Public Document Pack

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 14th January, 2021
Time: 2.00 pm

Place: Virtual Meeting – MS Team
Contact: Colin Gamble

Email: committeesection@southend.gov.uk

AGENDA

1	Apol	ogies	for	Absence
---	------	-------	-----	---------

- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd November
- 4 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 24th November
- 5 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2nd December

**** HERE AND NOW

- 6 Corporate Budget Performance Period 8
 Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources) attached
- 7 Council Tax Base and Non Domestic Rating Base 2021/22 Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources) to follow
- 8 Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget 2021/22 and Rent Setting Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources) to follow
- 9 Draft Prioritising Resources to Deliver Better Outcomes 2021/22 to 2025/26

Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources) to follow

10 Corporate Risk Register

Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources)

- 11 In-Depth Scrutiny Report Reablement Services
 Report attached
- 12 Better use of Children's Centres

Report of Executive Director (Children and Public Health)

13 Empty Homes Strategy

Report of Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Growth and Housing)

14 Controlled Parking Zone Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

15 Domestic Vehicle Crossing Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

16 Highway Enforcement Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

17 Highway Memorials Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

18 Updated Council Tree Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

19 Corporate Enforcement Policy

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

20 Green City Action Plan

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment)

21 Public Health Burials

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and Environment) to follow

22 Journey of the Child

Report of Executive Director (Children and Public Health)

23 Determined School Admission Arrangements

Report of Executive Director (Children and Public Health)

24 School Term Dates

Report of Executive Director (Children and Public Health)

25 Council Debt Position to 30 November 2020

Report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources)

26 Notice of Motion - Street Prostitution in Southend

Notice of Motion attached

27 Notice of Motion - Food Justice Champion

Notice of Motion attached

28 Minutes of the meeting of the Business Culture and Tourism Working Party held 16th December 2020

Minutes attached

29 Minutes of the meeting of the Senior Managers' Pay Panel held 18th November 2020

Minutes attached

30 SO.46 Report

Report attached

31 Exclusion of the Public

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below, on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

32 SO46 Confidential Sheet

Report attached

Chair & Members:

Cllr I Gilbert (Chair), Cllr R Woodley (Vice-Chair), Cllr T Harp, Cllr A Jones, Cllr C Mulroney, Cllr K Robinson and Cllr M Terry



SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 2nd December, 2020 Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams

Present: Councillor I Gilbert (Chair)

Councillors R Woodley (Vice-Chair), T Harp, A Jones, C Mulroney

and K Robinson

In Attendance: A Griffin, A Lewis, J Williams, J Chesterton, L Reed, E Cooney, M

Marks, J Ruffle, T Forster, B Martin, A Richards, C Gamble, A

Keating, A Grant, G Gilbert, N Laver and E Cook.

Also in attendance: G Kauders (Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP)

Start/End Time: 2.00 pm

598 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry.

599 Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors and officers declared interests as indicated:

- (a) Councillor Harp Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: Volunteer with Turning Tides and Youth Clubs in the wider Queensway area and Minute 601 (Chalkwell Hall Infants School and Junior School amalgamation) disqualifying non-pecuniary interest: Close friend of Chair of Chalkwell Hall Junior School (withdrew);
- (b) Councillor Jones Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: member of Development Control Committee;
- (c) Councillor Mulroney Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: member of Development Control Committee;
- (d) A Lewis and A Richards - Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: Council appointed representatives on the Porters Place LLP Board.

600 Better Queensway Regeneration Project - Progress Update and Consideration of the Final Proposals

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Regeneration and Growth concerning the submission of the new Business Plan for Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP. The matter had been considered by the Shareholder at its meeting held on 1st December 2020 and the recommendations from the Board were before the Cabinet for consideration.

Resolved:

- 1. That the submitted Business Plan (attached to the report to the Shareholder Board), be approved.
- 2. That the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to:
- (a) agree any non-adverse changes to the Business Plan whereupon any such matters shall be noted for information and reported to the following Shareholder Board: and
- (b) approve, agree or action any necessary outcome, or product of, or from, the Business Plan necessary to progress the Better Queensway regeneration project.

Reasons for decision

The review of the Business Plan by Council officers and the Council's procured advisors concluded that the Plan provides an assurance that the LLP is following the agreed strategic direction and objectives and is delivering its service and financial performance.

Delegation of agreement of non-material updates to the Business Plan and progression of actions resulting from the Plan will ensure that the LLP can continue to progress the project at pace and with the necessary agility to meet funding and programme deadlines.

Other options

Not approving the Business Plan would mean that the Plan approved in November 2019 would remain in place until an amended Plan is approved. This would frustrate the progress of the project. The October 2019 Plan does not reflect the next years' work on the project.

The £15m HIF funding from Homes England has a deadline for spend. Not approving the Business Plan will delay the project as an amended Plan will be required, which could result in non-expenditure by the deadline and therefore a gap in project funding.

If the Business Plan is compliant with the Partnership Agreement but is not approved by the Council, there is a risk to the goodwill established between the LLP Partners. This would have a considerably negative impact on the relationship between the LLP Partners.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

Outcomes of the informal consultation stage one of a potential amalgamation of Chalkwell Hall Infants School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Children and Public Health) providing feedback on the outcomes of the stage one informal consultation exercise regarding the Chalkwell Hall Infant and Junior School potential amalgamation.

Resolved:

- 1. That the further stages of consultation on a potential amalgamation not be proceeded with and the two maintained schools, Chalkwell Hall Infant School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School, be allowed to remain as separate entities.
- 2. That it be noted that as and when circumstances change in the future, the Cabinet reserves the right to reconsider the benefits of a potential amalgamation at that time.

Reasons for decision

As set out in the submitted report.

Other options

The proceed with the further stages of consultation on a potential amalgamation of the two schools.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: People Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Jones

602 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:-

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below, on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

603 Better Queensway Confidential Appendices

Resolved:

That the confidential appendices relating to the Porters Place LLP Business Plan, be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert



Public Document Pack

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 24th November, 2020 Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams

Present: Councillor I Gilbert (Chair)

Councillors R Woodley (Vice-Chair), T Harp, A Jones, C Mulroney,

K Robinson and M Terry

In Attendance: Councillors K Buck and K Evans

A Griffin, J Williams, A Lewis, J Chesterton, C Gamble, A Keating

and A Richards, R Harris and E Cook

Start/End Time: 2.00 - 2.42 pm

572 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence at this meeting.

573 Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared interests, as indicated:

- (a) Councillor Harp Agenda Items 3 and 5 (Roots Hall and Fossets Farm) Disqualifying Pecuniary Interest Season ticket holder at Southend United Football Club (withdrew);
- (b) Councillor Jones Agenda items 3 and 5 (Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm) Non-pecuniary interest member of Development Control Committee;
- (c) Councillor Mulroney Agenda items 3 and 5 (Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm) Non-pecuniary interest member of Development Control Committee;
- (d) Councillor Terry Agenda Items 3 and 5 (Roots Hall and Fossets Farm) Disqualifying Pecuniary Interest Season ticket holder at Southend United Football Club (withdrew);

574 Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) providing an update on the proposed development of housing for rent at both Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm.

The report highlighted that in order for the developments to proceed, decisions would also separately need to be made by all members of the Council in their capacity as Trustees of the Jones Memorial Trust, Youth Commemoration Ground Trust and the Victory Sports Ground Trust. A separate report on the Trust matters would be submitted to the next meeting of Council on 10th December 2020.

Resolved:

- 1. That authority be given to enter into all necessary transactions to facilitate the developments at Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm, as set out in the submitted report, subject to the following pre-conditions:
- (a) The submission of due diligence reports on the following matters which are satisfactory to the Executive Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Leader of the Council:
 - i) Independent financial review;
 - ii) Review by the Council's external auditors;
 - iii) Property report by Cushman Wakefield;
 - iv) Legal report by Gowling WLG; and
- (b) The developer reimbursing the Council the sum of £100,000 in respect of certain costs incurred to date (further costs will be reimbursed to the Council as development costs as the developments progress).
- 2. That the transactions referred to in resolution 1 above will not become unconditional until:
 - i) Planning Permission (including 30% affordable housing and the resolution of any required highway matters) has been granted for the developments at both Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm; and
 - ii) The necessary Charity Commission consents have been obtained in respect of the matters involving Jones Memorial Trust, Youth Commemoration Ground Trust and the Victory Sports Ground Trust
- 3. That the income strip leases for the Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm developments (each comprising a series of land transactions) be granted directly to the Council with the options to acquire the freehold reversions for £1 being granted to the Council's Housing Investment Company to ensure that the transaction is tax effective fundable at the optimal rate and the reversionary interests are suitably protected.
- 4. That authority be granted to the Executive Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Leader of the Council to:
- (a) Agree any final adjustments to the terms of the transactions, or the final documentation, including any adjustments required as a consequence of the due diligence reviews;
- (b) Authorise the completion of all necessary agreements to progress the transaction including but not limited to the sale of the Council's land at both Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm, the leases in and the options to acquire the freeholds at the end of the leases;
- (c) Authorise any necessary management and contracting arrangements for the new affordable and private rented accommodation. (Note: long-term property management has been considered but does not need to be concluded at this stage); and
- (d) Agree the use of all capital and revenue income from the developments and in particular the holding of reserves to ensure that the Council's long-term position is protected.

- 5. That it be noted that the authority to complete the following Trust matters will be separately considered by Full Council (acting as sole trustee of the three relevant trusts) and any necessary Charity Commission consents will also need to be obtained:
- a) the proposed easement over Jones Memorial Ground Trust land relating to the 'Supporters' Way' access from Sutton Road and ancillary access to Fossetts Farm residential development;
- b) the lease agreement required in relation to replacement parking for Jones Memorial Ground:
- c) the minor boundary adjustment to Victory Sports Ground to accommodate the required highways changes on the Sutton Road/Eastern Avenue roundabout; and
- d) a shared use agreement between the Youth Commemoration Ground Trust and the Loxford Trust to enable the release of the former Cecil Jones Junior School playing field land to the north of the Jones Memorial Ground (subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State for Education and the Charity Commission which the Loxford Trust may require).

(The decisions for the Council as Trustee, set out above, need to be taken in the best interests of each Trust. This requirement should be met as the arrangements will enable the development and generation of capital and long-term income for the Trusts to help support their objectives).

Reasons for Decisions:

To enable the Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm development proposals to be progressed with Citizen Housing, Homes England (if/as required) and SUFC so that the following objectives can be achieved:

- 502 homes at Roots Hall in partnership with the Council (subject to planning)
- 850 homes at Fossetts Farm in partnership with the Council (subject to planning)
- Affordable housing which is policy compliant (30%) for both sites
- The construction and longer term job creation and wider economic benefits arising from £500m of private investment in the developments
- The opportunity for the Council to become a major player in the Southend Private Rent market and to drive quality and safety standards.
- The potential for further additional homes at Fossetts Farm under a separate joint venture partnership between other parties.
- The opportunity to deliver a profit rent as commercial income/dividend for the long term and to benefit from the full value of the reversion.
- A new football stadium and new training ground for SUFC at Fossetts Farm to replace the current stadium at Roots Hall, which is nearing obsolescence and presents a significant risk to the future of SUFC, and current training ground at Boots & Laces
- The Council will receive profit rent, capital contributions and profit share and the combined developments will deliver substantial additional council tax income to the Council.

Other Options

As set out in the submitted report.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gllbert

575 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:-

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

576 Roots Hall and Fossets Farm - Confidential Appendix

The Cabinet considered a confidential appendix in relation to agenda item 3 above.

Resolved:

That the confidential appendix, be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

Chair:		

Public Document Pack

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 2nd December, 2020 Place: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams

Present: Councillor I Gilbert (Chair)

Councillors R Woodley (Vice-Chair), T Harp, A Jones, C Mulroney

and K Robinson

In Attendance: A Griffin, A Lewis, J Williams, J Chesterton, L Reed, E Cooney, M

Marks, J Ruffle, T Forster, B Martin, A Richards, C Gamble, A

Keating, A Grant, G Gilbert, N Laver and E Cook.

Also in attendance: G Kauders (Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP)

Start/End Time: 2.00 pm

598 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry.

599 Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors and officers declared interests as indicated:

- (a) Councillor Harp Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: Volunteer with Turning Tides and Youth Clubs in the wider Queensway area and Minute 601 (Chalkwell Hall Infants School and Junior School amalgamation) disqualifying non-pecuniary interest: Close friend of Chair of Chalkwell Hall Junior School (withdrew);
- (b) Councillor Jones Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: member of Development Control Committee;
- (c) Councillor Mulroney Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: member of Development Control Committee;
- (d) A Lewis and A Richards - Minutes 600 and 603 (Better Queensway Regeneration Project) Non-pecuniary interest: Council appointed representatives on the Porters Place LLP Board.

600 Better Queensway Regeneration Project - Progress Update and Consideration of the Final Proposals

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Regeneration and Growth concerning the submission of the new Business Plan for Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP. The matter had been considered by the Shareholder at its meeting held on 1st December 2020 and the recommendations from the Board were before the Cabinet for consideration.

Resolved:

- 1. That the submitted Business Plan (attached to the report to the Shareholder Board), be approved.
- 2. That the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to:
- (a) agree any non-adverse changes to the Business Plan whereupon any such matters shall be noted for information and reported to the following Shareholder Board; and
- (b) approve, agree or action any necessary outcome, or product of, or from, the Business Plan necessary to progress the Better Queensway regeneration project.

Reasons for decision

The review of the Business Plan by Council officers and the Council's procured advisors concluded that the Plan provides an assurance that the LLP is following the agreed strategic direction and objectives and is delivering its service and financial performance.

Delegation of agreement of non-material updates to the Business Plan and progression of actions resulting from the Plan will ensure that the LLP can continue to progress the project at pace and with the necessary agility to meet funding and programme deadlines.

Other options

Not approving the Business Plan would mean that the Plan approved in November 2019 would remain in place until an amended Plan is approved. This would frustrate the progress of the project. The October 2019 Plan does not reflect the next years' work on the project.

The £15m HIF funding from Homes England has a deadline for spend. Not approving the Business Plan will delay the project as an amended Plan will be required, which could result in non-expenditure by the deadline and therefore a gap in project funding.

If the Business Plan is compliant with the Partnership Agreement but is not approved by the Council, there is a risk to the goodwill established between the LLP Partners. This would have a considerably negative impact on the relationship between the LLP Partners.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

Outcomes of the informal consultation stage one of a potential amalgamation of Chalkwell Hall Infants School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Children and Public Health) providing feedback on the outcomes of the stage one informal consultation exercise regarding the Chalkwell Hall Infant and Junior School potential amalgamation.

Resolved:

- 1. That the further stages of consultation on a potential amalgamation not be proceeded with and the two maintained schools, Chalkwell Hall Infant School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School, be allowed to remain as separate entities.
- 2. That it be noted that as and when circumstances change in the future, the Cabinet reserves the right to reconsider the benefits of a potential amalgamation at that time.

Reasons for decision

As set out in the submitted report.

Other options

The proceed with the further stages of consultation on a potential amalgamation of the two schools.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: People Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Jones

602 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:-

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below, on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

603 Better Queensway Confidential Appendices

Resolved:

That the confidential appendices relating to the Porters Place LLP Business Plan, be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Finance & Resources)

To

Cabinet

On

14th January 2021

Agenda Item No.

Report prepared by:
Pete Bates, Interim Head of Corporate Finance
Caroline Fozzard, Group Manager for Financial Planning and
Control

Resourcing Better Outcomes - Financial Performance Report – Period 8
Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Members: Councillor lan Gilbert and Councillor Ron Woodley

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1 Purpose of Report

The Resourcing Better Outcomes financial performance report is a key tool in scrutinising the Council's financial performance. It is designed to provide an overview to all relevant stakeholders. It is essential that the Council monitors its budgets throughout the year to ensure that it is meeting its strategic objectives and that corrective action is taken where necessary.

2 Recommendations

That, in respect of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget Performance as set out in appendix 1 to this report, Cabinet:

2.1 Note the forecast outturn for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account as at November 2020.

That, in respect of the 2020/21 Capital Budget Performance as set out in appendix 2 of this report, Cabinet:

- 2.2 Note the expenditure to date and the forecast outturn as at November 2020 and its financing;
- 2.3 Approve the requested changes to the capital investment programme for 2020/21 and future years, as set out in section 3 of appendix 2.

3 COVID-19 Impact and Implications

- 3.1 The overall assessment of the health and economic impact of COVID-19 is continuing and will undoubtedly do so for a long time to come. The challenge is clearly worldwide, and national governments are still wrestling with how they can tactically put in place the right package of measures to save lives and to try to minimise the spread of the virus and its impact across their respective populations.
- These plans have been disrupted by major concerns of a resurgence in the virus and the potential impact of a second or even third wave of the pandemic. There has been a significant rise in the number of confirmed positive cases and several areas across the UK have already had additional lockdown measures imposed locally to try and contain and reduce the spread and impact of the virus. A new extended tier system is now in place and at the time of writing this report Southend-on-Sea, along with the rest of Essex had just moved into the top tier 4 category, which means the most severe restrictions are now imposed locally.
- 3.3 Alongside these worrying developments, there has also been some very positive announcements around the successful testing of various potential vaccines to immunise people against the virus. Consideration has now turned to how these new vaccines can be safely and quickly deployed across populations, prioritising the most vulnerable in the first instance with the obvious ambition to finally get everyday life back to normal again. The logistics of implementing such a huge immunisation strategy will take many months but it is clearly vital for everyone's health and wellbeing and critical to successfully getting our local economies working effectively again.
- 3.4 The pandemic continues to have a huge direct operational and financial impact right across the Local Government Sector. All local authorities are struggling with the challenges of uncertainty, large financial pressures and concerns for their residents and local areas in such unprecedented times. Most of the demand and financial pressures highlighted in this report are still inextricably linked directly or indirectly to COVID-19.
- 3.5 Effectively managing the short and medium term financial challenges that COVID-19 has brought to the Borough will be an important factor in our future success. This report focuses on providing some updated detail and commentary of the financial variances at a portfolio level that are currently forecast for 2020/21. This is based on the best information that we currently have available.

4 Revenue – General fund

4.1 In February 2020, the Council approved a General Fund revenue budget requirement for 2020/21 of £130.429M. This report provides details of the current projected outturn position for 2020/21 based on information as at the end of November 2020 (Period 8).

- 4.2 The total national value of COVID-19 emergency grant funding announced so far in 2020/21 is now £4.6 Billion. On 22nd October, Southend-on-Sea received notification of its share of the 4th tranche of funding £2,443,745. This brings our total emergency grant funding allocation for the year to £14,471,638. The total £4.6 Billion emergency grant funding has now been distributed to individual local authorities based on the Relative Needs Formula (RNF).
- 4.3 The Council, together with its partners has worked extremely hard to support local residents and businesses to help them cope with the challenges caused by the pandemic. The Council is trying to deal with many of the same uncertainties and financial challenges that all other upper tier authorities right across the country are experiencing. It is still incredibly difficult to untangle and isolate specific demand and cost pressures that are prevalent across the Authority now due to the impact of COVID-19. A lot of concentrated effort recently has also been deployed to try to get to grips with the underlying financial challenges. Government have played a part by providing significant additional one-off resources, but the sheer scale and impact of the virus has forced the Council to look closely again at every aspect of its operational arrangements. This effort is now beginning to have a positive impact on reducing the forecasted overspend for 2020/21.
- In headline terms the Council is now forecasting a net overspend of £3.05M for 2020/21, which is around 1.3% of the gross expenditure budget. The forecast overspend has reduced by around £2.85M from the £5.90M level that was reported at Period 6. A significant contribution to this improvement in financial performance is due to our 2nd claim for support from the Government's Income Compensation Scheme (for the period August November 2020). This brings our total value of compensation so far in 2020/21 to circa £4.15m. The other major variances are highlighted in Appendix 1. We are still operating in a very uncertain and challenging environment and there are genuine concerns around potential hidden demand for key services in our local communities, which makes future business and financial planning very difficult.
- 4.5 The other major financial support initiative previously announced by the Government was to provide an opportunity for local authorities to spread collection fund deficits over the next three years. The impact of this proposal has not yet been fully assessed or included as we have only just received the technical details and specific guidance. We are also waiting for clarification of the announcement contained in the headlines of the Provisional Finance Settlement 2020, regarding additional Government support equating to 75% for irrecoverable losses in the Collection Fund for 2020/21. These initiatives should provide some additional positive support to our financial position, but we need clarity on how the Government will define 'irrecoverable losses' and what the new accounting arrangements will be for our Collection Fund.

