

**3) Referring to the table on the Council's website which sets out all the services and facilities for each settlement – are there any comments about this or matters which need to be altered or changed.**

## **9.5 Options for Growth in the Review of the LDP**

- 9.6 The current approved LDP concentrated housing growth in sustainable extensions to Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch in the form of Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations. The plan did not allocate growth in the District's smaller settlements but relied on existing commitments (sites with planning permission already) and windfall sites (not planned) coming forward within settlement boundaries.
- 9.7 This strategy, whilst being considered at the time as the one able to deliver positive growth for the District it has however caused a number of issues, which are prudent to reflect on:
- Small and medium building companies have found it difficult to build in Maldon District because of the lack of smaller allocated sites and windfall opportunities; this could be having an effect on job availability, growth and skills in this sector. It could also be slowing down the opportunity to bring forward housing more quickly on smaller sites.
  - Though the plan had a windfall allowance in it, there was not a policy setting out how that was going to be delivered so it has not been as effective in tapping into this source of supply.
- 9.8 The Plan included settlement boundaries around most settlements. Whilst these appeared to be a way of protecting settlements, they have caused inflexibility in regard to housing coming forward. This is because settlement boundaries restrict development to within a defined settlement area. This has led to a lack of available land supply for windfall sites, which help support housing supply and this ultimately is one of the contributing factors to the District not having a 5 year supply of housing from 2021. The other negative impact of settlement boundaries is that all housing is constrained or squeezed into the settlements. This means that important green gaps, backland development and infill development have a presumption to be supported within the settlement boundary. This ultimately leads to a loss of the very unique character of some settlements, that it was an LDP objective to protect; especially the ones with larger properties and large gardens that can be subdivided. Over time, a continuation of this policy is likely to exacerbate this issue and the impact on the uniqueness of settlements will become more prevalent, as land is squeezed in them to fulfil housing demand.
- A lack of rural housing in the sustainable rural villages is failing to support transport provision and rural business improvements; this ultimately could lead to a loss of services and facilities and increased rural isolation and accessibility.

- Rural settlements have either had housing approved through the appeal system or have not grown sufficiently enough to ensure some affordable housing delivery is a tangible benefit. This could, if left unchecked, lead to an out-migration of younger people who cannot afford to live near their families, though it is hoped that the new “First Homes” may address some of this issue, the plan needs policies to accommodate this national change to policy.
- 9.9 At the time of the current approved LDP, national planning policy did not direct how much growth local planning authorities should place in settlements, but left the decision-making to each relevant authority. In 2019, national policy changed and acknowledged that small and medium sized sites can also make a positive contribution to wider housing delivery and offer other opportunities to local housing markets, SME builders and local supply chains. It is now envisaged by national policy that at least 10% of housing allocations will be delivered on sites which are no larger than 1.0 hectare.
- 9.10 The Council also has to consider the possibility that the Bradwell B Nuclear Power Station development will start to come forward during the plan period, in the event it is granted its DCO. This is a NSIP so the decision concerning it is not within the Council’s remit, but will be made by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 9.11 It would not be in the wider interests of the District if the Council did not give this project due consideration during the LDP Review. It needs to reflect on the possibility that it may have an impact on the District negative, neutral and positive. There may be other development needs arising from the Bradwell B project that the LDP needs to consider now, such as impacts on housing market, tourism and infrastructure. A silent LDP could be very damaging to the District leaving it vulnerable to development that the Council has very little control over. Therefore, each of the options outlined below is also accompanied by the following paragraph;
- 9.12 *“The LDP Review will have a major infrastructure project policy included which will consider the impacts of, and plan for, the Bradwell B Nuclear Power Station, should it proceed under the NSIP process. This policy will set out in broad terms the way the Council will deal with any growth needs arising from both the construction and the operation of the power station. It may look to allocate additional sites to manage this and these could be in the towns or large villages in the east of the District and/or along the rail line that terminates at Southminster. The policy will also set out how the Council will consider applications connected with any growth arising from the Power Station in terms of material planning considerations. This policy will only be activated if the Power Station receives consent and additional growth arises.”*
- 9.13 By placing the prospect of the Power Station into a major infrastructure project policy, it also enables the Council to be prepared if any other major infrastructure project comes forward in the District.

**Question - Do you agree with the approach set out above for major infrastructure projects?**

- 9.14 The Council is therefore asking for consideration to be given to the following housing growth options;

**9.15 *OPTION 1 – Retain the option in the LDP approved in 2017 – focus growth in the settlements of Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch***

This option would continue the principles set out in the present approved LDP 2017 with most of the growth being allocated in Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch, these are the main towns of the District. This could ensure the economies of scale necessary to generate a wide range of community facilities in these areas, a supported public transport network, business and employment opportunities and a supported retail offer. The only alteration would be encompassing national planning policy changes with regard to 10% of any housing allocation should be on smaller sites.

This scenario is characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions on greenfield sites adjacent to the main towns;
- 10% of the District's housing allocation on smaller sites would also be directed to Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the main towns;
- Continuation of the policy of having settlement boundaries;
- Development restricted in the other settlements to sites within the settlement boundaries;
- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy and tourism.

**9.16 *OPTION 2 – A strong focus on the towns and larger sustainable villages***

This option would focus the majority of growth on the two towns in the District, Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch and the larger sustainable villages. The larger sustainable villages in the context of this option will most likely be the top three/four/five (yet to be determined) large villages as set out in the settlement hierarchy with a good range of services and facilities and connectivity. This would ensure the economies of scale necessary to generate a wide range of community facilities, a supported public transport network, business and employment opportunities and a supported retail offer that could not only support their own populations but also spread benefits to their surrounding rural communities. It could also increase opportunities for small, medium building enterprises to develop housing in the District.

This scenario would be characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions on greenfield sites;
- 10% of the District's housing allocation being directed to the other sustainable large villages in the settlement pattern;
- A windfall policy for housing for the towns and large villages;
- A windfall policy for housing for the medium and small villages;
- Most affordable housing would be provided in the towns and with 'exceptions sites' being supported in the larger sustainable villages other large, medium and small villages, subject to identified need;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the towns and large villages;
- Increased new housing and business development in the more sustainable settlements (i.e. those with sufficient services and facilities to support themselves and surrounding smaller villages) sufficient to support their own role and meet the needs of smaller villages;

- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy, including tourism.

**9.17 *OPTION 3 – Growth generally focused on the towns Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch and all the large villages of the Settlement Hierarchy***

This option would focus on the most sustainable settlements within the District, with the allocated growth going in the towns Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch and the large villages. The amount of growth will be proportioned out with the housing allocated being proportional to the number of houses already in each settlement.

This scenario would ensure the economies of scale necessary to generate a wide range of community facilities, a supported public transport network, business and employment opportunities and a supported retail offer for anticipated population growth.

The scenario would be characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions of greenfield sites;
- 10% of the District's housing allocation being directed to the medium villages;
- There will be a windfall policy for the towns and large villages;
- There will be a windfall policy for the medium and small villages;
- Most affordable housing would be provided in the towns and large villages with 'exceptions sites' being supported in the medium and small villages;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the towns and large villages;
- Increased new housing and business development in the more sustainable villages (i.e. those with sufficient services and facilities to support themselves and surrounding smaller villages) sufficient to support their own role and meet the needs of the smaller villages;
- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy, including tourism.

**9.18 *OPTION 4 – Pepper pot growth throughout the Settlement Hierarchy (Spread the growth across all the sustainable settlements in the District)***

All growth will be pepper potted across the towns, large, medium and small villages this would include major and minor site allocations. This means that all settlements would get some growth and it would be based on a percentage proportion of the number of homes in each settlement, so larger settlements will receive more growth.

The scenario would be characterised by the following;

- Housing allocations in all towns, large, medium and small villages in the hierarchy, spreading the visual burden of growth across the settlements of the District.
- It may lead to an inability to provide essential infrastructure because of a lack of economies of scale and inevitably more smaller sites being brought forward.
- It would provide a quality of choice of sites across the District in different settlements which could support small, medium construction firms.
- There could be a decline in the amount of affordable housing coming forward because of smaller sites being allocated.
- May help support the sustainability of smaller settlements and encourage business and growth in those places.

- There will be a windfall policy for sites coming forward that are not allocated during the plan period.

**9.19 *OPTION 5 – Create a new satellite settlement or large urban extension bolted onto one of the towns, larger villages and/or settlement adjacent to the District boundary***

The satellite settlement or large urban extension would accommodate all allocated growth excepting 10% and a 20% buffer. This would ensure the economies of scale necessary to generate a wide range of community facilities, a supported public transport network, business and employment opportunities. The 10% and 20% buffer of growth would be allocated to the remaining towns and large villages.

The option would be characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions on greenfield sites in the new satellite settlement;
- 10% and the 20% buffer of the District's housing allocation being directed to the other towns and large villages, this will allow housing to come forward whilst the strategic allocations are preparing their applications and starts on site;
- A windfall policy for the towns and large villages;
- A windfall policy for housing for the medium and small villages;
- Most affordable housing would be provided in the satellite settlement or urban extension with 'exceptions sites' being supported in the other large, medium and small villages;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the towns and large villages if appropriate in the satellite settlement or urban extension;
- Increased new housing and business development in the more sustainable villages (i.e. those with sufficient services and facilities to support themselves and surrounding smaller villages) sufficient to support their own role and meet the needs of the smaller villages;
- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy, including tourism.

**9.20 *Option 6 – Focus growth in the north of the District to link into the service and facilities available in Tiptree, Witham and Maldon/Heybridge.***

This option would focus major allocations in the settlements in the north of the District. These settlements have a relationship with the settlements of Tiptree and Witham which lie outside of the District, and Maldon/Heybridge in the District. They look to these settlements for the majority of their higher-order services and facilities. Maldon/Heybridge is not included in this scenario for strategic growth allocations because of the amount of growth it has previously received, the amount of existing commitments it already has but are still to come forward and the lag in infrastructure coming forward in the town. Maldon/Heybridge requires a period of time in order for planned infrastructure to be delivered and existing commitments to be built out without additional pressure from new strategic growth.

10% of allocated growth on smaller sites would be in the remaining large villages and Towns.

This option is characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions on greenfield sites in and adjacent to the settlements in the North of the District, and those that border the District in Braintree and Chelmsford.
- 10% of the District's housing allocation being directed to the remaining large villages and Towns.
- A windfall policy for the towns and remaining large villages
- A windfall policy for the medium and small villages
- Most affordable housing would be provided in the northern settlements of the District with 'exceptions sites' being supported in the medium and small villages;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the towns and if possible in the northern settlements of the District;
- Increased new housing and business development in the more sustainable villages (i.e. those with sufficient services and facilities to support themselves and surrounding smaller villages) sufficient to support their own role and meet the needs of the smaller villages;
- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy, including tourism.

#### **9.21 *OPTION 7 – Focus growth along the rail line to Althorne, North Fambridge and Southminster***

This option would focus major allocations to Althorne, North Fambridge and Southminster because they have railway stations with a connection to London. Sites making up the 10% of housing allocations to be delivered on sites no larger than 1.0 hectare will be directed to Maldon/Heybridge, Burnham-on-Crouch and the remaining large villages. Though Burnham-on-Crouch has a railway station it is not included in this scenario for strategic growth because of the amount of growth in both allocations and windfall development it has previously received and the lag in infrastructure coming forward in the town. Burnham-on-Crouch requires a period of time in order for planned infrastructure to be delivered without additional pressure from new strategic growth.

This option is characterised by the following;

- Urban extensions on greenfield sites in and adjacent to Althorne, North Fambridge and Southminster;
- 10% of the District's housing allocation being directed to the District's towns and large villages (including Burnham on Crouch);
- A windfall policy for the towns and remaining large villages
- A windfall policy for the medium and small villages
- Most affordable housing would be provided in Althorne, North Fambridge and Southminster with 'exceptions sites' being supported in the medium and small villages;
- Promotion of new employment opportunities in the towns;
- Increased new housing and business development in the more sustainable villages (i.e. those with sufficient services and facilities to support themselves and surrounding smaller villages) sufficient to support their own role and meet the needs of the smaller villages;



- Development in the countryside restricted to that which supports the local economy, including tourism.

#### **Please Note**

- 9.22 All options outlined are reliant on the fact that there will be sufficient land in the areas summarised for delivery of the strategic growth target.

**1) Which growth option do you consider to be the most appropriate for the District of Maldon? Please set out your reason for this view.**

**2) Do you believe that there is another suitable growth option for the District, perhaps a combination of any of the above – please set out your views.**

**3) Do you think it is appropriate to include in the LDP review a policy dealing with major infrastructure projects such as the Bradwell B Nuclear Power Station, to be activated if this type of project comes forward?**

### **10.0 EFFECTIVE USE OF LAND**

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- 10.1 The majority of housing in Maldon District is inevitably going to be delivered on greenfield sites because the District does not have a legacy of industrial landscapes laying derelict and would otherwise provide ideal brownfield sites for redevelopment. Housing can however be delivered in ways which utilises land more effectively and the Council would ask that you consider the following questions;

**1) Would you consider the delivery of housing appropriate on areas of land where there are disused agricultural buildings, or derelict land in or adjacent to large, medium and small villages?**

**2) Housing can be delivered in larger quantities, but using less greenfield land, by building at higher densities. Would you consider this appropriate if sites with higher densities were designed to ensure they achieved a high quality of design?**

**3) Would you support minimum density standards to uplift the delivery of housing and ensure land in Maldon District was used as efficiently as possible, or do you think design, or other factors should dictate density on housing sites?**

**4) Would you consider higher density housing appropriate in large, medium and small villages, if the design was to a higher standard and the character of the settlement was still respected?**

**5) Is it appropriate to develop land for housing that has been previously used for commercial uses such as employment and retail which is otherwise vacant, underused and derelict ?**

## 11.0 HOUSING IN THE MEDIUM AND SMALL VILLAGES

- 11.1 Inevitably housing will come forward and be developed in the large, medium and small villages, either through site allocations or as windfall development. The Council understands that the character of many of these settlements is very important to local people and whilst the rural settlements had settlement boundaries in the approved Local Plan, as discussed above, it is believed that these have not allowed for enough flexibility in the delivery of housing and this has contributed to the present lack of a 5-year supply of housing land and a squeeze on the character and uniqueness of the District's settlements.

**1) Should the medium and small settlements retain some form of a settlement boundary, albeit more flexibly drawn?**

**2) Should the Council develop a windfall policy for all or specific settlements, potentially capping the number of units for each site coming forward and ensuring the protection for key views, green infrastructure gaps and the historic environment in each village.**

## 12.0 FUTURE HOMES FOR GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

- 12.1 As with reviewing the needs for general housing, the Council has a duty to consider the needs of the District's Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople. There are currently two public sites in the District which meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers who do not own land, but rather have housing needs that are met locally on a rental basis. These sites are owned by Essex County Council. There are also a further 17 sites that are privately owned and home to a number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households.
- 12.2 The current LDP established Policy H6 which is a criteria-based policy to make provision for new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches/plots to meet District needs, which in 2017 stood at an additional 9 pitches.
- 12.3 The Council will be updating its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in 2021/2022 to ensure any further provision of pitches and plots in the District is based on up to date and robust information collected locally and project the future need forward to the at least 2043 as the existing GTAA only looked forward to 2033.
- 12.4 This will help us to understand if there have been any changes in local households since the last GTAA was prepared in 2016, such as older children needing a pitch of their own, in-migration, or new households forming within the community. The GTAA update will also help us review whether any of the District's Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople households are currently living in over-crowded conditions or are concealed households due to social mobility or a lack of provision, to determine if there is a need in the LDP Review to identify existing sites that could safely be intensified or expanded, new sites allocated in the plan, or stronger policies that can support meeting the need.
- 12.5 Work remains underway by all Essex Local Planning Authorities through the Duty to Cooperate to establish whether there is a specific need for Transit Sites to be built in Essex to cater for Gypsies and Travellers who continue to travel to the county but have no-where authorised to pitch-up. This has been underway since 2018, however it has been impacted



by Covid-19 and a fall in travelling lifestyle amongst the Gypsy & Traveller community due to lockdowns and a lack of work. The Council will remain part of this project during the LDP Review.

**1) In the event of an increase of need, should the Council work look to establish both private and public sites for Gypsies and Travellers in the future, recognising that not all needs can be catered by one tenure of provision?**

**2) In the event of an increase of need, should the Council seek to intensify or expand existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites as much as possible, where it is otherwise safe and suitable to do so?**

**3) In the event of an increase of need, should the Council consider how it could use its Settlement Hierarchy, Rural Exception Sites and/or Windfall Policy (if implemented) to support the increased provision of new sites in sustainable locations that can serve the community's needs better?**

**4) Is there anything else the Council should be considering for homes for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?**

### **13.0 SELF-BUILD/CUSTOM BUILD HOUSING PLOTS**

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13.1 The Council does not currently have a high number of registrations on its statutory Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register, however there were 430 people on the Buildstore Register looking to self-build in Maldon District and of those, 127 live in the District. There is therefore an indication that self/custom build, as a form of housing provision, is of interest to local people. The council has a legal duty to provide plots equivalent to the number of people who have joined the statutory register. To ensure compliance with this in the future, the council could therefore consider allocating specific sites for self-build/custom build, or encourage them to be brought forward on smaller sites in the District

**1) Should the Council seek a proportion of self-build/custom build plots on larger housing sites.**

**2) In addition to the above, should the Plan also allocate specific sites in the LDP Review exclusively for self-build/custom build, either put forward by people who want to self-build or caveated by policy that they can only be brought forward by self-builders.**

### **14.0 A BEAUTIFUL BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

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14.1 The Council would like the LDP Review to prioritise attractive places and spaces when making choices around future land allocations and policies. Attractive places and spaces are, by their nature, subjective, but they often reflect local character and what is special or distinctive about a place. The National Design Guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful and successful can be achieved in practice and supports local design guidance that meets the priorities of local communities. The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission is an independent body set up to advise the government on how to promote and increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods. Its report sets out the importance of considering beauty at three scales during the planning process. These are:

- Beautifully placed (sustainable settlement patterns, sitting in the landscape)
  - Beautiful places (streets, squares and parks, the "spirit of place")
  - Beautiful buildings (windows, materials, proportion, space)
- 14.2 The Commission defines a beautiful place as 'a place in which people wish to walk, rather than a place that the car helps them to avoid... buildings that reflect the history, character and identity of their community and that belong in their surroundings: somewhere, not anywhere... a walkable settlement, in which the streets are an improvement on what preceded them, even when what preceded them was open countryside'.
- 14.3 The Council wish to ensure that these are the kinds of places that we want to plan for and the LDP should help to deliver them. Maldon District Council already has an adopted Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document that seeks to achieve better design through developments, but it could go further than that by working to endorse the wider Essex Design Guide.
- 1) Designing beautiful spaces and buildings, how important do you think it is that we should actively plan to create beautiful spaces and buildings?**
- 2) What do you think about the design policy in the LDP 2017 and the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2018? Do they need amending? If so, how and why?**
- 3) Should the Council seek to endorse the Essex Design Guide with a Maldon District supplementary section? Would this be a more flexible approach to design?**
- Please provide comments below on design matters you consider to be particularly important. We would be especially interested in your views on whether we should include general design guidance on relevant site allocations.

