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MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

APOLOGIES   Committee Services
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DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES
Paul Dodson

05 June 2024

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the;

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

on **THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2024** at **7.30 pm**

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

Please Note: All meetings will continue to be live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel for those wishing to observe remotely. Public participants wishing to speak remotely at a meeting can continue to do so via Microsoft Teams.

To register your request to speak / attend in person please complete a Public Access form (to be submitted by 12noon on the working day before the Committee meeting). All requests will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

A copy of the agenda is attached.

Yours faithfully

Director of Strategy and Resources

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:

CHAIRPERSON	Councillor M F L Durham, CC
VICE-CHAIRPERSON	Councillor J Driver
COUNCILLORS	D O Bown
	A Fittock
	A S Fluker
	K M H Lagan
	A M Lay
	R H Siddall
	N D Spenceley
	W Stamp, CC
	M E Thompson

AGENDA
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2024

1. **Chairperson's Notices**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

3. **Minutes of the Last meeting** (Pages 5 - 24)

    To consider the Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 14 March 2024 (copy enclosed).

4. **Disclosure of Interest**

    To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registrable interests and Non-Registrable Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraph 9 and Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members.

    (Members are reminded that they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout 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.

6. **Council Tax Empty Homes Premium Policy Revision** (Pages 25 - 36)

    To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer (copy enclosed).

7. **Project and Improvement Management Framework and Maldon District Council Productivity Plan** (Pages 37 - 72)

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

8. **Technology Strategy 2024 - 2027** (Pages 73 - 92)

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

9. **Planning Policy Working Group** (Pages 93 - 96)

    To receive an update from the Chairperson of the Planning Policy Working Group following receipt of the Planning Policy Working Group report (copy enclosed) at the last meeting of this Committee.

For further information please see the Council's website.

10. **Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies and Working Groups** (Pages 97 - 98)

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

11. **Any other items of business that the Chairperson of the Committee decides are urgent**

12. **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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

13. **Authority to Write Off Unrecoverable Debt** (Pages 99 - 100)

To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer (copy enclosed).

14. **Procurement of Services** (Pages 101 - 104)

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

15. **Proposed Contract Extension** (Pages 105 - 110)

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

16. **Splash Park Operations 2024** (Verbal Report)

To receive a verbal update from the Commercial Manager.

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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
In the event of a fire, a siren will sound. Please use the fire exits marked with the green running man. The fire assembly point is outside the main entrance to the Council Offices. Please gather there and await further instruction.

Health and Safety
Please be advised of the different levels of flooring within the Council Chamber.

Closed-Circuit Televisions (CCTV)
Meetings held in the Council Chamber are being monitored and recorded by CCTV.

Lift
Please be aware, there is not currently lift access to the Council Chamber.

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MINUTES of
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
14 MARCH 2024

PRESENT

Chairperson	Councillor M F L Durham, CC
Vice-Chairperson	Councillor A Fittock
Councillors	J Driver, A S Fluker, N D Spenceley, W Stamp, CC, S White, E L Stephens (Substitute for R H Siddall) and S J N Morgan (Substitute for M E Thompson)

654. CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICES

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

655. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION NOTICE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D O Bown, A M Lay, R H Siddall and M E Thompson.

In accordance with notice duly given Councillor E L Stephens was attending as a substitute for Councillor Siddall, and Councillor S J N Morgan was attending as a substitute for Councillor Thompson.

656. MINUTES - 25 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 January 2024 be approved and confirmed.

657. MINUTES - 1 FEBRUARY 2024 (SPECIAL MEETING)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the special meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2024 be approved and confirmed.

658. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were none.

659. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests had been received.

660.   BUDGETARY CONTROL AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer providing financial performance information for the period 1 April – 31 December 2023. The report provided an update on a number of areas including the following:

- Gross Service Income and Expenditure;

- Top Expenditure Areas and Variance Analysis;

- Top Income Areas and Variance Analysis;

- Salary Monitoring as at end of quarter 3;

- Inflationary impact;

- Impact on the General Fund Balance;

- Capital Monitoring (Appendix 1)

It was noted that service related net expenditure budgets remained on track to underspend this financial year, with additional income offsetting cost pressures. The 2023 / 24 Budget allowed for higher inflationary costs, however budgets, in particular employee costs, remained under pressure. Investment income was expected to over-perform against the budget due to higher interest rates, increasing the Council's overall projected underspend. Collection rates were out-performing current year expectations; however, the enduring cost-of-living crisis could yet create pressure on council tax and business rates income.

During the debate that ensued and in response to questions from Members, Officers advised that the Councill's Reserve position, including the Transformation Reserve was reported annually to the Council through the outturn report. The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that she could provide an update on the Council's Reserves outside of the meeting.

Further details were provided regarding the role for which drawdown from the Transformation Reserve was requested. It was noted that the post was for a fixed two-year period and was required to help the Council deliver future savings. Members were advised that the Council did not have the resource or expertise required to take this work forward. Investing in this post would bring efficiencies which would then deliver ongoing savings. In response to questions, the Interim Chief Finance Officer advised she would monitor the related savings and provide an update to Members outside of the meeting. In response to a suggestion to defer the decision regarding this drawdown from Resources, Members were advised that delaying until June (the next scheduled meeting of this Committee) would make it difficult to retain continuity within the service.

Councillor S White proposed that consideration of the requested drawdown on Reserves be deferred as more background information was required along with a detailed report as to why this item was not in the budget as a growth item. The Chairperson highlighted that Officers did not want to defer the decision on this business, but he was happy for a full business case to be brought back to the Committee.

In response to questions raised, the Commercial Manager provided the following updates:

- Following the successful award of a £100k government grant, a changing places facility was being installed at Blackwater Leisure Centre, this installation would include a hoist and support all persons using the Leisure Centre. The

Committee were advised that work had started but it was expected that 50% would continue into the new financial year.

- The Air Handling Unit moved air around the Leisure Centre and the Council was in a position to now fund this but up to date quotes were required before work could start. It was noted this spend was within budget.

- The Director of Service Delivery confirmed that the new Section 106 Officer had started and would be following a programme of work which included the stake park at Riverside Park, Burnham-on-Crouch. Officers were aware of the funding deadlines but would provide an update on the detail in respect of the skate park project outside of the meeting.

The Chairperson moved the recommendations. Councillor A S Fluker proposed that further information be brought back to the Committee in respect of the invest to save business case for the fixed-term IT Specialist role. This amendment was duly agreed. The Committee then agreed the proposals, as amended.

RESOLVED

(i) That the forecasted 2023 / 24 revenue financial position as at 31 December as detailed in the report be reviewed;

(ii) that the forecasted 2023 / 24 capital financial position as at 31 December as summarised at Appendix 1 to the report be reviewed;

(iii) that a drawdown of £98k from the Transformation Reserve for a two-year extension of a fixed-term IT specialist role as set out at paragraph 5.2 of the report be agreed

(iv) that further detail be brought back to the Committee in respect of the invest to save business case for the fixed-term IT Specialist role.

661. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, VIREMENTS, PROCUREMENT EXEMPTIONS AND USE OF RESERVES: QUARTER 3 (1 OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 2023)

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer reporting Virements, Supplementary Estimates and Procurement Exemptions agreed under delegated powers where they were below the levels requiring approval by the Committee.

It was noted that there were no supplementary estimates or use of reserves agreed during this period. Sections 3.3 and 3.5 of the report set out the virements and procurement exemptions agreed during this period.

In response to questions regarding procurement exemptions the following information was provided.

- Beat the Street – The amount shown was for the total amount of the contract but 90% of this was not being funded by the Council. The scheme would install boxing across the entire District and encourage all residents to become more active. It would also improve the Council's and wellbeing outcomes.

- Sonic Wall Firewall Uplift – The Corporate Leadership Team had gained assurance that the relevant research had been carried out and this proposed change would deliver the same service.

The Chairperson put the recommendations as set out the report and these were duly agreed.

RESOLVED

(i)   That the virements as detailed in paragraph 3.3.1 be noted;

(ii)   That the procurement exemptions as detailed in paragraph 3.5.1 be noted.

662.   REVIEW OF CUSTOMER STRATEGY

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery seeking Members approval of a new Customer Commitment Statement (attached as Appendix to the report). The report also provided an update on the significant progress that had been achieved in delivering the Council's Customer Strategy.

Background information following the Council's approval of its Customer Strategy in 2016 / 17 and the action plan developed together with the Council's Transformation programme in 2018 / 19 were detailed within the report.

The Council's Commitment statement set out the Council's ongoing commitment to deliver good quality services, and ensures residents, businesses and customers understood what they could expect from the Council.

The Chairperson commented on this being a good piece of work and thanked the Assistant Director – Service Delivery for the work she had done on the various proposals brought forward to the Finance Working Group, which had discussed everything in detail. He advised the Council was in the best position given the financial situation. The Chairperson then moved the recommendations set out in the report.

Members debated the report and in response to comments raised, the following information was provided:

- The Council would continue to focus on service improvements to maximise efficiency and through the changes / efficiencies some capacity could be released to manage demand. More customers using the digital services would free up staff to help support the most vulnerable customers who required face to face / telephone services. The Assistant Director – Service Delivery explained it was all about balance; ensuring the Council could deliver online whilst making sure it continuously improved and looked for efficiencies as well as maintaining the really vital face to face services for those that needed them.

- The Director of Service Delivery provided an update regarding Planning Services, current recruitment issues and how the public could contact the Council in respect of planning. He reported that the Assistant Director – Planning and Implementation would be looking into both the access to Planning Officers and recruitment into vacant roles.

- In response to a question about Planning Officers' attending appeal hearings, Members were advised that Officers attended where necessary.

The Chairperson moved the recommendations set out in the report and these were duly agreed.

RESOLVED

(i)   That Members considered the report and noted the significant progress that had been made in delivering improvements to the way in which the Council deliver its services;

(ii)   That the Customer Commitment Statement at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved. This will be published on the Council's website together with a summary of existing customer service standards.

663.   WORK OF THE PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP 2023 / 24

The Committee considered the report of the Chairperson of the Planning Policy Working Group providing Members with an annual update on the work carried out by the Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG) during 2023 / 24.

As well as detailing the work carried out by the PPWG, a workplan detailing the forthcoming work of the PPWG (up to September 2024), including briefing / training for all Members, was set out in the report. It was noted that the PPWG had assisted in the process of moving forward with the Local Development Plan (LDP) review.

The Chairperson presented the report to the Committee and commented on the great deal of work that the PPWG had undertaken.

At this point, a Member referred to responses from Essex County Council Education not supporting the Council's Planning Strategy. A number of concerns were raised regarding the Council's LDP review, including its rural policies, fiscal implications, strategic sites and the need for this committee to receive a regular progress update. In response to this discussion, the Chairperson requested that all comments be taken back to the PPWG.

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that it was not debating the LDP Review at this time, purely receiving the report of the PPWG. The Director of Service Delivery advised that Members' comments would be fed back informally to the PPWG for their consideration and reminded the Committee that this meeting was not the vehicle to talk about the LDP.

Following further debate, the Chairperson advised that he would ask the Chairperson of the PPWG to come and present his report at the next meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee received the content of the report.

664.   RESPONSE TO MID AND SOUTH ESSEX NHS INTEGRATED CARE BOARD CONSULTATION - PROPOSED CHANGES TO SERVICES AT LOCAL COMMUNITY HOSPITALS

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy and Resources seeking Members' approval of the Council's response to the Mid and South Essex NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) public consultation on proposed changes to services at local community hospitals.

The report provided details of the consultation, launched on 25 January 2024, and the reference group formed by the Council to inform the Council's response. The Council's proposed response to all 22 questions in the consultation was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The importance of the Council, as a key stakeholder, making a formal

response to this consultation was noted and that this would impact on the delivery and accessibility of vital community hospital and health services in the District.

During her presentation of the report, the Assistant Director – Strategy, Partnerships and Communications advised that the consultation had been extended for a further two weeks and now closed on 4 April 2024. The NHS website provided a Frequently Asked Questions document which within it set out details of potential sites and in response to comments the Assistant Director read out this list.

Councillor A S Fluker declared an interest in this item of business as a frequent user of the phlebotomy services at St. Peter's hospital.

A lengthy debate ensued. Question 8 of the consultation referred to 'your view about moving all other patient services out of St. Peter's hospital' and the Assistant Director explained that the Council's response to this question had been split into two parts, the first being that the Council didn't want to move services out of St. Peters hospital and secondly that it did want services to stay within the Maldon District. The Chairperson reported that Mr Daniel Doherty, Mid Essex NHS Alliance Director had informed the Council that the NHS would not close St. Peters hospital until the current services offered were available at another location elsewhere in the District. The work of the Council, Essex County Council, local Members of Parliament along with residents of Maldon was also highlighted.

The Chairperson moved the recommendation as set out in the report and this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that the Council's response (Appendix 1 to the report) to the Mid and South Essex NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) public consultation on proposed changes to services at local community hospitals be agreed.

665.   **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery presenting for Members' approval the Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 2029 (the Strategy), attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

It was noted that the Strategy outlined the rationale and approach for how the Council would manage its estate for the next five years and responded to recommendations made within the 2021 / 22 Management of Property internal audit.

The reported highlighted how the Council's Corporate Projects and Asset Management Working Groups had some cross-over in their objectives. Officers were proposing that the two Working Groups be brought together to form a Strategic Assets Working Group. It was confirmed that this proposed change would be brought forward at the Statutory Annual meeting of the Council when the annual appointment to Working Groups was discussed.

In response to query, it was clarified that Appendix 1 to the report was incorrectly labelled as confidential draft.

The Commercial Manager provided Members with the following information in response to comments raised during the debate:

- There was a definitive list of the assets that the Council owned, which was evaluated on a cyclical basis.

- If the Strategy was approved, Officers would liaise with those organisations with space within the Council building and to whom a discount or free lease had been given. These organisations would be asked to provide an annual report or statement confirming how they were contributing towards the Council's strategic objectives, and this would be brought forward for Members to consider in making a decision regarding the lease and discount. It was noted that this would ensure that the Council had a fair and equal process for everyone using the Council building as well as seeking to formalise the process and any discounts were given.

- Where a shared meter for recording of utilities was not available, the cost would be based on the square footage that was occupied. It was not noted that this was usual practice.

- Leases with a greater financial value or for more than 14 years would be brought to the Committee for consideration. For other commercial leases the Council had a Policy that required wherever possible Officers would seek market rent.

The Chairperson moved the recommendations set out in the report and these were duly agreed. Councillor S White advised that she did not support the recommendations.

RESOLVED

(i)   That Members note it is proposed to consolidate the Corporate Projects Working Group and the Asset Management Working Group into one Working Group; The Strategic Assets Working Group, subject to ratification by the Council in May 2024;

RECOMMENDED

(ii)   That the Asset Management Strategy 2024-29 (attached at **APPENDIX 1** to these Minutes) be approved.

666.   **ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There was none.

667.   **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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

668.   **AUTHORITY TO WRITE OFF UNRECOVERABLE DEBT**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer seeking Members' approval to write off debt which had proved to be uncollectable, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Members noted that the Council had processes in place to ensure the timely and effective billing and collection of local taxes due, however there were occasions where

debt was deemed unrecoverable. She confirmed that once a bankruptcy order had been served the Council could not take any further action. The report advised that the Council had pursued normal billing and recovery procedures in respect of the debts set out in the report up to the point that the debts became irrecoverable.

A debate ensued and in response to questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director – Service Delivery provided further information regarding the process that had been followed in relation to the two debts. She also referred to a report on the Council's debt recover process considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2021 and agreed to circulate this to Members for their information.

The Chairperson moved the recommendation as set out in the report and this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that the write-off of uncollectable business rates totalling £24,350.45 as set out in section 3.4 of the report, be approved.

669.   BUSINESS CONTINUITY STRATEGY 2024 - 26

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery seeking Members' approval to put in place a Business Continuity Strategy (BCS) (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), the first for the Council. It was noted that the BCS had been devised to help review and embed business continuity practice into the organisation of Maldon District Council.

The report provided background information regarding the Strategy which ensured the Council had a framework for regularly identifying and assessing risks associated with the continuation of its operations. It was noted that a scoring mechanism had been adopted to rank Council activities into critical, medium, or low categories. Individual business continuity plans followed seven business continuity principles which were detailed in the report. The Strategy also set out specific detail for ICT and customer services and how the Strategy and service plans were to be tested and developed.

Councillor A S Fluker referred to the Strategy being very robust and proposed that the Committee agree the recommendations as set out in the report. This proposal was duly agreed.

RECOMMENDED

(i)   That the Council approves the adoption of the Maldon District Council Business Continuity Strategy 2024 – 26 (the Strategy) attached at Appendix 1 to the report;

(ii)   That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Service Delivery in consultation with the Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee to approve amendments to the policy during its lifetime;

(iii)   That this Strategy is presented for renewal to the Strategy and Resources Committee on a two-year cycle

670. PROPOSAL AND FUNDING REQUEST

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery seeking Members' permission to secure Nomination Rights for two modular units of temporary hours to assist homeless adults with support needs from the District, subject to sufficient community sums be available.

The report provided detailed background information regarding the proposed purchase, set out a number of key benefits and risks in relation to it along with the financial considerations. Appendix 1 to the report provided a breakdown of the Council's temporary / emergency provision.

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

In response to questions raised by Members, further information was provided by Officers.

Following further debate the Chairperson moved the recommendations and these were duly agreed.

RESOLVED

(i)   That subject to sufficient future expected commuted sums being received, the Council agrees in principle to secure Nomination Rights in perpetuity for the two modular units identified in the report using funds from Section 106 Commuted Sums towards the provision of interim / temporary affordable housing;

(ii)   That following all necessary due diligence being undertaken, the Director of Service Delivery and the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee, be given delegated authority to proceed with the purchase of the nomination rights once funding is confirmed.

Councillor W Stamp left the meeting during this item of business and did not return.

There being no other items of business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 9.53 pm.

M F L DURHAM, CC
CHAIRPERSON

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MALDON DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Asset Management Strategy 2024-2029

Document title	Asset Management Strategy
Summary of purpose	
Prepared by	Katy Moore / Steven Butcher
Status	
Version number	V0.1 DRAFT
Approved by	
Approval date	
Date of implementation	TBC
Review frequency	5 years
Next review date	March 2029
Circulation	
Published on the Council's website	TBC

Validity Statement

This document is due for review by the date shown above, after which it may become invalid. Users of the strategy or policy should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the document.

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1. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY CONTEXT

1.1 The Council's estate is made up of a diverse range of assets including land, buildings and parks and open spaces, as detailed in the Council's Asset Register.

1.2 The Council also owns around 130 assets that are under lease or licence to commercial or community partners; and 70 moorings and berths throughout the Blackwater.

1.3 The condition of the Council's assets varies, with some assets being well maintained, whilst others have suffered in recent years due to financial and resource constraints.