- 4.6 The 2020/21 approved budget did include a one-off £3.0M earmarked support for Children's Services which has not yet been released or included in the forecast outturn assessment at this stage of the year. This would clearly reduce the current forecast level of overspending in this area. The Council also has a general contingency of around £1.0M which is still available and currently uncommitted, but again given all the uncertainty it has been decided not to release any of this amount at this point in the year. The situation will continue to be carefully monitored and further consideration and assessment will be provided as part of the 2020/21 Outturn report to Cabinet.
- 4.7 A major area of ongoing concern is the impact COVID-19 is having on income collection generally and the potential increases in bad and doubtful debts right across all our main income sources. Based on our latest analysis and assessment we are now forecasting a circa £1.5M deterioration in our collection of Business Rates. Increasing numbers of benefit claimants particularly those eligible for working age Local Council Tax Support have increased from 7,700 to 9,468 by the end of November 2020 (a 23% increase this year), which directly reduces our Council Tax base. This impact together with the additional challenges of collection means that we are now forecasting a £2.95M shortfall in Council Tax income collected for 2020/21. Although this shows an overall improved position from Period 6 it is still very concerning and will continue to be closely monitored, particularly given the latest development of moving Southend-on-Sea into Tier 4.
- This improved position can partly be attributed to the positive response from residents to our recent reminder and raising awareness campaign of the importance of maintaining council tax payments and/or seeking advice and support from our revenues and benefits teams when needed. It is hoped that residents can continue to make payments in the current climate and the additional financial support that is being provided to our local businesses will also help to improve this situation. The total forecast collection fund deficit is now £4.45M (£1.5M + £2.95M) and given the uncertainty at this stage we have not included any benefit from our continued participation in the Essex business rates pool. The situation will continue to be carefully monitored for the remainder of the financial year.
- 4.9 The Council's new 'Getting to Know Your Business' programme has now been operational for a couple of months. The first phase of the programme has helped to establish a baseline for all services in terms of their costs, income generation potential, value for money and relative performance. This data is now being used to highlight key lines of enquiry where benchmarking may suggest that either our costs or income levels are above or below average. This will lead to potential changes in operation or highlight areas for Cabinet to consider a review of existing policies and service delivery arrangements.

- 4.10 Most services are also continuing to develop further recovery and mitigation plans to try to improve the current financial situation and prepare for the huge financial challenge for 2021/22 2025/26. Adult Social Care are currently part way through a comprehensive independent diagnostic assessment to identify areas for review and improvement. All services are continually being challenged to try to improve efficiency and productivity to ensure that the resourcing of better outcomes for our residents are achieved, whilst also representing the best value for money for the local taxpayer.
- 4.11 Despite the clear and obvious financial challenges highlighted in this report the Council remains in a much stronger and resilient financial position than many other Local Authorities. We will continue to lobby Central Government with our other Essex local authorities for extra resources to both help with our local response but more significantly for the transition, preparation, and implementation of our recovery from the pandemic.
- 4.12 We will evaluate the implications of the Spending Review 2020 to understand any implications for 2020/21 and interpret the finer details of the Government's recently announced one-year provisional financial settlement for 2021/22. We will also continue to assess the impact of any future Government announcements and analyse the accounting implications of the two collection fund initiatives (75% support for irrecoverable losses and spreading of collection fund deficits). Once implemented these initiatives should improve the current overall forecast financial outturn for 2020/21.
- 4.13 The final area that still provides some concern and uncertainty in these unprecedented times is the potential impact of whatever the exact terms of the country's negotiated exit with a trade deal from the European Union will be. At the time of writing this report the full details of Brexit were still being assessed and evaluated. The UK Government and the European Parliament were finalising their respective appropriate governance arrangements to vote through the overall proposed exit package. We will continue to monitor the situation and update Cabinet and Council as appropriate.

5 Revenue – Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- In February 2020, the Council approved a balanced Housing Revenue Account budget for 2020/21. This report provides the details of the projected outturn position for this year based on actual activity and financial performance as at the end of November 2020 (Period 8).
- 5.2 Despite the challenges of COVID-19 the current forecast for the HRA indicates that it will have a net surplus of (£0.629M) in 2020/21, (around -2.7%) of gross operating expenditure. This positive position is predominantly due to increased levels of rental income received due to a lower level of voids within the Housing stock, which demonstrates good housing management practice. The major improvement in the financial performance from Period 6 is due to an estimated £0.160M underspend based on the revised internal borrowing requirement for the HRA Capital Programme for 2020/21.

- There is a risk of increasing levels of rent arrears caused by the impact of COVID-19 on tenant's income and their continuing ability to pay. An initial £0.250M provision has been included as part of the current forecast. This situation will be kept under constant review and work is ongoing with tenants to try and provide appropriate support and advice to mitigate any impact.
- A range of additional expenditure pressures have been experienced, primarily to clear the backlog of works on voids and gas appliances. These extra costs are directly attributed to COVID-19. There are also other potential expenditure implications which are still under discussion with South Essex Homes.
- It is currently anticipated that any surplus will be transferred to the HRA Capital Investment Reserve at the year-end for future planned investment into the housing stock. Potential to use some of the forecast surplus to fund additional revenue contributions to capital is also under consideration.

6 Capital – Southend 2050

- 6.1 Successful and timely delivery of the capital investment programme is a key part of achieving the Southend 2050 ambition and delivering the outcomes. The investment contributes to the five themes in the following way:
- 6.2 Pride and Joy the key investment areas are: the ongoing refurbishment and enhancement of Southend's historic pleasure pier and the town's cultural and tourism offer, including libraries, museums and theatres.
- 6.3 Safe and Well the key investment areas are: the construction and acquisition of new council homes and the refurbishment of existing ones via the decent homes programme; social care with the building of a new care facility and day centre to provide high quality services for people with high and complex needs.
- 6.4 Active and Involved the key investment area is the Cart and Wagon Shed for the coastal community team to use as part of their community interest company.
- Opportunity and Prosperity the key investment areas are: the Airport Business Park to deliver benefits for both local businesses and local communities, creating thousands of job opportunities and attracting inward investment; the secondary schools expansion programme has delivered 120 permanent additional secondary school places for September 2018 and a further 80 for September 2019. This expansion is across eight of the twelve Southend secondary schools and will result in an additional 1,050 places for 11-16 year old pupils once completed.
- 6.6 Connected and Smart the key investment areas are: the investment in the borough's highways and transport network, including the improvements to the A127 Growth Corridor funded by the Local Growth Fund; investment in the Council's ICT infrastructure and networks to enable and transform outcome focussed service delivery.

7 Capital – Deliverability and Affordability

- 7.1 There is inevitably a gap between the capital investment programme ambition and the finite available resources to afford and deliver the programme. This limits the number and value of schemes that are affordable and deliverable.
- The average capital investment delivered over the last 12 years has been circa £60m. Therefore on average it has been assumed to be the core deliverable level of programme each year. There will always be exceptions over and above this amount, for example where the Council is passporting grant or providing loans to partner organisations or purchasing property for strategic and regeneration purposes. These must form part of the capital investment programme but they do not create an issue with deliverability.
- 7.3 In order to aim for a deliverable level of programme each financial year there will need to be prioritisation and re-sequencing of projects. Since July a programme review has been underway. Multiple rounds of capital challenge sessions have taken place with project managers and directors to:
 - re-assess schemes in light of the Council's updated outcomes, refreshed roadmap and six recovery priorities;
 - re-assess schemes in light of the effects of the global pandemic on deliverability and affordability;
 - ascertain more realistic budget profiles based on expected delivery timescales and to ensure resources are in place to deliver them;
 - review the overall programme to achieve a more even investment profile across the years, to ensure it is realistic and affordable as a whole;
 - consider whether any schemes can be stopped or paused;
 - consider whether any schemes should be subject to a viable business case assessment;
- 7.4 This has led to some schemes being deleted from the capital investment programme whilst others have been moved to the 'subject to viable business cases' section below the main programme. These schemes can be brought up into the main programme at the appropriate time in line with the approach where schemes can enter the programme during the financial year and not just annually at budget setting. This approach should ensure that the programme is affordable, deliverable and focussed on the Council's key priorities.
- 7.5 The resulting requested changes to the capital investment programme for 2020/21 and future years are included in section 3 of appendix 2.
- 7.6 Just over a quarter of the programme is financed by Government grants and external developer and other contributions and at the end of November over three quarters had been received. The rest of the programme is funded by capital receipts, the use of reserves or by borrowing. Funding schemes by borrowing has a revenue consequence of approximately £70k for every £1M borrowed. In order to be affordable these revenue implications need to be sustainable in the medium and longer term.

8 Capital – Budget Updates and Projected Outturn

- In March 2020 the Council agreed a capital investment programme budget for 2020/21 of £108.6M. In June 2020 the outturn for 2019/20 showed a final spend of £59.5M against a revised budget of £71.0M, an underspend of £11.5M. The proposed budget carry forwards, accelerated delivery requests and other budget re-profiles and amendments initially resulted in a revised budget for 2020/21 of over £124M. It was clear that the programme needed to be reduced and a preliminary review was conducted which concentrated on the key strategic schemes' ability to deliver in the new environment and taking into consideration the position on external funding aligned to those schemes. This reduced the 2020/21 budget to £94.6M at June Cabinet.
- 8.2 Despite the challenges to the delivery of the capital investment programme as a result of the global pandemic, the Council's ambition to deliver better outcomes is not diminished. So in line with the approach where schemes can enter the programme during the financial year and not just annually at budget setting, there were a number of priority projects that were approved at the June, July, September and November Cabinet meetings for inclusion into the capital investment programme. Also the Forum 2 scheme budget was removed as a result of the decision to bring this project to a conclusion. Together with budget re-profiles this had the net effect of decreasing the 2020/21 budget to £62.3M.
- 8.3 £27.4M of this budget is identified as strategic schemes such as the Airport Business Park, Southend Pier schemes and the Delaware and Priory new build.
- This report details the projected outturn position for 2020/21 based on information as at the end of November (period 8). The report includes details of progress in delivering the 2020/21 capital investment programme and in receiving external funding relating to that year.
- 8.5 Since November Cabinet the Investment Board has agreed some proposed new schemes can progress to Cabinet for consideration. The Council has also purchased the Victoria shopping centre as a strategic acquisition on the High Street and for the future regeneration benefits it offers through its proximity to Better Queensway. As a result of this and the ongoing review, this report includes any virements between schemes, re-profiles across years, new external funding, proposed new schemes, proposed scheme deletions and movements between the main programme and the 'subject to' section.
- The progress of schemes for 2020/21 is detailed in sections 1 and 2 of Appendix 2 with Section 3 setting out the resulting requests to:
 - Carry forward £3,605,000 of 2020/21 scheme budgets into future years;
 - Bring forward £905,000 of budget from future years into 2020/21 and £2,655,000 of budget from future years into 2021/22;
 - Add scheme budgets totalling £2,570,000 into 2020/21 and £109,000 into 2021/22 where new external funding has been received;
 - Add scheme budgets totalling £1,694,000 into 2020/21 and £121,000 into 2021/22 for new schemes and additions to the capital investment programme;
 - Action virements of budget between approved schemes;

- Remove £115,000 from 2020/21 and £246,000 from 2021/22 for scheme budgets no longer required;
- Transfer £10,900,000 from the 'Subject to Viable Business Case' section to the main Capital Investment Programme in 2020/21, £500,000 in 2021/22 and £500,000 in 2022/23;
- Transfer £714,000 from the main Capital Investment Programme to the 'Subject to Viable Business Case' section in 2021/22, £6,769,000 in 2022/23 and £685.000 in 2023/24:
- 8.7 As at the end of November the capital outturn for 2020/21 is currently estimated at £74,624,000.
- 8.8 The 2020/21 capital budget is part of the wider capital investment programme spanning several years. The table below shows the revised programme if all the above requests are approved:

	2020/21		-				
	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000)	£(000	£(000)
At November	62,275	66,766	46,356	17,010	21,978	0	214,385
Cabinet							
Amendments	12,349	2,326	(4,410)	(2,504)	(8,559)	8,663	7,865
Revised	74,624	69,092	41,946	14,506	13,419	8,663	222,250
programme							
General Fund	58,837	50,858	22,664	6,778	5,778	8,663	153,578
HRA	15,787	18,234	19,282	7,728	7,641	0	68,672

2020/21 capital expenditure to 31/12/2020: £44,175,000

For 2020/21 the revised budget includes the purchase of the Victoria Centre (£10.9M) and the inclusion of £3.2M of new budget for the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. Although these take the revised budget over £60M they should not affect the deliverability of the programme as the first is a one-off purchase and the second relates to grant monies that have to be spent by March 2021. More details of these new budgets can be seen in Appendix 2.

For 2021/22 the revised budget includes £6.7M for the Priory New Build and £5.6M for the Airport Business Park launchpad. Although these take the revised budget over £60M they should not affect the deliverability of the programme as they are part of on-going projects that are delivering at pace.

9 Other Options

9.1 The Council could choose to monitor its budgetary performance against an alternative timeframe but it is considered that the current reporting schedule provides the appropriate balance to allow strategic oversight of the budget by members and to also formally manage the Council's exposure to financial risk. More frequent monitoring is undertaken by officers and considered by individual service Directors and the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) including the implementation of any necessary remedial actions.

10 Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 The regular reporting of Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring information provides detailed financial information to members, senior officers and other interested parties on the financial performance of the Council. It sets out the key variances being reported by budget holders and the associated management action being implemented to address any identified issues.
- 10.2 It also informs decision making to ensure that the Council's priorities are delivered within the approved budget provision.
- 10.3 It is important that any adverse variances are addressed in order for the Council to remain within the approved budget provision or where this cannot be achieved by individual service management action, alternative proposals are developed and solutions proposed which will address the financial impact. Members will have a key role in approving any actions if the alternative proposals represent significant changes to the service delivery arrangements originally approved by them.

11 Corporate Implications

11.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The robustness of the Council's budget monitoring processes and the successful management of in-year spending pressures are key determinants in maintaining the Council's reputation for strong financial probity and effective stewardship. This approach also enables the Council to redirect and prioritise resources to ensure the delivery of agreed outcomes for the benefit of local residents, local businesses and visitors to Southend-on-Sea.

11.2 Financial Implications

As set out in the body of the report and accompanying appendices.

11.3 Legal Implications

The report provides financial performance information. It is good governance and sensible management practice for the Council to consider monitoring information in relation to plans and budgets that it has adopted.

Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the Council as a best value authority to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". Monitoring of financial and other performance information is an important way in which that obligation can be fulfilled.

The Council is required by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council is also required by section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 to monitor its budget and take corrective action, as necessary. The Council's chief finance officer has established financial procedures to ensure the Council's proper financial administration. These include procedures for effective budgetary control. To comply with these best practice arrangements, it is important that Cabinet receive information and comment accordingly on the performance of the revenue and capital budgets as set out in the report.

11.4 People Implications

None arising from this report

11.5 Property Implications

None arising from this report

11.6 Consultation

None arising from this report

11.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

None arising from this report

11.8 Risk Assessment

Sound budget monitoring processes underpin the Council's ability to manage and mitigate the inherent financial risks associated with its budget, primarily caused by the volatility of service demand, market supply and price.

The primary mitigation lies with the expectation on CMT and Directors to continue to take all appropriate action to keep costs down and optimise income. Any adverse variances will require the development of remedial in year savings plans and appropriate spending reductions wherever possible. The ultimate back-stop mitigation would be to draw on reserves to rebalance the budget, but this will only be done at year end and will only be considered should all other in year measures fail.

With the likely scale of funding pressures and future resource reductions continuing, it is important that the Council holds a robust position on reserves and maintains the ability to deal positively with any issues that arise during this and future financial years.

11.9 Value for Money

The approved budget reflects the Council's drive to improve value for money and to deliver significant efficiencies in the way it operates. Effectively monitoring the delivery of services within the budget helps to highlight areas of concern and to assist in the achievement of improved value for money.

11.10 Community Safety Implications

None arising from this report

11.11 Environmental Impact

None arising from this report

12 Background Papers

Approved 2020/21 Budget – Report to Council 20 February 2020 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25 Resourcing Better Outcomes – Financial Performance Reports Period 4 (Cabinet - September 2020) and Period 6 (Cabinet – November 2020)

13 Appendices

Appendix 1 Period 8 – November 2020 Revenue Budget Performance 2020/21

Appendix 2 Period 8 – November 2020 Capital Investment Programme Performance 2020/21





Appendix 1

Budget Monitoring & Reporting 2020/2021

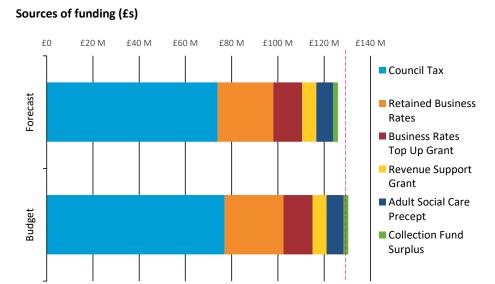
Period 8 - November 2020 Revenue Budget Performance





Summary

Last Reported Variance £M	Portfolio	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
2.000	Leader: Housing, ICT, Revenues & Benefits	17.295	19.459	2.164
3.622	Deputy Leader: Assets, Highways and Transport	4.799	8.234	3.435
1.173	Business, Culture and Tourism	4.914	5.951	1.037
4.862	Children and Learning	31.505	36.168	4.663
0.045	Community Safety and Customer Contact	4.310	4.349	0.039
1.829	Environment and Planning	18.480	20.299	1.819
3.822	Health and Adult Social Care	38.738	41.576	2.838
17.353		120.041	136.036	15.995
(0.360)	Corporate Budgets	25.209	24.878	(0.331)
16.993		145.250	160.914	15.664
0.000	Contribution to / (from) earmarked reserves	(8.577)	(8.577)	0.000
0.000	Revenue Contribution to Capital	0.363	0.363	0.000
(2.683)	COVID-19 Income Compensation	0.000	(4.154)	(4.154)
(13.007)	Non Service Specific Grants	(6.607)	(19.514)	(12.907)
1.303	TOTAL	130.429	129.032	(1.397)
4.600	Funding (including Collection Fund)	(130.429)	(125.979)	4.450
5.903		0.000	3.053	3.053



This detailed financial performance report for 2020/21 builds on the information provided at both Period 4 and Period 6 and summarises the forecast position as at the end of November 2020 (Period 8). All local authorities right across the country continue to wrestle with the unprecedented circumstances and challenges caused by the impact of COVID-19 on both their operations and finances. All services continue to be directly or indirectly affected by the pandemic. Our understanding and confidence in predictions, spending patterns, income activity levels and behaviours were increasing each week/month as further data became available up to Period 6. The recent expansion in the number of positive cases nationally and locally though, combined with the uncertanty of the impact of the latest lockdown measures and tier system has now added even more complexity and challenge in accurately predicting the financial forecast by the end of the year. At the time of writing this report we are still awaiting some detailed information from the Spending Review 2020, particularly the guidance on how the new 75% support for irrecoverable losses will be calculated and the detailed technical guidance to enable the spreading of Collection Fund deficits over three years. These assessments have therefore been excluded from this report.

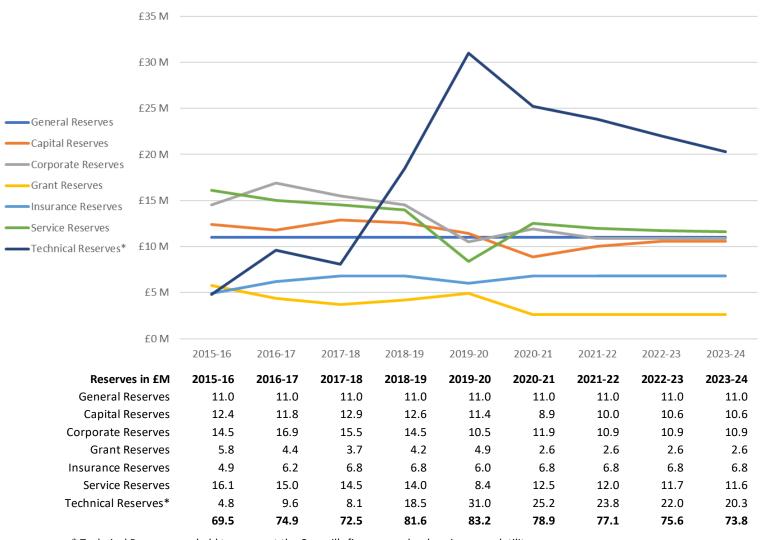
The COVID-19 Income Compensation line (£4.154m) now includes our 2nd claim for the period August - November 2020. The non-service specific grants positive variance of (£12.907M) is the remaining amount of unapplied COVID-19 emergency grant that we have received. The funding line variance of £4.450M highlights the net negative impact on our Collection Fund for additional eligible residents in receipt of support from our Local Council Tax Support Scheme and reduced collection levels for Business Rates and Council Tax. The situation is estimated to improve slightly from Period 6 but this assumes that there continues to be a positive local response from residents and businesses to recent reminders for non-payment. The situation will be continually monitored and a further assessment will be undertaken when Government guidance on Collection Fund accounting treatment is received.