## 15.0 TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

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- 15.1 Climate change is one of the biggest threats that we face both as a district, nationally and globally. Extreme weather events and rising sea levels are more common and the rate of species extinction is increasing. These impacts will affect Maldon District, especially as it does have an issue with flood risk and is rural, with agriculture as one of its main employment sectors. Taking bold and decisive action over the next 15 years (or sooner) will be critical if we are to avoid global temperature rising beyond 2 degrees Celsius, which is identified as a critical level, above pre-industrial levels.
- 15.2 To this end the Council can in its review of the LDP significantly strengthen its policies in connection with climate change. This however, could come at a cost in terms of how much developers may be able to provide in other funding contributions for infrastructure such as affordable housing, and community funding. One of the main requirements of a local plan is its policies must not make development unviable or unaffordable to build. The Council tests this by carrying out a viability appraisal on all its policies. In connection with climate change the Council is interested in the following;
- 1) Should the LDP Review make climate change one of its key priorities?**

**2) What do you consider to be important in terms of development and climate change? Are on site renewables such as photovoltaics, ground source heat pumps, etc as important/more important as off-site renewable energy projects such as on-land wind farms, solar farms, district heating networks, etc?**

**3) Should we plan for net-zero carbon from plan adoption in 2023? - This would require all new development to be net-zero carbon upon adoption of the plan. Would the Council need to bring forward any additional guidance to support this?**

**4) Should we plan for net-zero carbon from a specific future date? - This would require all new development to achieve net zero carbon from a future date in the plan process, set out in policy. It could allow time for the development industry to adjust to the higher standards and may mean we can secure more affordable housing and community benefits from development, earlier on in the plan process.**

## **16.0 ENHANCING AND GROWING THE ECONOMY**

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- 16.1 Enabling the creation of a prosperous economy is an important objective of plan making. The provision of high quality employment land works to attract business and enterprise to an area, which in turn creates and diversifies employment opportunities, increases the addition of value and ultimately strengthens the local economy.
- 16.2 A high quality retail offer is attractive to residents and visitors alike, but the nature of the high street has rapidly changed within a very short period of time, this has been accelerated with the Covid pandemic and the closure of some key national anchor retail outlets.
- 16.3 In a rural area the prosperity and success of the rural economy can help with job growth and retention when other sectors are struggling and Maldon district has a high number of self-employed residents as well as a high number of niche rural businesses. These types of employment also link into the continuing sustainability of smaller rural settlements providing some local employment, in some cases providing higher wages and the opportunity for younger people to stay and work in their communities.
- 16.4 The Bradwell B site is designated in the current National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure (EN-6) for large scale nuclear, a policy position that the Council supports if it can be demonstrated that nuclear sector development and associated major infrastructure projects would make a meaningful contribution to a low carbon economy and bring potentially significant economic benefits to the area.

**1) Should the local plan policies strongly support the economy in terms of a transition to a low carbon economy, ensuring development and growth opportunities are supported through this process?**

**2) Should the local plan allocate employment land so that it extends existing employment premises / areas in the District by working with existing businesses to ascertain their future need?**

**3) Should the Council contain a policy preventing the redevelopment of employment premises to residential units? If so, should the scope of such a policy be limited in any way? Please explain the rationale for your answer.**

**4) How important is the rural economy? How do you believe the rural economy can be supported through policy?**

**5) Should the nature, size and type of policy support for Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch's High Streets' change? How would you like the high street to change?**

## **17.0 THE VISITOR ECONOMY**

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**17.1** The visitor economy is covered by policy E5 in the current Local Plan. This policy supports development which contributes positively to the growth of local tourism in a sustainable manner and realise opportunities that arise from the District's landscape, heritage and built environment. Development for new tourist attractions, facilities and accommodation should demonstrate an identified need for the provision proposed and have good connections with other tourist destinations. The policy supports existing tourism development.

**1) Do you believe this policy requires modification? If so how would you like to see it changed?**

**2) Do you believe this policy encourages tourism or is it too restrictive?**

## **18.0 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**18.1** Maldon District is blessed with an outstanding natural landscape. The two estuaries that it lies on form a distinctive characteristic and form an attractive lure for visitors. Many of the areas are of international, national and local importance and subsequently have been designated as Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserves (NNR). Development can result in unacceptable negative impacts on areas of wildlife value. It is for this reason that new housing already pays a financial contribution in the District to mitigate impacts that would otherwise occur through increased user pressure.

**1) Should the Council consider having protected landscape views in the District, even though this may place development pressure elsewhere?**

## **19.0 ACCESS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT**

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**19.1** The Government define sustainable transport as "any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport". Promoting sustainable transport in new development can have multiple benefits – these include reducing traffic congestion, reducing carbon dioxide emissions, improving air quality, and improving both physical and mental health.

**19.2** Though, Maldon District is rural in character, it does not mean that some rural settlements do not have access to services and facilities in towns and larger settlements. The Council is supportive, in principle, of how it could integrate the 15/20-minute neighbourhood

concept<sup>4</sup> into the planning for growth, recognising however, that this is not practicable in some of the District's more rural locations. Most of the District has access to a reasonably regular bus service with shopper and commuter benefits and the District has four train stations all with access to London and regional connections, via Wickford.

- 19.3 Aside from the A12 and A414 both outside and inside the District, the road network is generally provided on lower-order B and C class roads. Whilst not comparable to some of the larger urban locations like Chelmsford and Colchester, this could be seen as a positive feature because it adds to the character of the District and is part of the attraction for those residents and visitors who seek a quiet rural idyll. However, some settlements find they have little or no footpath provision running alongside their rural roads, which can deter people to walk to services for safety reasons.
- 19.4 The current LDP sought to provide the following highway and public transport infrastructure to support the growth in the LDP, linked to Strategic Allocations throughout the District, which continue to remain relevant:
- North Heybridge Relief Road (part of North Heybridge Garden Suburb);
  - South Maldon Relief Road (part of South Maldon Garden Suburb);
  - Upgrades to B1018 Langford Road/ Heybridge Approach and A414 roundabout;
  - Improvements to B1010 and B1021 junction in Burnham on Crouch;
  - A414 Oak Corner and Spital Road junction improvements;
  - Eves Corner Junction changes in Danbury; and
  - Passenger transport improvements in South Maldon, North Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch.
- 19.5 In developing the LDP Review, it will be important that consideration is given how the above schemes can continue to be catered for and any additional highway and transportation impacts that any new spatial strategy and policies may lead to and the appropriate mitigation to minimise these impacts.
- It will also be important as to what other initiatives should be exploited to help improve access and transport in the District, including complementary measures such as developing place-based Transport Strategies to manage various competing demands for roadspace, parking and public transport in specific areas more effectively and in a coordinated manner; securing a District-wide Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP); and investing in project development such as the Department for Transport's Restore Your Railways Ideas Fund that could support the introduction of new movement corridors to support model shift.
- 19.6 The Council intend to commission a Highways and Transport Modelling Study that will help evaluate the impacts and test the mitigation necessary to reduce the impact. This will include reviewing appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes and a shift in people's behaviour of how they look to travel in the future, including a greater take-up of active travel choices (such as walking and cycling), reviewing any significant impacts from new development on the capacity and congestion on the transport network, any issues concerning highway safety and mitigation costs.
- 1) In terms of access and sustainable transport in the District, what is most important to you?**
- 2) Should the Council focus future growth on those areas with higher levels of commuter access either by bus or train?**

<sup>4</sup> [The 20-minute neighbourhood | Town and Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](https://www.tcpa.org.uk/)

- 3) Should all new development be linked to its settlement by a footpath wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or double buggy/pram?
- 4) Should development have to demonstrate that it can provide footpath/cycle links, which incorporate green infrastructure and support active travel choices?
- 5) Should the council continue to explore and support complementary projects delivered outside the planning system that can support travel choice and modal shift in the District?

## 20.0 SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

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- 20.1 The Government is clear in national policy that the LDP Review should set out a strategic policy which makes sufficient provision of infrastructure including transport, telecommunications [including digital and broadband], security, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management and the provision of minerals and energy. It also stresses that community facilities such as health and education must also form part of the development of the future planning strategy for the District.
- 20.2 The LDP Review will put expectations on new developments to deliver high quality development with infrastructure to support the local community. These requirements, commonly known as S106 contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will have financial implications for development. Our policies in the LDP Review should therefore be clear so that developers do not pay too much for a piece of land then determine that they cannot afford to meet our policy requirements. All policy requirements are important but no requirement can be so high that it makes development unviable, so if one is raised, another may need to reduce. To help us set our policy requirements at a level that is viable for development to go ahead, the Council will be commissioning an update to its Viability Assessment.
- 20.3 In the delivery of the first five years of the current LDP, not all infrastructure has come forward at the pace envisaged. It is acknowledged that there are perceptions that there have been delays in expanding The Plume secondary school and the construction of the South Maldon Relief Road in Maldon, for example. Whilst the upgrades have not yet taken place, this is not down to the infrastructure not being planned for or S106 contributions not coming forward from development that has been constructed, rather there has been a slower than anticipated delivery of housing units in the Garden Suburbs and on other strategic allocations, which has in turn, not brought in enough S106 contributions yet to fund their delivery; but with further time and demand created when the new housing is built, triggers to release more funding from the developments will be hit.
- 20.4 The LDP Review will therefore be an important opportunity to consider how development in the District can best meet the needs of new and existing residents and businesses supported by necessary infrastructure. This will include considering if certain spatial options (as set out earlier in Section 9), or development phasing offer a better chance of securing the necessary infrastructure upgrades, given advantages over critical mass and how existing capacities are being managed by infrastructure commissioners or providers and how these relate to national standards or benchmarking.



- 20.5 There is a need for high quality digital connectivity to continue to support the District's residents, businesses, transport infrastructure and key services, such as schools and GP practices. Through work undertaken by Superfast Essex, more of the District's rural locations have access to superfast broadband, but connection in more remoter places can be limited. The Government is currently considering requiring all new build residential developments to be fitted with full fibre digital connections, which the LDP Review will support as far as possible.
- 20.6 Whilst the Council is the local planning authority for the District, it is not responsible for the commissioning or delivery of many of the forms of infrastructure that communities depend on. It is imperative therefore that the Council continues to work with all relevant infrastructure stakeholders, including Essex County Council to prepare an update to the Maldon District Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to ensure all developments have the best chance of being supported by the required infrastructure that offsets its impact on the District. This will include a review of infrastructure costings and help inform how development can be sustainably phased and reflected in the LDP Review policies. The IDP should also be able to continue to be used to consider whether a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or any future replacement would help bring in additional contributions from more developments that otherwise have an impact.
- 20.7 Finally, moving forward, it will also become more important for the council to chase every penny of external funding and lobby Government and other funding bodies when infrastructure delivery either falls short of expectations, or cannot be funded fully/ at all by development.
1. **Should the Council focus future growth on those areas which stand to offer the better chance of securing infrastructure upgrades due to critical massing of development in particular locations?**
  2. **Affordable housing is often the biggest influence on viability, so should the Council continue to prioritise this policy requirement over infrastructure contributions or design quality across the District?**

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## REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021

### BUDGETARY CONTROL (APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2021)

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Strategy and Resources Committee (the Committee) with information in relation to financial performance over the period 1 April to 30 September 2021.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the forecasted 2021 / 22 financial position at the midway point of this financial year.

#### 3. ANALYSIS OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report sets out the financial position and performance of some of the key areas of the Council's services / activities for the first two quarters of the financial year.
- 3.2 The basis of identifying the variance is against the forecast budgets based on budget manager's knowledge of expenditure and income patterns over the financial year.

#### 4. REVENUE BUDGETS

- 4.1 The following table is an overview of current service forecast budget variances for the whole Council against the revised budget. It shows that employee costs make up just over half of Maldon District Council's (MDC's) gross expenditure and that there is a total current forecast expenditure underspend of £152k. However, there is a large income underachievement forecast of £753k. This is mitigated by non-ringfenced government grants which offset some of the service impact of COVID-19, and these are shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 1 – Gross Service Income and Expenditure**

Spend Type	Original Budget £000	Revised Budget £000	% of Gross Exp	Forecast Variance £000
Employee Costs	8,900	8,987	50.3	(204)
Non-Employee Costs	8,498	8,878	49.7	52
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>17,398</b>	<b>17,865</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>(152)</b>
Income	(7,946)	(7,946)		753
<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>9,452</b>	<b>9,919</b>		<b>601</b>

- 4.2 The Original Budget is the budget approved by the Council on 23 February 2021, excluding Housing Benefit payments, Covid Grants, and capital and pension fund charges. The Revised Budget is the current budget after the approved amendments since then. The following table shows this reconciliation:

**Table 2 – Budget Reconciliation**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount £000</b>
Original budget	9,452
Revenue commitments	406
Supplementary estimates	17
Mid-year growths	44
<b>Revised budget</b>	<b>9,919</b>

- 4.3 The next table shows the top 81% of expenditure areas for MDC, along with their respective percentages of total expenditure and forecast variances.

**Table 3 – Top Expenditure Areas**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Budget £000</b>	<b>% of Exp</b>	<b>Forecast £000</b>	<b>Forecast Variance £000</b>	<b>Actuals @ 30 Sep £000</b>
1. Refuse and Recycling	3,292	37.1	3,473	181	1,263
2. IT Software & Hardware	670	7.5	637	(33)	175
3. Planning Policy and Local Development Plan (LDP)	576	6.5	576	0	29
4. Street Cleansing	505	5.7	513	8	219
5. Property and Equipment Maintenance	418	4.7	353	(65)	152
6. Parks Operations	332	3.7	312	(20)	126
7. Business Rates	290	3.3	285	(5)	285
8. Housing Benefit Overpayments	238	2.7	88	(150)	(0)
9. Elections	221	2.5	243	22	101
10. Homeless Accommodation	175	2.0	184	10	63
11. Professional Services (incl. Internal Audit)	153	1.7	161	7	45
12. Leisure Centre Management Fee	143	1.6	146	3	73
13. Insurance	142	1.6	142	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,154</b>	<b>80.6</b>	<b>7,113</b>	<b>(41)</b>	<b>2,529</b>

#### 4.4 Variance Analysis

- 4.4.1 The small expenditure budgets not listed above are expected to overspend by £93k. This includes a contribution from MDC towards the Essex Council Tax Sharing agreement of £115k due to a drop-in collection rate of Council Tax last financial year.
- 4.4.2 At the halfway stage of the financial year, most service areas are forecast to spend near to budget, so the below analysis only explains the larger variances.
- 4.4.3 Refuse and recycling continues to operate at the high volumes seen since the pandemic began. Due to the need to hire an additional vehicle this service is likely to overspend by £181k. This will only partially be offset by higher income. These are shown in more detail in **APPENDIX 2**. There is additionally the risk of the nationwide shortage of HGV drivers causing further cost pressures.
- 4.4.4 The forecast IT underspend of £33k is due to the move this year from acquiring new software to only paying for their annual licences and maintenance. IT costs are broken down in more detail in **APPENDIX 4**.
- 4.4.5 Buildings and parks equipment maintenance is underspending by £65k due to low activity periods during periods of restrictions in the first quarter of this financial year.
- 4.4.6 This was also the case for Parks operational expenditure, such as utility costs.
- 4.4.7 Housing Benefit (HB) overpayments are actually a deduction against HB Subsidy but are largely recovered by invoicing the respective claimants as well. Budgeting for overpayments as well as lost subsidy has caused an ongoing underspend of £150k.
- 4.4.8 The overspend against Elections is offset by income as there was no full district election this year and other elections have been externally funded. The budget relating strictly for the district election will actually be carried forward to 2023 / 24 when the next one will take place.
- 4.4.9 Compensation payments have been incurred by MDC due to the leisure service provider not being able to meet its income targets during and after the Covid-19 lockdown. Since the lifting of restrictions, users have been returning to the leisure centres meaning compensation payments should be lower than last year, however these are still projected to be £146k. This is in place of the usual £143k contract payment for the Dengie Hundred centre.
- 4.4.10 The table below shows the top income areas for MDC, along with their respective percentages of total income and forecast variances. Although income levels are looking better than last year, some budgets are still forecast to underachieve.

**Table 4 – Top Income Areas**

Income Area	Budget £000	% of Inc	Forecast £000	Variance £000	Actuals to 30 Sep £000
1. Refuse and Recycling	(2,164)	26.8	(2,223)	(59)	(1,051)
2. Car Parking	(1,284)	15.9	(1,170)	114	(701)
3. Development Control	(823)	10.2	(782)	42	(391)
4. Blackwater Leisure	(637)	7.9	(8)	629	(8)

Income Area	Budget £000	% of Inc	Forecast £000	Variance £000	Actuals to 30 Sep £000
Centre					
5. Properties / Leases	(345)	4.3	(347)	(3)	(183)
6. Revs & Bens Admin Grants	(254)	3.1	(269)	(14)	(160)
7. Attractions	(179)	2.2	(96)	83	(68)
8. Building Control	(152)	1.9	(160)	(8)	(80)
9. Homelessness Grant	(142)	1.8	(143)	(1)	(143)
10. Cemeteries	(139)	1.7	(139)	0	(83)
11. Essex County Council (ECC) Council Tax Sharing	(124)	1.5	(104)	20	(52)
12. Land Charges	(124)	1.5	(124)	0	(61)
13. Springfield Industrial Estate	(115)	1.4	(126)	(11)	(63)
14. Splash Park	(110)	1.4	(57)	53	0
15. Court Costs	(105)	1.3	(55)	50	0
16. Precept Income	(103)	1.3	(57)	46	(57)
17. Licensing	(100)	1.2	(85)	15	(65)
18. Elections	0	0.0	(102)	(102)	(113)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(6,900)</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>(6,093)</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>(3,279)</b>

#### 4.5 Variance Analysis

- 4.5.1 Income from income budgets less than £100k overachieved by £54k. This included an apprentice incentive payment, 'other income' received across the various parks, and housing benefit for higher homelessness than expected.
- 4.5.2 Refuse and Recycling income is overachieving its budget by £59k due to the ongoing higher levels of recycling credit payments and garden waste customers. These are shown in more detail in **APPENDIX 3**.
- 4.5.3 Income from car parking in the town centres has not recovered to the levels seen before the pandemic, although the Promenade Park car park has recovered well. This still leaves an expected budget underachievement of £114k.
- 4.5.4 All Development Control budgets forecast on budget except a £72k budget for Planning Performance Agreement's (PPA's), where this income is only forecast to achieve £30k. Hence the £42k budget pressure. PPA's are a mechanism for us to create income through providing an enhanced planning process for developers, ensuring that their application is considered by an agreed date. However, they have proven difficult to put in place.

- 4.5.5 The Blackwater Leisure Centre contract includes income to MDC of £637k, as budgeted. Although customers are returning to fitness centres, because the service provider is still underachieving their overall income targets, they will not be able to pay the Council this financial year. A Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) payment of £8k is likely to be the only income against this budget this year.
- 4.5.6 The Maldon District usually hosts many attractions but many of these have been affected by Covid-19 restrictions imposed. This will mean this kind of income will underachieve by £83k.
- 4.5.7 Latest figures from the ECC Council Tax Sharing agreement show a small income underachievement of £20k due to lower collection rates, which are affected by the pandemic.
- 4.5.8 Maldon Promenade Splash Park opened late and closed early due to various Covid-19 issues. It therefore underachieved its income budget by £53k.
- 4.5.9 No court cost income was received last financial year. This income covers the cost of officer time for debt recovery work and court appearances. Summonses to courts have only recommenced in September 2021 so only £55k of the income target of £105k is likely to be achieved.
- 4.5.10 The elections income is external funding for elections other than the district election, which took place in May 2021.

## 5. SALARY MONITORING AS AT 30/09/21

- 5.1 The proposed national pay award would give staff a 1.75% pay-rise, although this may not be resolved with unions for some time yet. A 2% pay-rise was budgeted for as is still being forecast. A number of short-term in-year vacancies, some of which have been filled by temporary staff, bring about a forecast underspend of £204k.
- 5.2 The table below gives an analysis of MDC's salary variances by directorate.

**Table 5 – Employee Variances**

Directorate	Revised Budget £000	Forecast £000	Variance £000	Actuals to 30 Sep £000
Service Delivery	5,232	5,087	(145)	2,435
Strategy Performance and Governance	1,501	1,439	(89)	686
Resources	2,026	2,035	9	936
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>8,758</b>	<b>8,562</b>	<b>(196)</b>	<b>4,056</b>
Members Allowances	229	221	(8)	110
<b>Total Remuneration</b>	<b>8,987</b>	<b>8,783</b>	<b>(204)</b>	<b>4,166</b>

## 6. IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND BALANCE

- 6.1 The next table sets out the Council's total anticipated overspend, less mitigating Covid-19 grants from Central Government.

**Table 6 – Total Budget Variance**

	<b>Variance £000</b>
<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>601</b>
COVID Contingency	(371)
Income Compensation Scheme	(58)
Plus Investment Income Variance	(60)
<b>Total Budget Variance</b>	<b>112</b>

- 6.2 Income from local taxation is not estimated to reduce again following the decrease in council tax and business rates collections during last year due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, collection rates have only recovered modestly so far this financial year.
- 6.3 The Government has paid the Council a grant totalling £306k to provide financial support for the costs incurred because of Coronavirus, along with a Lower Tier Services Grant of £65k. These formed this year's Covid Contingency budget.
- 6.4 There is also the continuation of the income compensation scheme to reimburse Council's for the loss of fees and charges for the first quarter of 2021 / 22. Reimbursement is offered at a rate of 75% on 95% of losses below budget on eligible income to 30/06/21 only. A claim has been submitted to Central Government, which, if confirmed by them, will benefit the Council a further £58k.
- 6.5 Investment income is also performing better than predicted before this financial year due to maintaining a higher level of average balances invested than originally anticipated.