1.4 Whilst health and safety and other statutory considerations are the Council's first priority, additional investment to maintain and enhance Council assets is under greater strain. This Strategy is intended to be the catalyst to undertake a detailed review of the Council's assets to consider how it can best address these issues, whilst also contributing to the Council's broader strategic objectives.

1.5 The Council will need to continue to transform and evolve as it seeks to deliver services under greater financial pressures. The Council has to balance its core requirements for physical assets to deliver services, with its other strategic objectives. The aim of this Strategy is to improve utilisation of the estate, rationalise operational use where appropriate, and make cost savings and/or improve income generation.

1.6 Historically the Council's approach to commercial and investment opportunities has been to consider opportunities as they arise, rather than adopting a more strategic approach to asset acquisition, development, and disposal. This Strategy aims to establish a framework to determine the Council's priorities for its key assets to enable it to act it a more pro-active capacity towards commercial opportunities.

2. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PURPOSE

2.1 Physical assets form the foundation on which the Council delivers its services. They play a key role in shaping the social, environmental, and economic wellbeing of the local community, influencing the quality of life for local people.

2.2 Maldon District Council's Asset Management Strategy sets the strategic framework for the Council's estate operations, over the next five years. It is intended to guide future decisions regarding the strategic needs of the Council concerning the acquisition, use and disposal of estate assets (property and land) and to ensure that the assets are fit for purpose, efficient and financially viable. The Strategy sets out the governance approach that will support decision making for both new initiatives and day to day management of the estate.

2.3 This Strategy also sets out the approach that Maldon District Council will take towards physical assets that it shares with strategic and community partners.

3. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY VISION

"To ensure that the Council's assets continue to meet its own strategic, operational, and financial objectives, as well as those of its partners, residents and visitors, through optimising asset performance, sustainability, and cost effectiveness across its estate."

4. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

4.1   The core objectives of this Asset Management Strategy are to:

1.   Optimise the contribution that property and land assets make to successfully realising the Council's strategic priorities and service objectives by ensuring that it its estate is fit for purpose, financially viable and operationally sustainable.

2.   Reduce the environmental impact of Council owned assets to contribute to carbon neutrality.

3.   Improve asset income by taking measured risks with regards to property repurposing, investment, and disposal. This includes reducing running costs by improving building efficiency.

4.   Act upon strategic acquisition opportunities where these are affordable and align with corporate objectives e.g. affordable housing.

5.   Establish a robust asset appraisal system that will be undertaken throughout the life cycle of this Strategy to aid strategic decision making.

5. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SCOPE

5.1   The scope of this asset management strategy will cover three key areas:

1.   Development / maintenance of existing Council owned land and property*

2.   Disposal of surplus assets

3.   Acquisition of new property / land assets to deliver Council objectives, where affordable

Car Parks on council owned land are currently under separate review with a specific Car Parking Strategy being developed to look at opportunities for investment, development, and technology initiatives in the future.

6. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

6.1   **Officers**

6.1.1 Under the Council's constitution some assets management decisions are delegated to officers.

6.1.2 Currently lease agreements can be made under officers' delegation up to seven years, with a value of up to £15,000.

6.1.3 Longer leases can be agreed in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee these delegations can be increased up 14 years and up to a value of £25,000 per annum.

6.1.4 For any decisions that exceed these delegations, Member working groups are engaged to provide direction. with formal decisions then progressed to the Strategy and Resources Committee and/or Council for decision (as set in the structure diagram below).

6.1.5 It is proposed that the delegations pertaining to the management of assets are reviewed to allow quicker, less bureaucratic decision making for low value lease agreements.

6.1.6 The Asset Strategy seeks to categorises officer activity into two distinct areas:

1. Strategic Asset Management

2. Operational Delivery

6.1.7 These categories identify areas of focused activity and are grouped to allow for clear and consistent management, reporting and decision making. The key activities for each area are shown in the governance structure below:

6.2 **Members**

6.2.1 The proposed Asset Strategy Governance Structure set out below recommends that the existing Corporate Projects Working Group (CPWG) and Asset Management Working Group (AMEG) are replaced with one working group; called the Strategic Assets Working Group reporting into Strategy and Resources Committee (subject to agreement by the Council in May 2024). This will remove potential duplication/overlap across the existing working groups and allow for a more efficient process.

Maldon District Council Proposed Asset Strategy Governance Structure
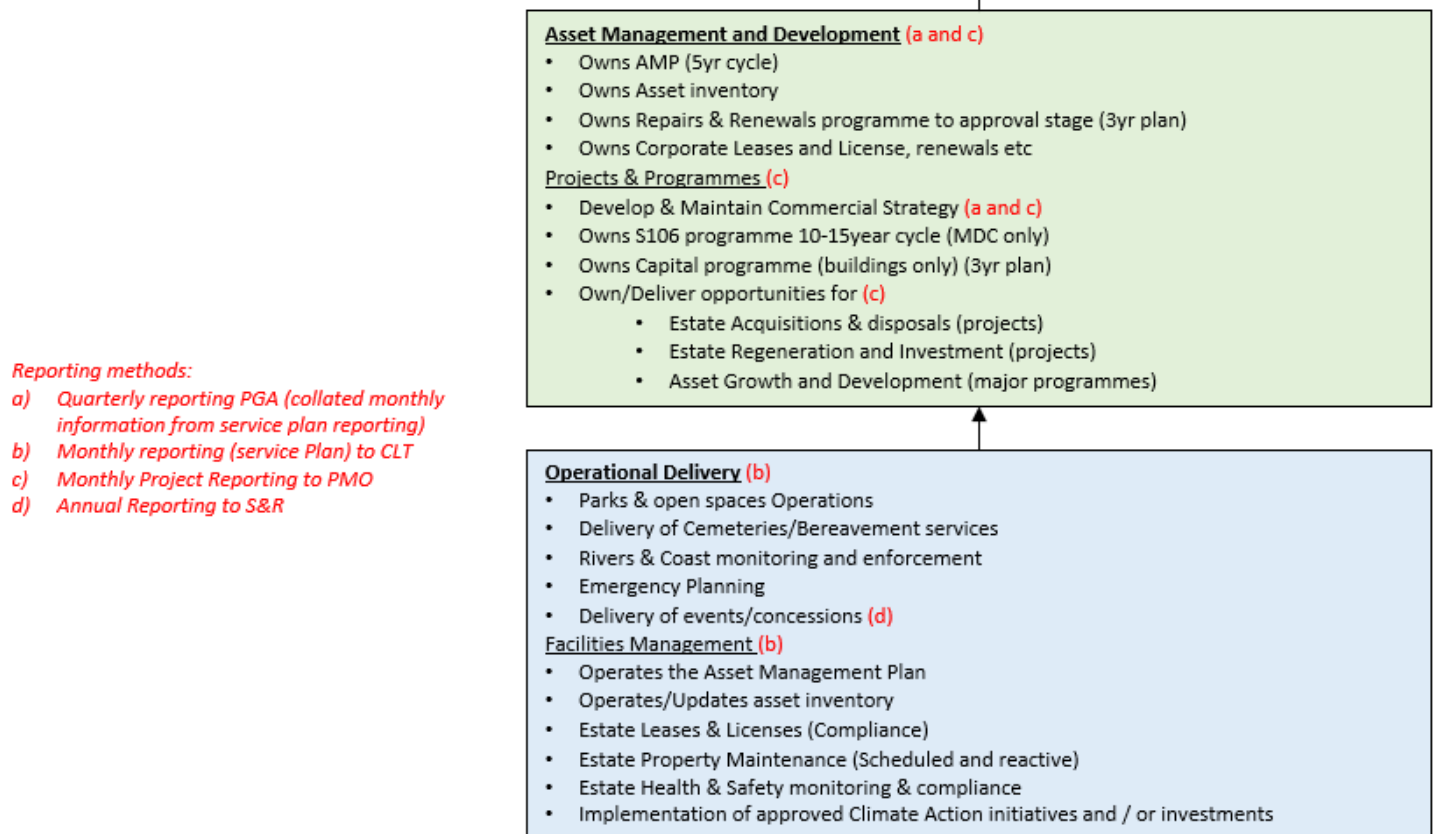
Full Council responsible for:
Agreeing Annual Asset Management Plan + Inventory (changes/priorities) which will support Estate Planning and Development funding requests via S&R

Strategy & Resources Committee responsible for:
Agreeing annual 'at risk' project budget needed for AMP and AFG project feasibilities

Strategic Assets Working Group responsible for:
Members working group providing steer on initiatives. Makes recommendation to S&R/council when formal decision is required

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                              │ Strategy & Resources Committee │
                              └─────────────────────────────┘
                                            ▲
                              ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Strategic Assets Working Group │
                              └─────────────────────────────┘
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Asset Management and Development (a and c)
- Owns AMP (5yr cycle)
- Owns Asset inventory
- Owns Repairs & Renewals programme to approval stage (3yr plan)
- Owns Corporate Leases and License, renewals etc

Projects & Programmes **(c)**
- Develop & Maintain Commercial Strategy **(a and c)**
- Owns S106 programme 10-15year cycle (MDC only)
- Owns Capital programme (buildings only) (3yr plan)
- Own/Deliver opportunities for **(c)**
  - Estate Acquisitions & disposals (projects)
  - Estate Regeneration and Investment (projects)
  - Asset Growth and Development (major programmes)

Reporting methods:
a) *Quarterly reporting PGA (collated monthly information from service plan reporting)*
b) *Monthly reporting (service Plan) to CLT*
c) *Monthly Project Reporting to PMO*
d) *Annual Reporting to S&R*

Operational Delivery (b)
- Parks & open spaces Operations
- Delivery of Cemeteries/Bereavement services
- Rivers & Coast monitoring and enforcement
- Emergency Planning
- Delivery of events/concessions **(d)**

Facilities Management **(b)**
- Operates the Asset Management Plan
- Operates/Updates asset inventory
- Estate Leases & Licenses (Compliance)
- Estate Property Maintenance (Scheduled and reactive)
- Estate Health & Safety monitoring & compliance
- Implementation of approved Climate Action initiatives and / or investments

7. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Given the substantial number of assets that the Council holds it will not be possible to review these all within the five-year Asset Strategy duration.

7.2 Therefore, consideration will be given to prioritising which assets should be reviewed in more detail to progress to business case stage.

7.3 An initial prioritisation exercise will be conducted by officers, in conjunction with the Strategic Assets Working Group, to draw up a five-year Asset Management Plan which will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee for approval. This will be reviewed and reported on an annual basis.

7.4 It is proposed that the criteria for initial prioritisation should be as set out below:

Proposed criteria for initial prioritisation of asset reviews:

- Any assets that are known to pose an immediate Health and Safety risk
- Asset overall balance sheet value
- Strategic importance to delivery of core Council services
- Strategic importance to delivery of key partnerships
- Potential to generate income and/or revenue saving.

7.5 **Delivering against the framework.**

7.5.1 Officers will report regularly to the Strategic Assets Working Group on asset management activities.

7.5.2 Business cases will be appraised by the Corporate Leadership Team via the Programme Management Office (PMO) Project Board before a recommendation is made to the Strategic Assets Working Group. This will include identification of the resources required to deliver the business case and any ongoing cost implications.

7.5.3 Capital investment bids for improvement / development will normally be progressed as part of the annual budget setting process unless a commercial opportunity is agreed to be pursued outside of this process.

7.5.4 Repairs and maintenance budgets will also be agreed as part of the budget setting process unless urgent health and safety measures are required outside of this process.

7.6 **Approach to collaborating with partners:**

7.6.1 Whilst the Council continues to recognise the wider community value and social outcomes delivered by partners, a consistent and fair approach should be taken on the use of Council owned assets to ensure value for money can be demonstrated.

7.6.2 Partners who are using Council owned assets at discounted rates will therefore be asked to evidence how they contribute to the Council's corporate goals on an annual basis. This evidence will be considered by the Strategic Assets Working Group who will make recommendations to the Strategy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

7.6.3 The Council policy is that it will no longer subsidise utility expenses on its assets. These must be paid in full by the lease holder.

7.6.4 Arrangements will be made to meet local and regional partners to discuss strategic asset management matters and opportunities on a regular basis. Where possible the Council will align its working relationships to deliver "one public estate" outcomes for the financial benefit of ourselves and partners, or improved customer services.

8. ASSET MANAGEMENT EVALUATION

8.1 As each asset is assessed the aim is to establish an improved evidence base which can be used to determine a 'Whole Life Costing' over the assets useful life to ensure it delivers value for money. Qualitative as well as quantitative aspects will be considered to build a full picture. The size and type of the asset this will determine the level of business case required. The following data will be captured to ensure robust recommendations and decision making can be made.

- Asset Location
- Current balance sheet value
- Estimated Useful Economic Life (UEL)
- Asset current condition and estimated future maintenance costs
- Running costs
- Health and Safety compliance
- Sustainability / environmental credentials e.g. carbon footprint
- Asset current utilisation / vacancy rates
- Fitness for purpose in current use
- Development opportunities
- Community value delivered aligned with Council corporate objectives

Maldon District Council Proposed Asset Strategy: Decision Flow Diagram

9. CIRCULATION AND REVIEW / SIGN OFF

Name	Role	Directorate	Signed off
Naomi Lucas	Chief Finance Officer	Resources	
Paul Dodson	Director of Strategy and Resources	Strategy, Performance and Governance (SPG)	
Richard Holmes	Director of Service Delivery	Service Delivery	

10. DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Date (YY/MM/DD)	Version	Details	Changes
29/02/2024	0.1	DRAFT	

11. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Maldon District Council (MDC) Assets Register: hosted within uniform software, accessible as and when required.

MDC constitution – delegations relating the management of assets:
(Public Pack) Agenda Document for Council Constitution, 20/12/2023 00:00 (maldon.gov.uk)

Page 97 ...... Scheme of Delegation Contents

Page 98 ...... To the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance: Assets of Community Value

Page 109 .... To the Director of Service Delivery: Asset Management

Corporate Plan 2023-2027 | Maldon District Council

REPORT of
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2024

COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM POLICY REVISION

1.   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To inform Members of a delay to legislative provisions to increase the period of time before which Council Tax premiums would become payable in certain circumstances.

1.2   To seek a decision on whether the Council wishes to amend the previously agreed Policy on Empty Homes Premiums to enable these provisions to be applied locally in advance of legislation being made.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Council

(i)   That provision is made for an extension to the time before which a Council Tax premium becomes due in some limited circumstances, effective from 1 April 2024 until further guidance is issued or enabling legislation is made;

(ii)   that the revised Empty Homes and Second Homes Premium Policy 2024 - 25 at **APPENDIX A** be approved;

(iii)   that the Head of Revenues and Benefits be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to make further technical amendments, to reflect updated guidance, as necessary.

3.   SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1   The Council previously considered* and agreed a Policy to enable the application of council tax premiums in respect of long-term empty homes after a period of 12 months and, from 1 April 2025 for second homes.

3.2   At the time of agreeing the Policy, the Council was awaiting guidance from Government on exceptions to the premium which should be applied.

3.3   On 11 March 2024, the Government published the response to its consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England and confirmed that it would legislate to bring the following exceptions into effect before the 2025 to 2026 financial year.

Proposed Government Exceptions to both the empty and second homes council tax premiums (not yet enacted in legislation)

- **Properties undergoing probate**: inherited properties will have a 12-month exception from the empty and second home premiums after probate or letters of administration have been granted. The property will be liable for the standard rate of council tax once the class F exemption (i.e. where the property is exempt from Council Tax payment for as long as it remains unoccupied, and until probate is granted) has ended; but a premium cannot be levied for a 12-month period.

- **Properties being actively marketed for sale of let**: a 12-month exception to both the empty and second home premiums will apply to properties that are actively marketed for sale or let.

Proposed Government Exceptions to the empty homes premium only (not yet enacted in legislation)

- **Empty properties undergoing major repairs**: properties undergoing major repairs or structural alterations will have up to a 12-month exception from the empty homes premium.

Proposed Government Exceptions to the second homes premium only (applicable from April 2025)

- **Annexes forming part of, or being treated as part of, the main dwelling:** an exception to the second homes premium for annexes which form part of a single property which includes at least one other dwelling.

- **Job related dwellings:** an exception to the second homes premium for job-related dwellings. This exception will not apply to cases where someone chooses to have an additional property to be closer to work while having a family home elsewhere or where an individual is posted to a new location but maintain their previous address.

- **Occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings:** a pitch occupied by a caravan and a mooring occupied by a boat are an exception to the second homes premium.

- **Seasonal homes where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited or has been specified use:** Where properties have planning restrictions or other conditions on occupation or use in place which prevent year-round occupation, such properties will be an exception to the second homes premium.

3.4   In its response to the consultation, the Government has reiterated that the Government's intention when providing billing authorities with the power to charge a premium was not to penalise owners of property genuinely for sale or rent and that the premiums are intended to be used as a tool to help address the impacts of second and empty homes.

4.   CONCLUSION

4.1   Given the clear indication that exemptions will be provided for in legislation from April 2025, it does not seem reasonable that under the provisions of current policy, customers could be disadvantaged in 2024 / 25 by the absence of these exemptions e.g. a premium would be applied to the council tax bill for a customer who is

struggling to sell a property in 2024 / 25 when this would not be the case in 2025-2026.

4.2   Officers consider therefore that it would be reasonable to revise the existing policy to incorporate the exemptions, in line with Government intent, in advance of them being legislated for.

5.   IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1   **Supporting our communities**

5.1.1   The updated Policy would avoid penalising customers as a result of the timing of legislative changes.

5.2   **Helping the economy to thrive**

5.2.1   The updated Policy would provide for increased time for properties to be reoccupied before increased council tax is levied in specific circumstances.

5.3   **Smarter finances**

5.3.1   Increased income as a result of the premium changes in 2024 has not been factored into the Councils budget.

5.4   **Provide good quality services.**

5.4.1   The updated Policy is in line with Government guidance and provides a clear framework for the administration of discretionary premiums.

6.   IMPLICATIONS

(i)   **Impact on Customers** – A clear policy provides a consistent approach when exercising discretion.

(ii)   **Impact on Equalities** – None.

(iii)   **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Challenges in evidencing that a property is genuinely being marketed for sale or rent may increase potential for fraud and will require careful management.

(iv)   **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None.

(v)   **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.

Background Papers:
* The Empty Homes and Second Homes Premium Policy was originally considered by the Strategy and Resources Committee 25 January 2024 and ratified by the Council on 15 February 2024 (Minute No. 487 refers).

Enquiries to: Michelle La Marre, Head of Revenues and Benefits.

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MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Empty Homes and Second Homes Premium Policy
2024-25

Contents

1. Introduction and background

1.1 The following policy outlines the Council's approach to the levying of empty homes premium and second homes premiums.

1.2 Premiums were introduced by government from 1 April 2013 with a view to encouraging homeowners to occupy homes and not leave them vacant in the long term.