In conclusion, and despite the enormous effects locally of COVID-19 and the corresponding financial impact, the Council remains in a relatively strong position compared to many other upper tier authorities across the country. This is because of its level of sensible reserves, financial resilience, and ability to cope with unexpected challenges.

Reserves

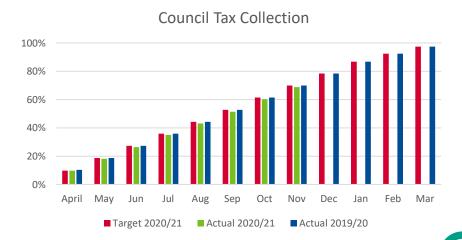
The Council maintains General Fund reserves at £11.0M in line with the Medium Term Financial Forecast. This provides a working cashflow balance and allows a degree of financial security in the case of unexpected events or emergencies.

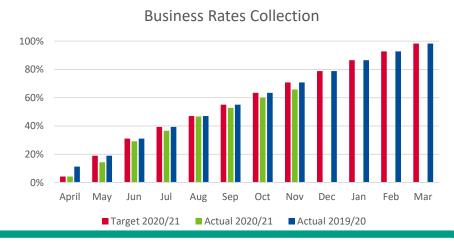
In addition,
Earmarked Reserves
are set aside to fund
future projects and
to mitigate specific
risk. The level of
these reserves will
fluctuate as grants
are received, risk is

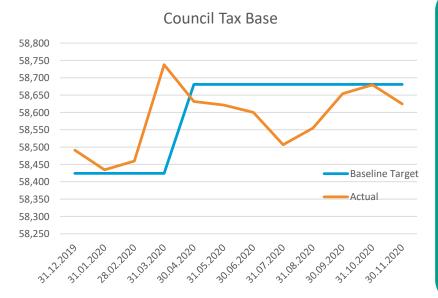


^{*} Technical Reserves are held to even out the Council's finances and reduce in year volatility

Collection Rates







Collection rates for the current year are below the monthly target on both Council Tax (1.1% below) and Business Rates (5.0% below). This reduction in performance and impact on the collection fund is directly due to COVID-19. The Council has not taken any formal enforcement action during the pandemic. Focus has been placed on providing advice and financial support to eligible residents and businesses.

The Council Tax Baseline also reflects a decrease of 56.26 band D properties. The Local Council Tax Support Scheme has increased significantly since the setting of the tax base due to COVID-19 with an increase of 1,266 band D equivalents in claimants (including removal of 889 band D equivalents due to the £150 hardship scheme).

The NDR Baseline is reflecting a decrease of £12.6m, however this is covered by the increased S31 grant received from Government to compensate the council for the passporting on of increased rate relief to elligible businesses due to COVID-19.

Leader: Housing, ICT, Revenues & Benefits

27.90%

of Total Gross Revenue Service Budget

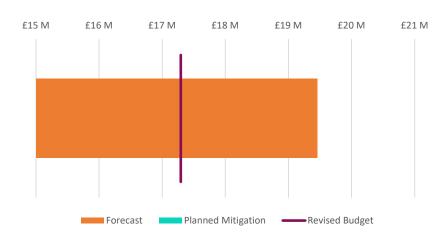
£2.2M

Forecast Adverse Variance

0.68%

Variance as % of Total Gross Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.593	Housing	3.439	4.093	0.654
0.294	ICT	3.249	3.476	0.227
(0.050)	Legal and Democratic Services	2.916	2.866	(0.050)
0.160	Other Services	4.849	4.944	0.095
1.003	Revenues and Benefits	1.129	2.367	1.238
0.000	Strategic Planning and Policy	1.713	1.713	0.000
2.000		17.295	19.459	2.164
1.365	Gross Expenditure	88.478	89.850	1.372
0.635	Gross Income	(71.183)	(70.391)	0.792
2.000		17.295	19.459	2.164



All rough sleepers have been placed in temporary accommodation during the period of the COVID-19 emergency. This has resulted in a pressure on Bed and Breakfast spend. The team are moving clients on to permanent accommodation where possible. The anticipated pressure assumes the numbers of rough sleepers in Bed and Breakfast will be reducing over the course of the financial year as more rough sleepers move on to permanent accommodation.

The pressure on temporary accommodation is being slightly offset by an underspend in the Private Sector Housing team due to vacancies. There is an ogoing recruitment drive to try to fill these vacant posts, together with the potential of engaging agency cover to clear the current backlog of work.

The approved ICT restructure has required a significant recruitment campaign to attract the necessary skills, expertise, and experience to the Council and this has resulted in a one-off cost to engage with the specialist market effectively. To ensure robust network connectivity during the extended period of working remotely there have also been additional one-off costs to bring equipment and support arrangements up to date.

Due to COVID-19 there has been an embargo on the issuing of any summons for unpaid council tax and business rates debts. As a direct result of no court appearances there is now £0.75m less income received by the Council from court fees. There is also an unfunded gap between the subsidy received from central government and the value of benefits paid to claimants. COVID-19 has seen an increase in the number of working age benefit claimants and this pressure may increase further by the end of the year. Welfare reform changes over the past few years have been managed via our reserves. There will now be a requirement for a permanent increase in the Council's revenue base to deal with the net expenditure that remains after applying the benefits subsidy received from the Government. This increase will form part of the development of the Council's future Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Deputy Leader: Assets, Highways and Transport

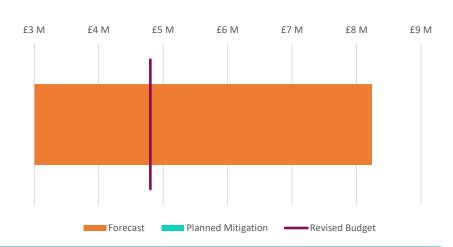
of Total Gross Revenue

Service Budget

6.22%

Last Revised **Forecast** Variance Outturn Service Area Budget Reported £Μ Variance £M £Μ £Μ 0.052 Asset and Facilities Management (0.398)(0.351)0.047 (0.230)**Financial Services** 3.676 3.411 (0.265)1.521 5.174 3.800 **Highways and Transport** 3.653 3.622 8.234 4.799 3.435 20.015 0.321 **Gross Expenditure** 19.736 0.279 3.301 Gross Income (14.937)(11.781)3.156 3.622 4.799 8.234 3.435

f3.4M



1.08%

Variance as % of Total Gross

Budget Envelope

COVID-19 and the associated lockdown and social restrictions have placed an enormous strain on the parking income of the authority during the traditionally busiest time of the year for the town. A reduction in travel during the first lockdown resulted in a substantial loss in both pay and display income and enforcement activity. The November restrictions have further exacerbated this income loss. There are also a number of expenditure pressures in the parking service including variable contractor works, security costs and the merchant and transaction fees in relation to cashless parking solutions.

Forecast Adverse Variance

There continues to be increased costs associated with the security and cleaning in the Travel Centre. Street lighting columns and other street furniture are replaced when damaged and although there is a continued increase in insurance claims to recover monies where possible there remains a financial pressure in the service overall.

Fixed term interim resources have been deployed to deliver on a range of new policies and strategies within parking and transport. Once these new arrangements are in place the recently approved highways and transport staffing structure will be implemented and the temporary staffing pressures should subside.

The overall Financial Services position has improved from earlier in the year due to the rescheduling of some audit work into 2021/22 and the intentional holding of several vacant posts to help with the financial challenge across the wider Council business areas.

Business, Culture and Tourism

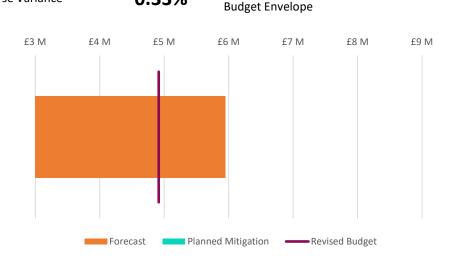
2.32%

of Total Gross Revenue

Service Budget

Last Revised Forecast Variance Reported Budget Outturn Service Area £Μ Variance £M £Μ £Μ 0.469 3.639 4.149 0.510 Culture 0.019 **Economic Development and Regeneration** 0.594 0.559 (0.035)0.684 0.681 1.244 0.563 Tourism 1.172 4.914 5.952 1.038 (0.052)**Gross Expenditure** 7.366 7.326 (0.040)1.224 Gross Income (2.452)(1.374)1.078 1.172 4.914 5.952 1.038

£1.0M



0.33%

Variance as % of Total Gross

The financial pressures faced within the culture and tourism service are entirely due to COVID-19. Our leisure provider has been fully supported during the pandemic and as a result no management fee will be received by the council in 2020/21. There has also been minimal income received from any libraries this financial year to date. The tourism sector was badly affected at the beginning of the pandemic but had started to show signs of recovery, before the latest lockdown. As a result of the pier being closed for the first quarter of the year and a reduced and socially distanced train service being in operation thereafter, there will be a significant reduction in admission income collected on this key tourist attraction.

Forecast Adverse Variance

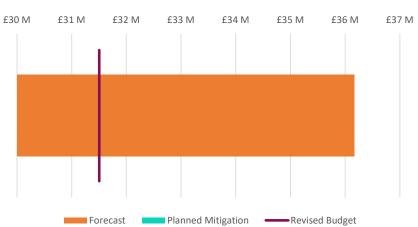
Children and Learning

28.67% of Total Gross Revenue Service Budget

£4.7M Forecast Adverse Variance

Variance as % of Total Gross Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
4.776	Childrens Social Care	23.529	28.065	4.536
0.004	Education and Schools	4.928	4.986	0.058
0.000	Maintained Schools Delegated	0.000	0.000	0.000
0.082	Youth and Family Support	3.047	3.116	0.069
4.862		31.504	36.167	4.663
4.685	Gross Expenditure	90.916	95.189	4.273
0.177	Gross Income	(59.412)	(59.022)	0.390
4.862		31.504	36.167	4.663



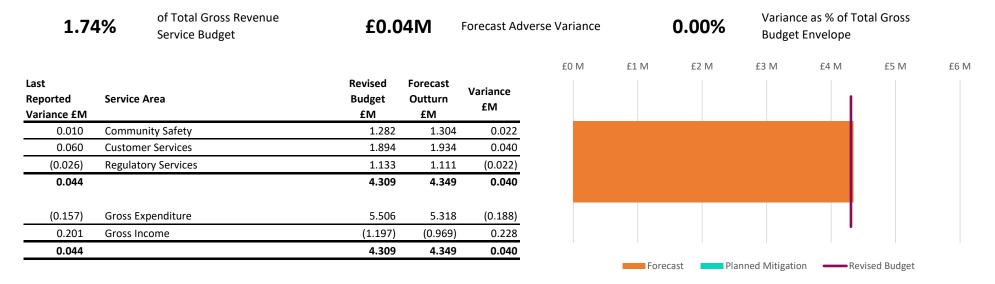
1.47%

As expected, Children & Learning Services remains a significant pressure area and is currently forecasting a net overall overspend of circa £4.7M, excluding the one off £3M put aside to support the service as part of the approved 2020/21 budget. Looked After Children (LAC) numbers have currently reduced slightly from their peak in 2019/20, following three consecutive years of increases. This reduction has not yet been experienced on our LAC external care placements though. This is the most expensive provision and in 2019/20 the average number was 81 cases. As reported at Period 6 there were 100 ongoing external care packages, at Period 8 this has now reduced to 92. This is a positive decrease of 8 placements (5 external fostering and 3 external residential care) as some children have either returned home, been successfully placed in adoption or moved onto supported accommodation. External care placements remain the most significant cause of the cost pressures but there is also continued spending pressures on the leaving care and unaccompanied asylum seeker care placements too. Pressures on social work staffing (although reduced from 2019/20) and independent professional assessment fees are also having an impact. Like nearly every service area there are also increased costs related to COVID-19 resulting from both placement extensions and additional staffing to respond to the crisis. COVID-19 has also naturally impacted on some areas of our traded income activity with Schools.

It is positive for the financial position that the LAC numbers have currently reduced, and this is benefiting the in-house care provision and will be assisting to mitigate previous in-house fostering capacity issues. The service has also now reduced its reliance on agency staff which is again having some positive impact within the financial forecasts.

The intention to continue to build capacity within the in-house foster care provision remains as a key priority. This will not only improve the outcomes for the child, but also help to alleviate external care spending pressures moving forward. There is always a risk to these forecasts that one or two extra residential or additional secured placements can have a significant cost impact and could potentially increase the current predicted level of spending forecasts considerably.

Community Safety and Customer Contact



Due to the restrictions on wedding services there has been a significant reduction in the use of our wedding venues in 2020/21 resulting in a £105k loss to fees and charges. A number of these services have been re-scheduled for future years but the opportunity to generate revenue from these venues has now passed for this financial year, resulting in a loss of income.

Staffing vacancies in Customer Services are off-setting part of the loss in income, however 4.0 FTE of the vacancies relate to posts that previously provided Customer Services to South Essex Homes and the contractual requirements have been reduced which will mean less fees and charges income for Customer Services in the future. Overall the contract changes result in a net £15k in year saving.

Environment and Planning

7.60%

of Total Gross Revenue Service Budget

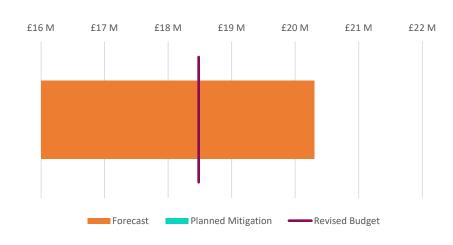
£1.8M

Forecast Adverse Variance

0.37%

Variance as % of Total Gross Budget Envelope

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.013	Cemeteries and Crematorium	(1.623)	(1.584)	0.039
0.023	Energy	0.122	0.144	0.022
0.265	Flooding	0.401	0.595	0.194
0.209	Parks and Open Spaces	4.510	4.714	0.204
0.148	Planning	1.097	1.285	0.188
1.172	Waste and Street Scene	13.973	15.145	1.172
1.830		18.480	20.299	1.819
1.573	Gross Expenditure	24.090	25.633	1.543
0.257	Gross Income	(5.610)	(5.334)	0.276
1.830		18.480	20.299	1.819



Storms early in 2020 have resulted in damage along our shoreline, both immediately and via increased repairs and maintenance identified during inspections of the coastline. This running list of repairs across one of our most valuable assets continues to result in a budget pressure for the service.

Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions in place at the beginning of the year regarding organised outdoors sports there has been a reduction in the income received from sports pitches and park event bookings. There was also a reduction in the number of planning and building applications particularly in the first two months of the year resulting in a further reduction of income for the authority. Building Control income has also suffered considerably due to the recent November lockdown.

As a result of the measures implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19, residents have now remained at home for a substantial period of time. Many people are also working from home now and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. One by-product of this change in how people are living is a significant increase in the volume of household waste which is being collected and disposed of. As a waste disposal authority, the financial consequences of this increase is borne by the Council.

Health and Adult Social Care

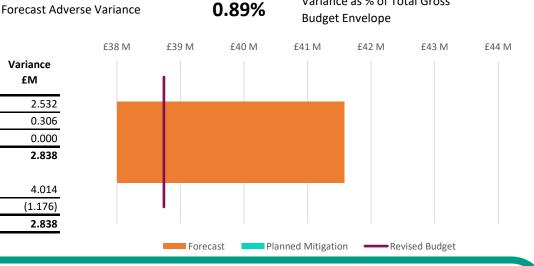
25.56%

of Total Gross Revenue

Service Budget

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
3.523	Adult Social Care	37.914	40.446	2.532
0.303	Health	0.127	0.433	0.306
(0.004)	Voluntary and Community Services	0.697	0.697	0.000
3.822		38.738	41.576	2.838
3.358	Gross Expenditure	81.052	85.066	4.014
0.464	Gross Income	(42.314)	(43.490)	(1.176)
3.822		38.738	41.576	2.838

f2.8M



Variance as % of Total Gross

Despite a major improvement from the forecast position at Period 6, there continues to be significant pressures on our range of Adult Social Care services, with £2.5M being the forecast overspend as at Period 8. The main contributary factors for the improving financial position include an increase in the number of packages of care being pausedby people or their families as they are being supported in other ways during the pandemic, and the utilisation of additional financial support provided for COVID-19 related challenges across the health and social care system. The main pressures that remain are on Older People's services. Extra investment was provided as part of setting the budget for 2020/21 but the impact of COVID-19 and the additional demands and response to the crisis has also made it very difficult to fully implement previously established recovery plans and develop new mitigation proposals. Extra investment has also been made into the provider market as part of our COVID-19 response.

There also remains a significant pressure on the Learning Disabilities (LD) service. In 2019/20 we saw an increasing demand on LD Supported Living placements, more than the usual transitions increase. We had more families where parents were older, and it was necessary for Social Care to support their loved ones to move to an environment that continued to provide the appropriate level of support but also maximised their independence. This reported pressure anticipates further demand increases in 2020/21 and this is being closely reviewed. There is also a pressure on services provided to those with a social care need but have no recourse to public funds.

In response to the COVID-19 emergency additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been made available to all care providers across the borough. This has

Housing Revenue Account

(£0.6M) Forecast Favourable Variance

-2.7%

Variance as % of Gross Operating Expenditure

Last Reported Variance £M	Service Area	Revised Budget £M	Forecast Outturn £M	Variance £M
0.308	Gross Expenditure	23.335	23.543	0.208
(0.736)	Gross Income	(28.522)	(29.359)	(0.837)
(0.428)	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE	(5.186)	(5.815)	(0.629)
0.000	Revenue Contribution to Capital	8.708	8.708	0.000
0.428	Contribution to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	(3.522)	(2.893)	0.629
0.000	TOTAL	0.000	0.000	(0.000)

HRA Reserves 2020/21	Opening Balance	Forecast Movement	Closing Balance
Capital Investment Reserve	23.2	(3.0)	20.2
Major Repairs Reserve	8.2	(1.3)	6.9
Repairs Contract Pension Reserve	0.6	0.1	0.7
HRA Reserve	3.5	0.0	3.5
HRA Reserves Total	35.5	(4.2)	31.3

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 the current forecast for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) indicates that it will have a net surplus of (£629,000) in 2020/21, a positive variance of around (-2.7%) of gross operating expenditure. It must be noted that there is a risk to the levels of rent arrears due to the impact of COVID-19 on tenants' income and their ability to pay. An estimate of £250,000 anticipated pressure has been built into the current forecast and used to increase our provision for potential bad and doubtful debts. The situation will continue to be closely monitored. There has also been extra cost pressures on staffing required to clear the backlog of works on voids and gas appliances directly due to the impact of COVID-19. There are other potential expenditure implications which are still under discussion with South Essex Homes.

The anticipated rental income is now estimated to be circa £800,000 higher than originally budgeted. This position is predominantly due to increased levels of rental income received as a result of a lower level of voids within the housing stock. This demonstrates good housing management practice. As the acquisitions programme progresses into quarter 4 there is also an anticipated increase in the numbers of units within the housing stock that will further increase the HRA's rental income stream in the future.

Further work has now been completed on the financinng of the Council's overall Capital Programme for 2020/21 and it is now expected to result in an estimated underspend of around £160,000 for the HRA based on the revised internal borrowing requirement.

It is currently anticipated that any surplus will be transferred to the HRA Capital Investment Reserve at the year-end for future planned investment into the housing stock. Potential to use some of the forecast surplus to fund additional revenue contributions to capital is also under consideration.