**Table 7 – Predicted General Fund Balance**

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Opening General Fund Balance</b>	<b>5,800</b>
Less Budgeted Use of Reserve	0
Less Supplementary Estimates	(17)
Less Mid-Year Growths	(44)
Less Net Cost of Services Variance	(112)
<b>Closing General Fund Balance</b>	<b>5,627</b>

- 6.6 All movements shown in this table are explained earlier in the report except for the Investment Income variance which has come about by better than expected returns from property, shares and bonds investments.
- 6.7 This table also significantly shows that the general fund balance would remain above the minimum recommended level of £2.6m. A minimum level of reserve is set to ensure the Council has the financial resilience to respond to emergencies and unforeseen events such as the current pandemic. However, if it did fall below the minimum level it would need to be replenished in future years.

## **7. APPENDIX 1 – CAPITAL PROJECTS MONITOR AS AT 30/09/21**

- 7.1 This appendix lists the capital projects in progress this year. Despite low spend so far, many projects are still in the procurement process, so expenditure will rapidly increase during the second half of this financial year. All capital projects are expected to be completed by 31 March 2022.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 Although the success of the vaccine has meant Council operations are returning towards normality, the lingering impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic has had a direct impact on the Council's ability to operate within its budget. It continues to result in income shortfalls and expenditure overspends. Salary underspends and Government grants have largely mitigated this, leaving a small budget shortfall to come out of the General Fund.
- 8.2 Ongoing responsible Budget Control is required not to exacerbate this position. This continues to require the conscientious pursuit of income and spending discipline as Covid grants do not cover 100% of Covid losses.
- 8.3 It is also important to note that some expenditure and income items are accounted for at the end of the year, whilst not all income due to the Council for chargeable work or services performed by the Council or payments by the Council for work or services it has purchased / received as at 30 September 2021 will be included in the figures above due to process lags. The information within this report is that which is recorded in the Council's financial management system up to 30 September 2021.

## **9. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

- 9.1 This report links to 'delivering good quality, cost effective and valued services'.

## **10. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None directly.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – No corporate risk issues associated with this report.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Variances from the budget will impact upon the level of balances and/or reserves available in the future.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Lance Porteous, Lead Finance Specialist.

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Capital Programme 2021 / 22	Total Budget (£000)	Expenditure to 30th September 2021 (£000)	Project Status	Due start date	Due completion date
<b>Vehicle &amp; Plant Replacement</b>					
Parks Vehicle -Rolling replacement	56	52	Completed	May-21	Mar-22
PWC - New project	15	14	Completed	Apr-21	Sep-21
<b>Information &amp; Communication Technology</b>					
PC and Printer Replacement Programme	47	0	In progress	Apr-21	Mar-22
Maldon District Council (MDC) I.T servers (Revenue funded)	0	43	In progress	Apr-21	Mar-22
<b>Maldon Promenade</b>					
New accessible play site 18/19	48	0	In progress	May-21	Mar-22
New Splash Park Elements 18/19	30	0	Not started	Apr-21	Mar-22
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>					
Oaktree Meadow re-surfacing	35	0	In progress	Aug-21	Mar-22
MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) – Burnham On Crouch	26	19	In progress	Apr-21	Mar-22
<b>Leisure Centres</b>					
Blackwater Leisure Centre air handling unit	25	0	Not Started	May-21	Mar-22
Blackwater Leisure Centre car park entrance and drainage works	25	0	Procurement process	Sept 21	Mar-22
<b>Rivers</b>					
Removal of Old Slipway St Lawrence	10	0	In progress	Apr-21	Mar-22
Burnham On Crouch Houseboats berth	1120	0	Procurement process	Sept 21	Mar-22
<b>Cemeteries</b>					
New toilet provision	25	26	Completed	May-21	Aug-21
<b>Housing</b>					
Disabled Facility Grants	<u>420</u>	<u>192</u>	In progress	Apr-21	Mar-22
<b>Total</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>346</b>			

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## Refuse and Recycling Expenditure

Refuse and Recycling Expenditure	Revised Budget £000	Forecast £000	Forecast Variance £000	Actuals to end Sep £000	Description of Expenditure
Household Residual Waste	835	833	(2)	343	Contract to collect domestic non-recyclable refuse
Household Dry Recyclables	773	933	160	253	Contract to collect domestic recyclable refuse
Household Garden Waste	480	482	2	155	Contract to collect domestic garden waste
Treatment of Recyclables Ex Glass	422	438	16	150	Contract for cleansing recyclable refuse, excluding glass
Household Food Waste	251	250	(1)	81	Contract to collect domestic food waste
Gate Fees Garden Waste	182	195	13	119	Fees to dispose of domestic garden waste
Plastic Recycling Sacks	90	90	0	62	Cost of purchasing and printing plastic recycling bags
Container Storage & Delivery	63	63	0	21	The cost of storing and delivering refuse containers
Treatment of Recyclables Glass	59	53	(6)	12	Contract for cleansing recycled glass
Equipment (New & replace containers)	58	58	0	42	The cost of buying refuse containers
Bulky Waste - Contract Cost	34	34	0	12	Contract to collect bulky refuse upon request
Other	45	44	(1)	11	Small waste management costs such as clinical waste collection and subscriptions.
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,292</b>	<b>3,473</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>1,261</b>	Domestic waste has increased significantly due to more people working from home and doing gardening during furlough since the advent of the pandemic.

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## Refuse and Recycling Income

Refuse & Recycling Income	Revised Budget £000	Forecast £000	Forecast Variance £000	Actuals to end Sep £000	Description of Income
Recycling Credits – Standard	(888)	(895)	(7)	(284)	Additional recycling and garden waste collected generated additional recycling credit income
Garden Waste Subscriptions	(672)	(674)	(2)	(674)	Fees received for collecting garden waste. Additional fees from new subscribers following introduction of fourth garden waste vehicle
Essex County Council (ECC) Contribution to Food Waste	(403)	(403)	0	0	IAA payment for food waste collection service received from Essex County Council
Sale of Recyclables Ex Glass	(128)	(182)	(54)	(62)	Income share payment from Suez as per contract for recycle excluding glass
Bulky Waste Income	(42)	(38)	4	(21)	Payments for bulky waste collection service
Sale of Recyclables Glass	(18)	(13)	5	(5)	Income share payment from Suez as per contract for glass
Other	(14)	(17)	(3)	(5)	Fees from Developers for containers for new properties, sale of textiles and ECC contribution to clinical waste disposal
<b>Total</b>	<b>(2,164)</b>	<b>(2,223)</b>	<b>(59)</b>	<b>(1,051)</b>	Income has increased significantly due to additional recycling credits payment and new garden waste customers. However, the income share from recycle paid by Suez has reduced due to market prices.

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## ICT Expenditure

ICT Expenditure	Budget £000	Forecast £000	Forecast Variance £000	Actuals to end Sep £000	Description of Expenditure
Software Maintenance	283	250	(33)	116	Software maintenance renewals, including Firmstep (front office to back-office connector), Veeam (Backup solution), Daisy (new phone system), Pinnacle (accounts software) Teamviewer (remote support) Insight (Office 365) Idox (uniform supplier) ArcGIS (Mapping software)
Academy (Revs and Bens System)	94	94	0	17	Licence and maintenance renewal
Software Licences	81	81	0	25	Software licence renewals, including Office365
Idox Uniform Maintenance	50	50	0	0	Maintenance renewal
Internet & WAN	35	35	0	4	Supplier is Freedom
Civica Workflow 360 Maintenance	33	33	0	(13)	Digital360 and Myservice renewal
Hardware Maintenance	30	30	0	15	Server generator repairs and fuel
Specialist IT Training	20	20	0	0	ACCA (Aruba network training) Palo Alto (Firewall training) ITIL v4 (IT management training) CSIM (cyber security training)
ESRI mapping	15	15	0	1	ArcGIS Maintenance Renewal
Other	28	28	0	10	Printing, stationery, consultancy, website maintenance
<b>Total</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>(33)</b>	<b>175</b>	Forecast overspend is due to the upgrades on the Revenues and Benefits Academy system required to process the business grants and other government support packages

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## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, VIREMENTS, PROCUREMENT EXEMPTIONS AND USE OF RESERVES: 1 SEPTEMBER 2021 – 31 OCTOBER 2021**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report Virements and Supplementary Estimates agreed under delegated powers where they are below the levels requiring approval by this Strategy and Resources Committee and seek approval where they are above the levels requiring approval by this Committee.
- 1.2 To inform the Committee of procurement exemptions that have been granted in the period.
- 1.3 To report on the use of Reserves during the period.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the Virements as detailed in paragraph 3.2.1 of this report, be noted;
- (ii) That the Supplementary Estimates as detailed in paragraph 3.3.1 of this report be noted;
- (iii) That the Procurement Exemptions as detailed in paragraph 3.4.1 be noted.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

##### **3.1 Rules and Regulations**

- 3.1.1 The approval and reporting arrangements in relation to virements and supplementary estimates are set out in the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures. These are as follows:

##### Virements (movements) within the same directorate:

- Agreed by the relevant Director and the Director of Resources.

##### Virements between different directorate:

- Up to £20,000 – Director and Director of Resources;
- Over £20,000 up to £50,000 - Director, Director of Resources in consultation with relevant Programme Committee Chairman; and reported to the next Strategy and Resources Committee.

- Over £50,000 - the Strategy and Resources Committee.

In addition, for the purposes of virements, salaries budgets are to be considered as a separate Directorate.

#### Supplementary Estimates

- Up to £20,000 – Director and Director of Resources in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Leader and reported to the next Strategy and Resources Committee.
- Over £20,000 – Strategy and Resources Committee.

3.1.2 The Contract Procedure Rules provide information in relation to procurement exemptions. The exemption enables the council to waive any requirements within the contract procedure rules for specific projects.

3.1.3 Procurement exemptions should be signed by the Officer and countersigned by the Director of Resources and where appropriate the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

### **3.2 Virements**

3.2.1 The following are two virements that are required to be reported to the Committee during this period. Both are for information only.

<b>Cost Centre To</b>	<b>Directorate / Service</b>	<b>Cost Centre From</b>	<b>Directorate / Service</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>
129	Resources / Legal	108	Strategy, Performance and Governance (SPG) / Committee Services	£5,500	Legal Services Expenditure and Income budgets more appropriately moved to the Legal team under Resources to reflect true ownership/ responsibility
129	Resources / Legal	108	SPG / Committee Services	(£10,000)	

### **3.3 Supplementary Estimates**

3.3.1 The following supplementary estimates were agreed by the Director of Resources in consultation with the Leader and the Chair of Strategy and Resources committee. In accordance with financial regulations, they are presented here for the committee to note.

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Directorate/ Service</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Capital or Revenue</b>
511	Service Delivery / Maldon Promenade	£6,500	Redecoration of Beach Huts in Prom Park	Revenue
511	Service Delivery / Maldon Promenade	£11,000	Purchase of 2 replacement Water pumps for the Marine Lake fountain	Revenue

### 3.4 Procurement Exemptions

3.4.1 The following procurement exemptions have been agreed.

Item	Amount	Description	Reason	Authority
1	£45,000	Click it Local	This is an extension of an existing contract with Uttlesford District Council	Chris Leslie
2	£40,800	Food Inspections	Urgent extension of existing contract due to necessary additional food inspections due to the Covid pandemic	Chris Leslie
3	£10,000	Jigsaw Housing Software	Extension of existing contract whilst competitive procurement process is followed to put a new agreement in place	Chris Leslie
4	£5,660	First Aid Cover – Prom Park	Under the threshold for full procurement process. Volunteer cover very experienced in their field and very cost effective	Chris Leslie
5	£11,400	Cemeteries Verge Cutting	Under the threshold for procurement and no other supplier could undertake the work at such short notice	Richard Holmes
6	£22,250	Mower	Under the relevant threshold and can only be supplied by one particular economic operator	Chris Leslie
7	£11,000	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update 2021-2022	Additional work by existing contractor which if undertaken by a different contractor would result in technical inconsistencies in the final report	Chris Leslie

### 3.5 Drawdowns from Reserves

3.5.1 There were no drawdowns from Reserves during this period.

## 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Committee is invited to:

- note the two virements in paragraph 3.2.1;
- note the two supplementary estimates in paragraph 3.3.1 and;
- note the seven procurement exemptions in paragraph 3.4.1 of this report.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

5.1 The adherence to the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures contributes towards the corporate core values of being open and transparent, and accountable for our actions.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None identified.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None identified.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None identified.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Lance Porteous, Lead Finance Specialist.



## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021**

### **2021 / 22 HALF YEARLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report on the Council's investment activity for the first half of 2021 / 22 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Treasury Management Code (CIPFA's TM Code) and the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Treasury Management Practices (TMPs).

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

That Members review the Treasury Management report for compliance purposes.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

##### **3.1 Background**

- 3.1.1 The Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires that authorities report on the performance of the treasury management function at least twice yearly (mid-year and at year end).
- 3.1.2 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2021 / 22 was presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 28 January 2021 and subsequently approved by the Council on 23 February 2021.
- 3.1.3 In 2021 / 22, the Council had an average of £28.0m invested and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. This report covers treasury activity and the associated monitoring and control of risk.
- 3.1.4 The 2017 Prudential Code includes a requirement for local authorities to provide a Capital Strategy, a summary document approved by the Council covering capital expenditure and financing, treasury management and non-treasury investments. The Council's Capital Strategy, complying with CIPFA's requirement, was approved by the Council on 23 February 2021.

##### **3.2 External Context**

- 3.2.1 The Council currently engages Arlingclose to provide treasury management consultancy and advice services. Attached at **APPENDIX 1** is information prepared by Arlingclose providing an overview of the external economic environment.

### 3.3 Local context

- 3.3.1 The Council is currently debt free and its capital expenditure plans do not currently indicate the need to borrow over the forecast period based on existing expenditure levels. However, as investment becomes necessary for Commercial Projects, additional funds will be required, and borrowing may then be needed. Investments are forecast to fall as capital receipts are used to finance capital expenditure and reserves are used to finance the revenue budget and Future Model.

### 3.4 Investment Activity (April 2020 – September 2021)

- 3.4.1 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment returns.
- 3.4.2 The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. Over the period from April to September 2021, the level of investments held by the Council has seen an increase of £10.9m due to the timing of receiving Grants, Council Tax and NNDR ahead paying these out to beneficiaries and preceptors. Therefore, the total of investments held on 30 September 2021 of £31.7m. These are comprised as follows:

**Table 1 – Invested Funds**

	<b>Balance on 01/04/2021 £000s</b>	<b>Movement £000s</b>	<b>Balance on 30/09/2021 £000s</b>	<b>Average Credit Risk Score</b>	<b>Counter- party limit</b>	<b>Sector limit</b>
<b>Short term Investments</b>						
Banks and Building societies	2,819	400	3,219	5.3	£2m	Unlimited (Banks) / £5m (Building Societies)
Money Market Funds	3,000	9,000	12,000	3.8	£5m	£12m
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	0	5,500	5,500	n/a	Unlimited	n/a
Fixed Term Deposits (LA's)	10,000	-4,000	6,000	4.6	£2m	Unlimited
<b>Long Term Investments</b>	5,000	-	5,000	n/a	£5m	£12m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,819</b>	<b>10,900</b>	<b>31,719</b>	<b>Ave 4.1</b>		

- 3.4.3 The Councils' £5m of externally managed pooled and property funds have generated a total return of £96k in 2021 / 22 to date. As these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives are regularly

reviewed. Strategic fund investments are made in the knowledge that capital values will move both up and down on months, quarters and even years; but with the confidence that over a three to five year period total returns will exceed cash interest rates. In light of their performance over the medium / long-term and the Council's latest cash flow forecasts, investment in these funds has been maintained.

### 3.5 Performance – Budgeted Income and Outturn

3.5.1 Below are the average rates of returns obtained on the Authority's investments:

- Short Term investments - 0.05%;
- Investments in the Investec Diversified Income fund – 3.25%;
- Investment in the Property Fund – 3.81%.

3.5.2 The above returns average to 0.63%, this is in accordance with the assumed interest rate included within the 2021 / 22 Budget Setting Report.

The Authority's budgeted investment income for the year was set at £132,900. Projected income for the year is currently £192,700. This increase is due to maintaining a higher level of average balances invested than originally anticipated.

### 3.6 Compliance with Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy (APPENDIX 2)

3.6.1 The Prudential Indicators for 2021 / 22, which were set on 28 January 2021 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement shown at **Table 1** have been complied with to date, except for some brief breached bank limits that occurred on the Council's current account, disclosed below.

**Table 2 – Counterparty Limit Breaches**

Date in Excess	Amount in Excess	Reason	Date Resolved	How Resolved
21/09/2021	£411,000	Net balance exceeded the £2m bank counterparty limit as BACS run went a day later	22/09/21	BACS run processed for £415k.
16/08/2021	£265,000	Net balance exceeded the £2m bank counterparty limit following grant payment from DWP	17/08/2021	£1m Investment to Deutsche Bank
02/08/21 to 04/08/21	£340,000 to £446,000	Net balance exceeded the £2m bank counterparty limit due to temporary lack of signatories available.	05/08/21	£1.5m DMO Investment once signatories available.
02/07/21 to 07/07/21	£9,000 to £139,000	Net balance exceeded the £2m bank counterparty limit as less paid out during that period than planned.	08/07/21	£149k payment to HMRC.
18/06/2021	£879,000	Net balance exceeded £2m bank	21/06/21	BACS run of £955k

Date in Excess	Amount in Excess	Reason	Date Resolved	How Resolved
		counterparty limit due to BACS run going out after the weekend.		processed.

- 3.6.2 The Section 151 Officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the half year in review complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy, the above items excepted.

### 3.7 Outlook for the remainder of 2021/22 (provided by Arlingclose.)

- 3.7.1 While Q1 UK GDP (Gross Domestic Product) expanded more quickly than initially thought, the 'pingdemic' and more latterly supply disruption will leave Q2 GDP broadly stagnant. The outlook also appears weaker. Household spending, the driver of the recovery to date, is under pressure from a combination of retail energy price rises, the end of government support programmes and soon, tax rises. Government spending, the other driver of recovery, will slow considerably as the economy is taken off life support.
- 3.7.2 Inflation rose to 3.2% in August. A combination of factors will drive this to over 4% in the near term. While the transitory factors affecting inflation, including the low base effect of 2020, are expected to unwind over time, the MPC (Monetary Policy Committee) has recently communicated fears that these transitory factors will feed longer-term inflation expectations that require tighter monetary policy to control. This has driven interest rate expectations substantially higher.
- 3.7.3 The supply imbalances are apparent in the labour market. While wage growth is currently elevated due to compositional and base factors, stories abound of higher wages for certain sectors, driving inflation expectations. It is uncertain whether a broad-based increased in wages is possible given the pressures on businesses.
- 3.7.4 Government bond yields increased sharply following the September FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) and MPC minutes, in which both central banks communicated a lower tolerance for higher inflation than previously thought. The MPC in particular has doubled down on these signals in spite of softer economic data. Bond investors expect higher near-term interest rates but are also clearly uncertain about central bank policy.
- 3.7.5 The MPC appears to be playing both sides, but has made clear its intentions to tighten policy, possibly driven by a desire to move away from emergency levels. While the economic outlook will be challenging, the signals from policymakers suggest Bank Rate will rise unless data indicates a more severe slowdown.
- 3.7.6 The global economy is entering a period of slower growth in response to political issues, primarily the trade policy stance of the US. The UK economy has displayed a marked slowdown in growth due to both Brexit uncertainty and the downturn in global activity. In response, global and UK interest rate expectations have eased dramatically.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides Members with a summary of the treasury management activity during the first half of 2021 / 22. As indicated in this report, only one of the prudential indicators has been briefly breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

#### 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 This report links to delivering good quality, cost effective and valued services in a transparent way.

#### 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None directly.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – This report is mainly about managing credit risk. A prudent approach continues to be taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Income is projected to exceed the Council's budgeted figure (£192,700) by £59,800 in 2021.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** - None directly.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Lance Porteous, Lead Finance Specialist.

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## 2021/22 HALF YEARLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

**External Context (Prepared by Arlingclose)**

**Economic background:** The economic recovery from coronavirus pandemic continued to dominate the first half of the financial year. By the end of the period over 48 million people in the UK had received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and almost 45 million their second dose.