1.3 The legislation which introduced premiums is S11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). Premiums could only be charged on long-term empty dwellings. An empty dwelling is one which is 'unoccupied' and 'substantially unfurnished'. The definition of 'long-term' is where the dwelling has been empty for a continuous period of at least 1 year.

1.4 Initially the maximum level of premium was set by government at 50% of the amount of Council Tax chargeable. Each Council could determine the level of premium up to the maximum and this is charged in addition to the amount determined by the Council as payable for an empty dwelling[1]

1.5 Certain classes of dwellings cannot be charged a premium namely:
- a dwelling which would be the sole or main residence of a person but which is empty while that person resides in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence by reason of their employment i.e., service personnel posted away from home[2]; or
- dwellings which form annexes in a property which are being used as part of the main residence or dwelling in that property[3].

1.6 In 2018 the Rating of Property in Common Occupation and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act allowed authorities to increase the level of premiums on empty dwellings with effect from 1 April 2019 as follows;
- Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 2 years or more, - from 1 April 2019 a premium can be levied up to 100%;
- Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 5 years or more, - from 1 April 2020 a premium can be levied up to 200%; and
- Dwellings left unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 10 years or more, - from 1 April 2021 a premium can be levied up to 300%.

1.7 It should be noted that premiums are charged in addition to the 100% Council Tax payable on empty premises.

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[1] Under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwelling)(England) Regulations 2003 and amended by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwelling)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 - Classes C & D.
[2] Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwelling)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 - Classes E
[3] Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwelling)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 - Classes F

1.8 Government, together with local authorities (including the Council) has unfortunately seen a rise in the number of empty homes together with a growth in second homes.

1.9 Inconsistencies in the legislation have also been identified whereby a premium can be avoided by the taxpayer merely furnishing an empty premises, when it would become a 'second home' which currently has a maximum charge of 100% with no premium.

1.10 In order to address these inconsistencies, and also to bring more dwellings into use, government has introduced sections within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (the Act).

1.11 This policy details the Council's approach in the charging of premiums as allowed within the new legislation.

1.12 The continued pressure on local authority finances (both the Council and the Major Preceptors) together with the need to encourage all owners of domestic premises to bring them back into use, makes it essential that the Council changes its approach to empty homes. The new legislation for second home premiums will encourage the use of dwellings as primary residences.

2. Empty homes premiums (From 1 April 2024)

2.1 Section 79 (1) (b) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 permits the Council to impose an empty homes premium after one year instead of two years. Section 80 of the Act provides that from 1 April 2024, a property can be charged an empty homes premium at 100% after one year, even if it became empty before 1 April 2024.

2.2 The Council has resolved to implement the change with effect from 1 April 2024.

2.3 The legislation requires the Council to be mindful of any guidance or further regulation in relation to the implementation of the premiums and this is detailed in Section 4 of this policy.

3. Introduction of premiums for second homes (From 1 April 2025)

3.1 The definition of a second home for Council Tax purposes is a dwelling which has "no one resident" but is "substantially furnished".

3.2 Section 80 (2) of the Act inserts a new section 11C into the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This permits the Council to apply a premium on second homes. The maximum Council Tax charge in these cases would be a standard 100% charge plus a premium of 100% making a total Council Tax charge of 200%.

3.3   Unlike empty dwellings, there is no requirement for a property to have been used as a second home for a fixed period of time before the premium can apply.

3.4   As with other changes introduced by the Act, section 11C (3) requires that the first decision to impose this class of premium must be taken at least 12 months before the financial year to which it would apply. In effect this means that premiums for second homes will not take effect until the 2025-26 financial year at the earliest.

3.5   The Council has resolved to charge second home premiums and has given the required notice.

3.6   The Act provides that a dwelling cannot be subject to both a second homes premium and an empty homes premium imposed under section 11B of the 1992 Act, and that an existing empty homes premium would cease to apply to a property which became subject to a second homes premium.

4.   Exceptions from the premiums (empty homes premiums and second homes premium)

4.1   Government has stated that regulations providing exceptions to the premiums will be laid in 2025. In the meantime, the Council has decided to allow the following exceptions:
- **Properties undergoing probate:** the Council will allow a 12-month exception from the empty and second home premiums after probate or letters of administration have been granted. The dwelling will be liable for the 100% of council tax once the class F exemption has ended; but a premium will not be levied for a 12-month period;
- **Properties that are being actively marketed for sale or rent** - the Council will apply an exception for up to a **maximum of 12 months** from the date that active marketing commenced, or until the property has been sold or rented, whichever is the sooner. The Council, in determining whether this exemption applies will require the following evidence:
    (a) evidence that the dwelling is being **actively** marketed for sale or rent through a recognised agent (evidence can include contracts with agents, advertisements in recognised newspapers or marketing websites);
    (b) where the premises are being self-marketed by the owner or landlord, evidence that the premises is being **actively** marketed (evidence can include advertisements in recognised newspapers or letting websites;
    (c) where for sale, evidence that the premises are being sold at a true market level for the size and type of dwelling within the area in which it is situated. Where the dwelling is for let, that the rent requested is at a true market level for the size and type of dwelling within the area in which it is situated.

The above list is not exhaustive and the Council reserves the right to request further evidence to support any claim for exceptions. The exception will only apply **once** to that dwelling for any taxpayer or taxpayers if they are jointly and severally liable;

- **Empty properties undergoing major repairs** - this exception is time limited to 12 months. The Council has decided that empty dwellings undergoing major repair works or structural alternations should be an exception to the premium for up to 12 months once the exception has been applied or when the work has been completed, whichever is the sooner. The exception will be applied at any time after the dwelling has been empty for at least 12 months, so long as the Council is satisfied that the necessary repair work is being undertaken. As with all other exceptions to the premiums, the Council will require the taxpayer to provide such evidence as is required to support their application;

- **Annexes forming part of, or being treated as, part of the main dwelling** - the Council will except such annexes from the Council Tax premium on second homes;

- **Job related dwellings** - currently, there is a Council Tax discount of up to 50% for properties which are unoccupied because the owner is required to live elsewhere for employment purposes. The discount applies where the dwelling is provided for the better performance of the duties of the employment, and it is one of the kinds of employment in the case of which it is customary for employers to provide dwellings for employees. The Council has decided that the dwelling should also be excepted to the second homes premium. **The exception will not apply to cases where someone chooses to have an additional property to be closer to work while having a family home elsewhere or where an individual is posted to a new location but maintain their previous address**;

- **Occupied caravan pitches and houseboat moorings** - the Council has decided that these caravans and boats should be an exception to the Council Tax premium on second homes; and

- **Seasonal homes where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited or has been specified for use as holiday accommodation or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence** - the Council has decided that dwellings that have restrictions or conditions preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 12-month period, or specifies its use as a holiday let, or prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence, should be an exception to the second homes premium.

5. Outcome expected and 'safety net'.

5.1 The expected outcomes of this policy are as follows:
(a) Taxpayers will be encouraged, through the implementation of the premiums, to bring empty properties into use and to revert the use of second homes to primary residences;
(b) The reduction of empty homes and second homes within the Council's area in line with the Council's Empty Property Strategy; and
(c) Increased Council Tax income from empty homes and second homes.

5.2 There may be circumstances where the implementation of these changes may cause exceptional hardship to a taxpayer. In such cases, the Council will consider applications for a reduction in liability under its Section 13A (1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 - Reduction in Council Tax liability policy.

5.3 Where such an application is received, it will be considered on an individual case basis taking into account the circumstances of the taxpayer and the situation regarding the level of Council Tax charged. Should the taxpayer be aggrieved by any decision of the Council a further right of appeal will be with the independent Valuation Tribunal.

6.   Legislation

6.1 The legislation that covers this policy and the recommendations made is as follows:
- S11A & S11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- S11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as introduced by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023);
- The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023; and
- S13A(1)(C) Local Government Finance Act 1992 (reduction in liability).

6.2 Due to changes in the legislation, the Council will be required to amend this policy, at any time, in line with statute.

7.   Finance

7.1 Any amount of premium received will be part of the Council's Collection Fund and will be shared between the Council and Major Precepting authorities in line with their share of the Council Tax.

7.2 Any reduction granted under S13A(1)(c) will be financed through the Council's general fund and do not form part of the Collection Fund.

8.   Notification

8.1 Where a taxpayer is granted an exemption, a revised demand notice will be issued. Where an exemption is applied for but not granted, the Council will provide a notification of its decision.

9.   Appeals

9.1 Appeals against the Council's decision may be made in accordance with Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

9.2 The taxpayer must in the first instance write to the Council outlining the reason for their appeal. Once received the council will then consider whether any additional information has been received which would justify a change to the original decision and notify the tax payer accordingly.

9.3 Where the taxpayer remains aggrieved, a further appeal can then be made to the Valuation Tribunal. This further appeal should be made within 2 months of the decision of the Council not to grant any reductions. Full details can be obtained from the Council's website or from the Valuation Tribunal Service website.

10. Delegated Powers

10.1 This policy for the Council Tax premiums has been approved by the Council. However, the Lead Specialist, Service Delivery is authorised to make technical amendments to ensure it meets the criteria set by government and the Council.

11 Fraud

11.1 The Council is committed to protecting public funds and ensuring that premiums are correctly charged.

11.2 A taxpayer who tries to reduce their Council Tax liability by incorrectly or falsely declaring their circumstances, providing a false statement or evidence in support of their application, may have committed an offence under The Fraud Act 2006.

11.3 Where the Council suspects that such a fraud may have been committed, this matter will be investigated as appropriate and may lead to criminal proceedings being instigated.

12. Complaints

12.1 The Council's complaints procedure (available on the Council's website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this policy.
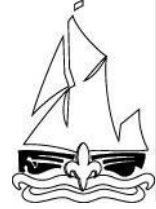
REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2024

PROJECT AND IMPROVEMENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

1.   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To provide the Corporate Project Management Office (PMO) and Improvement Framework (the Framework) for Committee review and adoption. To provide a 'Productivity Plan' for Committee review and adoption as requested by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

(i)   That the Project Management Office (PMO) and Improvement Strategic Framework (**APPENDIX 1**) be adopted;

(ii)   That the Committee approves the 'Productivity Plan' at **APPENDIX 2** and receives a six-monthly update on this going forwards.

3.   SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1   The DLUHC wrote to the Council on 16 April 2024 to advise on expectations for 'Productivity in Local government' and the requirement that Councils produce Productivity Plans as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

3.2   The Productivity Plans should include:

- how the Council has transformed the way it designs and delivers services to make better use of resources;

- how the Council plans to take advantage of technology and better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources;

- the Council's plans to reduce wasteful spend in organisation and systems;

- any barriers to progress that Government can help reduce or remove.

3.3   The Council adopted a Process Improvement Framework in 2021 which set out how it would use improvement methodologies to improve productivity as a Council. The Framework document at **APPENDIX 1** is an update to the 2021 document and builds on the learning and achievements of the last three years of activity.

3.4   Additionally in the 2024 / 25 budget setting process, the PMO and Process Improvement resource was combined for the authority to contribute a staffing cost saving. The revisions to the Framework include how the PMO approach is set out for the Council, and an approach to delivery within the team resource.

3.5   Within the Framework, the Council also links to the Data Management and Insight Strategy and the Technology Strategy for Maldon District Council (MDC), which are core documents that define the path of our improvement work and focus as a council. Together these documents also form the basis for the Council's Productivity Plan which is set out at **APPENDIX 2**.

4.   CONCLUSION

4.1   Building on best practice, the Project and Improvement Management Framework is presented for member adoption. Additionally, as this is a key document to support the Productivity Plan requirement, this paper highlights the Council's overall 'Productivity Plan' and call on Central government for what support it needs to achieve this.

5.   IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1   **Smarter finances**

5.1.1   These are key documents to define how the Council will drive efficiency and smart spending of resource at MDC.

5.2   **Provide good quality services.**

5.2.1   A key objective of Projects and Improvements is better service delivery for residents.

6.   IMPLICATIONS

(i)   **Impact on Customers** – A key objective of Projects and Improvements is better service delivery for our residents.

(ii)   **Impact on Equalities** – None.

(iii)   **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – A methodical approach to projects and improvements and clear governance / challenge of this helps to limit corporate risk.

(iv)   **Impact on Resources (financial)** – These are key documents to define how the Council will drive efficiency and smart spending of resource at MDC.

(v)   **Impact on Resources (human)** – These are key documents to define how the Council will drive efficiency and smart spending of resource at MDC.

Background Papers:
Data Management and Insight Strategy
Process Improvement Framework 2021 - 2024

Enquiries to: Cheryl Hughes, Assistant Director- Programmes, Performance and Governance.

PROJECT MANGEMENT OFFICE (PMO) AND IMPROVEMENT MANAGEMENT (IM) STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

2024 - 2027

Maldon District Council

Contents

Maldon District Council

Key Information	
Authors:	Assistant Director of Programme, Performance and Governance – Cheryl Hughes, PMO & Improvement Manager – Leigha Jones, Process Improvement Specialist – Rachel Hawkridge.
Accountable Assistant Director:	Assistant Director of Programme, Performance and Governance – Cheryl Hughes
Member Improvement Champions 23/24 (appointed by O&S and PG&A committees):	Cllr Simon Morgan, Cllr Emma Stephens, Cllr Vanessa Bell Cllr Maddie Thompson.
Frequency Improvement Member Champions are appointed:	Annually (following statutory annual council)
Frequency of Team/ Member Champions meetings:	First meeting planned for September and then held quarterly going forwards.
PMO SharePoint Site Link:	PMO - Home (sharepoint.com)
Improvements SharePoint site Link:	Process Improvement Programme Team - Home (sharepoint.com)

Key Information - Governance	
The Strategy applies to:	Maldon Council officers
Committee the last improvement Strategy/Framework was approved at:	Performance, Governance and Audit Committee
Date of when the Strategy/Framework was approved:	18th November 2021
Last improvement Strategy/Framework for reference:	Appendix A.pd (maldon.gov.uk)
This Strategy is due its next review:	31/03/2027

1. Achievements against the 2021-2024 Framework

I. **Adopting best practices** - Staff within the team have completed their apprenticeships and have up to degree level qualifications that qualifies them to train others.

II. **Knowledge transfer** - With specific projects, additional resource has been added to the team and these staff are also being trained to build capacity. This training includes knowledge transfer from the apprenticeship work completed by improvement staff, lean six sigma green belt training and skills development such as form building.

III. **Accessible Documentation** - The team have developed a SharePoint site with resources for self-serve projects and support in process improvement and contains tools and templates for use across the organisation.

IV. **Sharing knowledge** - We have run one white belt and one yellow belt staff training sessions since 2023 to build knowledge of process improvement processes across the organisation. These sessions were recorded and added to the staff on boarding packs for new staff.

V. **Building Capacity** - To help build capacity for improvements being made across the Councils services we have established an internal process improvement group called 'Green belt Champions'. We are coaching 24 delegates from across the Council, at least one individual from each service area which were either identified by ELT or they nominated themselves. Each 'Green belt champion' will be responsible for carrying out the improvements in their area in-line with best practices, they then provide the improvements team with regular updates and stats for further reporting. By someone in the service team leading on making the improvements they are then able to share their learning with their teams. The 'Green belt process improvement project management' training started January 2024 and is due to finish May 2024.

VI. **Building Insight** – To help improve processes for our customers we want to work closely with Members to utilise their insight from a customer perspective. After

the Process Improvement framework was signed off by Members in 2021, and the first member improvement champions were appointed. The process improvement team presented to the Improvement Member Champions on 10th March 2022, which set out how we wanted them to work with us in improving the customer journey on our website.

After the May 2023 elections, Cllr V J Bell and Cllr M E Thompson were appointed as the new Member Improvement Champions at the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee on 15th June 2023 and Cllr S J N Morgan and Cllr E L Stephens were appointed as new Member Improvement Champions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st August 2023.

An online form has been developed for staff to provide feedback on any processes which require improvements, an additional form asks several questions which feed into a technical matrix. This has been put in place to review and score project suggestions, which helps prioritise the work programme and the waitlist for process improvements. We also capture insight through the online customer feedback form where customers can give a star rating and comment on their experience.

There will be further development work on building insight in 2024 onwards, to:
- Work more closely with our Member Champions and build their knowledge around the service we provide and how we can make a bigger positive impact on the Council and our customers.
- Finding more ways to capture customer feedback and channeling this into the work we are doing.

VII. **Supporting other Council services** – The Improvements Team have been working closely with the Project Management Office (PMO) to support wider project delivery and help apply continual improvement skills to some of our corporate projects. For example, supporting with workshop facilitation, sharing skills to help projects realise benefits, sharing process improvement knowledge and project management templates.
In 2023, to support organisational efficiencies the PMO and process improvement resource were combined. This will be further formalised through

Maldon District Council

the launch of this revised strategy. During this transition, the PMO has seen the adoption of 'pre-project appraisals' designed to challenge project deliverables and ensure that project delivery is more likely to be achievable.

The improvements team have also supported the ICT team with delivering their projects outlined in the 2021-2024 IT Strategy. Ensuring that ICT projects are well documented, scoped effectively, deliverables are achievable, the outputs of the project are transitioned to business as usual, and the benefits of the projects are realised.

VIII.   **Success headliners**:

Customer feedback:
'Very simple and straight forward'

The Improvements team supported our customers by providing 68 online forms (accessible 24/7)

Customer feedback:
'Completing the application was so much easier than I had anticipated! Having the correct paperwork to hand, as advised by yourselves, was a bonus too. Thank you'

The Improvements team have improved the journey for our customers.
website to improve the journey for our customers.

Customer feedback:
Was far easier to complete than I thought.

The Improvements team have improved 45% of our customers.

The Improvements team have delivered 102 improvements.

During Covid-19 the Improvements team supported 15 processes to help to make them accessible for our customers

The Improvements team have saved the Council £258,152 in officer time.

The improvements team produce communications council wide on the improvements asked for and what has been done to achieve them.

The improvement team have shared knowledge and learning with teams across the council.

Customer feedback:
'Life changing - Marvellous.'

The Improvements team have saved the officers 7040 hours (equivalent to 938 working days).

Customer feedback:
'Keep up the good work'

The improvements team have shared templates and knowledge gained from apprenticeships with the PMO.

The improvements team has supported the IT strategy by helping deliver IT project and ensure smooth transition to BAU.

The improvements team have developed 'process improvement project management' training material for a variety of skill levels.

2.   Introduction

The previous strategy was targeted at building and embedding improvement resource in the organisation and the achievements above set out how this has been delivered to date.

The 'Project Management Office (PMO) and Improvements' is a service or function that provides support to corporate projects and improvement initiatives to reduce project failure. This version of the strategy sets out the functions of the service and how we intend on supporting other Council activities to ensure projects run effectively, to budget, within agreed timeframes, to the desired outcomes and helps to deliver the Corporate Plan Priority of "Greener Future."