Appendix 2





Budget Monitoring & Reporting 2020/21 Period 8 – November 2020 Capital Investment Programme Performance





Capital Investment Programme Performance Report

1. Overall Budget Performance by Investment Area

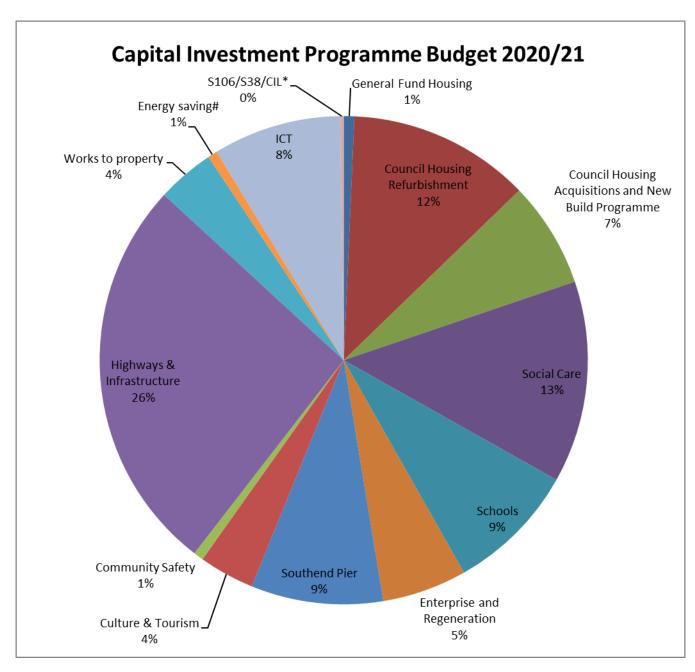
The revised Capital budget for the 2020/21 financial year is £62.275 million which includes all changes agreed at November Cabinet. Actual capital spend at 30th November is £28.299million representing approximately 45% of the revised budget. This is shown in Section 4. (Outstanding creditors totalling £0.339million have been removed from this figure).

The expenditure to date has been projected to year end and the outturn position is forecast to reflect the Project Manager's realistic expectation. This is broken down by type of investment area as follows:

Investment Area	Revised Budget 2020/21	Outturn to 30 th November 2020/21	Current Variance to 30 th November 2020/21	Expected outturn 2020/21	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2020/21	Amended Budget 2021/22 to 2025/26#
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Housing	435	286	(149)	435	0	4,513
Council Housing Refurbishment	7,518	3,369	(4,149)	7,518	0	30,913
Council Housing Acquisitions & New Build Programme	4,371	1,598	(2,773)	8,269	3,898	21,972
Social Care	8,319	2,620	(5,699)	5,819	(2,500)	6,735
Schools	5,387	3,915	(1,472)	5,082	(305)	3,415
Enterprise & Regeneration	3,491	2,919	(572)	14,491	11,000	26,581
Southend Pier	5,447	2,112	(3,335)	5,365	(82)	14,383
Culture & Tourism	2,286	1,093	(1,193)	2,216	(70)	582
Community Safety	410	99	(311)	410	0	2,265
Highways & Infrastructure	16,415	7,126	(9,289)	16,917	502	16,912
Works to Property	2,370	1,604	(766)	2,370	0	13,917
Energy Saving	397	10	(387)	333	(64)	1,818
ICT	5,277	1,492	(3,785)	5,247	(30)	3,012
S106/S38/CIL	152	56	(96)	152	0	608
Total	62,275	28,299*	(33,976)	74,624	12,349	147,626

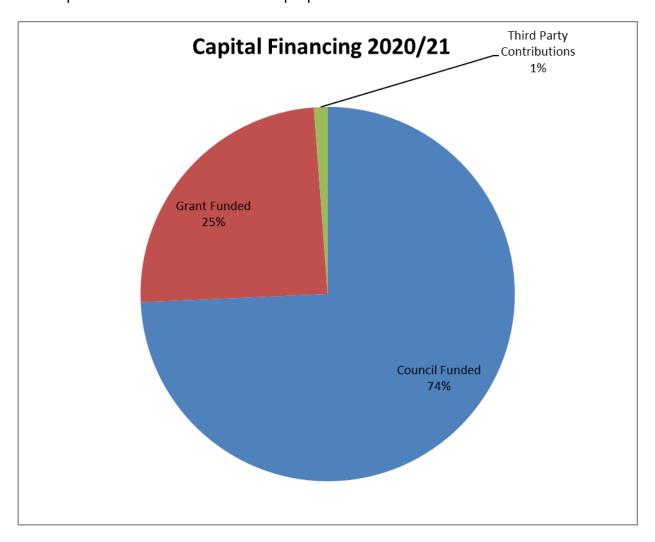
[#] These figures assume that all proposed changes in this report are agreed.

^{*}Outturn to 31st December 2020: £44,175,000



^{*}S160/S38/CIL percentage has been rounded from 0.24%

The capital investment for 2020/21 is proposed to be funded as follows:



^{*} Third party contributions are non-grant funding from external sources such as S106 contributions.

Of the £16.003million of external funding expected, £12.574million had been received by 30th November. The outstanding amounts mainly relate to Local Growth Fund schemes.

Progress of Strategic schemes

Successful and timely delivery of the capital investment programme is a key part of achieving the Southend 2050 ambition and delivering the outcomes.

Although the revised capital investment programme is £62.275million, £27.430million of this relates to strategic schemes and approximately 55% spend has been achieved to date for these strategic schemes.

Investment Area	Scheme	Project code	Revised Budget 2020/21 £000	Outturn to 30th November 2020/21 £000	Expected outturn 2020/21 £000	Latest Expected Variance to Revised Budget 2020/21 £000	Budget 2021/22 to 2025/26 £000
Strategic sche	emes						
Enterprise and Regeneration	Airport Business Park (including Local Growth Fund)	C10261	1,500	1,222	1,500	-	10,501
Enterprise and Regeneration	Airport Business Park - Acquisition	C11088	200	-	200	-	1,000
Enterprise and Regeneration	Better Queensway - Programme Management	C10747	641	447	641	-	830
Enterprise and Regeneration	Better Queensway - Loan to Joint Venture	C11069	1,150	1,250	1,250	100	13,000
Enterprise and Regeneration	Victoria Centre	New	-	-	10,900	10,900	1,000
Social Care	Delaware and Priory New Build	C10621	7,199	2,485	4,699	(2,500)	6,700
Schools	School Improvement and Provision of School Places	C10475	3,689	3,275	3,689	-	600
Southend Pier	Southend Pier schemes		5,447	2,112	5,365	(82)	14,383
Works to Property	Civic Campus - Efficient use of Space	C11020	133	95	133	-	214
Highways and Infrastructure	Local Growth Fund - A127 Growth Corridor	C10699	3,272	2,559	3,272	-	6,929
Council Housing Acquisitions	HRA Affordable Housing Acquisitions Programme	C11044	3,500	1,376	3,500	-	5,976
Council Housing New Build Programme	Construction of New Housing on HRA Land	C10684	499	108	499	-	13,140
Council Housing Acquisitions	Acquisition of Tower Block Leaseholds - Queensway		200	107	200	-	2,683
Total Strategic			27,430	15,036	35,848	8,418	76,956
Other scheme	s						
-	estment schemes		34,845	13,263	38,776	3,931	70,670
TOTAL SCHE	MES		62,275	28,299	74,624	12,349	147,626

Enterprise and Regeneration

All enabling works are now completed for the Airport Business Park. Procurement is also underway for construction of The Launchpad with tenders due for return December 2020 and contract award planned for February 2021. Works continue for the cycleways proposals and we are awaiting responses from Essex County Council in relation to the Bus Services and Bus Stop locations.

The bid has now been submitted to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) for 'top-up' funding from the Local Growth Fund and a decision is awaited.

As part of this report £2.9m is being moved from the main programme in 2022/23 to the 'subject to viable business case' section so that elements of the scheme budget can be reviewed.

The Better Queensway LLP Business Plan was approved through Full Council on 10th December and is now in place to see the project through the first phase of works anticipated 2021 -2026.

The new Business Plan is not requesting any new funds, the LLP will draw down the rest of the pre agreed £15m, use the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and SELEP money and then revert to senior debt. The HIF profile is subject to change and the budgets will be moved to the main programme at the appropriate time.

As part of this report £100k has been included as an accelerated delivery for 2020/21 in relation to Better Queensway - Loan to Joint Venture for funds that were drawn down earlier than planned as part of the joint venture.

Social Care

Whilst works on site are progressing for the Priory New Build, issues with the contractor and design team are continuing.

The new care facility will not be handed over on 21 April 2021 as previously forecast with handover of the new building likely to occur between July and September 2021.

As a result of this delay included within this report is a carry forward request for £2.5M of budget moving from 2020/21 to 2021/22.

Schools

St Thomas More has now confirmed the timeline and costings for the final phase of work to the hard standing/play area damaged during the building works and this will all complete this financial year. Chase School are on the last areas of fit out and final developer payments and are reporting a small overspend which we are currently challenging, and no further payments are being made until we have sight of their business case and a full spend breakdown.

Southend Pier

Work on the Pier Pavilion Platform has been halted and any unused budget released. Staff resources from this project have been diverted in the short term to the works on the Inner Pier Head and internal modifications to the Royal Pavilion. Other works have continued on at a good pace due to mild weather so far.

Works continue on the Bearing Refurbishment (Phase One) identifying which beams can be repaired. Preparation work has been carried out to scope a brief for the appointment of professional lead structural consultancy services for works on the pier head projects.

Works are continuing to progress to the revised schedule for the Pier Trains with rolling stock on schedule to be delivered to the pier post Easter 2021. Assembly is on track with components being painted within the factory. Works are also continuing well on the Prince George Extension (Phase 2).

As part of this report £238k is being removed from the programme. £131k of this is in relation to Southend Pier - Pier Entrance Enhancement as this project is now complete and so budget in 2021/22 is no longer required. £107k in 2020/21 relates to Southend Pier - Pier Pavilion Platform Detailed Design (Gateway Review One) as this project is no longer going ahead.

An accelerated delivery request is also included for the Southend Pier - Pier Head development Phase 1 totalling £25k to allow preliminary works to start and be funded with the remainder of the project taking place in 2021/22.

Works to Property

The Civic Campus Efficient Use of Space scheme remains under review following COVID-19 and the change in operational requirements.

Highways and Infrastructure

Works continue to progress and in order to minimise delays to traffic, the contractor has been asked to maintain two lanes of traffic on the A127 as much as possible.

Works are continuing in Hobleythick Lane to construct the new pedestrian island involving a lane closure and an early warning is being raised with the contractor as they are behind programme. The contractor will soon commence work on the new dedicated left-hand slip into Rochford Road.

Air Quality real time monitoring has been extended until 31 December to help capture Covid-19 inferences and there are no proposals to extend this. Further real time monitoring will be undertaken for 6 months post construction. Air Quality diffusion tube monitoring is ongoing.

The Public Liaison Officer is keeping local businesses, residents and key stakeholders informed of the works. A newsletter has been issued to local businesses, residents and key stakeholders.

Council Housing Acquisitions and New Build Programme

The Housing Construction Scheme Phase 3 has progressed to the planning application submission stage and further information has been requested as part of the planning

process for 2 further sites. Additional site investigation is also underway (soak away testing) to form part of the planning process.

Housing Construction Scheme - Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Archer Avenue – the procurement timetable for this scheme has been extended to allow for further return interrogation and clarifications. MMC Saxon – the procurement timetable has also been extended as well as the return deadline in order to account for new documentation which has now been uploaded to the tender pack.

Following a further detailed review of the Housing Construction Schemes included within this report is the request to carry forward in total £3.5M in relation to Housing Construction Schemes, Phase 3, 4 and MMC from 2021/22 to 2022/23.

As part of this report an accelerated delivery is requested for £700k of funds to be accelerated to financial year 2020/21 in relation to the Housing Construction Scheme - Land Assembly Fund (S106). These funds are to be used to fund a new capital project Next Steps Accommodation Programme detailed later in this report.

Progress continues to move forward with the HRA Affordable Housing Acquisitions Programme with seven properties completing in this quarter and a further eleven currently with solicitors.

The Council has commenced its acquisition strategy and contacted Quantock leaseholders to initiate acquisitions/options discussions. One acquisition has taken place and two more potential acquisitions have been proposed. This will leave 14 leaseholds outstanding and budgets were carried forward at November cabinet as these leaseholds are unlikely to be acquired in this financial year.

2. Progress of other schemes for 2020/21

General Fund Housing

It is requested that the budget of £785k for Private Sector Housing Strategy be moved to the 'subject to viable business case' section as there is currently no policy or officers in place to deliver this.

For the Private Sector Housing Strategy - Empty Homes initiative a report elsewhere on this agenda provides details of the new projects in line with the budget profile, beginning 2021/22.

Expenditure for the Disabled Facilities Grant is now on target with the refreshed budget profile. We have received £204k additional external grant funding and this is included within this report.

Council Housing Refurbishment

HRA budgets are on track to spend in financial year 2020/21.

Balmoral Estate Improvement and Structural Works continue to progress, and South Essex homes are finalising the tender documentation and procurement path which although slightly delayed is anticipated to start in late February/ early March 2021 and the 2020/21 budget will be spent in year.

Works have progressed with the Sprinkler System Installation Pilot and this is now with the design engineers with fees being funded from this year's Fire Safety budget. This will allow South Essex Homes to procure the works in readiness for a start on site in the next financial year.

Council Housing Acquisitions and New Build Programme

Following a cabinet paper presented on 15th September, the Council has been successful in securing government grant funding for the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. This programme has the aim of providing both permanent and supported accommodation for rough sleepers and will support the work already done in the light of the emergency response to Covid-19.

A total of £3.198M is requested as part of this report to be added to the capital programme for 2020/21. The Council has secured £1.624M of external grant funding and the programme will also require alignment of £1.574M of HRA resources to support it, to be financed from HRA reserves. £700k will be redeployed from an existing budget financed by S106 monies to complete the project total of £3.898M. Therefore, a virement is included within the report reallocating £700k from Housing Construction Scheme - Land Assembly Fund (S106) to the Next Steps Accommodation Programme.

Social Care

A property has now been sourced and an offer accepted in relation the Children's Residential Care Provision. Work has taken place, an application for 'change of use' has been submitted and if agreed then the sale will go ahead.

Schools

It has now been confirmed that the Council will be the contractor for the works required at Chalkwell Hall Infants. Works include the replacement of classroom demountables and insulation improvements. Most works are now scheduled for 2021/22 therefore the budget of £305k is included as a carry forward request in this report resulting in a budget of £523k being available to spend in 2021/22. £109k of funding for this project will be provided by the school and is included within this report as new external funding.

A virement in relation to works required at Chalkwell Infants is also included in this report combining all 3 projects relating to Chalkwell Hall Infants together, to allow more effective project management and monitoring.

Culture and Tourism

It is requested that budgets in relation to Playground Gates and Relocation of Badger Sett, £20k and £50k respectively are carried forward into 2021/22. Works in relation to the Playground Gates are currently in procurement and therefore may delay delivery in 2020/21. We are still awaiting a licence from Natural England in relation to the relocation of the Badger Sett so these works may not start until the new year.

The Joint Theatres and Leisure Centres Asbestos scheme is in place to deal with any asbestos as and when it is found. It is requested that this budget totalling £115k be removed from the programme. If works are required budget is available within the priority works budget.

A further request to move £214k for the Cliffs Pavilion - External Refurbishment works to the 'subject to viable business case' section is included within this report as discussions are ongoing with HQ Theatres.

Remaining projects continue to progress with contactors on site. Works at the Cart and Wagon shed, a local heritage centre, have experienced a minor delay due to a need to apply for revised planning but are still on track to complete in 2020/21.

A review of the spend profile has resulted in £25k budget being moved from Palace Theatre - Power Supply Equipment to Cliffs Pavilion - Power Supply Equipment. A request for this virement is included within this report.

Community Safety

The CCTV Equipment Renewal project is now in stage 2 of procurement with the expectation of appointing in January 2021. Implementation will then begin in February 2021 confirming the budget profile of this project in the current financial year.

A number of projects are underway in relation to the Security Measures programme.

A Vehicle Dynamic Assessment has been completed for auto bollards in the high street and all locations have been assessed for appropriately rated bollards by the Highways contractor ATG. A survey of the cabling network in the High Street is currently taking place and once the outcome of this is known a time frame for the works can then be set out and the business case for any potential additional funds can be submitted for consideration.

A Vehicle Dynamic Assessment has also been completed of the central seafront area identifying the vulnerable locations and required product ratings. A Project Board has been set up to identify and progress the necessary highways works and to identify the products and measures that can be installed. This is likely to be a mix of bollards to control delivery access / static measures such as planters and seating areas / artistic installations. Once cost estimates are obtained, the Board will need to submit for consideration a business case for additional funds.

Highways and Infrastructure

The outcome of recent capital challenge meetings has led to the further review of some projects.

It is confirmed that all Local Transport Plan schemes are on track and will be spent by March 2021.

Parking schemes are on track and works relating to Signage Replacement is currently progressing through procurement and will be complete by April 2021 in time to support the new parking strategy.

In light of a review and updated project timescales for the Improving Resilience of the Borough to Flooding from Extreme Weather Events project a carry forward request of £125k is included within this report to 2021/22.

Orders have now been placed for the Gas Works Car Park project with design levels agreed. Works are due to commence mid-January. Therefore, as part of this report a carry forward request of £115k is included as it is expected that works may continue into 2021/22.

In line with grant conditions accelerated deliveries of £1.407M are requested for Belton Way Highways Protection and Bridge Strengthening - Challenge Fund to enable spend by September 2021 in line with the grant funding conditions. Whilst an extension has been requested for this funding, we are still awaiting a response. Under current conditions we

are about to go out to tender with clear plans in place to spend the grant within the required timelines.

It is requested that £3.869M for Coastal Defence (Shoebury Common Sea Defence Scheme) be transferred to the 'subject to viable business case' section from the main Capital Investment Programme. An outline Business case has been submitted and all budget in 2020/21 will be spent. Further detailed design and then construction is needed for future years.

£742k of new external funding has been received for Tranche 3 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund and a request to include this in 2020/21 has been included in this report.

Works to Property

Fire Improvement Works have been completed at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, Cliffs Pavilion, Belfairs Swim Centre and Chase Sports Centre. Further works are ongoing at the Civic Centre and Southend Adult Community College.

A number of projects have been completed in relation to the Property Refurbishment Programme which include Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, Southend Adult Community College, Southchurch Park Toilets, City Beach Fountain and light columns, Civic Centre (toilets) and Cliffs Pavilion (waterproofing works). Boiler works are also in progress at Unit 8 Coopers Way.

Virements included in this report include £20k allocated from Priority Works to Civic Plant Room, Heating & Hot Water, £33k to Southchurch Car Park - Land Contamination Works following issues identified once work had begun at Southchurch Park that could not be covered by existing budgets and £47k for Sea Wall Remedial Repairs.

Energy Saving

Following the recent capital challenge meetings budgets have been reviewed and as a result included within this report is a request to carry forward £136k. These are in relation to Real Time Air Quality Measurement £56k and Electronic Vehicle Projects £80k. Work programmes have been rescheduled into financial year 2021/22.

Work continues on the Schools and Buildings Solar PV projects and it has been confirmed that all grant-maintained schools are in scope for these works.

An accelerated delivery has also been requested for the value of £80k into 2020/21 for the Energy Efficiency Projects to enable the delivery of projects within this financial year.

A number of unused budgets totalling £8k have been removed from the programme as these projects have now completed.

ICT

The ICT capital programme is driving to support the authority's response to Covid-19 and more specifically to maintain and uplift remote working services.

Technical resources have now been committed for the remainder of 2020/21 and the purchase order for Technology Device Refresh has been placed. The majority of the financing for the ongoing IT projects is upfront with work continuing into 2021/22 for delivery and completion of the projects.

There is a request to Carry forward £150k from 2020/21 to 2021/22 for the ICT - Digital Enablement project. This is in relation the Priory New Build detailed in section 1 of this report. Due to the expected delay of handing over the new care facility, the associated update in technology will also now be delayed until 2021/22.

It is requested within this report that £400k for the Application Transformation project be moved from 2023/24 to the 'subject to viable business case' section as it is envisaged that these funds will be needed as part of the business case that will be put forward for further budget for operational capital such as licences. £1.353M is subject to an accelerated delivery request to meet sums that have already been contractually committed in 2020/21.

A Business Case was brought to Investment Board and approved to come forward to Cabinet for the implementation of ContrOCC portals for Children and Adults Social Care. The portals will link to the finance element of ContrOCC and will enable the streamlining of processes with the long-term view to maximise income for Social care. A number of manual processes will be replaced, and the implementation of the portals will enable customers to access their information online. An addition to the capital investment programme is included within this report for £120k in financial year 2020/21 and £121k in 2021/22 and will be funded from the General Fund reserves.

S106/S38/CIL

Various S106, S38 and CIL schemes have been reviewed and there are no plans for works to be carried out this financial year.