The Bank of England (BoE) held Bank Rate at 0.1% throughout the period and maintained its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion, unchanged since the November 2020 meeting. In its September 2021 policy announcement, the BoE noted it now expected the UK economy to grow at a slower pace than was predicted in August, as the pace of the global recovery had shown signs of slowing and there were concerns inflationary pressures may be more persistent. Within the announcement, Bank expectations for GDP growth for the third (calendar) quarter were revised down to 2.1% (from 2.9%), in part reflecting tighter supply conditions. The path of CPI inflation is now expected to rise slightly above 4% in the last three months of 2021, due to higher energy prices and core goods inflation. While the Monetary Policy Committee meeting ended with policy rates unchanged, the tone was more hawkish.

Government initiatives continued to support the economy over the quarter but came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, with businesses required to either take back the 1.6 million workers on the furlough scheme or make them redundant.

The latest labour market data showed that in the three months to July 2021 the unemployment rate fell to 4.6%. The employment rate increased, and economic activity rates decreased, suggesting an improving labour market picture. Latest data showed growth in average total pay (including bonuses) and regular pay (excluding bonuses) among employees was 8.3% and 6.3% respectively over the period. However, part of the robust growth figures is due to a base effect from a decline in average pay in the spring of last year associated with the furlough scheme.

Annual CPI inflation rose to 3.2% in August, exceeding expectations for 2.9%, with the largest upward contribution coming from restaurants and hotels. The Bank of England now expects inflation to exceed 4% by the end of the calendar year owing largely to developments in energy and goods prices. The Office of National Statistics' (ONS') preferred measure of CPIH which includes owner-occupied housing was 3.0% year/year, marginally higher than expectations for 2.7%.

The easing of restrictions boosted activity in the second quarter of calendar year, helping push GDP up by 5.5% q/q (final estimate vs 4.8% q/q initial estimate). Household consumption was the largest contributor. Within the sector breakdown production contributed 1.0% q/q, construction 3.8% q/q and services 6.5% q/q, taking all of these close to their pre-pandemic levels.

The US economy grew by 6.3% in Q1 2021 (Jan-Mar) and then by an even stronger 6.6% in Q2 as the recovery continued. The Federal Reserve maintained its main interest rate at between 0% and 0.25% over the period but in its most recent meeting made suggestion that monetary policy may start to be tightened soon.

The European Central Bank maintained its base rate at 0%, deposit rate at -0.5%, and asset purchase scheme at €1.85 trillion.

**Financial markets:** Monetary and fiscal stimulus together with rising economic growth and the ongoing vaccine rollout programmes continued to support equity markets over most of the period, albeit with a bumpy ride towards the end. The Dow Jones hit another record high while the UK-focused FTSE 250 index continued making gains over pre-pandemic levels. The more internationally focused FTSE 100 saw more modest gains over the period and remains below its pre-crisis peak.

Inflation worries continued during the period. Declines in bond yields in the first quarter of the financial year suggested bond markets were expecting any general price increases to be less severe, or more transitory, than was previously thought. However, an increase in gas prices in the UK and EU, supply shortages and a dearth of HGV and lorry drivers with companies willing to pay more to secure their services, has caused problems for a range of industries and, in some instances, led to higher prices.

The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield began the financial year at 0.36% before declining to 0.33% by the end of June 2021 and then climbing to 0.64% on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Over the same period the 10-year gilt yield fell from 0.80% to 0.71% before rising to 1.03% and the 20-year yield declined from 1.31% to 1.21% and then increased to 1.37%.

The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 0.05% over the quarter.

**Credit review:** Credit default swap spreads were flat over most of the period and are broadly in line with their pre-pandemic levels. In late September spreads rose by a few basis points due to concerns around Chinese property developer Evergrande defaulting but are now falling back. The gap in spreads between UK ringfenced and non-ringfenced entities continued to narrow, but Santander UK remained an outlier compared to the other ringfenced/retail banks. At the end of the period Santander UK was trading the highest at 53bps and Lloyds Bank plc the lowest at 32bps. The other ringfenced banks were trading between 37-39bps and Nationwide Building Society was 39bps.

Over the period Fitch and Moody's upwardly revised to stable the outlook on a number of UK banks and building societies on our counterparty list, recognising their improved capital positions compared to last year and better economic growth prospects in the UK.

Fitch also revised the outlooks for Nordea, Svenska Handelsbanken and Handelsbanken plc to stable from negative. The rating agency considered the improved economic prospects in the Nordic region to have reduced the baseline downside risks it previously assigned to the lenders.

The successful vaccine rollout programme is credit positive for the financial services sector in general and the improved economic outlook has meant some institutions have been able to reduce provisions for bad loans. While there is still uncertainty around the full extent of the losses banks and building societies will suffer due to the pandemic-related economic slowdown, the sector is in a generally better position now compared to earlier this year and 2020.

At the end of the period Arlingclose had completed its full review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits. The outcome of this review included the addition of NatWest Markets plc to the counterparty list together with the removal of the suspension of Handelsbanken plc. In addition, the maximum duration for all recommended counterparties was extended to 100 days.

As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by treasury management advisors Arlingclose remain under constant review.

## 2021/22 HALF YEARLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

## Compliance with Prudential Indicators

(a) **Estimates of Capital Expenditure**

The Council's planned capital expenditure and financing may be summarised as follows.

<b>Capital Expenditure and Financing</b>	<b>2020 / 21 Actual £000</b>	<b>2021 / 22 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2022 / 23 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2023 / 24 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>759</b>
Capital Receipts	159	343	457	339
Government Grants	281	539	420	420
Contributions	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>759</b>
Supported borrowing	0	0	0	0
Unsupported borrowing	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Financing and Funding</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>882</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>759</b>

The table above shows that the capital expenditure plans of the council can be funded entirely from sources other than external borrowing.

(b) **Operational Boundary for External Debt and Authorised Limit for External Debt**

The council is currently debt free and currently has had no need to borrow.

(c) **Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions**

This is an indicator of affordability that shows the impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax. The incremental impact is calculated by comparing the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme with an equivalent calculation of the revenue budget requirement arising from the proposed capital programme.

<b>Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £</b>	<b>2022/23 Estimate £</b>	<b>2023/24 Estimate £</b>
Increase in Band D Council Tax	0	0	0

The impact on Band D Council Tax highlighted above is NIL as the capital Programme is fully financed by Capital Receipts and Government Grants.

(d) **Treasury Management Indicators**

The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Security**

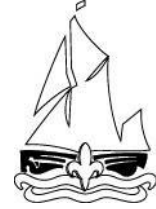
The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average [credit rating] or [credit score] of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment.

	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Portfolio average credit score	6.0	4.1

**Liquidity**

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

	<b>Target,</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Total cash available within 3 months	£3m	£23.5m



## REPORT of DIRECTOR RESOURCES

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to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021

### 2022 / 23 FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to review the fees and charges policies that have been put forward by officers: prior to the approval of the 2022 / 23 budget and updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.2 The detailed schedule of Fees and Charges will be reviewed based on the policy decisions and the Committee will recommend the actual 2022 / 23 fees and charges to Council during the next cycle of meetings. The 2022 / 23 income budgets will be based on the recommended policy.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### To the Council:

That the 2022 / 23 fees and charges policies at **APPENDIX A** be approved.

#### 3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

##### 3.1 Fees and Charges

- 3.1.1 Fees and charges set by the Council are one area where the Council may have the ability to generate increased resources, however each area is subject to different constraints. In looking at these policies, the following factors need to be considered:
  - Corporate and service objectives / priorities;
  - Seeking to make services self-financing, where there is scope to do so;
  - The level of charges levied by commercial competitors and other local authorities;
  - The introduction of new charges, where appropriate;
  - Whether concessions in fees and charges for specific users of the service(s) would apply or where they already apply then should they continue to apply.

##### 3.2 Current Position

- 3.2.1 The position with each policy is set out in **APPENDIX A** including any new or amended proposed policies, or any proposed concessions.

### 3.3 Summary of proposed changes to Fees and Charge Policy

Maldon promenade - splash park	Addition to also consider comparable facilities as well as cost recovery.
Maldon Town – off street car parking	Concessions to extend to residents for season tickets/discounts.
Chargeable street cleaning	Change to ensure these are charged at a market rate but also ensure it is a minimum of cost recovery.
Maldon promenade - beach huts	
Maldon promenade - pop up trading	
Parks & open spaces - advertising	
Commercial services - sponsorship	
Markets	
Pest control	
RAMS (Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategy)	Additions of a monitoring fee alongside all Essex coastal RAMS.
Commercial services - box office	Changed from standard 10% charge to a minimum of 10%.

3.3.1 No new Fees and Charges policies have been added.

## 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The fees and charges policy will inform the setting of the 2022 / 23 fees and charges, which will be brought to a subsequent Committee.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

5.1 The Strategic and Financial Planning process contributes towards “Delivering good quality, cost effective and valuable services”.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The fees and charges are for services and therefore impact on service users.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The implementation of the budget setting process is designed to minimise the risk of not having a robust Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- (iv) **Impact on resources (financial)** – Fees and Charges set by the Council are a key financial resource. The Council needs to consider additional income generation as part of the set of actions to balance its annual and future revenue budget.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – As well as financial factors, availability of staff has been considered for each of the policies in terms of implementation, monitoring and enforcement.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Lance Porteous, Lead Finance Specialist.



Committee	Directorate	Policy Area	Current Policy	Existing Concessions	Policy 22/23	Proposed Policy for 2022/23	Proposed concessions
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	River Moorings	Charge for moorings (not aligned with any other clubs)	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	River Wharfage	Set fees to compete with alternative berthing facilities on the east coast	Quarterly charges discount daily fee by 50%. Discounts available to charitable trusts.	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Off Street Car Parking (Maldon Town)	Maximise income, but take into account the need to support local businesses. No free school drop off permits.	Disabled Badge holders - Free parking. Season Ticket discounts for Public Sector Partners and Bulk Purchases. Free parking on bank holidays in Town Centre car parks.	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	Disabled Badge holders - Free parking. Season Ticket discounts for Public Sector Partners, Residents and Bulk Purchases. Free parking on bank holidays in Town Centre car parks.
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Off Street Car Parking (Outside Maldon Town)	Free entry	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Car Parking/Events	Suspend car parking and introduce a set fee for specific events. Charges will be dependent on the event size and entrance fee. To be determined by the Head of Service Delivery.	None	Retain Existing Policy	No change	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Maldon Promenade - Car Parking	Aim for overall 60% cost recovery for Promenade Park - with Car Parking being the key contributor	Maldon District Residents Season Tickets at reduced price. Disabled Badge Holders	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Maldon Promenade - Splash Park	Charge for the use of the splash park to offset costs of operating the facility	None	Amend Existing Policy	Charge to as far as possible to recover all costs of operation and in line with comparable facilities	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Use of Council Land for events	All Council Land. Use of a minimum events day rate charge on council owned land determined by the scale of event size to maximise income for all events.	Charity Organisations with under 100 people in attendance receive a concession ensuring full cost recovery.	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Council owned Land (inc Prom)	Charges to be for all council owned land as well as Prom Park to maximise income	Prices to be agreed by the Director of Service Delivery in Conjunction with the Chairman of Community Services Committee.	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Maldon Promenade - Beach Huts	Charge for hire of Beach Huts. Charges based on market rates.	None	Amend Existing Policy	Charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Cemeteries	Charges at levels comparable to facilities provided by other local authorities	Local Residents receive discounted rates. Under 18's Free	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Green Waste Bin Service	Charge for Service	Charges in line with other authorities. Charge for Bin for new subscribers	Retain	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Chargeable Household Waste Collection	Charges made for residential homes, with limited collections from villages halls equivalent to domestic property. Charges based on cost recovery for additional collections	Free Clinical waste collection	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Chargeable Bulky Household Waste Collection	Charge subject to annual adjustment to reflect contract costs. Fee is collected by Maldon District Council (MDC) and an agreed sum paid to the contractor for each collection	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	

Committee	Directorate	Policy Area	Current Policy	Existing Concessions	Policy 22/23	Proposed Policy for 2022/23	Proposed concessions
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Chargeable Street Cleaning	Charges set by negotiation with Officers	Charitable events and some specific commercial events are free	Amend Existing Policy	Charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation.	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Maldon Promenade - Pop Up Trading	Charge for the hire of trading stalls to commercial partners on a daily basis	None	Amend Existing Policy	Charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Parks & Open Spaces - Advertising	Charge for advertising on Council owned assets. Charges based on market rates	None	Amend Existing Policy	charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Court Costs - Council Tax and Business Rates	Charges set to maximum level agreed by Essex Magistrates Courts	None	Retain Existing Policy	no change	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	CCTV footage requested by individuals, insurance companies or any organisations other than the Police (subject to data protection)	Chargeable services	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Refuse and recycling containers for new build properties	Developers to fund the cost of provision of containers for new properties if the development is more than five properties.	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Parking Permits for Schools	Chargeable Services	Charges made to Schools for parking in MDC owned car parks	Retain Existing Policy	no change	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Road Closures	To reclaim costs plus statutory administration charge.	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Promenade Park Concessions	To Charge for concessions on the Prom. Prices set on negotiation with the Director of Service Delivery.	None	Retain Existing Policy	No changes	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Grounds Maintenance Contracts	Charges for contracts based on competitive market rates ensuring full cost recovery.	None	Retain	No Change	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Commercial team – Commercial Services - Box Office	Box office services commission rate set by officers – Standard 10% commission for all events. Concession Director of Service Delivery in conjunction with the Chairman of Community Services Committee be granted discretion to vary this rate to support the corporate goals of the Council.	None	Retain Existing Policy	Box office services commission rate a minimum of 10% commission for all events. Concession Director of Service Delivery in conjunction with the Chairman of Strategy & Resources Committee be granted discretion to vary this rate to support the corporate goals of the Council.	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Commercial team – Commercial Services - Marketing	Commercial team to charge a competitive hourly rate for its marketing and promotional services ensuring full cost recovery	None	Retain Existing Policy	No change	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Commercial team – Commercial Services - Sponsorship	Commercial Team to seek funding and sponsorship from partners and other organisations for which the Team provides a service, such as transport providers - Charges set by negotiation with the Director of Service Delivery and in-line with agreed criteria.	None	Amend Existing Policy	charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	

Committee	Directorate	Policy Area	Current Policy	Existing Concessions	Policy 22/23	Proposed Policy for 2022/23	Proposed concessions
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Land Charges	Self Financing Service subject to regulations	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Public Hire Vehicle & Hackney Carriage Licensing	Self financing service	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Building Control - Chargeable Services	Self financing service (by regulation) Break even over a five year period	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Development Control and Conservation - Pre Application Advice	Charge for advice	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Development Control - Planning Performance Agreements (PPA)	Charge based on generic officer cost rates to complete the tasks in the PPA.	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Planning Fees (Development control fees)	No Policy - no powers at present	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Licensing Act 2003	Set fees in line with the costs incurred in providing the service	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Gambling Act 2005	Set fees in line with the costs incurred in providing the service	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013	Recover reasonable costs of administration in accordance with statutory guidance	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Pest Control	Set charges to be competitive with other service providers	None	Amend Existing Policy	Charges should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Animal Licensing	Set fees in line with the costs incurred in providing the service	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Mobile Homes Act 2013	Set fees in line with the costs incurred in providing the service	Exempt those sites that have 8 or less units (Band 1)	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Pre Application for Tree Preservation Order advise	Charge for advice previous a free service. Charge to be based full recovery of Officer time	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Street Naming and numbering	Charges to developers and property owners based on cost recovery	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Revisit to rescore food hygiene ratings	Set fees in line with the costs incurred in providing the service. New legislation is expected but it is not clear if fees will be set nationally or locally	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Resources	External Printing	To be charged per copy.	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Resources	Administration of Parish Elections & Neighbourhood Referendums	Levy an administration charge based on recovery of Officer time	Not Applicable	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Markets	As per Tendered Price and to encourage development of the market.	None	Amend Existing Policy	charges based on competitive Market rates, and should aim as a minimum to recover all costs of operation	
Strategy & Resources	SPG	RAMS	To charge for mitigation to the harm caused by additional residential accommodation RAMS (Regional Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy)	None	Amend Existing Policy	To charge a monitoring fee alongside all Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) payments	
Strategy & Resources	SPG	S106	To charge a monitoring fee based on individual cases	None	Retain Existing Policy		
Strategy & Resources	Service Delivery	Hythe Quay Parking	None	To charge for parking on hythe Quay	Retain Existing Policy		

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**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021**

**CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Climate Action Strategy,  
**APPENDIX 1.**

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the progress that has been made in developing the Climate Action Strategy through the work of the Climate Action Member Working Group be noted and its recommendation for approval acknowledged;

To the Council:

- (ii) that the Climate Action Strategy be approved and endorsed .

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On 4 February 2021, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and stated it was the first step towards a cleaner and more sustainable Council, benefitting both residents and future generations.
- 3.2 Between the period of March 2021 and now, development of a Climate Action Strategy (the Strategy) has taken place and has been informed by officers from across the Council and by Members of the Climate Action Strategy Working Group.
- 3.3 The Strategy sets out the local and national picture, the 2050 carbon net zero target set by government and the pivotal role the Council has in helping to achieve these at a local level.
- 3.4 The Strategy sets out a number of Climate Action aspirations for the district, they are:
  - a) To be a carbon neutral District by 2030 and ensure that all our strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning and regulatory decisions are in line with a shift to net-zero carbon by 2030;
  - b) To improve our flood resilience and defences to protect the land and homes in the District;
  - c) To lead by example as a local authority and encourage local businesses, residents and parishes to make positive changes;
  - d) To give our younger people a voice by launching the **Our Home, Our Future**, community engagement group;

- e) To challenge perceptions and encourage positive, long-term behaviour change leading to healthier, greener lives;
- f) To identify and deliver economic benefits, leading to sustainable businesses, energy and environment related skills and jobs;
- g) Give residents, businesses and visitors the choice and opportunity to make greener, less harmful decisions;
- h) Reduce use of oil, natural gas and coal. Support the energy sector generating green energy to secure, low cost and low carbon energy supply.

3.5 The Strategy then sets out the Council's willingness to take action through the following approach:

- a) Understand better the wider carbon footprints of residents and businesses caused by the energy and transport we use and the from the things we buy from around the world;
- b) Identify where we can influence and what we can directly control and act on to ensure we make a difference by 2030;
- c) To springboard action, the Council will align its pledges to the capabilities of its partners and adopt a partnership-based approach to local climate action. This approach will mobilise the energy and expertise of the private and public sector, as well as the wider community;
- d) Importantly, the Council will work hard to develop a climate funding plan to evidence the plan of action, to mobilise local savings and to attract wider pools of capital to fund the implementation of the action plan;
- e) Find out what residents and young people really think about climate change and give our young people a lead role in shaping their future. Understand perceptions and work with feedback and ideas to stimulate positive behaviour change, and local business and community led initiatives;
- f) Continue to lobby government and industry for substantial investment. As a local authority we have a role to lobby Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make all carbon reduction targets possible. Maldon District Council is committed but it needs a fair and inclusive transition to net zero;
- g) Finally, we must look outward and ensure Maldon District's Climate Annual Action Plan is aligned to [Essex County Council's Climate Action Commission](#), [Transport East](#), and links in with the Districts' and Boroughs' Climate Group, and further still listens to the insight from the [Place-Based Climate Action Network](#). We must also endorse and help to promote pilots and initiatives that the District will benefit from 'Cleaner, Greener, Healthier'.

3.6 The Strategy sets our five Climate Action Pledges. The pledges enables the Council to engage with communities, businesses, local and national partners by setting out five key priority areas, delivering a broad range of activities under each of the pledges, leading up to 2030.

3.7 The Climate Action Pledges are:

- a) Kick the car habit
- b) Create Less Waste
- c) Show Nature We Care
- d) Be an authority that Leads by Example
- e) Have a strong policy commitment to Climate Action.