This strategy document will set out:

- Management of Project Management Office function.
  - o Robustly review and manage corporate projects.
  - o Ensure resource release doesn't exceed service capacity or goes on a backlog list.
  - o Ensure the releasing resource efficiencies where improvements have been made.
  - o Challenge releasing resource to projects and ensure they deliver value.

- Management of Continual Improvement function for the Council
  - o Build on knowledge transfer, increase organisational capacity.
  - o Deliver and release corporate efficiency through improvements.
  - o Improve customer experience and pathways for our processes.
  - o Facilitate the commitment to releasing resource efficiencies where improvements have been made.

The Department for levelling up, housing and communities wrote to the Council on $16th$ April 2024 to advise on expectations for 'Productivity in Local government' and there is a requirement that Councils produce Productivity Plans. The plans should include How we have transformed the way we design and deliver services to make better use of resources How we plan to take advantage of technology and better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources:

Our plans to reduce wasteful spend in organisation and systems.

Any barriers to progress that Government can help reduce or remove.

This Framework is an essential part of defining this delivery for the Council, alongside our Technology Strategy and Data and Insight Strategy.

3.   PMO and Improvement Management Framework

The flow diagram below shows how we work out what level of governance a project requires before it starts,

Question 1: Is it a change? If yes please start in the orange circle

If in doubt contact PMO - pmoprojects@maldon.gov.uk

Does this piece of work have high exposure? Customers, members, businesses, external suppliers

If you answer yes to any question in the circle go down the yes arrow

Does your work require additional resource, i.e not in your service?

Is robust governance, measures and controls required for this piece of work?

no

Business As Usual

yes

Does your project require external suppliers?

Will your piece of work require procurement?

You should manage your project through the:

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

PMO

yes

Does your work carry risks that will have an impact on the organisation?

Does you work require funding?

Will a corporate decision be required as part of your piece of work?

Does your work have significant legal risks?

Does your piece of work address corporate risks?

No

No

Will the change have a high customer impact?

Do you require support with template building?

Does your work solve a problem in a process?

Does your work need progress tracking support?

Has this work been defined within your service plan?

Yes

You should manage your project through the:

Process Improvement

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The PMO – To ensure the PMO is following best practices, developments have been implemented in-line with the project management methodology PMBOK (Project Management Body Of Knowledge) and the Local Partnerships guidance for Local authorities establishing a PMO. The Local Partnership is jointly owned by the Local Government Association, HM Treasury, and the Welsh Government.

The image below shows how the PMO Governance structure:

Project Roles and Responsibilities (SharePoint Link)

The flow chart below shows the PMO process and where the Improvements service crosses over:

Pre-project Appraisals are part of the project assurance structure that is linked to wider PMO Governance. held in the project 'concept' stage when the project initiator has finished drawing the business case (template in PMO SharePoint).

The PMO facilitates the Pre-Project appraisal meeting where all key stakeholders are invited to friendly challenge the project before it goes to CLT Governance board for

approval. The project will also need to pass PMO's key criteria threshold before it can go to CLT Governance board, if the project passes the threshold but doesn't check all criteria requirements then the project will go to CLT board with PMO recommendations.

To effectively manage Council resources the PMO uses a prioritisation matrix to score each project against key criteria which is in-line with Maldon District Councils Corporate Plan for 2023 – 2027. The project is put on a waiting list in descending numerological order and categorised as either High priority (Gold), Medium priority (Silver) or low priority (bronze). This method ensures that services are not overstretched on their availability to contribute towards project work and allows the PMO to raise red flags to ELT Project Board and CLT Governance Board when considerations and decision are needed in terms of resource availability. A project can still start immediately regardless of the score, but this will be at CLT Governance boards discretion. The waiting list is reviewed regularly by CLT Governance board and projects may be started and paused as corporate priorities change.

The PMO provides tools and templates that are accessible to all project managers and Sponsors and includes:
- Project Brief
- Business Case
- Project Budgeting
- Risk Assessment
- MoSCoW (for prioritising project requirements)
- Traceability Matrix (for managing project requirements)
- Options Comparison
- Stakeholder Checklist
- Project Management Plan (including Gantt chart)
- Budget, schedule management and forecasting (Monte Carlo Simulation tool and Earned Value Management)
- Decisions Log

Both the Local Partnership LLP and the PMBOK state that '*it is important to have clear definition on what is a project, programme and portfolio as this is a key parameter in establishing the role of a PMO, what the PMO will take responsibility for and provide* support with.'
They also state that '*a project is a specific, single initiative with tangible outputs, whilst a programmes and portfolios are a collection of related projects.'* Therefore, during the concept stage of a project when the business case is being drafted the PMO process is to establish if the work is categorised as either a project, programme or portfolio, this will define how it will be reported in the P3 management App (our internal project management tool). This process ensures that deliverables can be clearly defined and are measurable.

This image illustrates how projects, programmes and portfolios are defined:
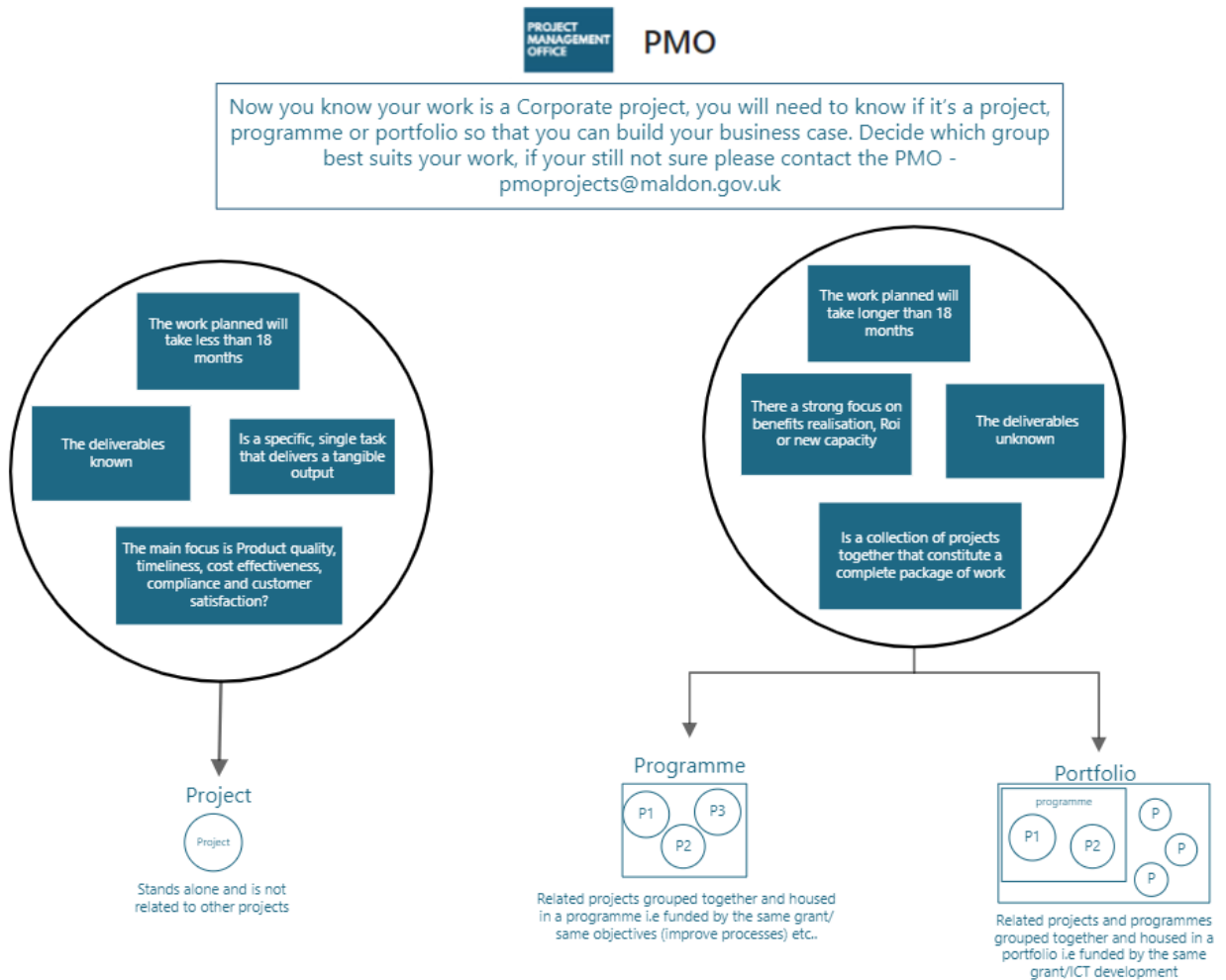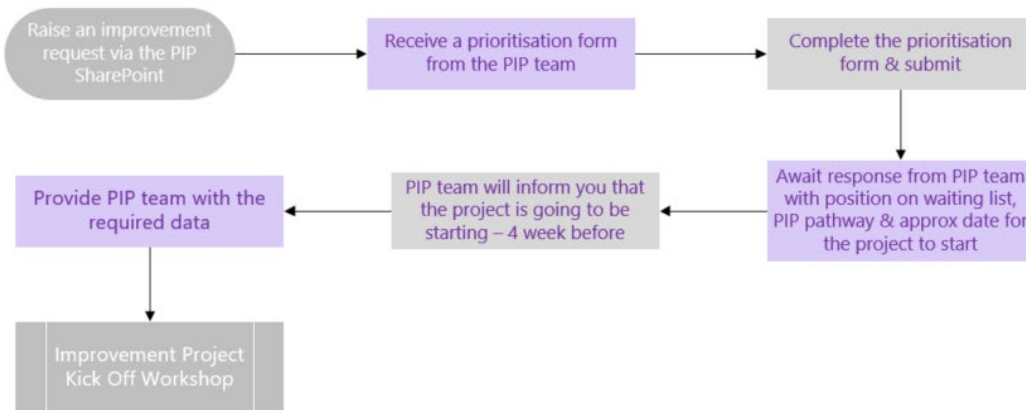

From April 2024 the PMO will be providing project management training/refresher courses that follows the PMBOK principles and is tailored to best fit Maldon District Council (current PMO Manager is qualified to provide bespoke/tailored project management training).

<u>The Improvement Management Service</u> – To ensure the Improvement Management Service follows best practices, it has been developed and embedded into the Council using the process improvement methodology Lean Six Sigma which is designed to improve performance by removing waste / defects and reducing variation.

The flowchart below shows how the Improvement management service is initiated:

Improvement Management (IM) Customer Process

```
Raise an improvement          Receive a prioritisation form        Complete the prioritisation
request via the PIP     →     from the PIP team              →     form & submit
SharePoint                                                                    │
                                                                              ▼
Provide PIP team with the  ←  PIP team will inform you that   ←   Await response from PIP team
required data                 the project is going to be          with position on waiting list,
    │                         starting – 4 week before            PIP pathway & approx date for
    ▼                                                             the project to start
Improvement Project
Kick Off Workshop
```

The Improvement Management team will determine which delivery pathway each raised process improvement should take, the Improvement Management Team aims to deliver the following packages which are dependent on the pathway selected for the improvement.

The decision tree shows how the pathway is decided:
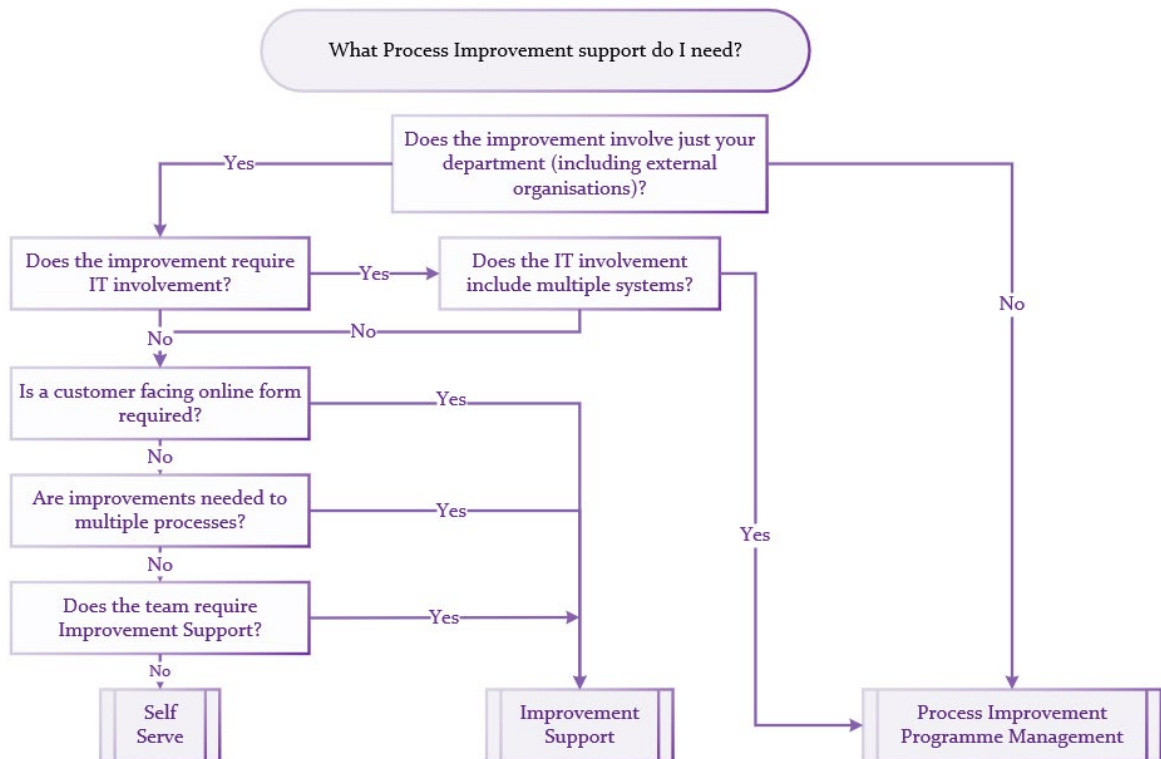
Please see Appendices 3.1 for the image which illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service fully managed' pathway:

Please see Appendices 3.2 for the image which illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service supported' pathway:

Please see Appendices 3.3 for the This image illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service Self-Serve' pathway:

Being a small team, we wanted to ensure that we are able to deliver as many improvements to processes as possible, for the public and for the process owners that services within the council can be sustainable with the resource that are available. With the Improvement team managing the improvements end to end, we are able to deliver 2 improvements per month on average.

To accelerate the volume of improvements being delivered we have trained 24 officers from different areas across the council to manage improvement projects, we have called these improvement leaders 'Green Belt Improvement Champions'. The training material was delivered over 12 weeks with delegates attending a 1 hour lesson each week and then they would apply the taught material to their own improvement project outside of lesson time.

The idea is that the 'Green Belt Improvement Champions' fully manage improvement projects in their areas with the support and guidance from the Improvement team. With this initiative we are hoping to see a significant rise in the volume of improvements being implemented across the organisation.

4. Governance, Assurance and Key Performance Indicators

The PMO was further developed in August 2023 which saw new robust Governance processes and structure, more assurance for key stakeholders and well-defined key performance indicators.

Governance

The flowcharts below show the governance processes implemented into the PMO:

Please see Appendices 4.1 for the image which illustrates the PMO governance for starting a project and whilst it is in progress.

Please see Appendices 4.2 The image illustrates the PMO governance for required project change requests.

Please see Appendices 4.3 The image illustrates the PMO governance for regular project updates.

Please see Appendices 4.4 The image illustrates the PMO governance for project closures.

For Improvement Management, any change requests for improvement projects are discussed with the improvement sponsor (Cheryl Hughes) at weekly team meetings. Any issues, concerns, or risks around the change to the project are talked through and then the changes are either agreed or declined – as shown in the process map below.

This image illustrates the Improvement management governance process for project change requests:
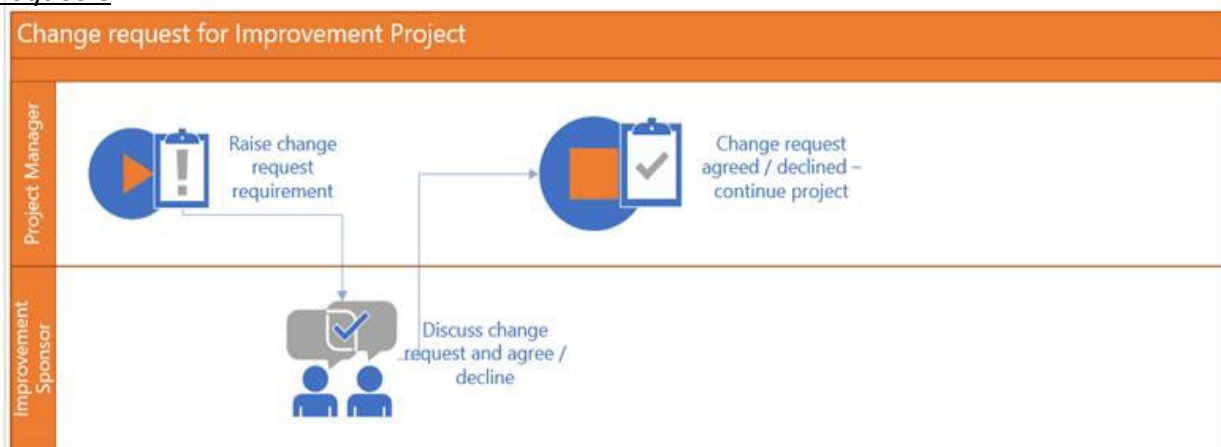
To ensure fairness, Improvement Management have embedded a project prioritisation process whereby an online form has been developed for staff to provide feedback on any processes which require improvements, an additional form asks several questions which feeds into a technical matrix. This has been put in place to review and score project suggestions, which helps prioritise the work programme and the waiting list for the improvement team. This is to ensure fair and consistent prioritisation to Improvement requirements throughout the authority.

Improvement Management carry out a feasibility analysis before each project starts to ensure the work required can be carried out efficiently and effectively.

This table shows the feasibility analysis criteria:

Category	Feasibility questions	Feasibility feedback	Feasible? Yes / No
Technical Feasibility	Does our current technology support the proposed solution?		yes
	Do we have the technical competence to build the system or do we have the support and resource from external suppliers where required?		
	Can we support and maintain the system when it is in use?		
Compliance Feasibility	Are there any legislative or statutory requirements involved in this process? (policy, regulations, standards, governance, requirements etc.)		
Organisational Feasibility	What impact will undergoing this project have on BAU and is this manageable?		
	Do we as an organisation have the staff availability to develop new processes for this change? e.g. resources		
Customer Feasibility	Will this improvement be suitable for our back -office staff? Have we had any feedback from them requesting a change?		
	Will this improvement be suitable for our external customers? Have we had any feedback from them requesting a change?		
Economic/Financial Feasibility	Are any purchases or spending required? E.g., any additional systems or upgrades		
	If yes, what is the budget, and can we afford to do so?		
	If yes, where will the budget come from?		
	Will the improvement save staff time, improve performance or reduce costs?		
Overcoming Barriers	What are our expected barriers and can we overcome these?		