3. Requested Changes to the Capital Investment Programme

Carry Forwards to Future Years

Scheme		2020/21 Budget £000	2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Improving Resilience of the Borough to Floodii	ng from Extreme Weather Events	(125)	125				
	Chalkwell Hall Infants - New Classroom Demountables		5				
Chalkwell Hall Infants Energy Project		(300)	300				
Playground Gates		(20)	20				
Relocation of Badger Sett		(50)	50				
Real Time Air Quality Measurement - Feasibili	ity	(56)	56				
Electronic Vehicle Projects		(80)	80				
Delaware and Priory New Build		(2,500)	2,500				
Gas Works Car Park		(115)	115				
Disabled Facilities Grant						(1,459)	1,459
Better Queensway - Loan to Joint Venture						(7,100)	7,100
Disabled Facilities Grant		(204)					204
Housing Construction Scheme - Phase 3			(1,500)	1,500			
Housing Construction Scheme - Phase 4			(1,500)	1,500			
Housing Construction Scheme - Modern Metho	ods of Construction (MMC)		(500)	500			
ICT - Digital Enablement		(150)	150				
Total Carry Forwards		(3,605)	(99)	3,500	0	(8,559)	8,763

Accelerated Deliveries

Scheme		2020/21 Budget £000	2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Better Queensway - Loan to Joint Venture		100					(100)
Southend Pier - Pier Head development Pha	se 1	25	(25)				
Belton Way Highways Protection			990	(990)			
Bridge Strengthening - Challenge Fund			417	(417)			
Energy Efficiency Projects		80	(80)				
Housing Construction Scheme - Land Asse	mbley Fund (S106)	700		(234)	(466)		
ICT - Application Transformation			1,353		(1,353)		
Total Accelerated Deliveries		905	2,655	(1,641)	(1,819)	0	(100)

Removed Budgets

Scheme		2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Southend Pier - Pier Entrance Enhancement		(131)				
Southend Pier - Pier Pavilion Platform Detailed Design (Gateway Review	One) (107)	` ,				
Joint Theatres and Leisure Centres – Asbestos		(115)				
Civic Centre CHP/Lifts Feasibility	(3)					
Leigh Energy Appraisal	(3)					
Priory Park Workshop Lighting	(2)					
Total Schemes Removed from Programme	(115)	(246)	0	0	0	C

Virements

Scheme		2020/21 Budget	2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 and future years Budget
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Chalkwell Hall Infants replace relocatables (SE			(109)				
Chalkwell Hall Infants - New Classroom Demo	untables		409				
Chalkwell Hall Infants Energy Project			(300)				
Housing Construction Scheme - Land Assemb	oly Fund (S106)	(700)					
Next Steps Accommodation Programme		700					
Cliffs Pavilion - Power Supply Equipment		25					
Palace Theatre - Power Supply Equipment		(25)					
Virements already actioned							
Priority Works		(100)					
Civic Plant Room, Heating & Hot Water		20					
Southchurch Car Park - Land Contamination V	Vorks	33					
Sea Wall - Remedial Repairs		47					
Total Virements		0	0	0	0	0	0

New External Funding

Scheme		2020/21 Budget £000	2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Chalkwell Hall Infants replace relocatables (SB0	C 50%)		109				
Next Steps Accommodation Programme		1,624					
Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2)		742					
Disabled Facilities Grant		204					
Total New External Funding		2,570	109	0	0	0	0

Additions to the Programme

Scheme	2020/21 Budget £000	2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Next Steps Accommodation Programme	1,574					
ICT - Childrens and Adults Social Care - Implementation of ContrOCC modules	120	121				
Total Additions to the Programme	1,694	121	0	0	0	0

Transfer from 'Subject to Viable Business Case' to main Capital Investment Programme

Scheme		2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Victoria Centre	10,900	500	500			
Total Transfer from 'Subject to Viable Business Case' Section	10,900	500	500	0	0	0

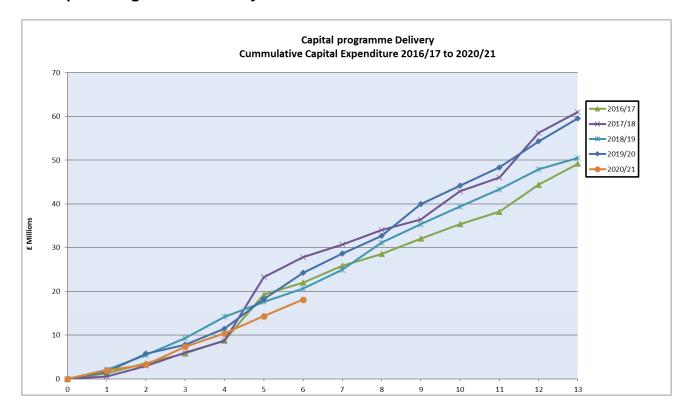
Transfer to 'Subject to Viable Business Case' from main Capital Investment Programme

Scheme		2020/21 Budget £000	2021/22 Budget £000	2022/23 Budget £000	2023/24 Budget £000	2024/25 Budget £000	2025/26 and future years Budget £000
Private Sector Housing Strategy			(250)	(250)	(285)		
Cliffs Pavilion - External Refurbishment works			(214)				
Coastal Defence (Shoebury Common Sea Defe	ence Scheme)		(250)	(3,619)			
ICT - Application Transformation					(400)		
Airport Business Park				(2,900)			
Total Transfer to 'Subject to Viable Business Cases'		0	(714)	(6,769)	(685)	0	(

4. Summary of Capital Expenditure at 30th November

	Original Budget 2020/21	Revisions	Revised Budget 2020/21	Actual 2020/21	Forecast outturn 2020/21	Forecast Variance to Year End 2020/21	% Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Fund Housing	1,375	(940)	435	286	435	-	66%
Council Housing Refurbishment	7,365	153	7,518	3,369	7,518	-	45%
Council Housing Acquisitions and New Build Programme	13,240	(8,869)	4,371	1,598	8,269	3,898	37%
Social Care	11,672	(3,353)	8,319	2,620	5,819	(2,500)	31%
Schools	5,564	(177)	5,387	3,915	5,082	(305)	73%
Enterprise & Regeneration	11,601	(8,110)	3,491	2,919	14,491	11,000	84%
Southend Pier	7,859	(2,412)	5,447	2,112	5,365	(82)	39%
Culture & Tourism	16,059	(13,773)	2,286	1,093	2,216	(70)	48%
Community Safety	1,700	(1,290)	410	99	410	-	24%
Highways & Infrastructure	21,738	(5,323)	16,415	7,126	16,917	502	43%
Works to Property	4,934	(2,564)	2,370	1,604	2,370	-	68%
Energy Saving	1,568	(1,171)	397	10	333	(64)	2%
ICT	4,220	1,057	5,277	1,492	5,247	(30)	28%
S106/S38/CIL	101	51	152	56	152		37%
	108,996	(46,721)	62,275	28,299	74,624	12,349	45%
Council Approved Original Budget - February 2020	108,996						
General Fund Housing amendments	(2,035)						
Council Housing & New Build Programme amendments	(7,356)						
Social Care amendments	(979)						
Schools amendments	(109)						
Enterprise & Regeneration amendments	(6,180)						
Southend Pier amendments	(2,103)						
Culture & Tourism amendments	(8,349)						
Community Safety amendments	(1,399)						
Highways & Infrastructure amendments	(1,522)						
Works to Property amendments	(2,270)						
Energy Saving amendments	(788)						
ICT amendments	1,044						
S106/S38/CIL amendments	(313)						
Carry Forward requests from 2019/20	9,805						
Accelerated Delivery requests to 2019/20	(2,528)	j					
Budget re-profiles (June Cabinet)	(24,063)		Actual co	mpared to Rev	isad Rudaat	enent ie	
New external funding	2,424		Actual Co	£28.299M		Sheur 19	
Council Approved Revised Budget - Nov 20	62,275						
Oddinon Approved Interised Budget - 1104 20	02,213						

5. Capital Programme Delivery



		Outturn
	Outturn	Against
Year	£m	Budget %
2016/17	48.8	89.0
2017/18	61.0	95.0
2018/19	50.9	96.7
2019/20	59.5	83.8

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Chief Executive and Town Clerk To Cabinet

On

14 January 2020

Report prepared by: Andrew Barnes – Head of Internal Audit

Corporate Risk Register - December 2020 update

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Policy & Resources, People and Place Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet Member – Cllr Woodley
A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

- 1 Purpose of Report
- 1.1 To consider the updated summary Corporate Risk Register.
- 2 Recommendations

That Cabinet considers the updated summary Corporate Risk Register and the position at December 2020 outlined in Appendix 1.

- 3 Summary Corporate Risk Register
- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Risk Register sets out the key risks to the successful delivery of the Council's corporate Southend 2050 Ambition and Outcomes and outlines the key management arrangements in place to mitigate and reduce risks, or maximise opportunities.
- 3.2 Updates on the Corporate Risk Register are discussed with and reported to Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the summary position is reported to Cabinet twice a year in June and January. The updated position on each risk or opportunity and management arrangements to mitigate these are included in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The revised presentation of the risks to demonstrate the alignment to the Southend 2050 Themes was well received at the last report to Cabinet and this has been further amended to include the Cabinet Member lead for each risk. The differing roles of Members, in determining priorities and policies, and Officers in managing delivery of those priorities and implementing those policies should be remembered.
- 3.4 Work is ongoing through the Transforming Together programme to further develop and align work on risk across the Council, so that the approach to risk management is better embedded, supports the governance framework, the transformation agenda and integrated decision making, supporting the organisation to manage well in an increasingly complex environment.
- In the period since the last report to Cabinet there have been further changes to the context that the Council is operating within as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic continues to have far reaching consequences and impacts across the whole of the Council's activities, the ways that services and officers are required to operate and the support that it has needed to provide to the Borough, as was covered in separate reports to Cabinet on 9 June and 15 September 2020.

Agenda Item No.

8

- 3.6 This has resulted in the agreement of three critical Council priorities to be focussed on in the short term:
 - Response to the Covid-19 pandemic
 - Economic recovery from both Covid-19 impacts and Brexit
 - Sustainability financial, environmental and our transformation as an organisation (with particular focus on adult and children's services recovery plans in the first instance).
- 3.7 Within this context CMT and other Directors have identified the following issues to be managed, monitored and reviewed as part of the Corporate Risk Register (with the relevant Scrutiny Committee for each issue in brackets):
 - 1. Covid-19 pandemic (Policy & Resources / People)
 - 2. Financial sustainability (Policy & Resources)
 - 3. EU exit (People)
 - 4. Public services landscape (Policy & Resources)
 - 5. Workforce (Policy & Resources)
 - 6a. Cyber security event (Policy & Resources)
 - 6b. Data protection (Policy & Resources)
 - 7. Safeguarding responsibilities (People)
 - 8. Adapting to climate change (People / Place)
 - 9. Health inequalities (People)
 - 10. Child welfare (People)
 - 11. Housing (Place)
 - 12. Adult social care (People)
 - 13. Waste management service (Policy & Resources)
 - 14. House building programme (Place)
 - 15. Regeneration and major projects (Place)
 - 16. Southend as a visitor destination (Place)
 - 17. Economic recovery and income inequalities (Policy & Resources / People)
 - 18. Local plan (Place)
- 3.8 The risk register heat map on page 4 of appendix 1 plots the current risk score for each risk using the Council's scale, as shown on page 2 of appendix 1. This shows that the risks that have been escalated to the Corporate Risk Register are those with the potential to be the most detrimental to achieving the Ambition for the Borough, which is why the risk scores are all relatively high and consequently the risks appear on the Corporate Risk Register.

- 3.9 It should also be noted that quarter 4 of 2020/21 is going to see the concurrent manifestation of 3 important risk issues in respect of:
 - EU exit, as the UK moves out of the transition period into its new relationship status with the EU (which at the time of drafting this report remains undetermined), with the resultant implications of what the new relationship status brings and the impact that could have on the economic recovery challenge for the Borough
 - Covid-19 pandemic, as we move into the post-Christmas period with the potential for a
 further impact on the health of the Borough depending on what arrangements Central
 Government determine for the Christmas period and what happens to the prevalence of
 the virus as a result
 - Agreeing a budget for 2021/22, with the necessary focus on adult and children's services recovery plans, and a medium-term financial strategy that will deliver both the Southend 2050 Ambition and Outcomes at the same time as achieving financial sustainability for the Council.
- 3.10 The potential cumulative impact of the combination of these risks manifesting together should be recognised and the effect that they are having monitored for both their individual impact and the impact of them cumulatively.
- 3.11 During the period since the last report to Cabinet, incidents have occurred at other Councils where examples of the risks that we are facing and working to manage have crystallised resulting in significant detrimental effects on the operations and provision of services at those Councils. Most notably the cyber-attack at Hackney and the financial difficulties at Croydon. These incidents demonstrate the importance of the management arrangements in respect of, and the governance arrangements overseeing that management of, the risks that are being faced by the Council.
- 3.12 As a reminder it is worth noting that the underlying risk management arrangements currently follows a 3-stage process:

1st stage: An 'inherent risk' with the risk assessed with no controls, assurance or actions in place, resulting in an inherent risk score.

2nd stage: The 'current risk' where the risk is assessed with controls, assurances and identified management actions and arrangements. It is this position that is being reported within the summary corporate risk register at Appendix 1.

3rd stage: The 'target risk' which is the risk with the controls, assurances and actions, as if they have been completed, resulting in a target risk score.

- 3.13 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the risks and opportunities currently on the corporate risk register and the arrangements in place to manage those, along with the 'current score' position for each risk as assessed by management, based on the risk or opportunity itself and the management of the issue that is in place to ensure that it progresses as the Council would want.
- 3.14 The risks as documented are effectively the worst-case scenario of what could happen if the Council is not appropriately managing the issue that it is facing. This does not mean that it will happen, as the purpose of the arrangements being put in place to manage the risk, or deliver the opportunity, is to ensure that the issue works out in the way that the Council wants it to.

- 3.15 Executive and other Directors ensure service specific risks are managed within their departments, within service management and in accordance with the risk management strategy and processes. 'Red' rated risks with corporate implications can be escalated to CMT via those Directors. Actions for managing these risks are updated and reviewed by Departmental Management Teams.
- 3.16 Operational risks, managed within departments, are also assessed as part of reviews undertaken by Internal Audit and project risks are monitored by CMT where applicable.

4 Corporate Implications:

4.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The Corporate Risk Framework underpins the operational effectiveness of the Council's Corporate Governance arrangements and specifically monitors progress of managing key risks associated with the successful delivery of the 2050 Ambition and Outcomes.

4.2 Financial Implications:

Any financial implications arising from identifying and managing risk will be considered through the normal financial management processes. Proactively managing risk can result in reduced costs to the Council by reducing exposure to potential loss.

4.3 <u>Legal Implications:</u>

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that:

A relevant authority must ensure it has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its function and the achievement of its aims and objectives, ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective and includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.

4.4 People Implications:

Any people and property implications arising from identifying and managing risk will be considered through the Council's normal business management processes.

4.5 Property Implications:

None specific.

4.6 <u>Consultation:</u>

Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders of the corporate risk register.

4.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications:

Corporate equalities considerations have been considered in the drafting of the register and any specific equality related risks have been identified for the Council.

4.8 Risk Assessment:

Failure to implement a robust assurance framework which includes fit for purpose risk management arrangements increases the risk that Council ambition and outcomes will not be delivered.

4.9 Value for Money:

Effective forecasting and timely management of risk is a key factor in preventing waste, inefficiency and unnecessary or unplanned use of resource.

4.10 Community Safety Implications:

None specific.

4.11 <u>Environmental Impact:</u> None specific.

5 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Summary Corporate Risk Register as at December 2020

Working to make lives better www.southend.gov.uk







Corporate Risk Register December 2020

Southend BC Risk Matrix

Risk tolerance level – Risks above this level will need particular resources and focus

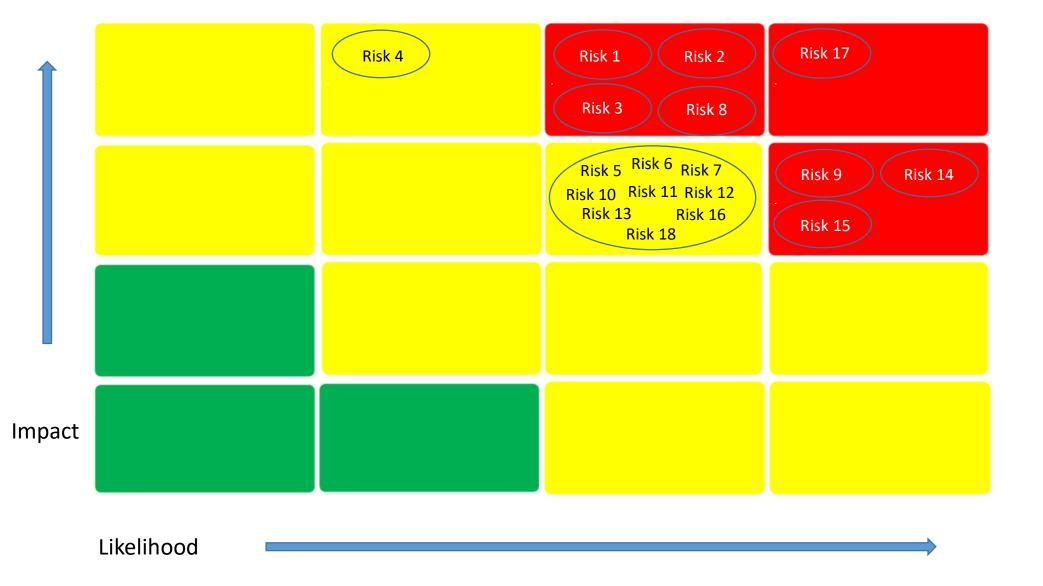
					_
Catastrophic / exceptional opportunity	4	8	12	16	
Severe / significant opportunity	3	6	9	12	
Material	2	4	6	8	
Negligible	1	2	3	4	
	Unlikely <25%	Likely 25-50%	Very Likely 50-75%	Almost Certain >75%	

Risk acceptance level (activity below which attracts minimum effort and resources)

Risk Register Heat Map: Risk numbers

Risk	
1 – Covid-19 pandemic	10 – Child welfare
2 – Financial sustainability	11 – Housing
3 – EU exit	12 – Adult social care
4 – Public services landscape	13 – Waste Management
5 – Workforce	14 – House building programme
6 - a) Cyber security b) Data protection	15 – Regeneration and major projects
7 – Safeguarding responsibilities	16 – Visitor destination
8 – Adapting to climate change	17 – Economic recovery and income inequalities
9 – Health inequalities	18 – Local Plan

Risk Register Heat Map: Current risk score







CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Ris Assess (current	sment	Risk rating (Lxl)	Leads
1	Covid-19 pandemic Risk that the Covid-19 pandemic causes an outbreak of ill-health in the Borough resulting in health and care services being unable to cope with the volume of cases, and significant disruption to the operational activities of the Council and other public service organisations in the Borough.	1. Increased focus on covid-19 through the agreement of the three critical Council priorities for the short term, with gold and silver cells established to implement the required response. 2. Civil contingency arrangements utilised, now also including the Outbreak Control Oversight and Engagement Board and the Health Protection Board, with representation from Public Health England (PHE) and links into the Essex Resilience Forum and central government. 3. Gold - Strategic command / Silver - Tactical / Bronze - Operational management arrangements in place and operating. Minutes / Issues log / Actions log maintained to capture, record and track progress with addressing issues. 4. Business continuity plans in place for all service teams. BCPs reviewed annually and submitted to the Emergency Planning team and being utilised in response to the covid-19 pandemic. 5. Local contact tracing service established in collaboration with Essex County Council. Under the guidance of PHE regional team and supported by PHE's local health protection team, the Council addresses complex cases utilising the Local Outbreak Control Plan. 6. Additional Consultant in Communicable Disease (CCDC) capacity brought in to support the Director of Public Health. 7. Increased communication of risks and requirements of the population to ensure increased understanding and compliance.	3	4	12	Alison Griffin / Leader





CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Ass (curren Likelihood	essment t score)	Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
2	Financial sustainability Risk that failure to address the financial challenge by effectively managing the growing demand for services, managing the costs of the covid-19 response and enhancing local income streams as part of recovery will threaten the medium to long term financial sustainability of the Council, leading to a significant adverse impact on Council services and the ability to deliver the outcomes desired by the Council, to address the financial position.	 Budget setting process to identify required investment and efficiencies to deliver a robust budget for 2021/22 and to deliver a robust programme of ongoing activity to deliver budget sustainablilty into the medium term. Management oversight of budget setting process through challenge provided by: Senior member, Chief Executive and Director to Director challenge to each other and departments on proposed savings and resultant budgets reports to CMT and Cabinet. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), including budget pressures to regularly consider financial impact of Government policy reported to CMT, Cabinet and Council to provide assurance, with reports to and minutes of meetings. Increased focus on the budget and transformation through the agreement of the three critical Council priorities for the short term, with gold and silver cells established to implement the required response. Getting to know your business workstream developed to ensure that appropriate focus on achieving value for money and the optimum approach to the delivery of the Southend 2050 outcomes is being made by all services. 	3	4	12	Joe Chesterton / Leader & Deputy Leader





CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Ass (current		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
3	Risk that the impact of, or a failure to address, prepare for and take advantage of the Government's agenda in the lead up to EU exit at the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020, and the implications arising from the terms of the exit, will hamper the ability of the Council to deliver it's ambition and outcomes.	 Working group with reps from across the organisation meets monthly (likely to be stepped up to weekly approaching exit date) and has a sitrep on MSTeams used to capture issues and impacts of EU exit and put measures in place to mitigate risk for the Council and Borough as far as possible. Links to the East of England lead and reporting to them as required via EELGA and horizon scanning through the LGA and MHCLG as the picture becomes clearer with cascading of any information shared with us. Officers participate fully in the Essex Resilience Forum which is taking a lead in coordination of planning for Essex. Most Brexit funding utilised on mitigations such as the fuel bunker at Tickfield and additional trading standards officer. Balance retained to be spent in accordance with the risks and opportunities presented. Economic Development continue to work alongside Business Essex Southend and Thurrock (BEST) to assist businesses to prepare. Corporate management team regularly updated and continue to monitor the opportunities and risks associated with EU Exit. Cabinet consider the implications and reports on progress with preparation on a regular basis. 	3	4	12	Alison Griffin / Leader





CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)		k ment score)	Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
4	Public services landscape Risk that failure to address and engage with the different models and public service governance arrangements being discussed will result in the organisation and the borough being left behind and ultimately unable to deliver the Council's ambition and outcomes.	1. Actively engaged in the Association of South Essex Local Authorities to manage the outcomes desired for the economic corridor and engage with the Government's devolution agenda to secure investment for infrastructure led growth, with the 'Growth and Recovery Prospectus 2020' now submitted to central government. 2. Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership (formerly STP) now spans more fully both health and local government. This reflects the desire to become a fully integrated care system for which the formal application is now being developed, as described in the national NHS Long Term Plan. Accountable Officer and the 4 Alliance Directors across mid and south Essex appointed. The Council has a seat on the Board and will continue to champion population health and community-based approaches to health and wellbeing through this partnership. 3. The South East Essex Locality Partnership Group has developed relationships across the SEE system, a shared Locality Strategy and MoU. The Council will play an active role as the organisational development is undertaken to become the place Alliance for South East Essex. 4. Local Government Reform working party constituted and a programme with 10 workstreams being delivered. 5. Partners have been engaged in the development of Southend 2050, including through a series of stakeholder events to develop a partners' timeline and roadmap. Partners have also taken Outcome lead roles for future delivery.	2	4	8	Alison Griffin / Leader





credit: ActiveSouthend

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Ass (current		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
5	Risk that the Council will not have the appropriate staffing resources, with the right skills, doing the right places through collaborative teams. This is impacted by the significant changes to ways of working implemented in response to covid-19 and the risks that these do not operate effectively, leading to a lack of workforce capacity causing a failure to effectively address the challenges posed by covid-19 in the short term and achieve the Council's desired outcomes in the longer term.	1. Refreshed the Transforming Together work to ensure that this drives and leads to the establishment of the 7 agreed conditions for successful delivery of Southend 2050 2. Refreshed TT work to include a People Plan detailing projects in progress / to be planned. These projects follow the employee life cycle and includes the following 5 areas: a) values and behaviours required of staff in place to reinforce what is expected of Southend employees and how we go about working to deliver the Ambition and Outcomes b) leadership development programme in place to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of leaders c) resourcing model managed by Customer Services to enable response at pace to changing requirements of the Covid-19 response, with budget set aside to support this from Government Covid-19 funding d) working collaboratively with the Council's resourcing partner to identify current and future resourcing needs and to proactively plan for these with the market e) align the Council's 'Managing organisational change policy' to the service redesign principles by the service and by HR 3. Appropriate governance and oversight on all recruitment, redeployment, learning & development and redundancies to ensure that the Council is making the best use of it's human resource and enabling all employees to reach their full potential in line with the Southend 2050 ambition	3	3	9	Joanna Ruffle / Leader





credit: ActiveSouthend

CRR	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the	Ris	k	Risk	Leads
ref		risk / deliver the opportunity)	Assess		rating	
			(current		(LxI)	
6a	Cyber security event Risk of a cyber security event causing significant operational, financial and reputational damage to the Council, caused by: a) failure to ensure the Council has a coherent and comprehensive approach to cyber security and data protection, including strategy, tools and processes b) a data breach c) remote working creating a wider footprint for attack. Opportunity to build resilience by ensuring that staff have the necessary digital skills.	 New ICT operating model introduced with a specific Head of Security focussed on enhancing the Council's cyber security arrangements and enhanced structure to deliver improved digital arrangements. Cyber security strategy now in place. Cyber Incident Planning and Response with key members of ICT team have attended CESG accredited training and role based training in place. Implementation of security tools including: Multi-Factor Authentication, Conditional Access, Modern Authentication. Membership and use of threat intelligence networks to enable quicker response to emerging threats. Compulsory Me-learning training sets for all staff and Phishing simulation test exercises. Monitoring and response processes in place. Daily and weekly backups taking place. Changes to processing of personal data and new processing, including COVID-19 related matters, risk assured in line with the Data Protection by Design and Default Policy and Procedure. 	3	Impact 3	9	Joanna Ruffle / Leader





credit: ActiveSouthend

CRR	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the	Ris	k	Risk	Leads
ref		risk / deliver the opportunity)	Assess (current		rating (LxI)	
6b	Risk that a failure to comply with responsibilities as a Data Controller (under DPA/GDPR or equivalent) leads to personal data being compromised, resulting in harm to individuals, loss of trust from residents, businesses and others, regulatory action, financial penalty and reputational damage.	 Changes to processing of personal data and new processing, including COVID-19 related matters, risk assured in line with the Data Protection by Design and Default Policy and Procedure. Annual Information Governance Toolkit assessment undertaken with a report prepared from the independent assessment and actions to improve. Senior Information Risk Owner in place, monitoring issues and progress, and produces an Annual SIRO report on data protection to Cabinet. Regular reporting to Good Governance Group and Corporate Management Team with reports to and minutes of meetings. 	3	က	O	Joanna Ruffle / Leader







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Assessment (current score) Likelihood Impact		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
7	Safeguarding responsibilities Risk that the Council will not be able to effectively deliver it's statutory safeguarding responsibilities as a result of a lack of understanding, resources and the additional challenges posed by lockdown as a result of covid- 19, and that this causes a failure to deliver the outcomes anticipated for the vulnerable people that are in need of support.	 Local Safeguarding Partnerships in place to complement and oversee the work of the Children's and Adult's services. Principal Social Worker – lead role in assuring quality of policy and practice and ensuring adherence to key frameworks e.g. safeguarding Review mechanisms in response to serious incidents – ensuring learning from Serious Case Reviews / Safeguarding Adults Reviews is embedded to minimise future risk. Care Quality Arrangements – working alongside key partners e.g. NHS/CQC to ensure safe, good quality care provision Getting to know your business delivering a budget and performance review of services to assess levels of resourcing against the demand for services, and address the budget challenges. 	3	3	9	Michael Marks & Tandra Forster / CM for Children and Learning & CM for Health and Adult Social Care







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Ass (curren	essment t score)	Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
8	Risk that failing to implement changes needed to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint will cause an inadequate contribution to the reduction in carbon emissions required. This will result in significant adverse impact on the Borough, and if the climate adaptation measures being implemented are also inadequate, there will be further implications for the Council in needing to respond to climate events in the Borough.	 Council declaration of a climate emergency in October 2019, providing initiatives to be pursued. Green City Action Plan being presented to Cabinet January 2021 detailing the actions to be taken to become a Green City. Updated management governance structure for new projects to ensure full consideration of all issues. Low Carbon Energy and Sustainability Strategy 2020-25 drafted and reviewed through member seminars, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees and Council. Oversight of Green City Southend 2050 outcome that includes carbon reduction activity through: reports to Theme leads, CMT and Cabinet with challenge at and minutes of meetings. Member Environmental Working Party with reports to and minutes of meetings. 	3	4	12	Larissa Reed / CM for Environ ment and Planning







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)			Risk rating	Leads
			Likelihood	Impact	(LxI)	
9	Health inequalities Risk that the health inequalities, particularly the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of residents, will increase due to the impact of Covid-19 and the associated restrictions that have, and will, need to be implemented in response to the pandemic. In the longer term the that implementation of the Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership (STP) proposals, and implementation of the Localities Model does not result in effective health and social care outcomes for residents resulting in increased health inequalities, worsening health outcomes and significant cost increases.	 Effective use of the Local Outbreak Control Plan mechanisms and the cell structure reporting into Health Protection Board and the Local Outbreak Control Oversight & Engagement Board. Use the Thriving Communities project to pick up on the early signs of possible neglect and any health inequalities emerging as a result of the pandemic, and to identify strategies to prevent needs escalating. This work programme feeds into the Health and Wellbeing Board. Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership with reports to and minutes of meetings. South East Essex Alliance who alongside the Council provide a leadership role in understanding need and providing oversight and challenge of arrangements and delivery. Health and Wellbeing Board that receive the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) that provides the intelligence needed to determine targeted action required, with reports to and minutes of meetings. Annual Public Health Report helps to focus our efforts on tackling health inequalities. 	4	3	12	Michael Marks / CM for Health and Adult Social Care







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Assessment (current score) Likelihood Impact		Risk rating	Leads
10	Child welfare Risk that failure to address the threats to children, particularly the vulnerable that face the greatest exposure to those threats, causes significant problems for those children, resulting in worsening outcomes for those in need of that support.	 Children's Safeguarding Partnership in place to complement and oversee the work of the Children's service. External review of Children's Safeguarding undertaken with findings and recommendations reported to Partnership Board. Independent diagnostic of Children's Services undertaken leading to an Improvement Plan overseen by the Improvement Board. Principal Social Worker – lead role in assuring quality of policy and practice and ensuring adherence to key frameworks e.g. safeguarding. Review mechanisms in response to serious incidents – ensuring learning from Serious Case Reviews is embedded to minimise future risk. Care Quality Arrangements – working alongside key partners e.g. NHS/CQC to ensure safe, good quality care provision. 	3	3	9	Michael Marks / CM for Children and Learning







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Asse (current		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
11	Risk that a failure to implement plans to address rising homelessness and failure to implement the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy will lead to further street and other homelessness, increased use of temporary accommodation & an inability to meet rising housing demand over the next 20 years, leading to worse outcomes for residents and an inability to deliver the outcomes for the Borough desired by the Council. Risk is increased by the impact of Covid-19 on those previously just about managing no longer being able to manage, causing an increase in homelessness.	 Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy approved and being delivered. Progress reported to Cabinet, with reports to and minutes of meetings. Core Strategy and Local Development Plan in place with reports to and minutes of meetings. Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels review and challenge, with reports to and minutes of meetings. Member Housing Working Party with reports to and minutes of meetings. Operational delivery is being managed as caseloads are high, challenging capacity. 	3	3	9	Tandra Forster / Leader







CGI from Better Queensway transformation consultation

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Asse (current s		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
12	Risk that difficulties being experienced in the adult social care market will cause provider failure and further difficulty in meeting increasing demand for support, resulting in worsening outcomes for those in need of that support. The impact of covid-19 has heightened these risks in the short term. Opportunity has been identified to reduce the number of people in residential care, using reablement and the community to support people to stay at home for longer.	 The Council influences the market for care by signalling the future expectation of requirements through: Market Position Statement Commissioning Strategies. The Care Governance Process provides quality assurance arrangements, oversight and support for the local market, including external assessment of services through the Care Quality Commission. Provider Failure Policy in place to direct action in the event of provider difficulty. Independent diagnostic review being undertaken to prepare a recovery plan to address the financial challenge and transformation work being undertaken on service delivery. 	3	3	9	Tandra Forster / CM for Health and Adult Social Care





An option for the Pier Train Replacement campaign's competition

CRI	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to	Risk Ass	essment	Risk	Leads
ref		mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	(current	t score)	ratin	
			Likelihood	Impact	g (Lxl)	
13	Risk of contractor failing to meet contractual requirements to effectively manage waste arrangements results in a loss of service quality and additional financial liability for the Council. Additional risk that the council will not have suitable arrangements in place for October 2023 when the current contract ends. Further risk that the enhanced service being sought from the revised future arrangements will not provide a solution that will deliver the outcomes in respect of adaptation to climate change and recycling that is being sought by the Council.	 Regular contract management meetings with suppliers with reports to and minutes of meetings. Data set monitored by DMT / performance board and senior managers with reports to and minutes of meetings. Cabinet and Scrutiny overview with reports to and minutes of meetings, including an in depth scrutiny project on barriers to recycling, with Environmental Working Group considering options. Current contract evaluation underway to identify the most appropriate way forward for the provision of waste collection and disposal services to ensure high quality and value for money is achieved. Delivery of new contract arrangements in progress, with consultancy support providing an options appraisal of service arrangements and finance, as part of the work to deliver new arrangements from October 2023. Negotiations are continuing to extend the current contract with Veolia, to be concluded by end of March 21. 	3	3	9	Larissa Reed / CM for Environ ment and Planning





Proposed Roots Hall development

C	RR	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action	Risk Asse	essment	Risk	Leads
	ref		to mitigate the risk / deliver the	(current	score)	rating	
			opportunity)	Likelihood	Impact	(LxI)	
	14	Risk that not achieving the development and delivery of the house building pipeline through effective engagement and arrangements with the market and developers that have been impacted by Covid-19, will result in an inability to deliver the anticipated housing supply, causing additional pressure on the housing market and an impact on the delivery of the desired outcomes of the Council.	1. House building pipeline in place and being managed with Cabinet agreement to specifically focus on five key workstreams. 2. Methodology for working with developers in place, to ensure that the right considerations are made about potential developers. 3. Updated partnership arrangements with developers to address the changed market circumstances, as a result of Covid-19. 4. Regular reporting to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet, with reports to and minutes of meetings.	3	4	12	Andy Lewis / Leader





Proposed Roots Hall development

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)		essment t score)	Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
15	Regeneration and major projects Risk that failure of partners to progress major infrastructure developments (e.g. Queensway, Seaways, Fossett Farm and Airport Business Park) will result in not achieving delivery of the plans and necessary sequencing of developments, resulting in the dependencies for the chain of regeneration not being delivered and the opportunities for improvement of the borough and delivery of anticipated outcomes not being achieved, as well as significant financial and reputational damage to the Council.	 Strategic planning for Borough in place and being managed. Methodology for working with developers in place, to ensure that the right considerations are made about potential developers. Project Board arrangements in place to govern progress with delivery, with reports to and minutes of meetings. Regular and formal monitoring / reporting arrangements in place with key funders, such as the Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and Homes England (HE). Regular reporting to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet, with reports to and minutes of meetings. 	3	4	12	Andy Lewis / Leader & Deputy Leader & CM for Culture, Business and Tourism







Proposed Better Queensway development

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the	Risk Assessment (current score)		Risk rating	Leads
	Visitor destination Risk that the competing demands and needs of residents and visitors will impact in the Borough's ability to meet the needs of its residents or provide a suitable destination for visitors, and that covid-19 will impact on the ability of the borough to provide an attractive proposition for visitors, reducing visitor numbers with a resultant impact on the economic strength of the borough and employment	to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity) 1. Refreshed tourism strategy 'Destination Southend' developed in partnership with key stakeholders on the Southend Tourism Partnership built on feedback from key stakeholders including residents and visitors. 2. Cultural Vision refreshed built on feedback from key stakeholders including residents and visitors that will inform investment decision and actions to be progressed. 3. Effective management of local attractions including engagement with key stakeholders				Tandra Forster / CM for Culture, Business and Tourism
	opportunities for school leavers.	 4. VisitSouthend website to promote events and attractions available to visitors. 5. Visit Southend Safely campaign to manage public expectations and behaviour 				
		to help ensure a safe, enjoyable visit given the circumstances of the pandemic.				



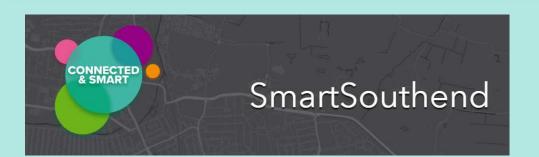




Proposed Better Queensway development

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Asse (current		Risk rating (LxI)	Leads
17	Economic recovery and income inequalities Risk that the impact of covid-19 lockdown reducing economic activity will cause a reduction in employment opportunities for 18-25 year olds and an increase in unemployment across the borough, particularly at the end of the furlough scheme. The impact is likely to be experienced unevenly across sectors with the retail, hospitality, leisure and tourism sector adversely affected causing further risk to traditional shopping centres and the town centre, as well as a further increase in income inequalities and disparity between different parts of the Borough. However, the phased reduction in lockdown provides the opportunity to attract new businesses and employers into the borough, providing new and additional employment that can contribute to the delivery of the ambition and outcomes for the borough.	 Increased focus on economic recovery through the agreement of the three critical Council priorities for the short term, with gold and silver cells established including representatives from businesses and the job centre, focussed on a programme of workstreams. LGA peer support provided to explore how the Council and partners can more effectively support younger people, aged 18 – 25, with a particular focus on their employment, skills, education and training. Engagement with businesses, including but not limited to the Southend Business Partnership, to understand the impacts of the pandemic and potential interventions which may aid recovery Engagement with funders of employment and skills projects to refocus delivery on job and business retention with associated changes to how projects are delivered to suit a virtual environment (e.g. SEBB, SECTA, A Better Start Southend WorkSkills, 60 Minute Mentor) Development of potential funding bids with colleagues across the organisation and partners, to apply for external funding if and when it becomes available to support recovery Development of ASELA proposition for inward investment offer for South Essex which initially focuses on retention and support 	4	4	16	Andy Lewis / CM for Business Cullture and Tourism







credit: Forward Motion

CRR ref	Risk / Opportunity	Management (key controls and action to mitigate the risk / deliver the opportunity)	Risk Assessment (current score) Likelihood Impact		Risk rating (Lxl)	Leads
18	Risk that failure to meet Government requirements and deadlines and make sufficient progress in producing a Local Plan will lead to Secretary of State intervention, resulting in reputational damage to the Council and the potential imposition of unwanted planning policies, causing an inability to deliver upon the Council's outcome priorities that are dependent on the Local Plan shaping and influencing the proposals for developments that are brought forward in the future.	 Local Plan delivery project arrangements in place with appropriate milestones and timelines to deliver the Local Plan. Local Plan being aligned with the development of the Joint Strategic Plan and other key Council strategies (including Corporate Plan, Southend 2050, Housing Strategy, Climate Change Emergency Declaration). Member Local Development Framework Working Party with reports to and minutes of meetings. Joint working with ASELA partners being managed to address duty to cooperate, including on infrastructure. Regular reports to Corporate Management Team with reports to and minutes of meetings. Reports to Cabinet with reports to and minutes of meetings. 	3	3	9	Andy Lewis / CM for Environ ment and Planning

This page is intentionally left blank

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services)

to

Cabinet

on Tuesday, 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: S. Tautz (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

In-Depth Scrutiny Report – 'The appropriate use of reablement for older people (65 and over) when discharged from hospital, to maximise the number of people at home after period of 91 days.'

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor T Harp
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the final report of the scrutiny project – 'The appropriate use of reablement for older people (65 and over) when discharged from hospital, to maximise the number of people at home after period of 91 days.'

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet approve the report and recommendations arising from the indepth scrutiny project, detailed at Paragraph 4 of this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 At its meeting held on 9 July 2019, the People Scrutiny Committee agreed that an in-depth study be undertaken to consider the appropriate use of reablement services by the Council (Minute 172 refers). The project plan for the study was agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 8 October 2019 (Minute 398 refers).
- 3.2 The project was led by a member Project Team and the appointments were agreed at Council on 16 May 2019. The Project Team comprised the following Members: Councillors F Evans (Chair), A Dear, D Garne, M Borton, C Nevin, A Chalk, I Shead and A Thompson. Mr T Watts of the Southend Carers Forum was co-opted as a member of the Project Team and Councillor L Salter also attended meetings of the Project Team.
- 3.3 Officer support for the project was provided by Sarah Baker (Director of Adult Social Care), Lynn Scott, (Head of Adult Social Care), Gemma Czerwinke (Service Manager (Adult Social Care)) and Fiona Abbott/Steve Tautz (Project Coordinators).