- 3.8 The Strategy goes on to identify what we know about the District today in terms of Carbon Emissions, behaviours and recycling performance, and also sets out what further information and data is needed to inform the Climate Action work of the District, to help identify carbon reducing pathways.
- 3.9 Existing Policies and Strategies are listed, setting out the work that is already defined and carried out by current corporate plan, policies and strategies and further acknowledges current national policy.
- 3.10 It's important the work of the strategy is done in partnerships to enable the Council to have access to funding and shared resource, data and climate specific tools. The Council's current list of partners is set out in the Strategy, acknowledging this is not exhaustive but provides the main bodies and organisations.
- 3.11 The Strategy also sets out known grant funds and incentives and states that these are often available to residents, landlords, housing developers, businesses, community groups, schools and in some cases local authorities depending on the criteria for application and the responsibilities to spend monies.
- 3.12 A large part of delivering the Strategy will be through the **"Our Home, Our Future"** campaign. The aim is to develop a large database of local Climate Action Friends who will come together to drive behaviours change, share ideas and take forward local initiatives. We have already seen interest from local businesses, residents (both younger and older), churches and community groups who are keen to take part. Using an Asset Based Community Development approach (ABCD) which in essence results in activity being led by the community - for the community. Through this approach we will aim to bring about positive and healthy changes, and to help each other understand what Climate Action can be taken forward. It also provides an opportunity to listen to the needs of our residents, visitors, schools and businesses to ensure all Climate Action is accessible and inclusive, and this means being affordable too.
- 3.13 The final section of the Strategy sets out next steps, including:
- a) Recruit a Climate Action Officer;
  - b) Climate Action Officer to produce 2022-2023 action plan, setting out outcomes for this period;
  - c) Continue to present strategy to partners and developers;
  - d) Launch the Our Home, Our Future engagement activities;
  - e) Set out short, medium, long-term actions, recognising some will be beyond 2030;
  - f) Gather local District data and set out known trends and behaviours;
  - g) Continue to build database of Climate Action Friends;
  - h) Commission carbon net zero pathways and opportunities District study;
  - i) Report on and monitor any committed, secured or allocated funding;
  - j) Review any announcements from COP26, UN Climate Change conference in November 2021.
- 3.14 An Equality Impact Assessment of the Climate Action Strategy is set out in **APPENDIX 2** for completeness.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Climate Action continues to be a priority topic for government. The Council is somewhat behind the curve in comparison to other local authorities and would benefit from having a Climate Action Strategy, to ensure it actively reduces impact and harm to the environment and to build resilience for the future.
- 4.2 Having a Climate Action Strategy will enable the Council to apply for funding to ensure better outcomes for the District and gain access to Climate Action tools and support both locally and nationally
- 4.3 The Strategy also provides a great opportunity to engage with the full spectrum of the community. It will give people a voice and a reason to come together to offer their time, skills, knowledge. Ideas can be shared about how lives can be lived and the changes that are needed, after what has been and is still a challenging time.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The Climate Action Strategy provides co-benefit to the Strategic Themes of Place, Prosperity and Community and will assist the thematic strategies in achieving outcomes.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The Our Home, Our Future community engagement approach to the development of the Action plan will enable those that wish to engage with the Council in developing our Climate actions to do so effectively and help influence the creation of an updated and robust approach for the District.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Appropriate Equalities Impact Assessments will take place throughout the lifetime of the Climate Action Strategy to ensure requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 are met. The initial assessment is set out in **APPENDIX 2**.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The Climate Action Strategy will help the Council reduce the risk of carbon emission increase and being better prepared for when climate and environment legislation and standards come into force. It also reduces the risk of missing out on funding opportunities to support climate action and resilience for the authority and the district.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Resource to deliver the work of the Climate Action Strategy is dependent on growth bid approval for 2022 - 2023. Further implications could arise from any decisions taken to 'green' corporate policy, contracts and any vehicle or machinery purchases. All future projects managed through the Project Management Office will include project costs relating to Climate Action.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – This is currently supported by existing officers, Members. If the growth bid is approved, a Climate Action Officer will be recruited, and they will deliver the programme of work.



- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Positive outcomes for the environment based on the aspirations and approach set out in the Climate Action Strategy.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** –Through the Our Home, Our Future campaign the Climate Action Strategy will provide an excellent opportunity for communities to engage in Climate Action. It should help to maximise engagement with communities and ensure that their perception and ideas and skills can be shared and considered in the formulation of the annual Climate Action Plan. Using an Asset Based Community Development Approach engagement will be coordinated ‘with’ and ‘by’ the community, for the community.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Paul Dodson, Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance.

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**Taking climate action for our future home and generations.**  
Maldon District Council's Climate Action Strategy 2021-2030.

**Foreword**

Maldon District Council declared a Climate Emergency at the February Council meeting earlier this year, this is alongside the 75% of local authorities who have also declared a climate emergency.

Since this motion at Full Council, we have been busy preparing how to approach Climate Action, setting out the Council's aspirations, identifying a core set of pledges and focusing on how we plan to engage with residents of all ages, with businesses and local community groups to help understand perceptions of climate change and to change behaviours.

It is easy to think that climate change is happening somewhere else in the world. However, we now experience regular episodes of extreme weather events and flooding, we breathe in poor quality air in built up areas, we are seeing a dwindling number of bees and wild flowers, and it upsets everyone to see plastics on our beautiful beaches. We think it is time to wake up and realise that we need to act quickly to protect our home and our future.



As a Local Authority, we have a vital role to play in achieving national net zero targets. The Council as an anchor organisation is uniquely placed to provide vision and leadership to local communities by raising awareness, influencing behaviour, and being a driver for local action that makes a real difference to the local environment. Through our powers and responsibilities, and by working with our strategic partners, a range of local people and communities, this strategy sets out how we will achieve this.

*Cllr Wendy Stamp, Leader of Maldon District Council*

## Introduction

At a county level and national level, there are a number of important climate and energy programmes and initiatives underway to help achieve a collective approach.

Essex County Council's [Climate Action Commission](#) is already underway and makes a clear statement that *'Climate action simply cannot wait – it is the responsibility of every organisation and resident in Essex to do our part to help ensure the County has a bright and green future. Essex County Council is committed to taking action on climate change - to lead the way and inspire other authorities to follow'*.

Nationally, Government has set out its net zero target by 2050, this is set out in law through the [Climate Change Act 2008](#). The Climate Change Act 2008 will set out policy change through the [Sixth Carbon Budget](#), providing advice to ministers on the volume of greenhouse gases the UK can emit during the period 2033-2037. The Government is increasingly focusing policy on public health improvement by tackling the range of factors that can contribute to ill-health. The potential risks posed by climate change are driving policy makers to consider, and reduce environmental impacts, with a strong focus on reducing unhealthy emissions and improving energy efficiency by 2050. With the additional focus on the recovery from the Covid-19 health pandemic, government has set out to create a greener and more resilient UK economy and has allocated a £160bn package for Low-Carbon initiatives.

To achieve government targets, we must ensure we play our part at a District level. It is vital that the Council acts at pace, setting out a Climate Action Strategy with a locally supported, evidence-based approach, and is delivered through an on the ground, localised action plan that tackles both reducing the District's contribution to climate change and adapts to the impacts of climate change.

The Council already has a number of strategy documents which support the District's environment, people's health and activity and which promote Maldon District as a great place to work, live and visit and already helps to protect and enhance the District's natural resources. Like all local authorities providing services to the public, the Council has several statutory duties to help protect and enhance the local environment. The **Our Home, Our Future - Climate Action Strategy 2021-2030** aims to build on the work the Council does and accelerate this through further action and engagement.

Our beautiful District has some stand out environmental challenges. Maldon District is bounded by 70 miles of coast line and has a number of areas around Mayland, Tollesbury and Goldhanger where sea defences are at risk of being below the acceptable level of protection, potentially causing flooding to homes and valuable agricultural land. This is a serious concern when as a <sup>1</sup>County flooding is set to double by 2040, impacting 75,000 homes.

The District has areas of air quality concerns due to the use of older, more polluting heavy goods vehicles. With the prospect of greater development occurring across the District

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<sup>1</sup> Essex County Council's Climate Action Commission report 2021

combined with the rate of flooding, a rise in sea levels, increased subsidence and rising levels of pollution, the Council and people who live in the District need to act.

The Climate Action Strategy is a positive step to identify ways to reduce carbon emissions and increase climate resilience across Maldon District. This will include developing strong climate partnership links, putting our hand up to be the first in line for sustainable transport options, to finding ways to support sustainable agriculture, and encourage development that meets all [future homes standards](#), and to engage and empower our communities to make low carbon and informed choices.

### **Our aspirations**

The Council wants to see action taken that will benefit our home and our future generations and has set out the following aspirations:

- To be a carbon neutral District by 2030 and ensure that all our strategic decisions, budgets and approaches to planning and regulatory decisions are in line with a shift to net-zero carbon by 2030;
- To improve our flood resilience and defences, to protect the land and homes in the District.
- To lead by example as a local authority and encourage local businesses, residents and parishes to make positive changes;
- To give our younger people a voice by launching the **Our Home, Our Future**, community engagement group;
- To challenge perceptions and encourage positive, long term behaviour change leading to healthier, greener lives;
- To identify and deliver economic benefits, leading to sustainable businesses, energy and environment related skills and jobs;
- Give residents, businesses and visitors the choice and opportunity to make greener, less harmful decisions;
- Reduce use of oil, natural gas and coal. Support the energy sector generating green energy to secure, low cost and low carbon energy supply.

### **Our approach to climate action**

The Council's willingness to take action is supported by the following approach:

- Understand better the wider carbon footprints of residents and businesses caused by the energy and transport we use and the from the things we buy from around the world;
- Identify where we can influence and what we can directly control and act on to ensure we make a difference by 2030;
- To springboard action, the Council will align its pledges to the capabilities of its partners and adopt a partnership-based approach to local climate action. This approach will mobilise the energy and expertise of the private and public sector, as well as the wider community;

→ Importantly, the Council will work hard to develop a climate funding plan to evidence the plan of action, to mobilise local savings and to attract wider pools of capital to fund the implementation of the action plan;

→ Find out what residents and young people really think about climate change and give our young people a lead role in shaping their future. Understand perceptions and work with feedback and ideas to stimulate positive behaviour change, and local business and community led initiatives;

→ Continue to lobby government and industry for substantial investment. As a local authority we have a role to lobby Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make all carbon reduction targets possible. Maldon District Council is committed but it needs a fair and inclusive transition to net zero;

→ Finally, we must look outward and ensure Maldon District's Climate Annual Action Plan is aligned to [Essex County Council's Climate Action Commission](#), [Transport East](#), and links in with the Districts' and Boroughs' Climate Group, and further still listens to the insight from the [Place-Based Climate Action Network](#). We must also endorse and help to promote pilots and initiatives that the District will benefit from 'Cleaner, Greener, Healthier'.

## Climate Action Pledges

The Council is going to take action to deliver the following Climate Action Pledges and will work with communities, businesses, local and national partners to take action by 2030.

To make a difference between now and 2030, we need to develop carbon reducing pathways and a yearly action plan setting out pilot schemes and initiatives to help us:

### 1. Kick the car habit



By 2030, the action the Council and its partners will take, will:

- Promote and increase car sharing;
- See a roll-out of electric charging points, particularly where off-street parking isn't available;
- Increase use of electric Council vehicles;
- Encourage electric vehicle take up and install more EV charging points on Council property;
- Plan positively for a reduction car use in the District's Local Development Plan;
- Update the Council's Parking Strategy;
- Require all future TAXIs and buses to be electric vehicles;
- Lobby, and partner with ECC to invest in active travel schemes and improve cycling routes;
- Promote walking along Coast Paths (Maldon to Salcott opened July 2021)
- Help to upcycle, pass on and maintain bicycles;
- Enable better park and stride options;
- Encourage walking and cycling in place of car use;
- Implement a sustainable staff travel plan;
- Reduce the dependency of cars from the District's High Streets;



- Lobby investment in the digital network and support rollout of 5G and future connectivity advancements;
- Ensure decarbonising transport does not result in social or economic disadvantage;
- Promote consumer choice through low mile menus and local produce.



## 2. Create less waste

By 2030, the action the Council and its partners will take, will:

- Establish a Business and Youth Engagement group to act as ambassadors, to promote new and established ways to re-use, reduce and recycle;
- Enable the group to educate and inform residents in terms of consumer choice at supermarkets, the products that produce the most emissions, or have travelled the furthest to reach the home;
- Home grown initiatives (from garden to table) and composting;
- Encourage Community up-cycling, turn waste into art and link to culture;
- Understanding the circular economy so that we can make informed choices;
- Improving the waste life cycle so that we are managing waste more sustainably;
- Reduction in waste, in particular plastic waste;
- Achievement of at least the 68% recycling by 2030 according to Climate Change Committee which advises government;
- Encourage the diversion of surplus food to foodbanks;
- [Develop Libraries of things](#) - Encourage people to give stuff away and borrow things rather than purchase more.



## 3. Show Nature we care



We will:

- Protect the District's Natural Capital including coastal habitats, biodiversity and natural greening;
- Deliver [Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019](#) projects;



- Continue to delivery air quality improvement via the Market Hill Air Quality Action Plan;
- Continue with town greening and greenways on redundant rail and canal connections;
- Plant more trees, and support rewilding, <sup>2</sup>4% of the District is woodland;
- Mow the grass less frequently;
- Create more inviting, usable spaces and parklets;
- Carry out a strategic flood risk assessment as part of the Local Plan Development Review;
- Protect and care for our marine life;
- Set up Coastal Guardians and encourage clean and positive use of coast paths;
- Be a welcoming home for more insects and wildlife (Buzz stops, not just bus stops);
- Clean beaches and waterways;
- Sustainable development;
- Link exercise to waste – jogging, walking and litter picks, path clearing clubs);
- Grow the green estate, via Environment Land Management Schemes and seek benefits from this (reinvest and offset harm);
- Composting schemes and compostable waste toilets in parks;
- Identify how we actively carbon capture;
- Welcome solar farm developments;
- Support sustainable farming - promote ecological methods and local practices that are economically viable, environmentally sound and protect public health.



#### 4. Be a Council that leads by example



We will:

- Reduce energy use in the Council estate;
- Procure services from companies who demonstrate sustainability and support net zero carbon;
- Require deliveries to come by electric vehicles and machinery;
- Implement a staff travel plan;
- Continue to be a paperless environment;
- Encourage and support staff ideas;
- Upskill and train staff in relevant areas of expertise;
- Review carbon output of current Council buildings and vehicles; produce a heat decarbonisation plan and plan for future improvements;
- Support Parish councils - help them to lead by example;
- Recover and recycle office materials where possible.



<sup>2</sup> Friends of the earth Climate Action District Data 2021

## 5. Develop a strong policy commitment to Climate Action

We need to:



- Respond to Environment Bill and legislation from government in support of achieving net zero targets by 2050;
- Influence positive change through the Essex Design Guide and Maldon District Design Guide;

- Ensure policy helps shape the District in ways that contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuels, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure;
- Ensure environmental impact is represented in all of our policies and risk assessments;
- <sup>3</sup>Only 32% of homes in the area are well insulated and 12% of households in the area are in fuel poverty. We need to better with our local developers to develop a Zero Carbon Build Charter in line with the Future Homes Standards 2025, and find out what they are already doing to provide greener methods of build, heating, insulation and energy technology solutions;
- Ensure all Council Strategies complements and delivers Climate Action
- Raise funds for action - emission reduction and offsetting from S106 and CIL payments;
- Lobby government to change building regulations and provide greater certainty on its energy mix for net zero;
- Monitor the potential development of Bradwell-on-Sea for GW-scale, new nuclear development or other potential development and seek to maximise sustainable construction methods, mitigation for any local environmental impacts and maximise the benefits to local people and businesses, supporting job creation and supply chain opportunities. (currently not engaged with MDC, BrB states it aims to reengage in future years);
- Shape a legacy vision, should the District receive a new Nuclear Development;
- Understand future planning and development impacts; e.g. Greenfield to brownfield land use (farm land used as solar farms, change of status at the end of lease period).



<sup>3</sup> Friends of the Earth Climate Action District Data 2021

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## What we know about the District today and current behaviours

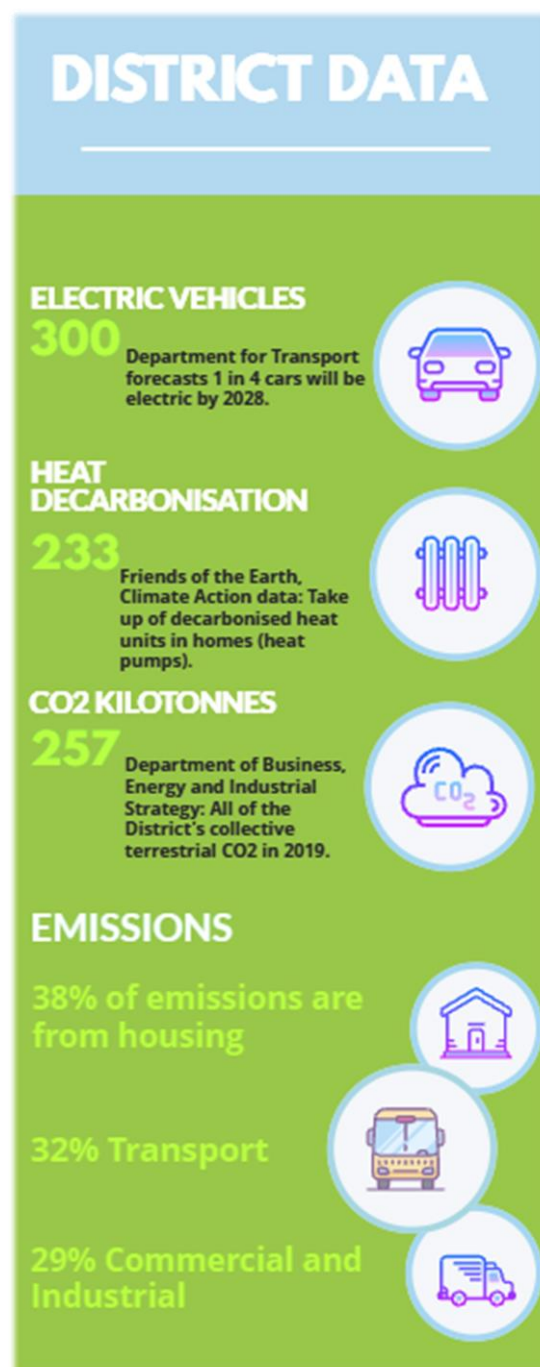
It's helpful to gather a range of data and insights that will inform the decisions we need to make and to help engage with our communities. Using data and insights we can set out to understand how much energy we use, our carbon footprint, air quality readings, traffic density, car ownership, fuel and energy consumption, flooding risks, and a gather a range of known behaviours and outputs that help provide a clear picture about the challenges we face, what our perceptions of climate change are and to inform pathways to enable us to reduce direct emissions and change behaviours by 2030.

Earlier this year a survey was conducted by Essex County Council. They spoke with 150 Maldon District residents. The results from this tells us the following:

- The men who took part in the survey tended to be more sceptical about behaviour change;
- Lower income households and families feel they will be personally impacted by climate change;
- Younger public transport users are more likely to car share and are open to new modes of transport;
- Most engaged are females, middle-aged and those who are more affluent. They are proactive and willing to take-action and change behaviours;
- <sup>4</sup>284g of meat and dairy is consumed on average per person per day. Older people said they were less likely to believe that switching their diet has a significant impact on climate change.

This early insight to our work tells us that empowering people to make low carbon choices is all linked into the Levelling Up agenda and that we must ensure initiatives are subject to Equality Impact Assessments. People living in poverty feel they will be disproportionately burdened by higher fuel costs and potentially locked out of the Electric Vehicle market due to affordability. To then be charged more for parking or be forced to use expensive and

<sup>4</sup> Friends of the earth Climate Action District Data 2021



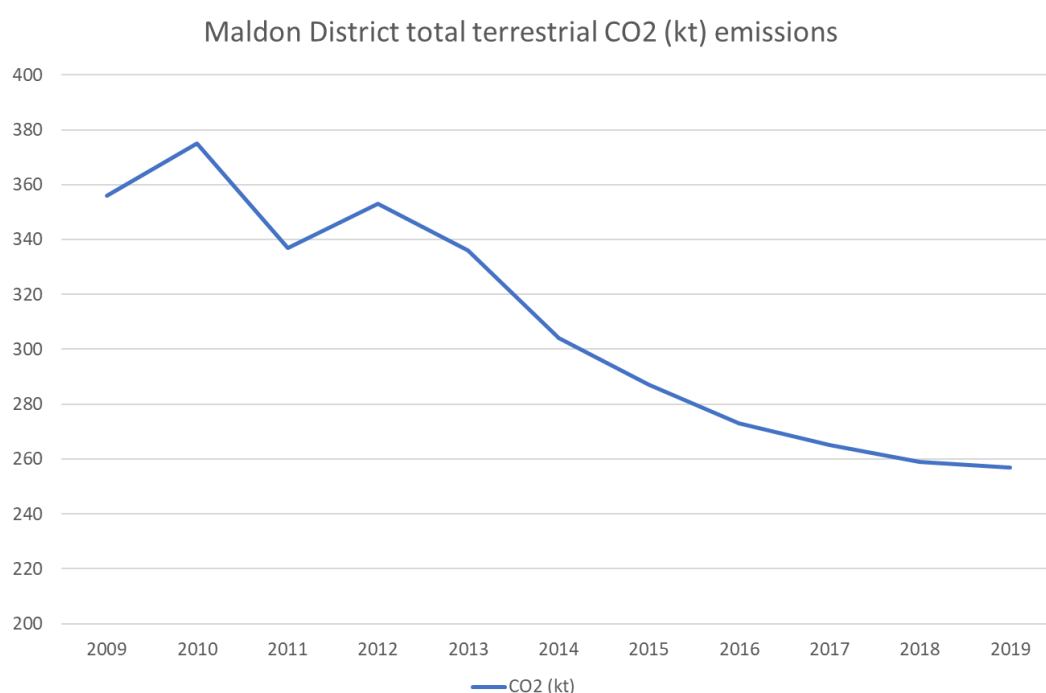
limited public transport adds to the challenges people face and will impact their quality of life.