The answers to the questions in the above table, will confirm if the improvement project is feasible, if it isn't then we will assess the reason for this and either put it on hold until a time where it is feasible or close the project.

Before any improvements to a process goes live, it will go through thorough testing by the team who own the process and it will not go live until it has been signed off.

This Image shows the information required for a process improvement to be signed off:

> **Go live sign off for add name of process**
>
> Process sign off for add name of process.
>
> By electronically signing this (sending the email back with your email signature) you are confirming that you have carried out testing and you are happy that the form is fully working and is ready to go live.
>
> Please indicate the case retention time for the Firmstep form ....
> Days/weeks/months/years (if applicable)
>
> Signed:

To ensure governance with improvement projects being managed by our 'green belt champions', the Improvement Management Team offer support and provide guidance to our green belt champions via a monthly workshop which will take place to discuss any projects currently being worked on. We will answer any queries, check in on how the projects are progressing and provide any suggestions and support as necessary. This platform also allows the group to discuss any lessons learnt from the projects they have been working on and share knowledge between the team.

Alongside this, a Microsoft form has been created for all green belt champions to complete when they reach the end of a phase within the DMAIC lifecycle. This signifies the completion of a project milestone and asks questions around the templates used, if any improvements could be made to these, ensures that all the correct documentation has been completed or considered and provides suggestions for communication to be sent where necessary.

Assurance

Project assurance is a fundamental part of effective project governance and project audits are the means to providing that assurance to enable Sponsors and other stakeholders to have confidence that the PMO governance is working and that projects are being managed as intended.

From April 2024 BDO will be carrying out Audits of:
- The PMO to review our corporate approach and give feedback on areas for improvement.
- A random selection of corporate projects to review individual project governance, documentation, resource balance, objectives and expectations can be realistically delivered based on the project's constraints.

From April 2024 PMO will carry out Project health checks to:

- Identify project support needs.
- Check project viability.
- Ensure governance processes are in place.
- Check PMO governance processes are being followed.
- Give assistance where needed to give assurance on all the above

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

How we monitor and evidence KPI's for both the Project management Office and Improvement Management is broken down into two categories, strategic and service reporting:

Strategic reporting:

- PMO and Improvement- the KPI's are fed into the balance score card which is reported to PGA committee through the exceptions report.

Service reporting:

- P3 (Project, Programmes and Portfolio's) Headline and insights report - for strategic decision making.
- P3 (Project, Programmes and Portfolio's) summary and highlight report – for project decision making.
- PMO governance – compliance / worth / trends / traffic or demand / benefits realisations – future identification and will be built during 2024 - 2025
- PMO and IM Success reporting – measured success / benefits realisation

Strategic failures will be flagged and escalated to CLT Governance Board if identified through the PMO or the Assistant Director of Programmes, Performance and Governance if identified through Improvements. These may also then be reported in the Balance Score Card Exceptions or the Corporate Risk Register, depending on severity.

5. Realigning to the new Corporate Plan and Technology strategy

The work we do underpins delivery of key corporate strategies including:
Corporate Plan 23-27 defines a 'smarter finances' goal, where we will be both digitally efficient, and sustainable in our expenditure, which are underpinned by process improvement activity. Our Project Management office function will also contribute to this goal by ensuring sustainable expenditure and project delivery.

There is also a 'provide good quality services' corporate goal. This includes an aim to achieve 'improved processes that improve efficiency' and Ensure Value for Money. The activity as set out in this strategy also directly contributes to delivery of this goal. our member champions help to feedback the voice of the customer to ensure services are designed with customer journey in mind.

Technical strategy – this is a key document for the authority and sets out our vision for how we will utilise systems and build new customer processes. A revision to this strategy is currently in development for 24/25. The roadmap of this work will help define the delivery plan of PMO and Improvement work.

Additionally, the work the team does supports delivery of the Data Management and Insight Strategy adopted by Strategy and Resources committee in January 2023 Appendix B.pdf (maldon.gov.uk) We will continue to work closely to support delivery of the action plan from this strategy that supports improvements in data maturity at Maldon, and is an activity being tracked and encouraged by OFLOG (office for Local Government) Activity also includes supporting the GIS (Geospatial Information System) development programme and linking opportunities for process improvement based on mapping developments.

6.   Changes in the team structure and incorporating PMO

In 23/24, a structure change was made within the team. The Project Management Office function has now combined to create a central Corporate PMO and Improvements function. This also created an organisational efficiency of 1 FTE, supporting delivery of balanced budgets for the Council.

The table shows the two core roles within the team:

Project Management Office	Process Improvement (general)	Process Improvement (technical improvements)
Overview and reporting of organisational projects	Management and delivery of Corporate continual improvement programme	Delivering and supporting technical process improvement
Challenge and scrutiny of project delivery. Escalating risks through reporting	Presenting ideas for improvement and challenge in areas of 'inefficiency'	Supporting PMO reporting and project management of IT projects
Support and training of project managers	Support and training of improvement champions	Technical capacity building / staff communications- supporting transition of IT projects to BAU
Measurement and reporting project benefits and outcomes	Measurement and reporting organisational efficiency	Testing of organisational systems
Keeping up with best practice and ensuring the organisation is aware	Keeping up with best practice and ensuring the organisation is aware	

We currently have ad hoc resource within the team, attached to project resource delivery (e.g., HMLR project) This means wider project work can be progressed by the team until summer 2024 when this resource is fixed until.
At the permanent level, there are 2 FTE posts attached to the work outlined in this strategy. This means our approach is to build capacity and support across the Council and enabling all staff to support Improvements and Project work as highlighted.

7.   Service offer

The table below outlines the service provided by the Improvements team including examples of the activities currently being delivered.

Activity	Example
Supporting services in delivering strategy via projects and improvements	• Providing support on ICT projects • Creation of Licensing forms due to removal of forms on .gov website
Training and building capacity for teams to carry out their own projects and improvements	• Carrying out 'green belt' training sessions and providing support where necessary • Project Management mentoring • Knowledge transfer
Ensuring compliance	• PMO monitoring. • Monitoring and improvements to processes such as FOI and complaints
Corporate reporting and governance assurance through the PMO and Improvement program	• P3 App (internal project management tool) • Reporting tools and templates available on SharePoint
Supporting organisational benefits realisation	• Templates produced with financial information relating to wages. • Corporate challenge and support
Delivering projects and Improvements	• Licensing forms • Revs and Bens forms • Grant forms • Creation of Integrations into back-office systems • Set up of new Civica documents to allow for auto indexing
Managing projects and improvement	• Website improvements • Task Smart • HMLR
Keeping abreast of and ensuring best practise for projects and improvements	• Website accessibility and guidelines • PMO
Provide advice and training on software solutions available to improvement processes	• Training on the Freedom of Information process via Firmstep
Support, advise and provide recommendations for project management and improvements	• Quick win workshops • Support provided to Green Belt Champions • Analysis of current software use
Produce and share tools and templates	• Creation of self-serve section on the PIP SharePoint • PMO SharePoint

8. Workplan

We have a list of projects that have been raised by either colleagues or the public. The list is subject to change as new more important projects can be added and these projects will take priority, however the work list that is intended to be carried out during 2024 2027 is as follows:

Work list that will be fully managed by the Improvement management Team:

Score	Process Impacted	AD area	Service Area	Problem statement - 'what is the issue?'	What we require	Form Required?	Pathway
67	Contact us form and process	Sue	CSA / ALL STAFF	Low star rating	Look at process and see if we can improve this - remove need for sign up? Look at adding PDF button to help with transfer to Civica	Yes	PIP
65	Database	Hannah	Cemeteries	Similar issues to the garden waste database	New database	No	PIP
49	Fly tipping etc.	Sue	Community Engagement	Process needs to go through firmstep and the address issue needs looking into	Use the firmstep system to push information into Uniform and prevent duplication with address problems	Yes	PIP
44	Food hygeine inspections and audit record	Hannah	Environmental Health	Process very paper based and currently unable to go out on site due to COVID	Make this a more automated process with less paperwork by using an online form and integrating into Uniform	Not sure	PIP
44	Environmental Health Consultations	Hannah	Planning/ Enviromental Health	To enable consultation requests from Planning to Environmental Health to be added to Uniform automatically - : Before Dash went live consultations from Planning to Environmental Health used to be added to Uniform and a jobsheet printed via the 'Robotic User'. This was turned off when Dash went live but a new process was not put in place for these, so now each planning consultation that is received has to be manually created in Uniform, which can take up a lot of caseworker time.	If a process can be put in place whereby when Planning choose to consult EH it is automated in some way to create a new Uniform record, print a job sheet and/or send an email to the EH email account. The Process Improvement Team are currently working on automating consultations from Licensing to EH as part of the TEN form improvement process, so once that is in place I'm hopeful that it would be relatively easy to copy the process into another type of consultation.	Not sure	PIP
27	All building control applications	Matt	Building Control	The application colours don't change at the correct time scales in line with when we need to take certain actions. Also we can't delete Regularision or Revision applications. Also we can't change 1 type of application to another when people submit the wrong form. I also notice there are at random times multiply entries for the same application number appear in the list.	Changes to allow the processes to run smoothly	Yes	PIP
26	council tax -change of tenant's pathway and form	Sue	PIP	1 star rating given - acting on customer feedback to review report. Customer has to complete the form numerous times if they have numerous properties rather than capturing all the information in one go.	star rating- investigate process- is feedback reflective, Amend form to be able to take more than one property detail at a time.	Yes	PIP

Work list that will be supported by the Improvement management Team:

Score	Process Impacted	AD area	Service Area	Problem statement - 'what is the issue?'	What we require	Form Required?	Pathway
45	Breach of planning condition	Matt	Enforcement	Manually inputting details into Uniform from form	Integrations from Firmstep form to Uniform	Yes	QW
45	noise complaint	Hannah	CSA and Environmental Health	a housing association, it will not allow you to proceed unless you upload a copy of complaint sent to the housing association, this is usually a phone call and so they have nothing to upload, also if a resident is vulnerable we would complete this for them but again cannot get past this point	customers cant use the form and we cant help them	No	QQW
41	Council Tax Discount form	Sue	Revenues and Benefits	Highlighted at website project group that the 'Contact Us' was the link to applying for all the Council Tax discounts. This prolongs the process as customers have to be contacted to be sent a form and gather the info off the back of their initial contact. Also unable to upload evidence on 'Contact Us' form.	One form listing the discounts that can be applied for, when selected opens up questions to apply for that particular discount. Function to upload evidence on application form. Captures all/majority of info in initial contact.	Yes	QW
41	Application for the review of a premises license	Hannah	Environmental health / licensing	To allow customers to request a review of a premises license .Manual form to be downloaded as PDF from website and then emailed / sent in by post, old ways of working.	New e-form to allow customers to complete all the information required to request a review	Yes	QW
40	Upload evidence and Update us	Sue	All	Confusing for customers and users as they are so similar	Both forms need to be merged, bearing in mind that the update us form link is used in Uniform templates.	Yes	QW
39	Report a nuisance	Hannah	Enviromental Health	Not all information is collected as required and lot of manual work to get information into back office systems	New online form collecting correct information with integrations into Uniform and Civica	Yes	QW
37	Temporary road closure for special events	Sue	Events	Transfer to new forms (change may be required to wording - contact Shaun)	Transfer to new forms	Yes	QW
32	customer to contact us to raise noise nuisance report	Hannah	Environmental Health	Specialists are not using Dash and therefore Caseworkers are having to email the correct officer to let them know they have an application and having to close the case in Dash on their behalf.	Removal of Dash process for specialists and addition of selecting officer in caseworker stage so email is automatically send to Specialist.	Yes	QW
25	Disabled reducation application form	Sue	Revs & Bens	Currently a downloadable PDF form on the website	Make this an online form	Yes	QW
3	Committee Services	Cheryl	Appointments Board	The process needs mapping and a clear deliniation of work	a new process		QW

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Work list that will be managed by the Green belt improvement champions and will falls into the self-serve pathway:

Score	Process Impacted	AD area	Service Area	Problem statement - 'what is the issue?'	What we require	Form Required?	Pathway
48	Subject access requests	Annette	Legal	There doesn't seem to be a central recording or processing of subject access requests (SAR'S). These are request by individuals to see the personal information we hold about them. This is often a file eg housing file or could potentially be all the records we hold.	We have a central and standarised way or recording and storing these requests.	Not sure	GBC ?
41	Export certificates	Hannah	Environmental Health	Inconsistent with how the info comes in, Received via email, Expecting high volumes in January	Scope new form	Yes	GBC
41	Paperless reminders and ebilling	Hannah	Waste	Council wide issues with sending paper billing, reminders and general info	implement a process for information to be pulled from a system filtered and reminder, bills and general info and updates to be sent via email	Not sure	GBC
41	To use uniform and civica	Annette	Street naming and numbering	we use uniform as a very basic recording system for applications (added in manually) we dont use civica - documents are being saved in the drive	To use uniform in the correct way - set up template letters for consultees, confirmation letters etc - not sure what else we can do on uniform be able to plot on the map section To index documents on to civica, this includes all the old files in the office which need back scanning	No	GBC
39	Maldon school permit process	Sue	Community Engagement	Link is sent to parents – issue with duplicated permits being distributed	New form and process	Not sure	GBC
39	Report writing including conditions inputted into uniform	Matt	Development management	Every report is written manually, starting mostly from scratch on a new word document, writing all the conditions separately (can be 10-20 conditions on a full application). Hearing how other councils work using uniform to write reports/conditions shows there are significant time savings to be made doing it this way. It might be that the report is uploaded automatically to civica once written, although I'm not 100% familiar with how it works. Colchester council is an example if you need to speak to anyone about it. Some existing planning officers might have worked at places where this exists, so they might be able to help too.	The standard text and conditions need to be input into uniform, and maybe a linked process created with civica, but I don't know the details. A Uniform specialist would probably have to be hired temporarily to complete this process.	No	GBC
39	Incoming and outgoing e-mails	Sue	Revs & Bens	When contacting customers for further information or other enquiries we often use e-mails. When the customers reply to the e-mails these go into the Revenues inbox and then have to be manually indexed onto their file in Civica. Due to the daily volume of incoming and outgoing e-mails across Revs and Bens it is a daily task to monitor the Revenues inbox and manually index the e-mails. Often there can be a delay with the e-mail appearing on the file dependant on when this task takes place during the day or week. If a customer telephones before it gets indexed Customer Services or the officer who answers the call may not have all the up to date information on the file and has to go looking for it.	I believe with Civica Workflow there may be the function to have the incoming e-mails automatically indexed onto an existing file if the account reference or claim number is contained in the subject line. When staff send out an e-mail they can input the ref number in the subject line and when the customer replies to that e-mail it will automatically index onto that file. We can also inform customers if we know they are sending in an e-mail to input that information into the subject line.	No	GBC
33	Move green waste to 100% online	Hannah	Waste	Some process that could be moved to online are still being done manually over the phone	Channel shift all Green waste processes to online	Yes	GBC
28	Report issues with a car parking machine or request refund	Sue	Community Engagement	new form needed	scope and build new form with integrations	Yes	GBC

9. Service risks

The following risks have been identified that may impact delivery of the programme as defined in the document.

Scores have been given in line with the Corporate Risk Framework, and mitigating actions identified. We will monitor and review these risks throughout delivery to see how effective the mitigating actions have been and if further mitigating work is required.

Risk	Score	Mitigating Actions
Not realising benefits to deliver Corporate Plan objective of smarter finances	L- 3 I-4 =12	Close working with finance colleagues, development of consistent ways to monitor benefit delivery
Resource not committed to projects	L-2 I-4 =8	Monthly CLT board to review projects. Reporting of project impacts for CLT/ AD review
Not having clear project objectives	L-3 I-4 =12	PMO robust challenge on projects , including pre-project appraisal meetings and recommendations to CLT board
'Critical Friend' approach is not fully developed	L-3 I- 2 =6	Training/ relationship building to establish trust in this role. Feedback from 2024 internal audit may also help us to develop this further
Not having skilled staff resource	L-2 I-5 =10	PMs designated but need training, templates. Challenge on organisational capacity for projects and if too many are in progress (using AD capacity feedback)
Awareness and empowerment of staff to make improvements.	L-3 I-4 =12	Green belt training Quarterly check in with green belts. Regular comms to staff eg oneteam articles, and onboarding information for new staff members
Business continuity/ organisational knowledge transfer of PMO and improvement support	L-3 I-4 =12	Documentation and wider PPG team training for processes. SharePoint development to also create central resource around processes.
Resource in team to deliver improvements / support projects is limited – model relies on wider staff commitment	L-4 I- 2 =8	Review possible options to look at resource extensions. Manage expectations/ clarity of roles as part of strategy launch