Report Title Report Number

Agenda Item No.

- 3.4 Progress with regard to the review was achieved in the first half of the 2019/20 municipal year, including the development of an action plan, the receipt of relevant presentations and the holding of appropriate site visits. However, the completion of the projects was subsequently delayed from late-2019 as a result of a number of issues including reduced officer capacity in key service areas.
- 3.5 From March 2020, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic also further delayed activity with regard to the completion of the review, reflecting the Council's approach to the handling of the pandemic, including the necessary focus on priority activities and the delivery and implementation of the Coronavirus Act 2020, which changed the lead responsibility for all discharges from hospital to Health. As a result, it was not possible for the in-depth review to be completed by the end of the municipal year and the Committee agreed that it be carried forward into the current municipal year.
- 3.6 The draft final report arising from the in-depth scrutiny project was agreed by the People Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 24 November 2020 (Minute 582 refers). An overview of the evidence considered by the Project Team is set out in the report.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (Part 4(e) of the Constitution), the report of the in-depth scrutiny report is attached at Appendix 1 for approval by the Cabinet.
- 4.2 The recommendations from the review are set out in Section 9 of the report. There are no recommendations arising from the review that have budget implications that require consideration as part of future years' budget processes prior to implementation.
- 4.3 The overarching recommendations from the review are as follows:
 - (a) That performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator continue to be reported as part of the Council's regular corporate performance report.
 - (b) That, on the relaxation of the relevant provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and with regard to the Council's ongoing performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator at that time, consideration be given to the identification of measures to further improve the delivery of reablement services by the Council, if required.
- 4.4 In considering the report of the in-depth scrutiny report, the People Scrutiny Committee also agreed the following:
 - (a) That the Council's monthly performance against the national performance indicator (ASCOF2B2) that measures the proportion of older people (65 and over) offered reablement services following discharge from hospital, be reported to the Committee on an ongoing basis.
 - (b) That the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care be requested to seek the continuation of the funding previously provided by the Clinical

Report Title Report Number

Commissioning Group on a pilot basis, for the package of follow-up support provided by Southend Association of Voluntary Services as part of the discharge to assess arrangements, in order to maintain contact with patients discharged into Pathway 0 and the provision of relevant assistance and guidance.

4.5 The Cabinet is requested to endorse the recommendations arising from the indepth scrutiny project.

5. Other Options

5.1 To note the report but not progress any of the recommendations.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 Not applicable

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

In the context of the Southend 2050 Vision, the main focus of the project was to consider whether the current service offered accessible and effective care, delivered to the right people, in the right place and at the right time.

7.2 Financial Implications

There are no recommendations arising from the review that have budget implications that require consideration as part of future years' budget processes prior to implementation.

7.3 Legal Implications

None

7.4 People Implications

None

7.5 Property Implications

None

7.6 Consultation

As described in the report

7.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Any future revisions to the provision of reablement services would need to be subject to an assessment of equality and diversity implications. However, no such service changes are recommended as a result of the in-depth scrutiny project.

Report Title Report Number

7.8 Risk Assessment

None

7.9 Value for Money

None

7.10 Community Safety Implications

None

7.11 Environmental Impact

None

8. Background Papers

None

9. Appendices

Final report of the Project team (Appendix 1)

Report Title Report Number

People Scrutiny Committee In-Depth Scrutiny Project

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY REVIEW 2019/20

REABLEMENT SERVICES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report explores the challenges facing the Reablement Service of Southend-On-Sea Borough Council, particularly in light of the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic of early 2020, which placed new demands and pressures on existing health and social care systems.
- 1.2 Reablement is a term applied to describe an assessment and interventions provided to people in their home (or care home) aiming to help them recover skills and confidence and maximise their independence. For most people interventions last up to 6 weeks.
- 1.3 When someone is discharged from hospital, they may need help to manage at home. Such support is often provided by the Reablement Service. An effective Reablement Service is beneficial for our residents and the National Health Service (NHS) as it assists individuals to lead full and independent lives whilst reducing the overall cost of long-term provision. Reablement can play a decisive role in helping people to regain their independence and maximise their health and wellbeing following hospitalisation or ill-health. It can also reduce the amount of time a person needs to stay in hospital, therefore aiding faster recovery.
- 1.4 The provision of an effective Reablement Service is not only beneficial to clinical outcomes and residents' health and wellbeing, but also can help to ease the financial and capacity pressures placed on local authorities and the NHS through decreasing the need for hospital admission, decreasing the need for long-term care packages, and appropriately reducing the level of ongoing home care support required.
- 1.5 I would like to thank all councillors, co-opted members, officers and external organisations for their contribution to the in-depth review.

Councillor Fay Evans Chair of the In-Depth Scrutiny Review Project Team

2. Background

- 2.1 Reablement is a short-term personalised service usually provided at home (or other community setting), to aid recovery after discharge from hospital, enabling adults to maximise their optimum level of independence. Reablement seeks to enable people to do things for themselves rather than the traditional home care approach of having things done for them. For example, if someone has had a fall needing hospital admission, they may not be physically capable of coping with daily tasks such as washing, dressing and domestic tasks.
- 2.2 Reablement focusses on a person's wellbeing by building on their strengths. It supports them to regain confidence, self-esteem, and motivation and develops outcomes to learn or re-learn the skills needed for everyday life, such as:
 - personal care.
 - dressing.
 - toileting.
 - nutrition.
 - meal preparation.

- domestic and cleaning tasks.
- washing.
- falls avoidance.
- managing medication.
- 2.3 Reablement also considers what equipment, adaptations, and assistive technology may help the adult to maintain their independence and teaches them how to use these to support themselves.
- 2.4 There is strong evidence that reablement services lead to improved outcomes and value for money across the health and social care sectors. Home is the most appropriate place for recovery for nearly all people discharged from hospital. This is not a new approach and reablement services offered by the Council are provided at no cost to the individual. However, reablement services may not be suitable for those that require a higher level of care and are only available to people that can consistently participate in reablement and have the potential to benefit from a reablement programme.
- 2.5 The Local Government Association (LGA) has previously found ('Efficiency opportunities through health and social care integration: Delivering more sustainable health and care' (June 2016)) that:

'Discharge planning to maximise independence would save money and improve outcomes. For nearly a quarter of people who were discharged from hospital with a care package, a preferable pathway was identifiable that could have delivered better outcomes at lower cost. Given that a significant subset of these pathways results in costly long-term residential placements this is of particular significance. Practitioners taking part in the study estimated that 59 per cent of long-term residential placements resulting from an acute hospital admission could be delayed or avoided.'

2.6 The identification of the Reablement Service for in-depth scrutiny review arose from concern at the Council's performance against the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) and national performance indicator (ASCOF2B2), which measures the proportion of older people (65 and over) who were offered reablement services following discharge from hospital. The identification of the Reablement Service for review also arose from concerns with regard to how data informing the Council's performance against the ASCOF2B2 performance indicator was recorded. At that time, the Council's performance figures reported in June, July and August 2019 were:

June 2019	64.5%
July 2019	61.6%
August 2019	63.7%

- 2.7 The ASCOF Framework is used both locally and nationally to set priorities for care and support, to measure progress and strengthen transparency and accountability. The framework measures the benefit to individuals from reablement, intermediate care and rehabilitation following a hospital episode, by determining whether an individual remains living at home 91 days following discharge (the key outcome for many people using reablement services). It also captures the joint work of social services, health staff and services commissioned by joint teams, as well as adult social care reablement, to
 - delay and reduce the need for care and support; and
 - to ensure that when people develop care needs, the support they receive takes place in the most appropriate setting and enables them to regain their independence.
- 2.8 The Council's performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator, (the proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into

reablement/rehabilitation services) since the period prior to the escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic, was as follows:

February 2020	70.8%
March 2020	81.7%
April 2020	80.2%
May 2020	81.3%
June 2020	77.6%

2.9 The Council's monthly target for its performance against the indicator during this period was for 80% of people to still be at home 91 days after their discharge from hospital

3. Framework of the Review

- 3.1 At its meeting on 9 July 2019, the People Scrutiny Committee agreed (Minute 172 refers) that an in-depth scrutiny review be undertaken to consider the appropriate use of reablement services by the Council, as part of its work programme for 2019/20.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that the framework for the review should be:

"The appropriate use of reablement for older people (65 and over) when discharged from hospital, to maximise the number of people at home after period of 91 days."

- 3.3 The scope of the review was to consider:
 - whether the current service offered accessible and effective care, delivered to the right people, in the right place and at the right time.
 - how the service was delivered.
 - the experience of residents who used the service.
 - the views of partner agencies and the level of integration; and
 - relevant comparative information.
- 3.4 The review was set within the context of the Council's 2050 ambition and priorities and the following proposed outcomes for the project were agreed:
 - increased awareness of the reablement offer and the intention to promote health, wellbeing, dignity and social inclusion through focused work to maximise independence and reduce the need for longer-term support.
 - assurances that the reablement offer supports the appropriate people to maximise their level of independence and to recommend changes to the offer as appropriate; and
 - assurances that the use of reablement supports the relevant outcomes outlined in the 2050 ambition.
- 3.5 Progress with regard to the review was achieved in the first half of the 2019-20 municipal year, including the development of an action plan, the receipt of relevant presentations and the holding of appropriate site visits. However, the completion of the projects was subsequently delayed from late-2019 as a result of a number of issues including reduced officer capacity in key service areas.
- 3.6 From March 2020, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic also further delayed activity with regard to the completion of the review, reflecting the Council's approach to the handling of the pandemic, including the necessary focus on priority activities and the delivery and implementation of the Coronavirus Act 2020 (see paragraph 6.6), which changed the lead responsibility for all discharges from hospital to Health. In addition to the dedication or redeployment of officer capacity that would have supported the reviews towards key service

provision and the adoption of ongoing remote working and meeting arrangements for councillors and a significant number of the Council's employees. As a result, it was not possible for the in-depth review to be completed by the end of the municipal year.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 The review was undertaken on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee by a Project Team comprising Councillors F Evans (Chair), A Dear, D Garne, M Borton, C Nevin, A Chalk, I Shead and A Thompson. Mr T Watts of the Southend Carers Forum was co-opted as a member of the Project Team.
- 4.2 The Project Team was supported in its investigations by relevant officers including Sarah Baker (Director of Adult Social Care), Lynn Scott, (Head of Adult Social Care), Gemma Czerwinke (Service Manager (Adult Social Care)) and Fiona Abbott/Steve Tautz (Project Coordinators).
- 4.3 The Project Team met on three occasions between July 2019 and September 2020.
- 4.4 The project was undertaken using an evidence-based approach to the consideration of a range of options, through a mixture of desk top research, informative presentations and site visits, that supported our understanding of the provision of reablement services and the experiences of residents that use the services. All such site visits were undertaken prior to the escalation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Development Team

4.5 On 29 October 2019, the Project Team received a presentation on the services provided by the Community Development Team and the role of social workers in GP surgeries and other health teams.

Community Site Visit

4.6 We also undertook site visits to the Pall Mall Surgery and Jordan's Sheltered Housing Hub on 29 October 2019.

Assessment Bed Site Visit

- 4.7 On 29 October 2019, the Project Team also visited Priory House to receive an overview of the assessment bed arrangements designed to help people become independent and to offer the skills and support they need to return to their own homes. We also received relevant performance data with regard to the ASCOF2B2 indicator in relation to Priory House and other establishments within the Borough that provide assessment bed facilities.
- 4.8 At our visit, the Project Team was also provided with a tour of Priory House so that members could meet staff and residents. We also considered a case study relating to the work of Priory House and received a presentation on the role of therapists and the importance of home visits.

Hospital Site Visit

4.9 On 30 September 2019 members of the Project Team visited Southend University Hospital Foundation Trust to receive an overview of the work of the Hospital Social Work Team and the Integrated Discharge Team. The Project Team also visited Windsor Ward and Princess Anne Ward at the Hospital to observe ward-based Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) (including reablement workers, health and care providers, occupational therapists and physiotherapists etc.) working.

4.10 The Project Team wish to extend its thanks and appreciation to each of the agencies and organisations that facilitated its programme of site visits.

5. The Impact of COVID-19

- 5.1 Since the commencement of the scrutiny project, the United Kingdom has faced one of the biggest challenges ever encountered in public health and social care provision, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic has resulted in changes to the Council's delivery of reablement services and the scope of the ongoing project. Performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator dipped as a result of the changing landscape for the delivery of reablement services brought about by the pandemic.
- 5.2 At its meeting in July 2020, the Project Team received a presentation on how the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the delivery of reablement services and how the approach to the handling of the pandemic affected the scope of the ongoing project.
- 5.3 The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted the ability of the Project Team to conduct the review fully in accordance with the scope and project plan agreed at the commencement of the project. Although we have received information and presentations on how the Council traditionally delivers reablement services, some elements of service delivery have by necessity changed as a result of the response to the pandemic. Additionally, whilst we welcomed the favourable experience of residents who had used the service as part of our programme of site visits in 2019, we have not been able to further assess satisfaction with the service since the escalation of the pandemic and the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020.
- 5.4 However, even in light of the pandemic, we consider that the current service continues to offer accessible and effective care, delivered to the right people, in the right place and at the right time. Social care staff have continued to work at a high level of integration with health care professionals and relevant comparative information showed improvement against the ASCOF2B2 performance indicator at the height of the pandemic.

6. Coronavirus Act 2020

- 6.1 The Coronavirus Act 2020 was enacted on 25 March 2020 and made provision for the Government to respond to the emergency situation and manage the effects of the pandemic. The Act, which is time-limited for two years, set out a number of provisions that were relevant to the scrutiny project and sought to relax regulations in order to ease the burden on healthcare services during the pandemic.
- 6.2 Although the provisions of the Act are intended to be temporary, it is clear that the Government remains mindful of the impact of the 'second wave' of the virus that is currently being experienced.

(a) Care Act Easements

- 6.3 The Care Act Easements were intended to assist in managing the predicted rapidly growing pressures as more people needed support because unpaid carers were unwell or unable to reach them, and as care workers were having to self-isolate or unable to work for other reasons. The Care Act Easements enable local authorities to streamline present assessment arrangements and to prioritise care so that the most urgent and acute needs were met.
- 6.4 The easements took effect on 31 March 2020 and will be in place for a period of two years (reviewed every six months), and should only be implemented by local authorities where this

is essential in order to maintain the highest possible level of services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.5 At the present time, the Council has not sought to implement any of the provisions arising from the Care Act Easements. A comprehensive report of the Executive Director (Adults and Communities) that presented a framework setting out how the Council would implement the provisions set out within the Care Act Easements, was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 28 July 2020.

(b) Discharge Requirements

- 6.6 The Coronavirus Act 2020 also set out how health and care systems and providers should change hospital discharge arrangements and the provision of community support during the coronavirus pandemic. This aspect of the Act was the key factor and the most significant operational change for the provision of Adult Social Care by the Council and the area most likely to have an impact on the performance of the Reablement Service.
- 6.7 The requirements focus on ensuring that acute and community hospitals discharge all patients as soon as they are clinically safe to do so. Transfer from the ward must happen within one hour of that decision being made to a designated discharge area. Discharge from hospital must happen as soon after that as possible, normally within two hours. The Government agreed that the NHS would take the lead on all discharges and fully fund the cost of new or extended out-of-hospital health and social care support packages. This applies for people being discharged from hospital or who would otherwise be admitted into it, for a limited time, to enable quick and safe discharge and more generally reduce pressure on acute services.
- 6.8 Discharge requires teamwork across many people and organisations and the funding and eligibility blockages that currently exist cannot remain in place during the COVID-19 emergency period. A 'Discharge to Assess model has been implemented across England as a default pathway (with alternative pathways for people who cannot go straight home), as staying in hospital for longer than necessary has a negative impact on patient outcomes. The Discharge to Assess model ensures that patients are given the chance to continue their lives at home, which is important for their long-term wellbeing.
- 6.9 Only a small number of relevant officers remained in hospital settings for discharge purposes, with other staff being transferred to social care assessment roles. The Project Team was most encouraged to be advised that many innovative arrangements for the handling of discharge arrangements were proposed by staff.

7. Current Position

- 7.1 The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact on the delivery and performance of reablement services by the Council.
- 7.2 In order to manage the authority's approach to the handling of the pandemic and to comply with the changing legal landscape brought about by the Coronavirus Act 2020, the Adult Social Care Department make swift and significant changes to its current provision of services, including:
 - all teams moved to a model of 'A' and 'B' Teams, with as many staff as possible able to work remotely and undertake assessments on a virtual basis.
 - all teams embraced new ways to assess and support the community using technology and connecting closely with staff from other departments and other organisations.
 - Occupational Therapy enhanced the Reablement and Assessment Bed Service, taking a lead role in reducing need for long-term care for people facing acute phases

- of illness. Digital technology was used to support home assessment and to ensure that medical equipment was delivered and safely installed.
- the protection of clinically extremely vulnerable people with underlying severe health conditions (Operation Shield) was co-ordinated by the Community Development Team and many staff provided support for the COVID-19 helpline established by the Council.
- a unit of 13 specialist beds was established at Priory House to manage patients from Southend Hospital who had a COVID-19 positive status, who could not return to their normal place of residence.
- the use of digital offers from day-care providers including Project 49, to support people to remain connected and included whilst they were unable to physically attend day opportunities.
- close monitoring of social care demand and financial and practical support to support providers to manage capacity.
- robust support for care providers around infection control, by supporting the provision of relevant personal protective equipment (PPE), offering infection protection control advice and maintaining regular contact and communication channels.
- 7.3 The Hospital Team faced the biggest changes following the revisions to the Discharge Requirements. The team were located into the community pathways of a 'Discharge to Assess Model', with only a small number of staff remaining at the hospital to ensure safeguarding and complex case management responsibilities were met. A 'hot site' for COVID-19 positive patients was established at Basildon Hospital.
- 7.4 The care homes within the Borough acted extremely responsibly during the period of the pandemic. It remains generally the situation that visitors are not permitted within the care homes.

8. Hospital Team and Intermediate Care

8.1 The Discharge to Assess Model set out in the Discharge Requirements has a focus on specific pathways that people will be discharged into when deemed clinically stable. Although discharge into a specific pathway is determined by health professionals, social care staff are involved in the consideration of relevant discharge decisions.

Pathway 0

Simple discharge with no input required from health and/or social care, although relevant advice provided.

Pathway 1

Support to recover at home. Able to return home with support from health and/or social care through a 'Home First' approach.

Pathway 2

Rehabilitation in bedded setting.

Pathway 3

There has been a life-changing event. Home is not an option at point of discharge from acute care. Patients within this pathway were generally transferred to Brentwood Hospital.

8.2 Staff within the Hospital Team and the Intermediate Care Team were aligned to the pathways. New Multi-Disciplinary Teams were formed with health staff and Essex

Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. Two managers support the pathways, with one focusing on Care at Home and the other on the Acute and Bedded Settings. Priory House and care agencies were supported in setting up specialist teams to manage people with a COVID-19 positive status and social workers provided supported through each of the pathways.