We must be fair and practical and acknowledge that Climate Action choices will be made based on personal circumstances. Our work through **Our Home, Our Future** engagement group will listen to the concerns based on affordability and accessibility for all.

### Our carbon emission data

Carbon emissions across the District are currently calculated each year by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) who release local authority wide carbon emissions data (there is always a two-year lag in the publication of each year's data e.g. 2020 data will not be published until 2022).

The current CO2 emissions data shows totals of terrestrial CO2 reported in kilotonnes for the period of 2009-2019:



This tells us that CO2 terrestrial emissions are reducing year on year, and there still a long way to go.

To put things into perspective, a car puts on average a pound of CO2 in the sky for every mile driven.

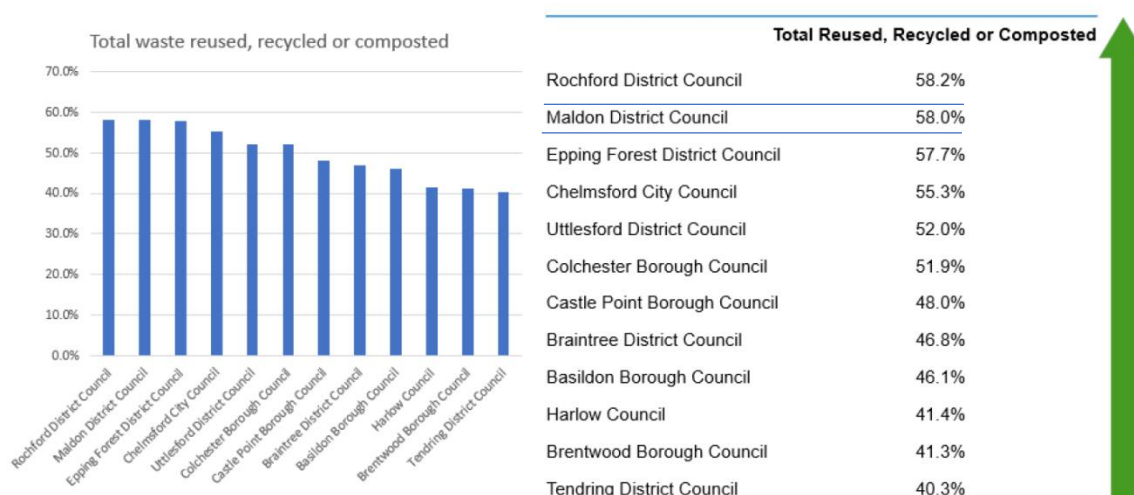
In 2005 the District's (an area of 98.34 Km<sup>2</sup>) terrestrial CO2 total was forecasted at **429 kilotonnes**.

In 2019, Maldon's collective terrestrial CO2 emissions was forecasted at **257 kilotonnes**.

*(source: Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics, 2019)*

## Our recycling data

Recycling alone is not enough to make the impact needed to reduce and prevent the impacts of climate change and we need to change the perception of “I am doing my bit”. To make a real difference we all need to make better consumer choices and avoid generating unnecessary food and packaging waste. We must find ways to reduce pressures on recycling centres and refuse companies. The following Essex Waste Partnership graph shows the percentage total waste reused, recycled or composted for Maldon 2020-2021. Reassuringly it tells us that the District is performing well, when compared to other authorities in the county.



## What further information and data do we need to inform the Climate Action work of the District?

To ensure we gain a better understanding to inform our priorities and the action we take, we will need to collate and curate a range of data. We will need to source and commission the following evidence base, recommendation studies and tools:

- The direct and indirect carbon footprint of the economy of Essex and Maldon District;
- The consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions by the County and at District level;
- The circular economy opportunities;
- Recommendations and carbon reduction pathways to reducing direct emissions by 2030;
- Pathways to sustainable transport (also focusing on affordability and accessibility);
- Develop an online tool 'District heatmap' showing the District's Green space and biodiversity hotspots, Renewable energy, Sustainable shops: repair, reuse and refill, Low carbon buildings, Local community groups – and any other asset that can be plotted onto the map.

### **Our existing policies and strategies**

Taking Climate Action in the Maldon District doesn't just enable us to take positive steps in reducing carbon emissions and harm to the District we love. By continuing to embed, greener, healthier and growth through the work of our other main strategies, Prosperity, Community, Place, it gives us the opportunity to:

- Improve the health and well-being of our residents;
- Generate a low carbon, local economy and greener business growth;
- Strengthen our communities by working together more on green initiatives;
- Improve equality - Level up areas that need support and investment;
- Improve our visitor offer;
- Make the District more accessible through better, greener modes of transport.

Maldon District Council already has several strategies and guides which already set out climate and environment improvement policies, projects and plans. It is a challenge for the Council to deliver all strategies and plans. It is an aim of the Climate Action Strategy to recruit a Climate Action Officer, this officer will have the responsibility of working with colleagues to review and validate existing strategies and to help bring to life the work set out within these documents:

- Corporate Plan 2019-2023
- Place Strategy
- Prosperity Strategy
- Community Strategy
- Green Infrastructure Strategy SPD
- Renewable and Low Carbon Technologies SPD
- Sense of Place, Place Plan
- Place shaping policies in Local Development Plan
- Place related management plans
- Parking Strategy
- Walking and Cycling (Maldon District Cycle Action Plan 2018)
- Maldon District Design Guide SPD
- Local Development Plan review.

#### National Policy:

- Energy White Paper
- Heat Decarbonisation Strategy
- Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution
- DLUHC (Housing White Paper Planning for the Future and NPPF)
- National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP).

## Our Partners

The Council already works with a number of statutory bodies and local agencies. We will continue to work with these to progress the work of the Climate Action Strategy.

### Local and regional:

Essex County Council, Climate Action Commission  
 District and Boroughs Climate Forum  
 CORE group  
 ECC Nature Partnership and Local Nature Recovery Strategy (not yet started)  
 Sense of Place Business board  
 Burnham-on-Crouch Business Board  
 Essex County Council's Insight team  
 Visit Essex (tourism)  
 The Essex Communications Group  
 South East Energy Hub  
 SELEP  
 Transport East  
 Mid Essex Health Alliance.

### National:

Place Climate Action Network  
 Ofgem  
 The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP)  
 Environment Agency  
 Natural England  
 Historic England  
 The Office for Low Emission Vehicles  
 Magnox and Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)  
 The Centre for Sustainable Energy (National Charity)  
 Defra (Clean Air Strategy, Climate Change, Green Future)  
 DfT(Gear Change, MRN, Airports & Ports Policy Statements, Decarbonising Transport, RIS 2)  
 Network Rail Strategies  
 BEIS (Industrial Strategy, Clean Growth Strategy, Nuclear Energy)  
 Visit Britain.

## Funding plan, grant funds and incentives

Currently residents, landlords, housing developers, businesses, community groups, schools and in some cases local authorities can apply for funding depending on the criteria for application and the responsibilities to spend monies. Listed below are a few funding options to be explored further to understand how the Council can attract funding and develop a long-term funding plan.

- Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Magnox;
- Welcome Back Fund;
- Energy Saving Trust;
- LoCASE – The Low Carbon Across the South East programme;
- Rural Community Energy Fund;
- Community Energy England;
- Green Homes Grant;
- Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive;



- Active Travel Funding;
- Restore your Railway bid;
- Future Levelling Up Fund bids;
- South East Energy hub initiatives;
- DfT – national sustainable funding for transport (await outcomes from DfT spend review)
- Identify opportunities from COP26 (November 2021);
- Local Authority Delivery Fund - In March 2021, Government announced £200m for low-income households heated by mains gas through a third phase of Local Authority Delivery (LAD) funding;
- Home Upgrade Grant - £150m available to support for low-income households off the gas grid through the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG);
- Citizens Advice Essex -The Warm Homes Fund.

## Engagement

Using an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, we will engage with local communities, young people and businesses to capture ideas, develop initiatives and support community led schemes to bring about long-term behaviour change and raise awareness. We will deliver engagement through the following activities and groups:

- Our Home, Our Future campaign;
- Welcome Back Fund engagement - post Covid-19 fund helping high streets recover and thrive;
- Existing community groups and schools;
- Conduct consultations;
- Parish Forum and Parish Councils;
- Staff on the ground;
- Council social media channels and local community page admins;
- Sense of Place board;
- Housing residents' association groups;
- Business groups;
- Climate Action Strategy Member working group;
- Local Climate Action Friends;
- Maldon District Developers' & Agents Forum.

## Next steps

To kickstart the work of the strategy, here are a set of initial steps the Council will need to take:

- Recruit a Climate Action Officer;
- Climate Action Officer to produce 2022-2023 action plan, setting out outcomes for this period;
- Continue to present strategy to partners and developers;
- Launch Our Home, Our Future engagement activities;
- Set out short, medium, long-term actions, recognising some will be beyond 2030;
- Gather local District data and set out known trends and behaviours;
- Continue to build database of Climate Action Friends;





- Commission carbon net zero pathways and opportunities District study;
- Report on and monitor any committed, secured or allocated funding;
- Review any announcements from COP26, UN Climate Change conference in November 2021.

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*i Picture source: Essex County Council COP26 Electric Battle Bus, attended by Cllr Carlie Mayes*

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## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

<b>Title: Draft Maldon District Climate Action Strategy</b>	<b>Date 07/10/2021</b>	<b>Officer Preparing G Button</b>
<b>1. Background</b>		
<p><b>1.1 Description of Strategy</b> (Including aims, outcomes and in the case of an existing service how long it has been delivered in its current format)</p> <p>1. The purpose of the Climate Action Strategy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the first step of work following the Climate Emergency declaration in 4 February 2021.</li> <li>• Set out Climate Action Aspirations for the period of 2021-2030</li> <li>• Set out an approach in commencing and delivering the work of the Climate Action Strategy</li> <li>• Sets out pledges (priorities) underpinning a set of climate actions for each pledge.</li> <li>• Set out what data is needed and currently known to help inform the aspiration, approach and pledges and ultimately decision making.</li> <li>• Sets out potential partners and funding streams for delivery of the Climate Action Strategy.</li> <li>• Help inform a 2022-2023 action plan</li> <li>• Help inform a short, medium, long term plan</li> <li>• Set out potential funding pots, grants and initiatives.</li> <li>• Informs the campaign Our Home, Our Future and is tool for garnering sign up and support from Climate Action Friends from across our resident and business communities.</li> </ul> <p>2. The purpose of this Strategy is set out the council's climate aspirations, approach and priorities between 2021 and 2030.</p> <p>3. The Strategy provides 5 pledges and several known activities the Council has the power to act on or influence.</p> <p>4. Local and National partners are listed – The are partners we work with and can work with to deliver the strategy.</p> <p>5. Initial baseline quantitative and qualitative data is set out in the document. It also states what further data is needed to help achieve the aspirations of the strategy.</p> <p>6. Potential funding pots, grants and initiatives are also listed.</p> <p>7. The approach for engagement is set out using an Asset Based Community Development approach and identifies known stakeholders and channels.</p>		

## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

### 1.2 Who are the users of the strategy / policy / service (Refer to data held about the users of the service i.e. numbers of users, demographic breakdown.

Having this information is important to understand which sectors of the community might be affected. If that is not available refer to the demographic data held on the intranet.)

MDC

Residents and visitors (who will benefit from the enhanced/new green infrastructure)

Local businesses

Local organisations

Local Charities

Developers

Council partners

Landowners

Other local authorities

Government agencies.

### 1.3 Have users been consulted with? (Have you carried out consultation with users or stakeholders while drawing up the proposal / policy / service? For example, have you carried out a formal consultation, discussed the issue with a Friends/User Group or consulted with stakeholders? If so, outline the results and how it has informed your plans. It's also important to show whether the target audience was reached during the consultation.)

The Strategy has been prepared to enable community engagement to follow. Through the Our Home, Our Future campaign, the work of the strategy will informally consult with residents, schools, community groups and businesses using an asset-based community development approach (by the community – for the community) – acknowledging that much of the work is dependent on understanding current perceptions of behaviour change and the ability to make positive change.

### 1.4 If the analysis is regarding an existing Service, what are users' views of that Service? (Base your view on evidence such as satisfaction surveys, levels of compliments and levels of complaints).

N/A

## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

### 2. Equality Aims – consider how the proposal / policy / service meets the three Equality Aims listed in the Equality Act.

Aim	How does the proposal / policy / service meet the equality aim?	Action or addition needed in order that the proposal / policy / service meets the aim?
2.1 To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	There are no identified negative impacts relating to unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation with regard to the Climate Action Strategy.	None
2.2 To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Strategy engagement will seek involvement from - and be accessible by - all members of the community.  Strategy delivery will be to everyone, regardless of their protected characteristics	None
2.3 To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	There are no identified negative impacts relating to the fostering of good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not in relation to the Strategy.	None

## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

### 3. Equality Impacts – examine how the proposal / policy / service impacts on the community. Base the analysis on evidence. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Impacts	Positive impact (X)	Could adversely impact (X)	No impact (X)	How different groups could be affected: Summary of impacts	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
3.1 Age (What will the impact be on different age groups such as younger or older people?).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit all the community regardless of ages	Engagement will aim to bring young and old together to help discuss perceptions of Climate Change and to listen to each other, learn from each other and to come together to deliver community action to support climate resilience.
3.2 Disability (Consider all disabilities such as hearing loss, dyslexia etc as well as access issues for wheelchair users where appropriate).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All engagement activities and strategy action projects will consider the needs of people with disabilities.	Climate Action engagement will seek views from all members of the community and seek to understand needs and positive behaviour changes, this includes anyone with disabilities.
3.3 Pregnancy and Maternity (Think about pregnancy, new and breastfeeding Mums).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy will positively inform Pregnancy and Maternity in that it will promote all waste reducing initiatives and these could support pregnant women or parents in making healthier choices.	The Strategy is expected to deliver positive outcomes through engagement and promotion of its pledges and the projects and initiatives that support these. E.g. diverting disposable nappies/sanitary products from landfill, promoting greener alternative and consumer choices.
3.4 Sex (is the service used more by one gender and are the sexes given equal opportunity?).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy intends to benefit the community regardless of sex.	Campaigns and activities will be accessible to all sexes.
3.5 Gender Reassignment (Is there an impact on people who are going through or who have completed Gender Reassignment?).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit the community regardless of gender reassignment.	Campaigns and activities will be accessible to people of Gender Reassignment.

### Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

<b>3. Equality Impacts – examine how the proposal / policy / service impacts on the community. Base the analysis on evidence. Attach additional documents if necessary.</b>					
<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Positive impact (X)</b>	<b>Could adversely impact (X)</b>	<b>No impact (X)</b>	<b>How different groups could be affected: Summary of impacts</b>	<b>Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact</b>
<b>3.6 Religion or belief</b> (Includes not having a religion or belief)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit the community regardless of religion and belief.	The Climate Action Strategy is expected to generate a positive impact against this criterion. E.g. engagement with Climate Action Friends.
<b>3.7 Sexual Orientation</b> (What is the impact on heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual people?)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit the community regardless of sexual orientation.	The Climate Action Strategy is expected to generate a positive impact against this criterion.
<b>3.8 Race</b> (Includes ethnic or national origins including Gypsies and Travellers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit the community regardless of race.	The Climate Action Strategy is expected to generate a positive impact against this criterion.
<b>3.9 Socio-Economic Group</b> (Will people of any particular socio-economic group be particularly affected?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Climate Action Strategy is intended to benefit the community regardless of socio-economic status.	The Climate Action Strategy is expected to generate a positive impact against this criterion.  It will monitor any potential negative impacts in the future that could be placed upon lower income households. These are not currently identified.

## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

**4. Is there a Cumulative Impact?** (If the same group is the subject of many changes or reductions the overall impact is much greater. Consider what else is happening within Maldon District Council that may have an impact and also what we know is happening elsewhere (such as Essex County Council). See Guidance for further advice.)

The impacts as identified above are generally positive and should assist in ensuring other services delivered directly by Maldon District Council or its partners seek to deliver positive change and therefore the overall cumulative impact should be positive. We have highlighted a need to monitor socio-economic information to ensure low income households, in particular, are not adversely effected.

## 5. Outcome

**5.1 Consider all the analysis and evidence above and indicate**

(1) No change needed ☒ (2) Adjust ☐ (3) Adverse impact but continue ☐ (4) Stop, remove the proposal / policy / service ☐

### 5.2 Adjustments

If option (2) above is selected please detail what adjustments are needed, who is responsible and how that will be reviewed. Also outline how that will be agreed (i.e. Committee, CMT).


**5.3 Decision Making** (How will this equality analysis be taken into account during the decision making process? For example, will it be included with a report to Committee/CMT? Will it be considered at department level or by a Head of Service? How will community/stakeholders views be taken into account?)

The EqIA will be included as an Appendix to the Committee Report for the Climate Action Strategy.



## Maldon District Council Equality Analysis

Please complete the questions below as fully as possible - the boxes will expand to accommodate your text. Please include the document version in the footer below.

<b>6.0 Next Steps</b>
<b>6.1 If there was a lack of evidence or data held on which to base this assessment, how will that gap be addressed for the future?</b> Equality monitoring data will be sought from engagement activities and any service users to determine whether there is any negative impact of the strategy.
<b>6.2 Summary of actions highlighted within this analysis</b> (Include how this will be picked up within service/work plans) Equality monitoring data will be sought from engagement activities and any service users to determine whether there is any negative impact of the strategy.
<b>6.3 Arrangements for future monitoring of equality impact of this proposal / policy / service</b>  This will be assessed and monitored via the annual Climate Action Plan.
<b>6.4 Approved by (Manager or Head of Service signature and date)</b>  <div data-bbox="127 751 327 935" data-label="Text">  </div>
<b>Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager</b> Once approved please forward this analysis to Cally Darby to arrange publication.

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**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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to  
**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**11 NOVEMBER 2021**

**RURAL SETTLEMENT LIST**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To propose a Rural Settlement List for the financial year 2022 / 23, to determine and award Rural Rate Relief to eligible businesses.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Rural Settlement List attached as **APPENDIX A** be approved.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Section 42 of the Local Government Act 1988, as amended by the Local Government Finance and Ratings Act 1997, places an obligation on local authorities to publish a Rural Settlement List each financial year for the purpose of determining the eligibility for Mandatory Rural Rate Relief for businesses in the District.
- 3.2 Rural rate relief can be claimed by eligible businesses (e.g. where it is the only post office or pub in a rural settlement), provided the population of the rural settlement is below 3,000 residents.
- 3.3 It is necessary to formally refresh this policy annually.
- 3.4 There have been no significant developments in the District no changes are proposed to the previously published Rural Settlement List.

**4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Members are asked to approve the Rural Settlement list for 2022 / 23 set out in **APPENDIX A**.

**5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

- 5.1 The granting of Rural Rate Relief to applicants within the Rural Settlements enhances the work of the Council and ties in with Corporate Objectives.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Publication of the Rural Settlement List enables relief to be granted to eligible rural businesses.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Failure to publish the Rural Settlement List by 31.12.21 would prevent the Authority from legally awarding any Mandatory Rural Rate Relief for 2022 / 23.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Without a valid Rural Settlement List the cost of any Rural Relief Granted could fall on this Council. The Rural Settlement List is also an enabler for part of the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief policy.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Michelle Lamarre, Lead Specialist.