Maldon District Council

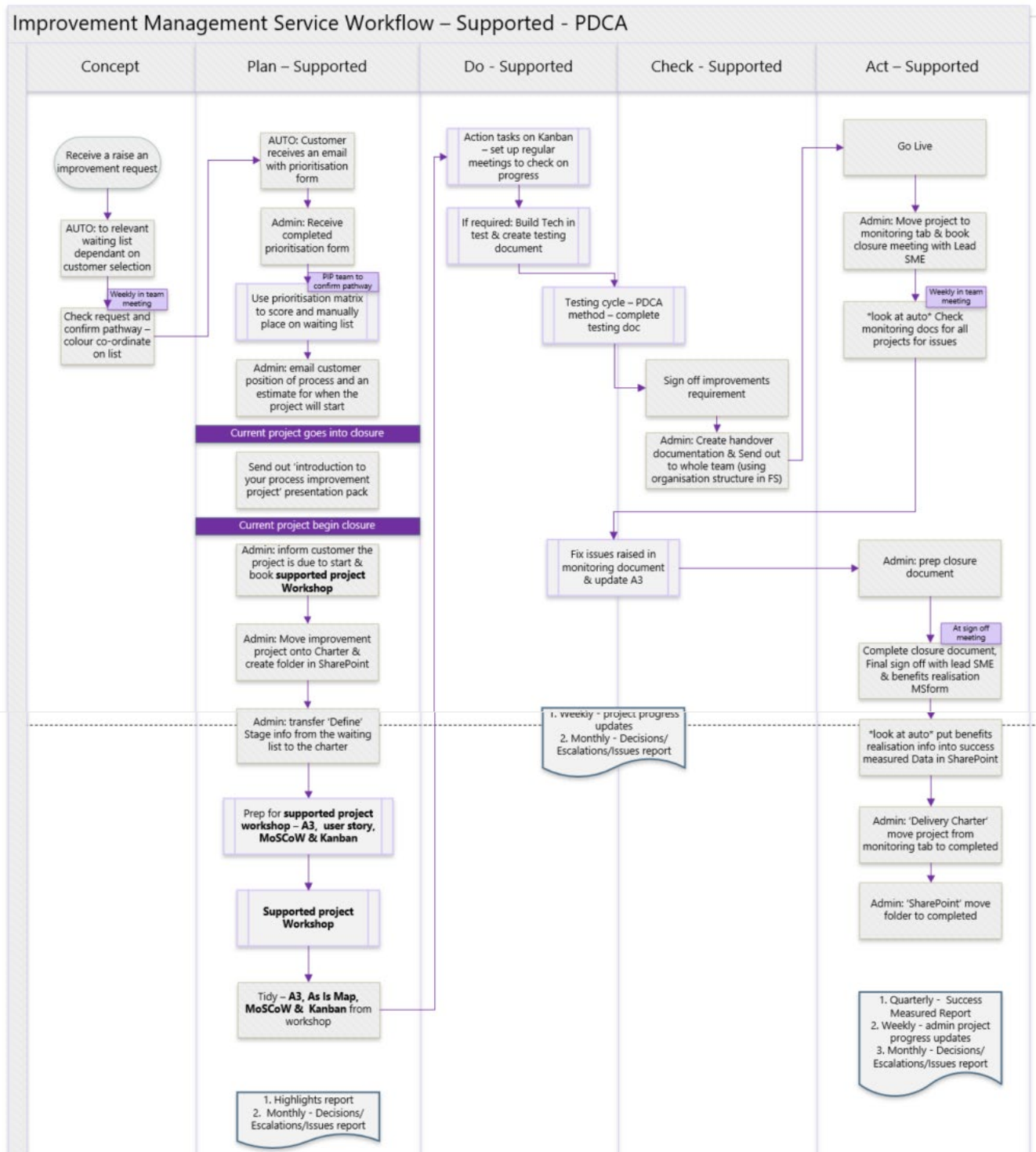| Risk Level	Likelihood score				
	1= Unlikely	2= Less likely	3= Likely	4= Very likely	5= Definite
Major : Level 5	5	10	15	20	25
Significant : Level 4	4	8	12	16	20
Moderate: Level 3	3	6	9	12	15
Minor: Level 2	2	4	6	8	10
Negligible: Level 1	1	2	3	4	5

Maldon District Council

10.Appendices

3.1: *Image illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service fully managed' pathway:*

IMS fully Managed Workflow - DMAIC

Concept	Define	Measure	Analyse	Implement/Improve	Control

Concept
- Receive a raise an improvement request
- AUTO: to relevant waiting list dependant on customer selection
- Check request and confirm pathway – colour co-ordinate on list (Weekly in team meeting)

Define
- AUTO: Customer receives an email with prioritisation form
- Admin: Receive completed prioritisation form (PIP team to confirm pathway)
- Use prioritisation matrix to score and manually place on waiting list
- Admin: email customer position of process and an estimate for when the project will start
- Current project goes into control
- Next improvement from prioritisation list that is mustard (yellow)
- Send out 'introduction to your process improvement project' presentation pack
- Current project begin closure
- Admin: inform customer the project is due to start, ask for data & book **Define - Kick Off Workshop**
- Admin: Move improvement project onto Charter & create folder in SharePoint
- Admin: transfer 'Define' Stage info from the waiting list to the charter
- Admin: chase outstanding data
- Prep for Define - kick off workshop – **Presentation, A3, data collected & analyse, Kanban & feasibility**
- **Kick Off Workshop**
- Finish/tidy all documentation from workshop
- 1. Highlights report 2. Monthly - Decisions/Escalations/Issues report

Measure
- Admin: book & prepare Measure workshop/s
- Measure stage Workshop/s
- Admin: update Kanban with the actions from the workshop
- 1. Highlights report 2. Monthly - Decisions/Escalations/Issues report

Analyse
- Admin: book Analyse stage workshop/s
- Analyse Workshop/s
- Admin: update Kanban with the actions from the workshop
- Admin: complete MoSCoW table & send out to IT developer with user stories
- 1. Highlights report 2. Monthly - Decisions/Escalations/Issues report

Implement/Improve
- Action tasks on Kanban – set up regular meetings to check on progress
- If required: Build Tech in test & create testing document -using agile
- Testing cycle – using agile – testers to complete the testing document
- Sign off improvements requirement
- Go Live

Control
- Start next project
- Admin: Create handover documentation & Send out to whole team (using organisation structure in FS)
- Admin: Move project to monitoring tab & book closure meeting with Lead SME
- *look at auto* Check monitoring document for issues (Weekly in team meeting)
- Fix issues raised in monitoring document
- Admin: prep closure document
- Complete closure document, Final sign off with lead SME & benefits realisation MSform (At sign off meeting)
- *look at auto* put benefits realisation info into success measured Data in SharePoint
- Admin: 'Delivery Charter' move project from monitoring tab to completed
- Admin: 'SharePoint' move folder to completed
- 1. Quarterly – Success Measured Report 2. Weekly - admin project progress updates 3. Monthly - Decisions/Escalations/Issues report
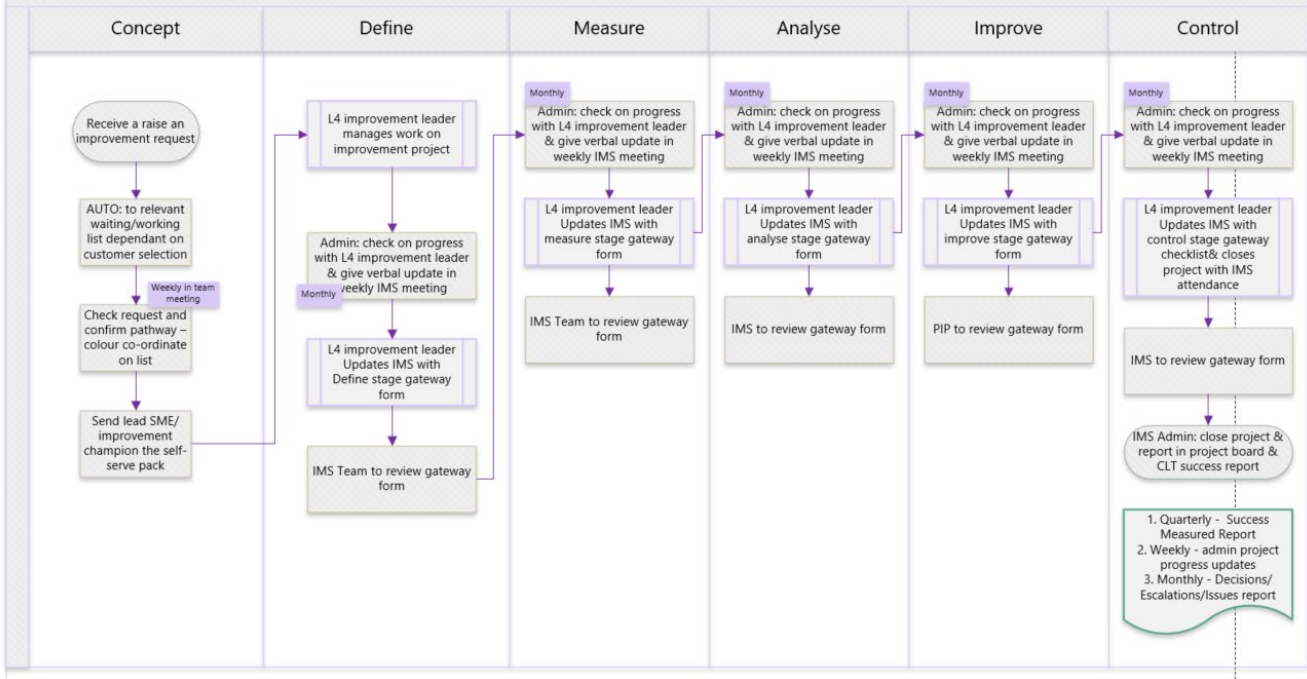
3.2 This image illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service supported' pathway:

<u>**3.3**</u> *This image illustrates the delivery process through the 'Improvement Management Service Self-Serve' pathway:*
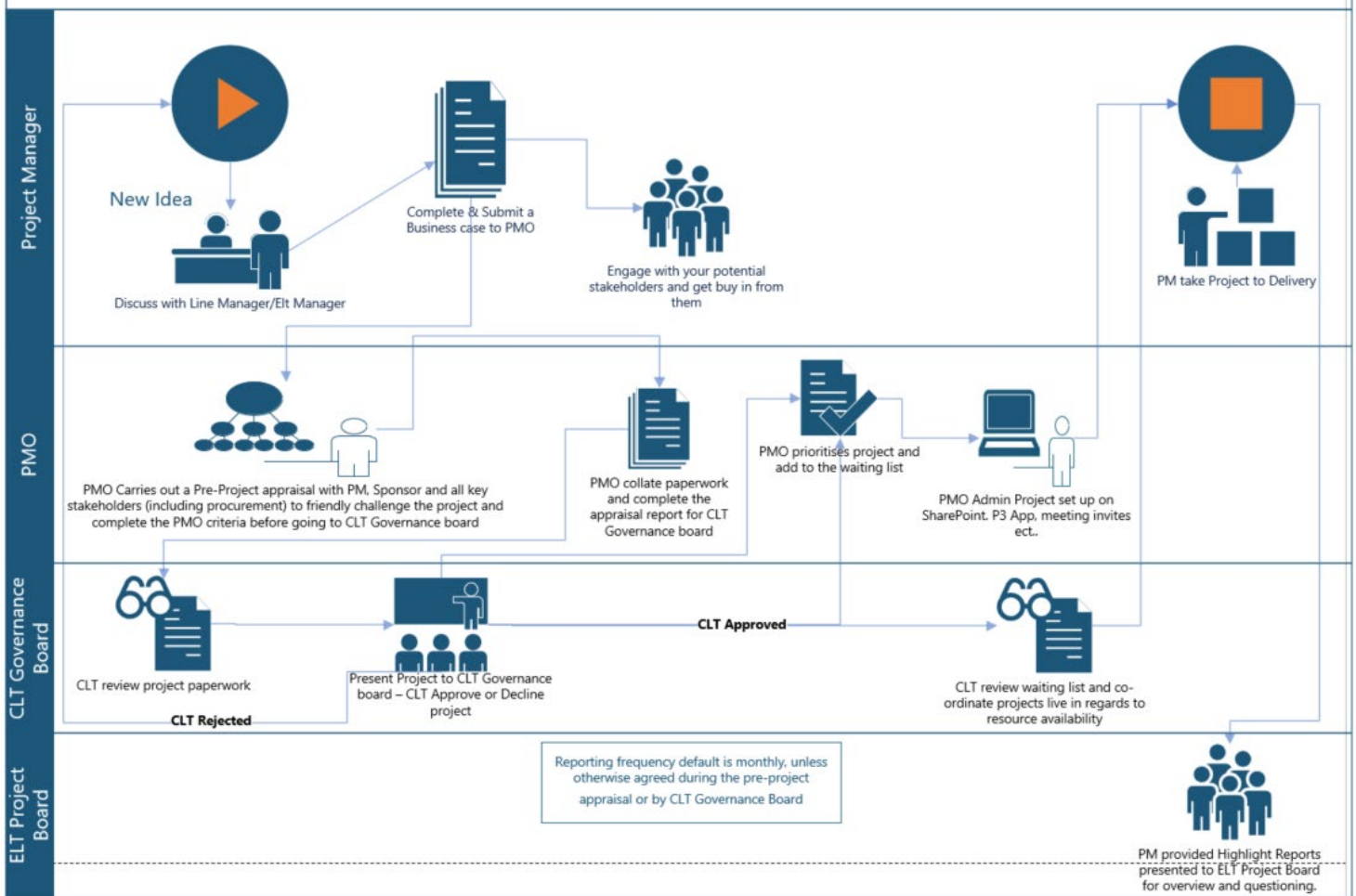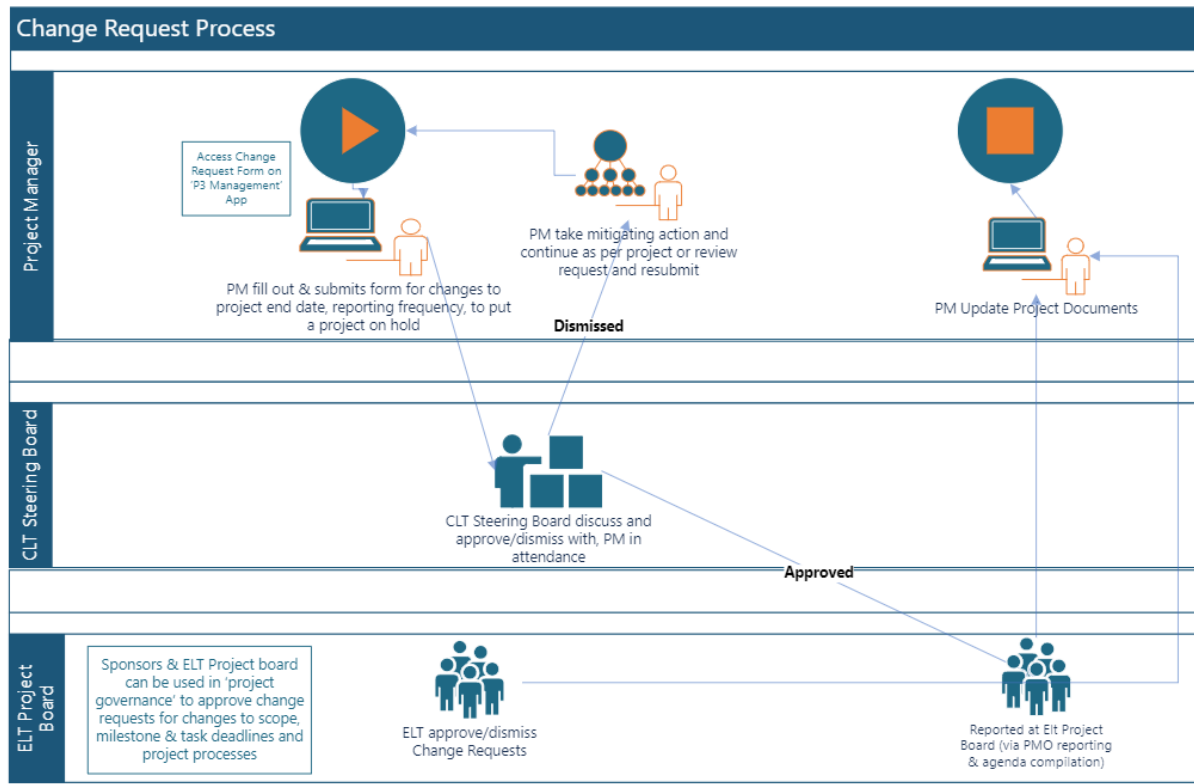
Maldon District Council

<u>4.1</u> *Image illustrates the governance for starting a project and whilst it is in progress:*

Project Governance Process – Starting & In progress

Project Manager

New Idea

Discuss with Line Manager/Elt Manager

Complete & Submit a Business case to PMO

Engage with your potential stakeholders and get buy in from them

PM take Project to Delivery

PMO

PMO Carries out a Pre-Project appraisal with PM, Sponsor and all key stakeholders (including procurement) to friendly challenge the project and complete the PMO criteria before going to CLT Governance board

PMO collate paperwork and complete the appraisal report for CLT Governance board

PMO prioritises project and add to the waiting list

PMO Admin Project set up on SharePoint. P3 App, meeting invites ect..

CLT Governance Board

CLT review project paperwork

CLT Rejected

Present Project to CLT Governance board – CLT Approve or Decline project

CLT Approved

CLT review waiting list and co-ordinate projects live in regards to resource availability

ELT Project Board

Reporting frequency default is monthly, unless otherwise agreed during the pre-project appraisal or by CLT Governance Board
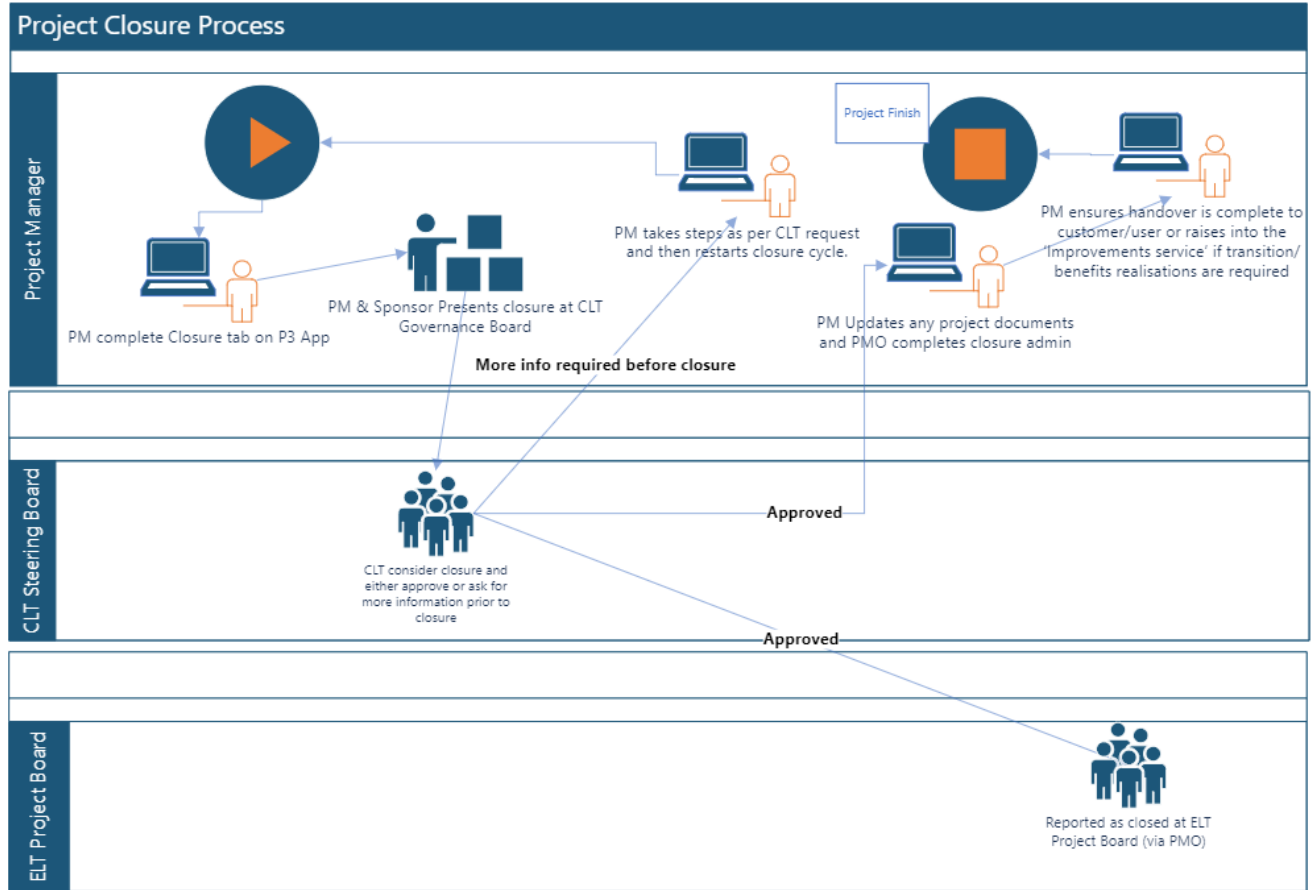
PM provided Highlight Reports presented to ELT Project Board for overview and questioning.