**Maldon District Council006C**  
**Rural Settlement List 2022**

The following have been designated as Rural Settlement Areas under  
 Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988:

ALTHORNE – NORTH  
 ALTHORNE \_ SOUTH  
 ASHELDHAM  
 BRADWELL-ON-SEA  
 BRADWELL WATERSIDE  
 COLD NORTON  
 DENGIE  
 GOLDHANGER  
 GREAT BRAXTED  
 GREAT TOTHAM – NORTH  
 GREAT TOTHAM -SOUTH  
 HAZELEIGH  
 HEYBRIDGE BASIN  
 LANGFORD  
 LATCHINGDON  
 LITTLE BRAXTED  
 LITTLE TOTHAM  
 MUNDON  
 NORTH FAMBRIDGE -NORTH  
 NORTH FAMBRIDGE -SOUTH  
 PURLEIGH  
 ST. LAWRENCE  
 STEEPLE  
 STOW MARIES  
 TILLINGHAM  
 TOLLESBURY  
 TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY  
 TOLLESHUNT KNIGHTS  
 TOLLESHUNT MAJOR  
 ULTING  
 WICKHAM BISHOPS  
 WOODHAM MORTIMER  
 WOODHAM WALTER

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**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
11 NOVEMBER 2021**

**MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the first progress update on the Marketing and Communications Strategy (**APPENDIX 1**) which was approved by this Committee on 17 October 2019. (Minute 469 refers) and delayed due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the Committee acknowledges the amount of work carried out by the team to communicate Covid-19 guidance and the impact it has had on the team's ability to deliver any face to face engagement and tourism specific activities;
- (ii) That the direction of travel of the Marketing and Communications Strategy, be supported acknowledging that where possible the team have delivered communications activities and that this is continuously being monitored as the pandemic guidelines and potential winter impacts evolve.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Communications, Marketing and Engagement function sits within the Strategy, Performance and Governance Directorate and includes the centralisation of our digital tourism approach.
- 3.2 Due to the Covid Pandemic, the focus of the team was diverted to support our community Coronavirus response. We worked closely with the Community Theme Lead and the Maldon and District Community Voluntary Service (CVS), producing a weekly support pack as well as supporting the NHS / Government guidelines via our social media channels and our website.
- 3.3 In addition to this, the team has also managed to support and undertake a number of other initiatives going above and beyond when required.
- 3.4 There are a number of corporate projects in progress, and the team actively lead the communications workstreams for these, identifying key milestones, messages, supporting consultations and engagement activities.

#### **4. DIGITAL / TOURISM**

- 4.1 Following the closure of our Tourist Information Centres, the development of our Digital / Tourism offer focused on supporting our Tourism businesses as well as developing the Council's online presence in general.
- 4.2 Whilst we had made a good start on some external campaigns, much of our planned activity had to be put on hold due to the Coronavirus pandemic, as the attention of the team had to focus on the Council's internal and external response to Coronavirus.
- 4.3 Our Tourism campaigns were quickly changed to develop a focus on a 'Stay Away' message with a video produced to promote this message, and this was highlighted as an exemplar in the East of England of how to effectively communicate this message.
- 4.4 Despite the Coronavirus pandemic, during the spring / summer of 2021, a new website platform was developed for Visit Maldon District. This replaced the existing content with the additional options to enable access for businesses and organisations to manage and update their own content, including photos. This site has much more functionality enabling the ability to upload video and provides a booking facility. This functionality gives us a firm footing to compete with the wider tourism market. The website has been praised by the host company (Simple View) and is used in demonstrations as a good example when pitching to prospective clients.
- 4.5 The team's ambition is to actively promote the website directly to businesses and the tourism sector to encourage take up of listings (free of charge) to ensure the website is the trusted place to go for local information.
- 4.6 Partnership opportunities have been initiated such as with Ordnance Survey who are able to share the web information to their various online apps, again ensuring our District information is relevant and up to date. Visit Essex also share the same web host, so events listings will be shared with further opportunities in the future.
- 4.7 Another clever feature of the website is the 'near' feature enabling any attraction or open space to cross promote 'what is nearby', including events. This enables us to increase cross promotion and show the connectivity across the District.
- 4.8 A suite of 30 walks in leaflet format are currently being updated and rebranded (21 complete so far) – with the intention of linking through to the Ordnance Survey mapping app and where relevant, Go Jauntly which is another popular walking app. Each walk has a listing which includes a downloadable PDF to be printed at home for those wishing to have a paper copy of the route and map.
- 4.9 In terms of Culture and Heritage activity, Lottery funding provided in Dec 2020 enabled numerous tourism attractions to become more sustainable and to diversify post COVID. A number of promotional activities were conducted at the start of the year and as the relaxations were introduced – including a video of various venues welcoming visitors back, in a safe way. A free and adaptable booking app was developed to enable organisations to take online bookings in an easy and cost-effective manner – no matter the size of organisation.
- 4.10 The last few elements of the Heritage and Culture project will be delivered in the coming months, including collaborative social media workshops with the Communications and Marketing team in partnership with representatives from the tourism sector. Also, a training plan is being developed to help enable and empower



our enthusiastic volunteers to promote the District, with a focus on accessibility and inclusion at the forefront of excellent customer service.

- 4.11 The team have worked on Essex County Council's, 'Path to Prosperity' Coastal Communities project, which comes to an end in October 2021. The team have developed promotional materials and participated in Essex wide initiatives, which have led us to build good working relationships in particular with Rochford and Chelmsford Councils. This has led to joint work underway to promote the River Crouch – 'Crouch Aware' initiative. Our in-house expertise has been used to cross promote river safety, picking up of litter and coastal protection including 'bird aware' as well as general marketing of the area. This work will continue after the project concludes via the River Crouch Coastal Communities Team, as a shared resource.
- 4.12 Interpretation panels are also underway to help deliver on the Central Area Master Plan project from Hythe Quay to Fullbridge and will include the history and the points of interest to this working part of the river.
- 4.13 The team played a strategic role in the Covid-19 high street recovery plans and supporting communications to our local businesses, including the visual prompts and public health advice notifications. The team procured and designed many of the responsive communications across the District.
- 4.14 Future Tourism campaigns to support our visitor economy as we emerge from the pandemic will include:
- Promotion of the Maldon District visitor website to the Tourism and Business sectors to increase free self-promotion;
  - Currently identifying promotional activities that fall under the Welcome Back fund criteria;
  - Develop walking and cycling opportunities across the District - Green travel;
  - Campaigns developed by a wider 'District Tourism Team', a partnership of the local tourism industry;
  - Develop a joined-up events calendar with promotional offers throughout the winter months such as discounted accommodation, breakfast deals;
  - Accessible Maldon District – promotion of the District for those who may need mobility aids, or may have additional considerations with an aim of encouraging inclusion;
  - We are undertaking volunteer training in the District to help improve customer service and awareness of accessibility issues;
  - Develop initiatives to improve the lower high street, Maldon;
  - Crouch Aware – awareness campaigns in partnership with Rochford and Chelmsford Councils;
  - Social media training will be delivered to attractions and businesses to improve their visibility online and help them to work together on joint campaigns and promote their businesses.

## **5. SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 5.1 Despite the challenges faced with Coronavirus, we have managed to raise our profile on our social media channels and to promote our online digital services. We have seen a marked increase in our social media.

- 5.2 **APPENDIX 2** highlights the statistical analysis of our social media channels.
- 5.3 In the first full quarter of 2020, our presence on social media developed greatly, particularly our Promenade Park / Tourism page in line with the new digital tourism approach.
- 5.4 A consequence of Covid-19 has meant that the uptake of digital services has become the norm with our website currently ranked as 47 out of 435 on the local authority index and our social media engagement increasing massively mainly due to our work on Covid-19 Communications.
- 5.5 We have introduced a new Maldon District Council Instagram account which went live at the end of September 2021, enabling us to engage with our residents aged 25-34. (In the UK, this age group accounts for 30.1% Instagram users).
- 5.6 In general, we have observed a significant increase in the impact that our corporate communications have had throughout the pandemic period. We attribute this in large part to the public desire to stay informed and have access to assistance and local authority services while the Council's operations shifted to a digital only approach to comply with COVID-19 Government Guidance.
- 5.7 We saw a slower but expected, smaller growth and impact in our tourism communications due to the restrictions of movement during the pandemic and public requirement to limit social interactions for much of 2020.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 6.1 We have provided more support through online engagement to the community due to the restrictions placed on us by Covid.
- 6.2 During 2021, we will be developing an exciting and robust approach to community engagement with the aim of supporting strong, active and inclusive communities, who feel informed and involved in decision-making.
- 6.3 This strategic approach will enable us to engage with a wide cross-section of the community on a number of our key priorities and projects.
- 6.4 We will be undertaking our annual residents and business survey in November 2021 with a 'You Said, We Did' feedback available on the website when the survey is launched.

## **7. FILMING**

- 7.1 The popularity of the District as a venue for TV and Film Makers continues to grow, with the team supporting a number of productions including Series 2 of Liar, Location, Location, Location and Sky / HBO with The Third Day filmed on Osea Island. We have also assisted with several smaller TV productions and adverts.
- 7.2 We have developed a 'Screen Tourism' area on our website and have collated the productions we have assisted, and these can be seen on [Visit Maldon District Website](#).
- 7.3 In September 2020, we became an official Creative England partner and we continue to work closely with them in promoting filming locations.

- 7.4 In June 2021, Creative England featured our Local Authority as a case study following the National Creative England Summit due to our well-known and proactive film friendly approach.
- 7.5 During March 2020, the team assisted a large-scale production filmed in and around the District. This was for a six-part series based on the book, the Essex Serpent, due to be broadcast in 2022.
- 7.6 A recent enquiry in August 2021, could see us working with a major American production company who are currently looking at locations in the District.

## 8. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 8.1 The introduction of the 'One Team' brand has been instrumental in bringing the staff together and has emanated in the weekly 'One Team' bulletin which is sent to all staff and Members. The clear message that we are all One Team has triggered a high level of engagement from our staff.



- 8.2 The One Team bulletin has been vital during coronavirus and the periods of lockdown which saw staff working remotely. Health and wellbeing information, coronavirus updates and advice for working at home have all been regularly communicated ensuring that staff welfare and productivity were supported.
- 8.3 The bulletin is used as a key tool to communicate management information and updates such as introducing new members of staff, starters and leavers, job vacancies and latest news allowing all staff to access that information in a timely way. It is also a key channel to communicate staff surveys and to gather feedback on topics such as remote working.
- 8.4 Data is regularly collected on how many people read One Team, and this remains high. It is shared with 212 members of staff and 31 Members. Data for the first quarter of 2021 is provided below.

<b>One Team Views 1 April – 30 June 2021</b>	
Highest Unique Page Views	285 (8 April 2021 edition)
Lowest Unique Page Views	152 (29 June 2021 edition) *
Average Unique Page Views in the Quarter	211
*Increased to 241 in the following quarter	

- 8.5 Video has also been used as a key communication tool to connect and communicate with staff. Eighteen staff update videos have been circulated between March 2020 and September 2021. These featured either CLT or members of ELT and averaged 125 views per video.
- 8.6 The Communications, Marketing and Engagement Team have played a key role in the roll out of our new core values. The team have communicated the importance of the values and encouraged team discussions on the values across MDC on a bi-monthly basis. The results of those have been collated and provided to CLT, HR Specialists and One Team Champions. Work is currently underway to progress any improvements suggested in the feedback.
- 8.7 Awareness Days Calendar
- 8.7.1 The team has developed a calendar of awareness days and weeks that will be supported across the year, so that they can be properly planned for and activity

coordinated. The days/weeks selected align with our corporate priorities or have a particularly high national profile.

- 8.7.2 Between January and September 2021, 19 awareness activities have been supported by the Council.

27 January	Holocaust Memorial Day
4 February	Time to Talk Day
8 –14 February	Apprenticeship Week
19 March	Comic Relief
31 March	International Trans Day of Visibility
April	Stress Awareness Month
29 April	On Your Feet Britain
30 April	Commemorating Captain Tom
10–16 May	Mental Health Awareness Week
12/13 May	Eid al Fitr (End of Ramadan)
17–23 May	Dementia Awareness Week
22-31 May	English Tourism Week
June	Pride Month
14–20 June	Men's Health Week
17 June	Clean Air Day
21–27 June	Armed Forces Week
5 July	NHS, Social Care and Key Workers Day
9 September	Emergency Services Day
10 September	World Suicide Prevention Day

## 9. CAMPAIGNS

- 9.1 Since the lockdown ended, we have started to support both national and local campaigns and awareness days that align to our Corporate Plan as well as activities in our Thematic Strategies.
- 9.2 Throughout the pandemic period, we have supported national campaigns on a range of topics from COVID-19 safety advice to local elections, regional activities such as the Click it Local and #StaySafeEssex schemes operating in Essex, and local initiatives within the Maldon District including the Keep it Local in conjunction with the Maldon District Sense of Place Board.
- 9.3 Additional communications activities were identified, where possible and in line with Government Guidelines. This included the promotion of local shopping at Christmas, and a safe return to traditional tourism activities during the relaxation of Government Restrictions over the first half of 2021.
- 9.4 Since summer 2021, we have been regularly promoting local tourism venues, activities, events, and experiences including the Maldon Splash Park and Beach Huts.
- 9.5 We have also supported the Heritage Open Days and English Tourism Week national campaigns and will continue to support applicable tourism related campaigns throughout the remainder of the year.

## 10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Despite the challenges we have faced since this strategy was approved, we have successfully adapted and changed to the needs of the service. We will continue to update and reflect new insights, decisions, opportunities and challenges.
- 10.2 Our core focus will continue to underpin the work of the Thematic strategies, Commercial strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan and the emerging 'Our Home, Our Future' Climate Action Strategy and the review of the Local Development Plan.
- 10.3 Our communications, marketing and engagement will continue to be outcome led and drive channel shift when appropriate, continuing to embed our digital approach with partners and customers.

## 11. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 11.1 This strategic approach to Marketing and Communications supports the work detailed in our overarching Corporate Plan and our thematic strategies.

## 12. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – It is important to ensure that our internal and external stakeholders have the right perception of the Council and that we communicate in one voice, as one organisation and at the right time.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** –We are delivering accessibility and equality training to visitor attraction volunteers. Our focus on equality, diversity and inclusion will be part of the emerging community engagement approach.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The Communications and Marketing Strategy will help the Council reduce the risk by communicating in an effective and timely manner.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – We utilise our existing budget wisely and will seek opportunities for external funding and income generation when possible
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – This strategy is delivered by our existing Communications, Marketing and Engagement Team.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – There will be positive outcomes for the environment though the messaging we deliver as part of the Council's strategies.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – This strategy will help to strengthen communities by communicating, celebrating, educating with our community.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Paul Dodson, Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance.

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# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY UPDATE NOVEMBER 2021

Prepared by Russell Dawes

# Marketing and Communications Strategy

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2. Purpose
3. Our principles
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5. Crisis communication
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10. How we will achieve our targets
11. Our performance
12. Glossary of terms or abbreviations
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## Marketing and Communications Strategy

**1. Our vision**

***‘To build trust with all of our customers through timely and effective communications’***



The following Communications Strategy will support and celebrate the outcomes of the Council and underpin the Corporate Plan [2021/23], Maldon District Council's top-level strategy document. The Corporate Plan sets out our vision to achieve a 'Sustainable Council – Prosperous Future'.

The positive impacts that we want to make in relation to this vision is explained in more detail by our three strategic themes: Community, Place and Prosperity.

Communications and engagement will be outcome led and support channel shift - modernising our digital approach with partners and customers.

Communications should be two-way and are essential in giving information, engaging, consulting, gaining feedback, developing insight from people, residents, employees and visitors, businesses and other stakeholders. A good standard of communications is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Council's work including councillors, staff and partners. This strategy sets a framework for our marketing and communications.

Communication is central to the delivery of all Council services and public engagement. We want to ensure that our priorities, objectives, values and ambitions are shared with our residents, workforce, partners, local businesses and stakeholders.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of this Marketing and Communications Strategy document is to:

- Outline the communication outcomes the Council has set out to achieve; in order to ensure that it listens, engages and promotes the work of the Council and partners have committed to delivering across the District.
- Communicate the customer offer, in terms of what we do and how we deliver it;
- Enable us to prioritise our resources effectively and plan-ahead

Our Marketing and Communications will be delivered through smart working in the following ways:

- Effective engagement to support strong and resilient communities;
- Working with communities, businesses and partners to promote the District;
- Working in partnership to generate coherent messages and maximise reach;
- Develop marketing campaigns which deliver positive results and measurable outputs;
- Ownership of marketing and communications workstreams for strategic projects;
- Delivering excellent internal communications and offering account management to support colleagues' communications activities;
- Make best use of technology to gain audience insights, develop the best ideas, implement strategies and achieve maximum impact;
- Expand and encourage the use of a broad spectrum of communication tools to promote inclusion across our communities;
- Measure the customers' experience and channel shift journey;
- Maintain the highest ethical standards of communications.

The vision and principles of the Marketing and Communications Strategy underpin the Council's overarching vision of: ***'Sustainable Council – Prosperous Future'***

This strategy document will help deliver the Council's Corporate Plan by means of:

- Effective marketing and communications to promote the 20 outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan;
- Communicating the information our customers need to access our services;
- Communicating the impact, we have on our customers' lives;
- Influencing the behaviour and attitudes of our customers by developing and delivering clear messages;
- Marketing the Council's services and the District as a whole;
- Ensuring information is accessible and inclusive.

### 3. Our principles

Whilst each department will communicate to different audiences, a consistent tone across the Council is important to ensure that internal and external stakeholders have the right perception of the Council and that we communicate in one voice, as one organisation.

The following list of principles act as a useful guide:

- The work of the Council and the attributes of the District are promoted;
- Our communications help to drive and embed an agile and dynamic Council;
- Staff and Members value our expertise and support;
- We communicate, educate and celebrate;
- Communications should be factual, accurate, reflect the position of the Council and be approved by relevant Senior Managers;
- Communicate to the right audience, at the right time and be informative and useful;
- Always considers the appropriate channels for those with disabilities and accessibility needs;
- Provide opportunities for feedback and two-way conversations wherever appropriate;
- All Council projects have a communications workstream identified to receive communications support and resource (and at inception);
- Digital first approach is a priority, when social and electronic channels are the most effective method to use;
- Our activities are ethical and adhere to GDPR and the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011.

### 4. Statutory Compliance

In relation to this Marketing and Communications Strategy, there are some statutory duties for which the team are responsible as part of any co-ordinated communications activity. It is the responsibility of the team to use a range of channels, in a timely manner, to ensure that our community are well informed about any local or national issues.

The following table sets out some of the key responsibilities:

<b>Statutory Compliance</b>
Civil Contingencies Act 2004 – we have a statutory duty as a category 1 responder to provide information to members of the public in times of an emergency and to promote any national, regional or local campaigns in order to warn and inform.
Elections communications – the Electoral Commission provides the information which we are obliged to use to ensure that the electorate is informed of any election.
Freedom of Information – the communications team are responsible for ensuring that any FOI's placed by the media are managed in the correct manner.
Transparency – Publication of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015
EDI Policy

## 5. Crisis Communications

The team will manage all of the Crisis Communications on behalf of the Council, guided by our statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act to 'Warn and Inform'. This will be undertaken in partnership with the Essex Resilience Forum (ERF) and the Essex Communications Group.

We plan for and respond to any local or national crisis event, examples of this include (not an exhaustive list):

- Flooding
- Mourning protocols
- Health Emergency
- Health
- Transport
- Business continuity
- Terrorism

## 6. Our Brand

The Council has a highly visible brand which is depicted on livery and stationery as a Thames Sailing Barge and this is used across our social media channels.

The Council's Style Guidelines sets out where and when our brand should appear in internal and external communications.



In addition to the Council's Corporate brand we are an advocate of the 'Sense of Place' branding which is used to unify the District's identity which in turn helps to promote the visitor offer and local economy.



This complements the Council's own brand and is used in line with the Sense of Place guidelines.

## 7. Our Activity

The work of the team is dynamic, and we capture our activity across the team in our workplan which is a 'live' document and embraces what we do and can be seen [via this link](#)

The team deal with a constant flow of work and this comprises both proactive business as usual issues, in addition to reactive and specific project/campaign work.

We report on some specific Tourism measures as part of the Prosperity Strategy in line with the Corporate reporting schedule, but our activity supports and interlinks all of the Thematic and Commercial Strategy's

### Specific Tourism Measures - Enhancing and Promoting the District's Visitor Economy

8.Enhancing And Promoting The District's Visitor Economy	8a	Business Benefit Through Tourism Activity -Evidence (Via Survey)		30%	Annual (updated Quarterly)
	8b	Digital engagement with media outlets (inc Social/Website)	Statistic data to be confirmed	TBC	Quarterly
	8c	Tourism Value to the District (Value £)		link visual to 8e?	Annual
	8d	Economic value of events £ (Estimate) (Individual data read per quarter)	Statistical Analysis to be run	TBC	Annual - Calendar year
	8e	Tourism Value to the District (Growth %)		3%	Annual

### Social Media

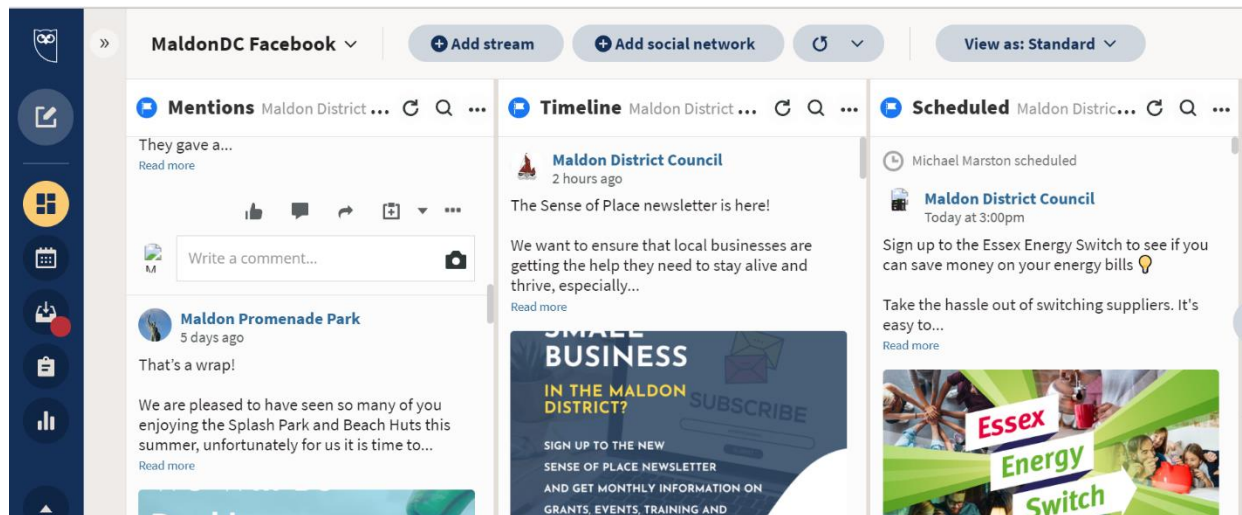
We actively use social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Linked-In) to communicate with our residents. This is a growing area of activity and we are expanding the use of these channels to help embed our digital first approach and engage with our residents. Our accounts are also increasingly being used by our Customer Team to engage with our residents on a variety of trending topics and local issues.

During 2020, our presence on social media has developed greatly, particularly our Promenade Park / Tourism page in line with new digital approach. A consequence of Covid-19 has meant that the uptake of digital services has become the norm with our main district Council website ranked as 47 out of 435 local authority sites. Our social media engagement has massively increased mainly due to our work on Covid-19 Comms.

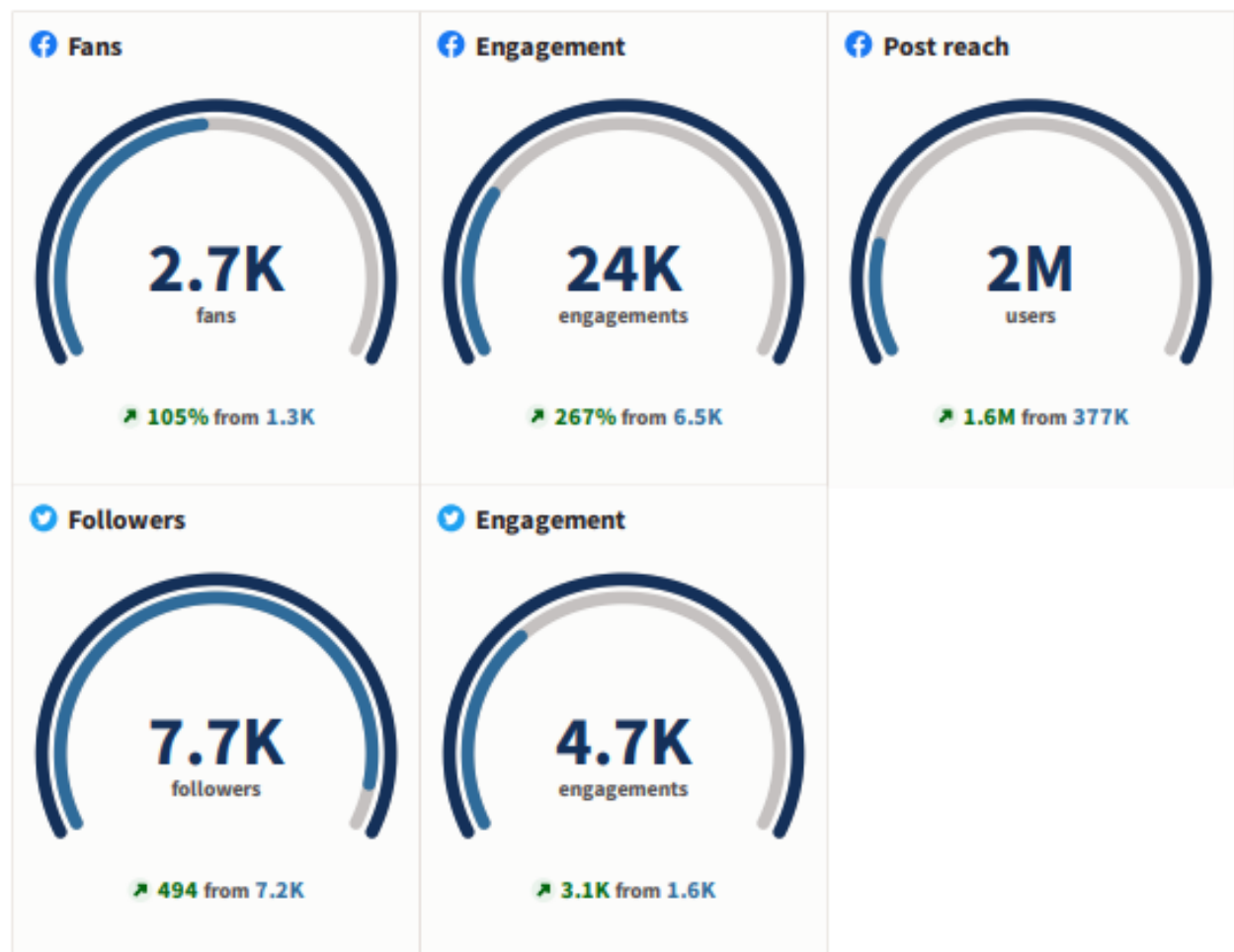
[Appendix 2](#) is an analysis of our social media channels

We manage and monitor our social media channels through our social media dashboard called Hootsuite and this is used to consolidate all of our social media channels in one place. It enable us to share messages out across all of our social channels in real time or schedule for later.

### Example of the Hootsuite Dashboard:



Analytics data for period (02 March 2020 – 20 September 2021) compared to previous period (14 August 2018 – 01 March 2020):



### Press Enquiries

Our press office has fostered an excellent working relationship with the local and national media and regularly communicate with them. We endeavour to respond to press enquiries within the timescale set by the media representative, but this is subject to our ability to follow due process to agree a response.

## **Annual Residents' and Business Survey**

In October 2019, we undertook our annual first residents' and business survey to better understand how we can ensure that we are meeting the aspirations of our local community. Covid-19 did not stop our ability to delivery on the outcomes /feedback of this survey which were published on our website.

This survey has become a key process for understanding our community and enabling us to demonstrate that the Council is listening and acting, where possible, on the responses we receive.

## **Internal Engagement**

We engage with our staff using a variety of channels which include Video logs, One Team bulletins, team meetings, face to face staff briefings (when appropriate), FreshService, Intranet, wellbeing events and staff surveys.



The 'One Team' brand has been instrumental in bringing staff together and has emanated in the weekly 'One Team' bulletin which is sent to all staff and Members. The clear message that we are all One Team has triggered a high level of engagement from our staff.

The use of video has been a key communication tool to connect and communicate with staff and this has proved to extremely useful and expanded across our other channels to communicate, educate and celebrate the work of our staff and Members.

## **Campaigns**

As well as our own campaign activity and supporting awareness days, we participate in a wide range of national and local campaigns to support the work of our strategic partners. These include but are not limited to; Public health campaigns, Cabinet Office, Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, Department of Housing Communities and Local Government, Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Essex Councils. These include campaigns such as waste, crime, flu, housing, census and many more and these are tracked via our social media monitoring platform, Hootsuite.

## **Annual Awareness Days Calendar**

The team has developed a calendar of the awareness days and weeks that will be supported across the year, so that they can be properly planned for and activity coordinated. The days/weeks selected align with our corporate priorities or have a particularly high national profile.

## **Community Engagement Approach**

During 2021, we will be developing a robust Community Engagement approach with the aim of supporting strong, active and inclusive communities, who feel informed and involved in decision-making.

This strategic approach will enable us to engage with a cross-section of the community on a number of our key prioritise including our Local Development Review and Our Home, Our Future Climate Action Strategy.



We hope our engagement will improve the perception of our services and importantly make them feel that their contribution has made a difference.

### **Screen Tourism - Filming / TV Opportunities**

The popularity of the District as a venue for TV and Film Makers continues to grow, with the team supporting a number of productions including Series 2 of Liar, Location, Location, Location and more recently Sky/HBO with The Third Day. We have also assisted with a number of smaller TV productions.

Data from Creative England tells us that the value to the economy of the District from TV and Film making since 2020 is estimated as an approximate £2.5m and represents the money spent in the local area.

We will proactively work with our partner Creative England and production companies to maximise our opportunity to offer locations in the District for filming.

This will benefit our Visitor economy with visitors exploring the locations, so we have collated the productions we have assisted with on our [Visit Maldon District Website](#) to encourage these visitors.

### **Tourism Marketing**

We support specific local and national digital tourism campaigns to raise the profile of the Maldon District as a desirable visitor destination working in partnership with our local tourism businesses and Visit Essex.

We will seek opportunities to collaborate on joint tourism marketing initiatives to share resources and increase reach to ultimately meet the outcomes of our Prosperity Strategy and emerging Tourism Marketing Plan.

We will ensure our tourism activities align with the three Council thematic strategies as well as the commercial approach, to ensure we maximise opportunities to income generate for the Council and to benefit the wider District economy.

We will develop our plans in an agile way to ensure we are able to respond to opportunities as they arise, such as funding or partnership activities which often occur at very short notice.

We will continue to promote the District as a destination of choice and to stand out from the crowd, ensuring our promotional work follows an inclusive in approach.

The visitor destination website (<https://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk>) and social media tools will continue to be developed, including the use of extranet logins for businesses and organisations to manage their own content. Priority will be given during the latter part of 2021 to publicising the opportunities available to tourism partners.

### **Commercial use of assets**

We will assist the Commercial Manager to promote and maximise the benefit of the assets which the Council owns or manages. We will support them with any communications and marketing plans and material to ensure activities can be targeted towards any specific consumer group who may wish to utilise Council assets, such as families .

## 8. Getting our priorities right

Using data and insights from a range of inputs and evidence, policies and legislation, the following SWOT analysis has been carried out to help us identify our Communications focussed strengths and weaknesses. The following information enables us to focus our time and resource in areas where we can both make a difference, either directly or by smart partnering, and where we can effectively measure performance.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional and experienced team</li> <li>➤ Coordinated, managed, and consistent approach to communications activities</li> <li>➤ Respected internally and externally</li> <li>➤ Comprehensive website presence</li> <li>➤ Strict and consistent protocols in place</li> <li>➤ Good relationship / contacts with the media</li> <li>➤ Resilience provided through a multi-skilled team</li> <li>➤ Access to external groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of clarity in publications could become a threat to our brand</li> <li>➤ Unclear message, intent, and/or call to action</li> <li>➤ Not taking full advantage of online platforms for engagement</li> <li>➤ Lack of coordinated marketing</li> <li>➤ Long sign off process can cause delays</li> <li>➤ Lack of investment in training</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase our engagement</li> <li>➤ Develop our digital tourism offer</li> <li>➤ Enhance our social media</li> <li>➤ Marketing and communications integrated as a corporate function</li> <li>➤ Identify marketing niches and consider new ones</li> <li>➤ Develop internal and external relationships</li> <li>➤ Agile and collaborative working</li> <li>➤ Improve our stakeholder database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Time</li> <li>➤ Resources</li> <li>➤ Financial limitations</li> <li>➤ Outside pressures</li> <li>➤ Change in political direction</li> <li>➤ Strategic communications planning impacted by reactive needs of customers and the Council</li> <li>➤ Difficulty in managing expectations – ‘wanting it all’ with limited resources</li> </ul>

## 9. Where do we want to be?

The Communications Team will indirectly support the delivery of all 20 of the Council’s outcomes. The role of the team may not be explicit in all outcomes but there will be involvement through communicating project milestones, assisting with engagement and where appropriate helping to celebrate successes. The function therefore has a pivotal role to play within all projects across the Council.

## 10. How we will achieve our targets

### Strategic partnerships

Through smart partnering – collaborating and synergising with other councils and partners, providing better information and insights and improving ways of working in partnership to achieve ambitions in common - whether that is through delivering service benefits, securing better value for money, through joint procurement or by increasing the opportunity to secure extra funding, or adding capacity for instance.



The following strategic partnerships are identified in relation to our communications vision ‘*To build trust with all of our customers through timely and effective communication*’.

- Essex Communications Network
- Essex Resilience Forum
- Visit Essex
- Creative England
- Visit England & Visit Britain
- Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group – Marketing Group
- Cabinet Office
- Department for Communities and Local Government
- Public Health England
- LGA
- LG Comms
- Bradwell B Communications Team

## **Strategic Communications projects**

In line with the Council’s drive to maximise the opportunity to generate commercial income identified the potential to explore chargeable rates and services to TV/filming production companies that enhances our current offering. This will enable us to expand upon the charges for Officer time and advice, loss of income, use of land and Council facilities.

We have become an official Local Authority partner with Creative England and we work with other Councils across the County.

We plan to initiate a filming impact and benefits business survey after a known filming event has taken place in the District. Using the results of the survey, we aim to quantify the economic benefits from filming and production, by the end of the year.

## **11. Our Performance**

The Marketing and Communications Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and reported to Committee. The Senior Specialist – Communications, Marketing and Engagement, will be responsible for this document, with the accountability for this strategy lies with the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager.

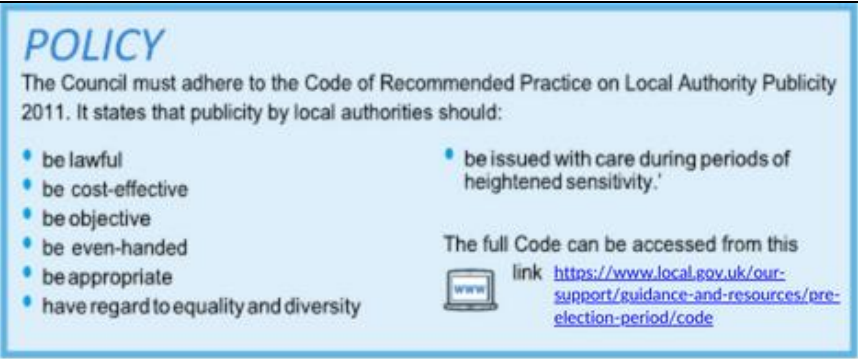
Our Tourism key performance indicators have been developed post-Covid and form part of our performance reporting and this is reported as part of our corporate reporting.

## **12. Glossary of terms or abbreviations**

<b>ECN</b>	<b>Essex Communications Network</b> - A multi-agency communications network which co-ordinated communications activity across Essex.
<b>LGA</b>	<b>Local Government Association</b> - A politically-led, cross-party organisation that works on behalf of Councils (405 local authority members: 2018/19).
<b>LG Comms</b>	<b>Local Government Communications</b> – National body who co-ordinates communication and marketing campaigns across Local Government.
<b>ERF</b>	<b>Essex Resilience Forum</b> – a multi-agency network of key civil emergency stakeholders who have a statutory role to prepare and ‘warn and inform’ in an emergency.
<b>Visit Essex</b>	<b>Visit Essex</b> – Membership based organisations supporting Tourism and Marketing businesses and campaigns in Essex.
<b>Visit England</b>	<b>Visit England</b> – National body for promoting Tourism in England
<b>Creative England</b>	<b>Creative England</b> – National body responsible for co-ordinating

	film opportunities across England.
<b>Mid-Essex CCG</b>	<b>Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, Marketing Group</b> – Health body for Mid Essex health and wellbeing campaigns.
<b>Cabinet Office</b>	<b>Cabinet Office</b> – Prime Ministers Office lead national policy and civil emergencies (COBRA)
<b>DLUHC</b>	The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities supports communities across the UK to thrive, making them great places to live and work.
<b>PHE</b>	<b>Public Health England</b> – National body responsible for public health and associated campaigns.
<b>WRAP</b>	<b>Waste Reduction Partnership</b> – co-ordinating body for waste and recycling reduction.

### 13. Supporting documents

Social Media Community Standards	<a href="#">External guidance on the Councils social media approach</a>
Social Media Protocol	<a href="#">Guidance for staff on the use of social media</a>
Press office process	<a href="#">Media enquires / news release process</a>
Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity	 <p><a href="#">The code   Local Government Association</a></p>
Elected Members Press and Media Protocol	<a href="#">Guidance for our elected Members</a>
Corporate Style Guide	<a href="#">A guide to the use of our corporate style and branding</a>

- This strategy is a working document and will continuously be updated to reflect new insight, decisions, opportunities and challenges. It underpins the work of the thematic strategies, Commercial strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan.

## Social Media Statistical Analysis

**MDC Facebook** – Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A steady growth of **1.1k** new followers to **2.7k** page followers
- **24k** engagements including messages, comments, likes and shares
- **2.5m** page impressions including the total number of times any content from or about this page appeared on someone's screen
- A combined reach (the total number of people who saw our posts) of **2m** users including **46k** video views
- **2.5k** inbound messages received which have been responded to, or triaged to the appropriate officer for response
- **37k** weblink clicks from posts, linking to [www.maldon.gov.uk](http://www.maldon.gov.uk) or partner websites where appropriate.

**MDC twitter** - Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A positive increase of **494** new followers to **7.7k** page followers
- **4.7k** engagements which includes the total number of interactions (retweets, replies, and likes) for the tweets published in the selected time frame
- **30k** post traffic which includes the number of clicks on all weblinks and vanity URLs included in the tweets published during the selected date range.

**Visit Maldon District Facebook** - Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A consistent growth of **225** new followers to **1.4k** page followers
- **3.6k** engagements including messages, comments, likes, and shares
- **227k** page impressions including the total number of times any content from or about this page appeared on someone's screen
- A combined reach (the total number of people who saw our posts) of **198k** users including **9.7k** video views
- **342** inbound messages received which have been responded to, or triaged to the appropriate officer for response.
- **6k** weblink clicks from posts, linking to [www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk](http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk) or partner websites where appropriate.

**Visit Maldon District Twitter** - Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A positive increase of **150** new followers to **1.6k** page followers.

- **851** engagements which includes the total number of interactions (retweets, replies, and likes) for the tweets published in the selected time frame.
- **3.5k** post traffic which includes the number of clicks on all weblinks and vanity URLs included in the tweets published during the selected date range
- The total reach of Twitter posts and other content is not available at the time of this report.

### **Promenade Park Facebook** - Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A healthy growth of **3.2k** new followers to **8.9k** page followers
- **11k** engagements including messages, comments, likes, and shares.
- **12m** page impressions including the total number of times any content from or about this page appeared on someone's screen.
- A combined reach (the total number of people who saw our posts) of **1.1m** users including **29k** video views.
- **3.2k** inbound messages received which have been responded to, or triaged to the appropriate officer for response.
- **9.7k** weblink clicks from posts, linking to [www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/prompark](http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/prompark) or partner websites where appropriate.

### **Visit Maldon Instagram** - Key statistics for the period from 02 March 2020 to 20 September 2021:

- A steady growth of **442** new followers to **1.6k** page followers.
- **5.8k** engagements including the total number of likes and comments received by your organic photo, video, or carousel posts published in the selected period.
- **79k** post impressions including the total number of times your organic photo, video, or carousel posts were shown to users on Instagram.
- A combined reach (the total number of unique accounts that have seen your organic photo, video, or carousel post) of **74k** users including **1.2k** video views.
- **85** inbound messages received which have been responded to or triaged to the appropriate officer for response.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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