4.2 *This image illustrates the governance for required project changes:*

4.3 *This image illustrates the governance for regular project updates:*

4.4 *This image illustrates the governance for project closures:*

Project Closure Process

Project Manager

Project Finish

PM complete Closure tab on P3 App

PM & Sponsor Presents closure at CLT Governance Board

More info required before closure

PM takes steps as per CLT request and then restarts closure cycle.

PM Updates any project documents and PMO completes closure admin

PM ensures handover is complete to customer/user or raises into the 'Improvements service' if transition/ benefits realisations are required

CLT Steering Board

CLT consider closure and either approve or ask for more information prior to closure

Approved

Approved

ELT Project Board

Reported as closed at ELT Project Board (via PMO)

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Productivity plan criteria	Activity or evidence	How this is monitored	Reporting details (if applicable)
How we have transformed the way we design and deliver services to make better use of resources	In 2021 we adopted an improvement framework to formalise our journey https://democracy.maldon.gov.uk/documents/s25577/Appendix%20A.pdf Process Improvement will be further updated in June S&R with the PMO and improvements strategy due	Quarterly success measured, programme delivery through Project Management Office (PMO)	Appointed member champions group and internal Onteam updates
How we plan to take advantage of technology and better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources	Technology strategy- scheduled for S&R June, Council July Data and insight strategy https://democracy.maldon.gov.uk/documents/s29877/Data%20Management%20and%20Insight%20Strategy.pdf (adopted Jan 2023)	delivery of roadmap through Project Management Office reporting Action Plan tracked by PPG team	Monthly project updates and exceptions (CLT)
Our plans to reduce wasteful spend in organisation and systems	PMO and improvements strategy presented to June Strategy and Resources Committee LGA Finance peer review and action table https://democracy.maldon.gov.uk/documents/s31240/Appendix%202.pdf MTFS and savings strategy to identify efficiency savings to build into future budgets Regular budget monitoring to ensure savings already agreed are delivered and to track any emerging pressures Committee approved Procurement Strategy , Spend Analysis and Procurement Activity Plans along with Contract Savings tracker providing improving VFM and realising budget savings	Quarterly success measured, programme delivery through Project Management Office (PMO) Action plan delivery updates CLT+ Savings Strategy group, reporting to the Finance Member Group Monthly monitoring to CLT+ and quarterly reports to S&R Monthly tracking of Activity Plans. Corporate Contract Register. Corporate reporting of monthly KPI's via Balanaced Scorecard (BSC)	Appointed member champions group and internal Onteam updates Finance Member Group, S&R and Council Quarterly reporting to S&R Monthly Corporate BSC. Monthly Director, AD & CFO sign off Activity Plans
Any barriers to progress that Government can help reduce or remove	SWOT analysis in Data and insight strategy https://democracy.maldon.gov.uk/documents/s29877/Data%20Management%20and%20Insight%20Strategy.pdf (adopted Jan 2023) - collaberative working through Essex Policy and Performance Network to discuss and raise barriers Longer term funding reviews providing additional central protection for Local Gov from cyber attacks and financial fraud Allowing greater and less complex route to devolution understanding local priority challenges and target assiatnce to this (ie £5m culture levelling up issues) Reducing financial reporting burden to be proportionate to users needs, especially for smaller councils	Action Plan tracked by PPG team	Essex Data Partnership - officers share feedback/ experience

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REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2024

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 2024 - 2027

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To recommend the Technology Strategy 2024 – 2027 (**APPENDIX 1**) for approval by the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To the Council:

That the Technology Strategy 2024 – 2027 (**APPENDIX 1**) be approved to replace the ICT Strategy 2021 – 2026 and run alongside the Corporate Plan 2024 - 2027.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 With the release of the new Corporate Plan 2024 – 2027, Maldon District Council's priorities were amended, and the Technology Strategy needs to shift to align to these.

3.2 Additionally, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) wrote to the Council on 16 April 2024 to advise on expectations for 'Productivity in Local Government' and there is a requirement that Councils produce Productivity Plans as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. The plans should include:

- How the Council has transformed the way it designs and delivers services to make better use of resources.

- How the Council plans to take advantage of technology and better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

- the Council's plans to reduce wasteful spend in organisation and systems and any barriers to progress that Government can help reduce or remove.

3.3 The Technology Strategy is a key component of the Council's Productivity Plan as it defines how the Council will use technology and transform the way it work digitally.

3.4 The Strategy and accompanying roadmap are built on learning from the past three years around the Council's system capabilities, organisational strengths and weaknesses and development time for new processes.

3.5   It will comprise of four priorities:

3.5.1   **Cyber / Security – Managing risk, Security and Compliancy** - This will ensure the security and stability of all systems as the highest priority.

3.5.2   **A Modern IT Infrastructure that enables digital transformation** - A structured and step change process to automating services based on available resources, with achievable timelines and agreed outcomes.

3.5.3   **Streamlining process to create an agile and flexible digital service model** - Working towards providing efficiencies, improved quality, and savings where achievable.

3.5.4   **System and Data – Developing information for business and customer insight** - To move towards an improved knowledge and use of data base to inform service delivery.

3.6   The draft strategy is provided at **APPENDIX 1**.

4.   CONCLUSION

4.1   The Technology Strategy 2024 – 2027 is presented to this Committee to recommend to the Council for approval.

5.   IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1   **Supporting our communities**

5.1.1   To support our community by providing the technological infrastructure to improve front line services.

5.2   **Enhancing and connecting our place**

5.2.1   The Technology will work to link data and organisations.

5.3   **Helping the economy to thrive**

5.3.1   To provide an improved IT infrastructure for delivering improved services to assist the local economy.

5.4   **Smarter finances**

5.4.1   To achieve efficiencies and savings using technology.

5.5   **A greener future**

5.5.1   To provide greater automation and reduce carbon footprint where possible.

5.6   **Provide good quality services.**

5.6.1   The Strategy will ensure the managed and controlled development of technology over the next four years.

6. IMPLICATIONS

(i) **Impact on Customers** – Better, more connected services.

(ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Expanding Council Services to the community.

(iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Lowering risk throughout the authority.

(iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Smarter use of Resource to achieve more for less.

(v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Smarter use of Resource to improve workflow.

Background Papers:
None.

Enquiries to:
Grant Hulley, Lead Specialist ICT and
Annette Cardy, Assistant Director - Resources

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Technology Strategy

2024 – 27

Document Version: 1.0

Written By: Lead ICT Specialist Grant C Hulley

Reviewed By: Assistant Director of Resources Annette Cardy

Version 1.0

Maldon District Council

APPENDIX 1

Table of Contents

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APPENDIX 1

Key Information

Authors:	Lead ICT Specialist – Grant Hulley
	Assistant Director of Resources – Annette Cardy
	Assistant Director of Programmes, Performance and Governance – Cheryl Hughes
Accountable Assistant Director:	Assistant Director of Resources – Annette Cardy
Review Date	Every Four Years
IT SharePoint Site Link:	TBC

Key Information - Governance

The Strategy applies to:	Maldon Council officers
Committee the last ICT Strategy was approved at:	Council
Date of when the Strategy was approved:	30 June 2021
Last improvement Strategy for reference:	ICT Strategy
This Strategy is due its next review:	31/03/2028

Version 1.0

Maldon District Council

Technology Strategy 2024 - 2027

Executive Summary

This technology strategy sets out Maldon District Councils technology vision of the future and how technology can support the delivery of its corporate priorities set within the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027 for the years 2024 to 2027.

As the technology strategy priorities are based on the Corporate Plan the following priorities are key to this strategy:

- ➢ **Supporting our communities**
    - o Services delivered intelligently.

- ➢ **Enhancing and connecting our place**
    - o More connected services

- ➢ **Helping the economy to thrive**
    - o Reduced resource and services costs

- ➢ **Smarter finances**
    - o Reduction in Technology costs.

- ➢ **A greener future**
    - o Reduction in our technology CO2 and electrical usage.

- ➢ **Provide good quality services.**
    - o Continued improvements to core systems and services.

Local government is facing challenging economic pressures alongside an increase in customer expectations. The way we use our technology is more vital than ever to support the enhancement of services to the residents of Maldon.

The Department for levelling up, housing and communities require local government to identify productivity plans to include 'How we plan to take advantage of technology and better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources. The Technology strategy is a key contributor to this.

This strategy identifies four key priorities which provide the foundation for the council's technology framework and support the delivery of the authority Corporate Plan. These four priorities are listed below.

1. Managing Risk, Security and Compliance
2. Infrastructure for Digital Transformation
3. Streamlined Digital Processes
4. Data Insight

The aim of these is to foremost ensure stability and then provide for controlled development through the continued delivery of high quality, secure, agile, and cost-effective systems which enable flexible and efficient ways of working.

Focus will be on the **reduction of its technology footprint** to support **the green initiative** and **smarter finance's** whilst **streamlining services** and harnessing data to **support the communities, connecting our place,** and **improving the quality of service**.

Introduction

The significant challenges that face the Council have prompted an organisational change in agenda which determines how services will be delivered and accessed by residents in the future. Key challenges include, hybrid working, budgetary constraints, increased customer demand and efficient resource requirements; and plans need to consider how Maldon District Council can make more efficient use of resources, work in closer collaboration with different agencies to optimize outcomes, whilst managing increasing pressures for flexibility.

Digital solutions provide an opportunity to develop new products and services, to create, collaborate and build successful service delivery models at a scale and a speed that was previously unimaginable. Digital technology gives opportunities to reduce the costs and increase the quality of public services, change the way in which we learn, work, live and access information from the world around us.

As technology advances and new consumer service models evolve, our customers' expectations for accessibility change. There is a drive both internally and externally to ensure that our services are increasingly more accessible, anytime, anywhere, anyplace.

This technology strategy aims to provides direction and outline of strategic ICT priorities that will shape Maldon District Councils future environment. It provides a platform that can harness innovation for the delivery of new service models, whilst providing a stable and resilient infrastructure which facilitates the most efficient use of resources.

Implementing this strategy will enable Maldon District Council to build on its investments in hybrid working to date and drive its digital delivery models. We have limited resource in the ICT team and the defined priorities in this Strategy will define the development of the ICT roadmap and resource allocation maximising the resources available to gain the most benefit through automation and the migration to cloud based infrastructure.

This strategy will be a 'living' document updated to respond to the changing and evolving business needs as and when change occurs. ICT's focus will be the removal of legacy systems in favour of a smarter more streamlined system enabling the council to better streamline its services to the public, as shown in the technology roadmap.

Maldon District Council

APPENDIX 1

Future long term technology vision

To align to the Corporate Plan the future technology vision must extend on the council's vision:

'To be a sustainable council, promoting growth and investment at every opportunity. To support our communities through excellent partnership working and to maintain and improve quality of life' The council will develop a technology architecture, built upon a fully integrated, data driven Authority that facilitates end to end digital service delivery across all the corporate business areas.

This framework will have Business Intelligence at its heart, providing corporate leadership, service managers and Council Members with the data and insight they need to make operational and strategic decisions, allowing the council to commission services based on detailed knowledge of the needs of our customers.

Much of this strategy will be delivered using cloud-based products, integrated into line of business applications.

The following slides set out the strategic priorities, which then shape our aims of the technology strategy i.e how we get there.

Sustainability statement

MDC is committed to the use of sustainable technology within the end-to-end transformation of the council systems and services.

During engagement with external suppliers Maldon District Council actively drives the use of low carbon solutions alongside more energy efficient systems, A 2018 study found that using cloud systems such as Microsoft can be up to 93 percent more energy efficient and up to 98 percent more carbon efficient then current on-premises solutions. This strategy has a core focus on the migration to Cloud technologies for which one benefit is the reduction of energy use and the use of sustainable power sources.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic ICT Priority 1: Managing Risk, Security and Compliance

It is vital that the council is a secure place to work, learn and do business. Getting security right is a fundamental enabling element of our digital ambitions. As we carry out more transactions and share more information online the greater the risk of our information, operations and finances being stolen, exploited or disrupted. These risks will only increase as we build and benefit from the internet of things innovation. Our reputation for cyber resilience has the potential to quickly become a determinant of future economic success. We will ensure that;

- People can access straightforward, reliable and easily accessible advice on cyber security.

- We share information about cyber threats across sectors and are well prepared to manage them.

- Our digital public services are safe and secure to use.

- The systems and process we use are appropriately maintained/ robust

- There is resilience in key customer processes to ensure we deliver services effectively

Maldon District Council

- We will work with academic institutions partners to enable effective and coordinated cyber security research and innovation.

- Cyber resilience skills are embedded within our wider digital skills ambitions.

Outcomes, measures of Success

- Ensure accreditation to national information security and governance standards. (Cyber Assessment Framework, Cyber Essentials Plus by 2026)

- Embed good security practice in all staff behaviour. (Training and testing through third party systems such as Boxphish with monitoring of outcomes)

- Deliver core customer processes in a consistent way

- Cyber Policies approved and in place (Inc AI, Cyber, Usage, Passwords)

- Active Directory migration to Azure Active Directory and cleansed

- Permission control based on group access and cleansed

- Removal of the Active Directory (AD)

- System training In-house to officers and members to support service delivery

Strategic ICT Priority 2: A Modern ICT Infrastructure that enables digital transformation.

Maldon District Council currently operates in an isolated environment whereby digital services do not all talk to each other across services. We will seek to build our internal Digital Business Technology Platform (Dynamics), developing centralised processes, and be a front runner for sharing and improving access to services across a network of authorities.

Our approach is to:

- Simplify and standardise ways of working across the council so that it becomes easier to use our services.

- Create common digital platforms for services that will encourage innovation in the delivery of public services whilst ensuring that the platforms and technologies are both secure and resilient.

- Make better use of cloud-based solutions as a source of both cost reduction and service innovation.

Outcomes, measures of Success

- Commodity cloud services as well as shared service offerings will be meshed into an overall ICT platform for business use. A single platform will be presented built from a small number of providers (internal and external) E.g: Dynamics – Build based on process priority with visibility to CLT and ELT – 15 processes in dynamics by 2027

- 90% of our ICT infrastructure will be cloud based within 3 years. (Removal of the on site Data Centre and implementation of Azure services to allow for server migration into the cloud. 12 current hosts, 9 migrated to the cloud by 2026)

- Reduce the environmental impact of technology used by the council – Lower electrical and carbon use whilst achieving work force flow optimisations and savings through these optimisations.

- Building upon hybrid working to allow full remote access to systems and services from multiple device types and locations.

Strategic ICT Priority 3: Streamline Processes to create an agile and flexible digital service model.

Automated Technology solutions facilitate new ways of analysing information in order to streamline processes and decision making. Using data from digital devices (sensors) that capture environmental and operational information from across the council estate, resources can be targeted more effectively, increasing capacity and reducing cost.

Outcomes, measures of Success

- Adoption of Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Machine Learning technology to drive process change.

- Create a culture of continuous process review and design to provide effective resource management.

- Develop a technology cost optimisation programme.

- Review Enterprise Resource Platforms and associated functions

- Create an Internet of Things network that provides data to improve infrastructure management and reduce climate change emissions.

- Task Smart / Dynamics delivery (PMO (P3), Stray Dogs, Environmental Health)

- Over all system reduction through the migration of data and services to new, intuitive systems

NB, although this is a goal of the strategy, acknowledging limited resources and the need to focus on systems architecture and security and resilience, investment in new technology is likely to have a smaller proportion of IT time/ resource allocated in the roadmap.

Strategic ICT Priority 4: Developing Information for Business & Customer Insight

Data holds the key to unlocking innovation in public services. Better data sharing can generate new insights stimulate new ideas and deliver potential savings to the public sector. Such benefits will, however, only be realised if people in Maldon trust us to hold their data securely and use it in appropriate ways. We are already seeing benefits in areas of public service from the use of open and shared data. Collective data agreements are helping to widen access and reduce the costs of key data sources across the public sector.

Outcomes, measures of Success

- Data from systems to be collated within cloud-based data stores enabling data mining to drive insights that support business decision making.

- Business users have tools to be able to navigate and draw knowledge from the accumulated data to support intelligence led commissioning.

- Data management processes are established as normal practice within business units supported by ICT services and tools to provide processes, governance and management of critical data.

- ARCGIS and Dynamics as a data centric system to optimise data sharing both internally and externally to drive work flow improvements.

Information Systems and partners

We will manage data and security compliance at a level that provides assurance to customers and providers, that the information we hold is managed securely and governed within data protection regulations.

Microsoft will continue to be a strategic delivery partner over the life of this strategy and will support the council in delivering the **Technology Roadmap**. Projects over 2024 will be focussed on consolidation of key systems and using corporate technology platforms to deploy common standardised processes that facilitate automation and integration.

Using Azure cloud Business and Operational Analytics through PowerBI we will ensure that our core systems are fit for purpose and integrate with strategic delivery partner networks where appropriate.

The Microsoft Security and Compliance product suite will ensure our information and data is available to share within the constraints of a fully secure data governance framework. Automated document archiving, deletion and retention will optimise the way we store and retrieve data to ensure information is easily accessible.

Microsoft 365 power platform suite will facilitate collaborative systems and workplaces that increase resource capacity, capability and information sharing across multiple delivery agencies and providers.

In order to deliver the projects outlined in the Technology Roadmap we will continue to work in collaboration with the Essex Digital Partnership (EDP), Microsoft and Insight to ensure consistent operational technology support. Where specialist technical skills are required to implement specific transformational change programmes, we will engage with Microsoft 'gold' partners or their equivalent to provide innovative business solutions.

By using strategic delivery partners and a 'gold' partner supply chain we will deliver the following technology enabled strategic outcomes:

Maldon District Council

Provide staff, partners and public with access to reliable and predictable ICT services that fully exploit the benefits of technology.

Enable new ways of working and new service delivery models.

Use our information and data to drive an intelligence-based target resources where they can be most effective.

Provide secure, agile, and flexible digital technology solutions that empower customers and providers to improve service delivery.

Challenge and facilitate the business to take advantage of existing and new digital technologies.

Resource and Governance

All organisational ICT decisions will be governed by CLT+ through the Lead ICT Specialist which will approve and advise Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Extended Leadership Team (ELT) on technology investment, direction and issues which have priority. Day to day ICT problems will be raised via Fresh Service (FS) and triaged to the appropriate knowledge base for assessment and diagnosis. High level FS tickets will then go to the Lead ICT specialist in prep for CLT+ based on the expert knowledge available. Doing so will give representation from all corporate directorates and area's, allowing for a global view of the council.

To ensure robust governance of technology commissions for both corporate and major business initiatives, The Lead ICT Specialist along side their stakeholders provide management oversight of technology programmes and projects holding the delivery partners to account, ICT workload for both projects and BAU will be based off the ICT Roadmap and a priority rating, new items following approval form CLT+ then get assigned a priority based on the roadmap and important to the council.

The Governance set out above will focus on:

- Priority setting and effective use of resources.

- Quality assurance

- Clearly defining roles and responsibilities

- Delivery outcomes and specific timetabling

The 'design authority' will reside with the Lead ICT Specialist who will define the overall corporate technology and strategic activity over the life of the Technology Strategy. Major initiatives to which ICT contribute will be set in accordance with the Strategic Delivery Plan. These priorities will be set out in an Infrastructure Business Delivery Plan and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

All corporate technology spend will be centrally managed by the Lead ICT Specialist via the ICT Budget with new technologies being funded from the forecast underspend.

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When considering new technologies, an end to end process of analytic definition takes place to ensure new systems achieve the same or better levels of statutory and legal requirements, this is supported via direct contact with supporting legal bodies such as the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Department of work and pensions (DWP) and the Local Government Association (LGA) to ensure Maldon District Council have the needed system for the nest service delivery.

To ensure the council make best use of technology across the whole organisation we will develop additional skill sets within the ICT Teams including Change and Project Management, Business Process Analysts, Data Scientists, Programmers and Developers.

Data and Business Intelligence

Digital data will enable the council to improve, optimise and reinvent existing business models, operating processes and outcomes. By using data strategically, the council will be insight driven, innovative and predictive when designing new service delivery models. Maldon Adopted a data management and insight strategy in 2023 which aligns to this data centric approach to our in house systems. (Data Management and insight strategy link)

Digital is all about data. How it is collected, governed, secured and consumed. Data can be mined, refined and processed using automation to produce dynamic insights. This strategy must deliver a data infrastructure that promotes the innovative use of data across the public sector. It must encourage data sharing and collaborative insight to facilitate service improvement and awareness. It must have enterprise information management, governance, strategy, and skills embedded in the corporate culture.

We will utilise modern and collaborative tools to efficiently work together, deliver accessible services and reduce our carbon footprint. – MDC Corporate Plan 2023

At the core will be the Microsoft Azure Data Lake and Power BI analytics tool set. The data lake will have the ability to consume data from all line of business applications along with feeds from the Internet of Things (IoT) devices connected to cloud network services. This strategy sets the corporate direction and associated activities to achieve a corporate data platform that will be the central repository.

This will facilitate storage and analytic capability across multiple data sets from many services. Dynamic reporting will enable real time diagnostics and management information to be distributed across all levels of the council.

Maldon District Council

Customer Engagement

Our customers will benefit from digital service delivery. The ubiquity of smart phones in all walks of life mean we must consider a transformation in customer engagement from a 'one stop shop' model to a 'no stop' model, in which all services we provide can be accessed 'on the move' from digital handheld devices.

To create successful digital services, we must focus on;

- Multichannel Delivery - User Centric, Personalised and Proactive

- Digital Platforms - Platforms, Partnerships and Ecosystems

- Data Centricity - Insight Driven, Innovative and Predictive

Our services must be integrated, personalised, and created using Human-Centred Design for better service outcomes. We must use data and provide knowledge to providers who can in turn develop Proactive Service Delivery Models that continuously receive digital feedback from service users.

We must continue to embrace and develop Automated Service Delivery techniques using newer technologies such as artificial intelligence, and machine learning to provide consistent, easily accessible transactional and informational services across a full range of public services.

Above all, we must empower our customers and providers to drive improvements in services using digital technology delivery models.

Maldon District Council

APPENDIX 1

The Technology Roadmap

A Technology Roadmap 2024-2027 supporting the delivery of our ICT priority and outcomes has been produced. The roadmap has four clear strategic priorities from this strategy with associated enabling projects. The projects are designed to encourage innovation and use of new technology, thereby shaping the way ICT is delivered across the Council.

In addition to this, Business As Usual (BAU) and core resilience will be factored into the ICT resource planning to allow for great optimization within the ICT teams.

In order to successfully develop and deploy activities within the roadmap, the Project management office (PMO) will be engaged to oversee each program and project of work.
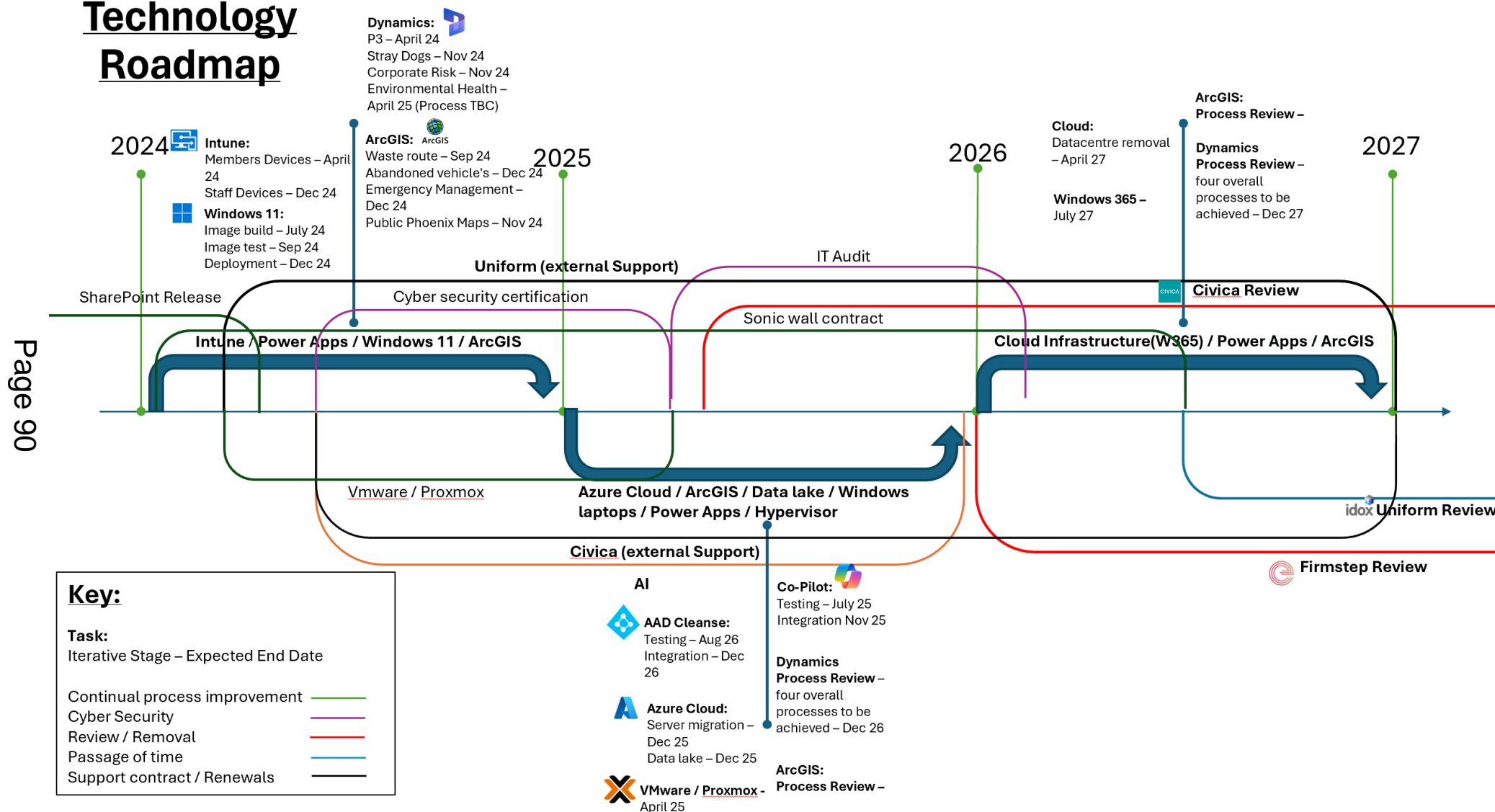
In order to make the most of technology investment the Council is committed to the continued optimisation and consolidation of all systems and applications using Enterprise Business Capability to digitise business process and reduce overall resourcing cost e.g Sonicwall

The Technology Roadmap is broken down into three key areas per year, over the period of the strategy including the task end date as shown below:

2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Dynamics		
P3 – Jan 24 - April 24	Stray Dogs – May 25 - July 25	Workplan will be defined Process and System review.
Planning – May 25 - April 25	Corporate Risk – Aug 25 – De 25	
	Environmental Health – Dec 25 – April 26	
ArcGIS		
Waste route – Sep 24 – Dec 24	Workplan will be defined Process and System review.	Workplan will be defined Process and System review.
Abandoned vehicle's – Dec 24 – Apr 26		
Emergency Management – Dec 24 – April 26		
Public Phoenix Maps – Nov 24		
Projects		
Intune – Feb 24 - April 25	Co-Pilot – April 25 - Nov 25	Windows 365 – April 26 - July 27
Windows 11 – April 24 - Dec 24	Azure – April 25 - Dec 25	

Maldon District Council

Technology Roadmap

Dynamics:
P3 – April 24
Stray Dogs – Nov 24
Corporate Risk – Nov 24
Environmental Health – April 25 (Process TBC)

Intune:
Members Devices – April 24
Staff Devices – Dec 24

Windows 11:
Image build – July 24
Image test – Sep 24
Deployment – Dec 24

ArcGIS:
Waste route – Sep 24
Abandoned vehicle's – Dec 24
Emergency Management – Dec 24
Public Phoenix Maps – Nov 24

Cloud:
Datacentre removal – April 27

Windows 365 – July 27

ArcGIS:
Process Review –

Dynamics
Process Review – four overall processes to be achieved – Dec 27

2024   **2025**   **2026**   **2027**

SharePoint Release

Uniform (external Support)

IT Audit

Cyber security certification

Civica Review

Sonic wall contract

Intune / Power Apps / Windows 11 / ArcGIS

Cloud Infrastructure(W365) / Power Apps / ArcGIS

Vmware / Proxmox

Azure Cloud / ArcGIS / Data lake / Windows laptops / Power Apps / Hypervisor

idox **Uniform Review**

Civica (external Support)

AI

Firmstep Review

Co-Pilot:
Testing – July 25
Integration Nov 25

AAD Cleanse:
Testing – Aug 26
Integration – Dec 26

Dynamics
Process Review – four overall processes to be achieved – Dec 26

Azure Cloud:
Server migration – Dec 25
Data lake – Dec 25

ArcGIS:
Process Review –

VMware / Proxmox - April 25

Key:

Task:
Iterative Stage – Expected End Date

Continual process improvement ──────
Cyber Security ──────
Review / Removal ──────
Passage of time ──────
Support contract / Renewals ──────

Summary

Maldon District Council is on a digital journey. The roadmap to delivery started in 2019 with an ICT strategy that clearly set out a set of projects based on cloud computing, mobility and flexibility within a well-defined secure framework that enabled data sharing across multiple delivery providers and hybrid working for officers and members alike.

With this technology Strategy 2023-2027, the journey continues, building on the platforms developed thus far and developing them using technology solutions that have emerged in the last four years.

Technology advances and a migration in the cloud computing marketplace will enable Maldon District Council to take full advantage of cloud data storage capacity and analytics to develop digital feedback mechanisms that will enhance our authority and create customer service models designed to be hybrid, proactive and personalised.

Using AI alongside autonomous devices connected to and interacting with their environment Maldon District Council will be able to improve infrastructure management and reduce the environmental impact of service delivery. It will be able to develop service models that improve the lives of vulnerable people and allow them to live more independently.

This Technology Strategy supports Maldon District Councils Corporate Plan 2024 – 2027 and the key priorities that are working towards improving the lives of those who live, work and learn in Maldon.

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Agenda Item 9 – Planning Policy Working Group

The following report from the Chairperson of the Planning Policy Working Group was received by the Strategy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 14 March 2024.

WORK OF THE PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP 2023 / 24

1.   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an annual update on the work carried out by the Planning Policy Working Group (the Working Group) during 2023 / 24. The update is provided by the Chairperson of the Working Group, Councillor K M H Lagan.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee receives the content of the report.

3.   SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1   On 23 February 2021, the Council agreed to review its Local Development Plan (LDP), setting a timetable in statutory document called its Local Development Scheme (LDS). To support this work, on 18 March 2021 the Council agreed to establish a Planning Policy Working Group (Minute No.342 refers).

3.2   From the Working Group's Terms of Reference:

The Planning Policy Working Group is an advisory group will support the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Council in the legal and sound development of planning policy documents and guidance as set out in the LDS.

The Working Group will provide an important Member perspective on the preparation of all planning policy for the Maldon District.

The Working Group will:

- provide cross-party member engagement and discussion in the work being undertaken to prepare the policy documents set out in the LDS.

- provide informal feedback and discussion with officers on key draft evidence, documentation and policy options to guide officers formulating formal recommendations to the Strategy and Resources Committee; and

- provide regular updates to the Strategy and Resources Committee on its work informing the LDP Review and SPD preparation.

- take an active part in any planning policy training and encourage other Members outside the Working Group to attend that training when offered to the wider Membership of the Council.

3.3   The Planning Policy Working Group has been meeting regularly since its formation in 2021 (24 times).

3.4   The Working Group has carried out the following work in 2023 to January 2024:

Discussed the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (which have now become effective) – it was concluded that overall, the changes will not have a major impact on Maldon District.
Discussed a draft of the front portion of the reviewed plan – this includes the Vision, Issues and Objectives. This followed on from the Issues and Options Consultation Jan. – Mar. 2021 and considered the comments made during that consultation.
Discussed a draft of the of the Maldon Nature Conservation Study – this has been carried out by consultants and apart from the mapping which needs to be checked for accuracy to ensure it adheres to the site outlines.
The Working Group had a presentation by JBA the consultants who have updated the District`s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). This is also nearly complete apart from the mapping, which is presently being worked on. This particular piece of work will carry weight once published as it will replace the existing SFRA and will need to be rolled out to both Development Management Officers and Members in terms of understanding and training in due course.
Discussed the Employment Land and Premises Study.
The Working Group had a discussion on the proposed changes to the Plan-Making system (these changes have now been enacted)
The Working Group discussed a draft of a Major Projects Policy, they asked for the policy to be checked against one drafted by Essex County Council (ECC) which officers did and came back to the Working Group for a further discussion.
The Working Group had a discussion around Community Led Housing – there is further guidance from Government to come around this and when this is produced a more formal discussion will be held with invited specialist guests to the group.

3.5   The Working Group has agreed the following work plan to September 2024.

MONTH	AGENDA ITEM
14 MARCH	Update to the Strategy and Resources (S&R) Committee
MARCH	Update on Central Area Master Plan (CAMP) and Policy S5
MARCH	All Member and Development Management (DM) Officer briefing on the updated SFRA with JBA consultants.
MARCH	Rural Exceptions and Community Led Housing discussion with guests (If the national guidance has been produced).
MARCH	Discussion on a Single Plot Exceptions Policy – should we have one?
APRIL	All Member Briefing on Net Zero Policy – ECC will be assisting from the Climate and Planning Unit
APRIL	Heritage Policy
APRIL	Houseboats Policy
APRIL	Affordable Housing Policy
MAY	Rural Exceptions and Community Led Housing Policy
MAY	Tourism Policy
MAY	Discussion around retail and its policy considerations.
MAY	All Member Briefing on the work carried out on policies so far.
JUNE	Employment Policy (Not rural)
JUNE	Self-Build – Custom Build Policy
JUNE	Single Plot Exceptions Policy (If Members determine it should come forward)
JULY	Leave Free for evidence work that is coming forward for discussion
JULY	All Member Workshop on the progress of the Design Policy and Design Code
AUGUST	Retail Policy and its evidence base
SEPTEMBER	Update to S&R Committee
SEPTEMBER	Design Policy and Design Code

3.6   The pink highlighted items on the workplan are all Member briefings, the blue highlighted items are updates to the Strategy and Resources Committee.

4.   CONCLUSION

4.1   The work of the Planning Policy Working Group is positively assisting in the process of moving forward with the LDP Review. The work will, going forward also include briefing/training for all Members, as the case with the SFRA, where Members and Officers will need this training, prior to the publication of the updated study, for decision making on planning applications.

5.   IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1   The LDP Review covers all three Strategic Themes of Place, Prosperity and Community. The theme of Place seeks to deliver the District`s housing needs and deliver sustainable growth and new infrastructure through development. The theme of Prosperity seeks to ensure that the council supports business, economic growth and tourism. The theme of Community seeks to build on the strengths of our communities and what they can do to support themselves and help each other to thrive.

5.2   **Supporting our communities**

5.2.1   The LDP seeks to build on the strengths of our communities and what they can do to help each other to thrive.

5.3   **Enhancing and connecting our place**

5.3.1   The LDP will include transport and movement policies in it to connect places.

5.4   **Helping the economy to thrive**

5.4.1   The LDP will include employment site allocations and economic policies to support the wider economy.

5.5   **A greener future**

5.5.1   The LDP will include policies that cover climate change.

5.6   **Provide good quality services.**

5.6.1   Working with strategic partners through the Duty to Co-operate enables services such as health to be funded and expanded.

6.   IMPLICATIONS

(i)   **Impact on Customers** – None.

(ii)   **Impact on Equalities** – None.

(iii)   **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – None.

(iv)   **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None.

(v)   **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.

REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

to
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
13 JUNE 2024

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND WORKING GROUPS

1.   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   The purpose of this report is to appoint to Working Groups of the Strategy and Resources Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

(i)   That the Committee nominates representatives to the Outside Bodies as shown in paragraph 3.1.1 below, for the ensuing Municipal Year;

(ii)   That the Committee appoints representatives to the Working Groups as listed in paragraph 3.2.1 below, for the ensuing Municipal Year.

3.   SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1   **Outside Bodies**

3.1.1   Members are asked to nominate representatives to serve on the following Working Groups, aligned to the Strategy and Resources Committee, for the ensuing municipal year.

Outside Bodies	To be appointed
Maldon Museum in the Park Liaison Committee (moved from the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee)	Two Members
Maldon Citizens Advice Bureau Liaison Committee (moved from the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee)	Three Members

3.2   **Working Groups**

3.2.1   Members are asked to nominate representatives to serve on the following Working Groups, aligned to the Strategy and Resources Committee, for the ensuing municipal year.

Working Groups	To be appointed
Car Parking Task and Finish Working Group	Four Members *Please note the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Council's Member representative on the South Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee are also members of this Working Group*

Our Vision: Sustainable Council – Prosperous Future

Working Groups	To be appointed
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer Working Group	Two Members
Waste Contract Member Working Group	Four Members

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Committee Services.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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