- 8.3 The Project Team recognised that people discharged into Pathway 0, whilst requiring no formal support or assistance from health and/or social care, might be reliant on the support of 'unpaid care' through family and friends etc. We were pleased to note that Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) made direct contact with all patients discharged into Pathway 0, to provide assistance and guidance where necessary.
- 8.4 The Project Team was advised that robust information arrangements are in place between the health and social care teams, so that all discharges into specific pathways are communicated to social care, and that flexibility exists in the pathway approach to transfer people between different pathways should this be necessary. The creation of the MDTs around each of the pathways has been critical to the success of this approach and also serves to address any identified safeguarding issues, although it is still too early to indicate whether the approach has delivered improved outcomes.
- 8.5 However, the experience of responding to COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of reablement services that are centred on the individual and which provide safe, proactive care that maximises independence and wellbeing.
- 8.6 With the focus on care at home and reablement services, the performance of the ASCOF2B2 indicator has improved, with a clear vision to improve the outcomes for people.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 We consider that the review was undertaken within the context of the Council's 2050 ambition and priorities and that, whilst allowing for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the proposed outcomes for the project have been achieved, albeit in a markedly different context to that originally established in July 2019 when the scope of the project was determined.
- 9.2 At the present time, we do not therefore consider that it is appropriate to make recommendations as to the future operation and management of the Reablement Service, given the changes to service provision brought about by the Coronavirus Act 2020 and the ongoing implementation of relevant provisions (particularly revised discharge arrangements) of the Act.
- 9.3 However, we do recommend the following:
 - (a) That performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator continue to be reported as part of the Council's regular corporate performance report; and
 - (b) That, on the relaxation of the relevant provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and with regard to the Council's ongoing performance against the ASCOF2B2 indicator at that time, consideration be given to the identification of measures to further improve the delivery of reablement services by the Council, if required.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director for Children & Public Health

Cabinet

on 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Elaine Hammans - Head of Early Years

Options report to improve outcomes for children and maximise Children's Centre use

People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Anne Jones
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

The Administration have made clear the importance of their ambition for the best start in life for Southend children, as indicated in the 2050 roadmap and outcomes, and in particular maximising the contribution and role of the Children's Centres.

The purpose of this report is to update cabinet on the current position and to present a range of options going forwards for cabinet to consider to enhance the offer for young children and their families.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the findings from the discovery and define stages of service design to date.

Cabinet is asked to consider the options for a future delivery model for Southend's Children centre offer as set out in paragraph 4.5 and agree to option 3 for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.6.

3. Background

- 3.1 Children Centres under the Childcare Act 2006, are a group or group of places with the aim of bringing together integrated early childhood services for better outcomes in:
 - Child development and school readiness;
 - Parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and
 - Child and family health and life chances.

Children's centres are more than the buildings in which they operate, rather a coordinated and integrated partnership delivery of services to children and families where needed. The current council budget for the contract is £996k per annum.

- Family Action hold the current contract and are the Council's management agent for the coordination and current running of all Southend's nine Children's Centres, they were awarded the contract in October 2016. Previously centres were run and operated under a mixed economy, of voluntary, health and school management arrangements. The current contract was awarded in October 2016 for three years, plus the option of a further three years. We are currently in the second year of the plus three option, October 2020 to September 2021.
- 3.3 Southend 2050 provides an opportunity to rethink the current arrangements and build on the

delivery in order to maximise integrated services for young families, using the full potential of the assets and thriving communities together to deliver a comprehensive service.

3.4 Work to date

- 3.4.1 As part of the 2050 roadmap, work commenced on the ambition to make better use of children's centres. The work was with the council's service design team and using the double diamond method for service design. Work has progressed through the "discovery" stage to look at the current offer and what it could look like in the future.
- 3.4.2 A comprehensive action plan of engagement was created, including using appreciative inquiry with families across the town. Significantly, this included working with partners such as Family Action, A Better Start Southend (ABSS), Early Years Providers and SAVS, with the aim of engaging with a wide range of families, including through a resident online survey. Other information including the voice of the child was also captured. Work also included mapping current community assets geographically, and visiting other councils to gain insight of different operating options and researched provision regionally and nationally. Full data desktop scrutiny including centre usage and footfall has also been undertaken.
- 3.4.3 As part of the discovery phase, strong and productive working relationships continued with key strategic partners including ABSS. Following their earlier research in May 2020 on the impact of Covid 19, ABSS are supporting the children's centre review by commissioning the University of Essex to undertake a literature review and comparative analysis of local authorities who have reviewed, redesigned and/or reproved Children's Centre services. The university will report in December, this review will provide extensive evidence of 'what works' and valuable insights into the experiences of other local authorities in redesigning their Children's Centre offer. Although this may not be published in time for the cabinet meeting in January, verbal feedback can be given, and the research will be used to further inform the service design going forwards.

3.5 Learning taken from the impact of Coronavirus (Covid–19)

- 3.5.1 Whilst impacting on every child in the country, COVID-19 is likely to have a greater impact on the children and young people already living in poverty in the UK. Financial instability may rise during the COVID-19 crisis and low-income families already unable to budget for unexpected expenses will be hit the hardest.
- 3.5.2 During this time services have had to look completely differently at how they deliver services to children, families and the wider community. As a result, in early years:
 - strong partnerships have developed further, for example, we have worked more collaboratively with ABSS as a result of our shared covid support
 - children's centres and partners have developed new and innovative ideas of supporting families. Of particular merit is the virtual support that the council has provided throughout the pandemic to families, including finding childcare placements where required

Listening to families and reacting to their changing level of need and supporting their real concerns of the growing emotional and economical family strain have been invaluable in informing future models going forwards.

3.6 Findings from the service redesign

- 3.6.1 The combination of the discovery phase and the learning from Covid 19 have provided learning and insight from current users of the services and those new to children's centres in the Borough. The finding showed that:
 - Families value advice on obtaining help and support: benefits, financial, health, housing, home schooling.
 - Families reported the current children's centre offer supported them to regain or rebuild confidence to enable them to feel less isolated, more resilient and rebuild an enhanced

support network.

- Families enjoy the opportunity to **access early education**, especially for disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs.
- Opportunities for networking for parents and children to interact socially, through for example activities such as stay and play.
- They expressed a **growing need** for emotional, behavioral and mental health support.
- Access to services have shown a preference of a blended approach, moving away from entirely place based provision to online/virtual delivery.
- Families have reported that during this time centres with outdoor space are more popular, especially for those who do not have access to safe outdoor space at home.
- Families told us that **finding information** on the children centre offer of activities and branding could be enhanced.
- Families referenced the benefit of "**trusted and familiar faces**" from the centre staff and regular partner delivery staff especially Health.

Throughout the discovery phase, and reflecting the findings above, several themes clearly emerged for cabinet to consider. These include

- 1. a strong desire for integrated services easily accessible, irrespective of who delivers them to families;
- 2. they valued a multi-agency, statutory and voluntary sector support;
- 3. the benefit they derived from a supportive network of professionals and peers in rebuilding their confidence.

These themes shaped the options presented below in section 7.

4 Options for consideration

- 4.1 What emerged from the service design process, including the summary of the findings above can be seen in full detail in the accompanying information pack.
- 4.2 The selected options were not exhaustive, other options have been considered and dismissed through the service design process on the grounds of either affordability, lack of support from families, or complexity in relation to legal considerations. The options set out will allow cabinet to consider the most effective way of meeting family's needs expressed above, but within the budget framework currently available.
- 4.3 The type of services families told us they wanted are not radically different from the current offer. However, the clear request from the discovery phase for integrated and shared delivery of services and provision indicate that some of the options below will allow members greater control and confidence that both their ambitions and the needs of families are better served.
- 4.4 The options therefore span the degree of control that this administration wishes to retain in relation to the management and operation of the centres. It must be remembered that irrespective of the options, the duty remains with the LA in respect of its statutory duties. The options provide cabinet with the opportunity to determine how much operational influence and control over those outcomes it wishes to retain, on a continuum from option one, with minimal influence and control other than contract monitoring to option four where all management and operating decisions and deliver rest entirely with the council.
- 4.5 The full options are set out in the appendix, indicating the benefits and challenges provided by each of the five options. In summary they are:

Option one. External procurement for a new Children's Centre contract.

This option would require a procurement exercise to tender for a new contract nationally. Officers have developed a clear timeline for procurement that will meet the October 2021 deadline should

members wish to follow this option.

Opportunity A new procurement would allow the Council to restate its ambitions through a new outcomes framework.

Risk However, it would also run the risk of a less integrated approach to delivery, contrary to our 2050 ambitions to work in, and cross partnership, and is dependent upon the appetite within the market. Secondly, at this time, the maturity of the market is yet to be fully tested (Officers did undertake a "soft market testing" exercise as part of discovery, which indicated that in theory, the market showed some initial interest). Finally, a new contract following procurement will only deliver what is specified in that contract, however detailed and clear, and no more.

Option two. The establishment of a formal "trust" to deliver services.

This option would require the establishment of a legal external entity, legally at arm's length from the council (although the council could be a part), such as a Local Authority Trading Company or a Joint Venture.

Opportunity This may have greater potential to attract interest from other organisations, and a new perspective on delivery.

Risk However, it would be complex and lengthy to establish, and the contact value may not be sufficiently attractive to potential partners. As such it may run the risk of not being completed within the timeframe of October 2021.

Option three. A strategic partnership model between the council, statutory services and voluntary and third sector partners.

This option would involve establishing a formal governance structure to oversee the management and operation of the children's centres and their staff. The exact nature of the entity is to be determined, there are several models already in existence with the Borough, but its brief would be to ensure a collaborative effort by partners focused upon improving outcomes within early years. The operating model would be determined as a result of detailed co design, but would involve some form of "umbrella" governance arrangements between the strategic parties and partners. Consideration of the draft outcomes for this option are included below in 4.6.1.

Opportunity This would meet the desire for strategic and shared partnership that it is fair to say has been problematic under the current arrangements. Under such an arrangement, the entity would be able to bid for and attract external funding that is not currently accessible to local government. It would also potentially benefit from the ability to pool budgets where appropriate going forward. It would bring the necessary commitment from partners to fully to shared ownership and operation and allow meaningful community engagement from the start. The umbrella would be representative of key partners and assets within the borough rather than a single organisation lead.

Risk It would require the council to TUPE existing staff and the associated costs.

Option four. Bring in house.

This option would bring all of the staff and operation of the centres within the council as employees.

Opportunities This would allow the council greater direction of the work within the children's centres.

Risk It would also require the council to TUPE current Family Action staff into the council, with associated on costs. This may make the option vulnerable to budgetary pressures within its own budget as a result of less ability to attract external funding sources. Ultimately, suitability would be problematic.

Option five: Do nothing

The current contract is due to run until September 2021, with the option a further extension of a year.

Opportunity It would allow short term continuity for staff.

Risk However at the end point, cabinet will be faced with the same current question. There would be little in the way of assurance that any remaining term on the contract would deliver better outcomes.

4.6 Commentary on the options

4.6.1 Each of the options set out in detail in the appendix would to varying degrees be able to deliver the administrations ambitions for the children's centre offer and the findings from the discovery phase.

It was clear from families, and indeed from strategic partners with whom the council currently works, that in order to deliver sustainable and effective services going forward, a greater emphasis **and commitment** to partnership working would be required.

Whilst this could be achieved in part by most options, it forms the basis of the **third option**. Ongoing discussions with key partners, including ABSS and SAVs indicate that there is a clear and timely opportunity to integrate their legacy proposals alongside the future of the Children's Centres in a community led partnership approach to prevention and early intervention.

The third option therefore allows and commissions a greater degree of multi agency and partner commitment to improving outcomes, critically not from their exiting separate organisations, but under a loose federation, and will therefore enable a range of benefits that the other options cannot so easily provide. These include:

- a shared commitment to multi agency cooperation and delivery on shared outcomes
- the opportunity for attracting additional capacity, resource and commitment that is not currently available would the council be sole provider
- the option going forward to have a wider engagement with the council and the communities on their priorities, and the ability to vie resource to support these priorities mid-stream
- it offers a collective ability for community organisations and the council to develop a sustainable platform for further improvements in the children centre offer as part of the wider children's agenda
- In addition, it will allow this work to align more closely with the legacy agenda from ABSS as one of the partners

Outcome/measures

The following (draft) outcomes have been determined following the engagement sessions with service users, and will be tested with them as the process develops in an iterative way. They relate in particular to the recommended option three, as the benefits of multi agency collaborative deliver would be best seen to meet cabinet's aspirations.

Outcomes

- Children's development and school readiness will improve. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers will be narrowed.
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills will improve. Inequalities will be reduced in of all young children
- Adults will volunteer in centres. More parents will enter work/training. This will reduce isolation and increase wellbeing.
- Children will receive better infant and childhood nutritional information and support. Child and family health and life chances will improve.
- More families engage regularly to gain skills, support and knowledge. Supporting the child poverty agenda by engaging with our most disadvantaged families

Measures

- There will be an increase in scores in the early years foundation stage profile
- There will be a rise in two year olds accessing funding
- There will be a rise in parents accessing 30 hours childcare as they will be in employment
- Less children will be living in Poverty
- Fewer families will be referred to social care as a result of early intervention

5 Timeline

The current contract extension expires in September 2021. Officers have drafted a clear timeline for decisions required by cabinet that will allow this to happen).

Irrespective of the option selected, but particularly in relation to re-procurement option one, officers have ensure that should this be required, the timeline will allow all stages to be delivered in order to secure a new contract by the end of September 2021.

6 Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Financial Implications

It should be recognised that particular change to the current model may have financial implications for the available budget. The current budget is £996k per annum. Part of this is a contribution from Public Health (£100k). Following cabinet decisions today, full indicative costings for the preferred option will be prepared.

Budget

However, as indicated above in section 7.3, the range and scope of services required by centre users was not radically different from the current offer. Therefore, at least in the first year of the new arrangements, it is assumed that the budget to the council will remain in the region of the current budget £996k. This is the working budget available in order to best improve the work of Children's Centres.

The latest outturn summary from family action indicate a slight overspend this year (£998k). Of that expenditure, £663 (65%) were on staffing costs, £104k (10%) on central administration and management costs and £131k (13%) on premises costs. However, should be noted that contingent upon their decision, further budget flexibility could be explored, phased over time.

The significant advantage of working more closely with strategic partners would be in their ability to either attract or accrue addition resource and capacity through their existing workforce, be it employed or voluntary. Again, this could result in possible reduction and reliance solely on the council core budget.

It is envisaged that once the direction is known, full indicative costings past the first year can be worked out by partners on a sliding scale, and more importantly, the outcomes that the partnership would wish to achieve would be clearly articulated above and beyond the high level benefits expressed in 3.6.1 above.

6.2 Legal Implications

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty to ensure Integrated Early Childhood Services are delivered, currently this is through children's centres. Further specialist legal advice on the options will be required at a later stage.

6.3 **People Implications**

Depending on the option selected, early conversations with human resources have taken place regarding potential TUPE arrangements related to several of the options.

6.4 Property Implications

Of the nine current Children's Centres, only one centre is owned by Southend Borough Council, Cambridge Road. Eastwood is situated on a Local Authority maintained school site. Six others are based in Primary Academies (under 125 year lease to the Trust from the Council) and the remaining one (Centre Place) operate in another building.

We hold information on DFE capital requirements including the dates that each centre must remain as a building to deliver early childhood services from. In the leases of the buildings it states "In accordance with DfE requirements, the Children's Centre shall be open during the hours of 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, for 48 weeks of the year, except for bank holidays and other public holidays. Any additional hours required outside these times will be subject to the agreement of and any conditions required by the School/Licensor."

Consultation

As part of the discovery phase, significant community consultation has taken place with both service users and those who do not currently use the centres. This work has substantially informed this recommendation.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

Risk Assessment

Value for Money

Community Safety Implications
None envisaged.

Environmental Impact

None envisaged

7. Appendices

Appendix one

Options detail

Option	Benefits/Opportunities	Risks/Challenges
Option One external procurement Appoint a new provider for all of the services through a competitive process: Duty remains with LA regardless of where contract sits.	 Opportunity to undertake a review of the current outcome framework Opportunity for fresh innovative and creative working Continuity of service provision/length of contract 3rd Party may be able to access additional funding for charitable/social purposes in which statutory bodies cannot access. Accountable to LA to deliver on its duty Management of staff including all HR remains with the contracted company/organisation. 	 Potential disruption for families External partners have raised concerns of ensuring a smooth transition due to the impact of the pandemic TUPE/staff changes Potential loss of partner commitment/involvement Soft market intelligence was positive but without knowledge of financial details/obligations: Potential risk:- No interest The contract wild liver what is specified within the contract and no more
Option two formation of a trust Forming a legal partnership/ charitable trust: Strategic partnership:	 A clear public statement of charitable objects May have tax advantages Strategic Cohesion: Funding opportunities may emerge from partners A wider breath of potential knowledge and skills both locally and nationally 	 Complex – Roles and responsibility and ownership of delivery Any legal partnership or charitable trust must have or form a legal entity. Any legal partnership /charitable trust either formed locally or nationally would be required to go through a competitive tendering process.
Option three hybrid model Joint agreed responsibility for delivery between LA and 3rd parties/voluntary sector	 Local Authority would remain legal entity. This would allow potential easy route to work with 3rd parties/voluntary sector (governance model). More community involvement in the design of the service delivery Voluntary sector funding opportunities are possible Joint responsibility between LA 	Potential additional management costs of 3rd sector/voluntary involvement Potential tension between services Aspirations verses what can be realistically delivered within envelope Forming of a governance model to ensure fairness and equity

Report Title Report Number

Option	Benefits/Opportunities	Risks/Challenges
	 and 3rd party/voluntary sector to deliver full integrated childhood services. Allows for pooled budgets Brings a wealth of experience and knowledge of all sectors. Ensure clear commitment for the coalition of partners 	 Potential conflicting priorities across any mix of partners Each organisations financial/organisational pressures may impact on service delivery or involvement
Option four, take back in house provision	 Increased ownership/ responsibility. Public health /Social Care (Early Help). More opportunity to deliver phased approach to service delivery verses buildings Opportunities to widen delivery in existing community assets Joint use of budgets and staff across organisation Data sharing challenges resolved Opportunity to further develop integrated early childhood services linking with Thriving Communities. Saving of management cost that would be occurred in any 3rd part organisation managing children centres contract 	 Challenge in ensuring 3rd sector involvement and collaboration. Risk of yearly fiscal saving pressures Responsible for sustaining building assets including maintenance and cleaning etc More HR expenditure, i.e pension, sickness Loss of a national perspective /infrastruture
Option five, do nothing	 Bridges the immediate pandemic concerns Allow some continuity of provison in the short term 	 Delays the decision until future years Does not necessarily lead to improvement in outcomes Risk of staff "drift" as a result of uncertainty

Report Title Report Number



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director Growth & Housing

То

Cabinet

On 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Jodi Thompson – Policy and Project Support Officer Agenda Item No.

Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: The Leader of the Council, Councillor lan Gilbert
Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Empty Homes Strategy 2021 - 2026 for approval and provide an analysis of consultation findings.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021-2026 is considered and agreed for implementation.
- 2.2 The incentives to reduce the amount of the empty homes contained within the draft strategy are agreed and the associated capital budget is noted.

3. Background

- 3.1 The number of long term empty homes in England has risen by 5.3% to 216,186 in the last 12 months to October 2019¹. Government statistics outline, there are now over 216,000 long-term empty homes in England².
- 3.2 The Action on Empty Homes report 'empty homes in England 2019³' highlights rises in London (up 11%), the South East (up 9%) and the East (up 11%). They report the highest regional occurrence of empty homes is in the North East where one in every 72 homes is long-term empty.

¹ Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England from 2004 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants

³ https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/publications-and-research

3.3 According to Council Tax records, the amount of 'vacant' (neither resided in nor furnished) empty homes in Southend over the last five years are recorded as below. This includes an empty home 'vacant' for a period of 6 months or more.

Year	Number	Percentage +/- from previous year
2015	593	-28%
2016	701	+18%
2017	615	-12%
2018	596	-3%
2019	630	+6%
2020	724	+15%

- 3.4 Empty homes are categorised differently for Council Tax and enforcement and intervention purposes. Council Tax classify an empty home as one that has been unoccupied and unfurnished for a period of 6 months or more. For the Empty Homes Team, enforcement and intervention action against owners of empty homes can only take place once a property has been empty for a period of 2 years or more.
- 3.5 The strategy, among other approaches, proposes to engage owners prior to a 2 year empty duration and seeks earlier intervention such that enforcement actions can be avoided as much as possible or, where necessary, enforcement action can be swift and informed by earlier engagement once the 2 year threshold is reached. Added to this, 86.4% of consultation respondents (see **Appendix 2** and section 11.1) were in agreement to use legislative frameworks to the fullest, including enforcement action.
- 3.6 Of the 724 Council Tax categorised empty homes:
 - 99 are charged a 100% Council Tax premium (those empty for 2 years or more).
 - 73 are charged a 200% Council Tax premium (those empty for 5 years or more).
 - 426 Class F Council Tax exemptions are in place.
 - 198 Class F Council Tax exemptions have been in place for 6 months or more (although further investigation would be necessary to establish the volume of which have received Grant of Probate 6 months earlier).
- 3.7 Of note is that Class F exemptions are not included within Council Tax vacant listings as the exemption is applied while the property is furnished.
- 3.8 Empty homes cases opened during the lifecycle of the last strategy to date are 233, of which 81.5% were closed during the same period. Service requests for empty homes during 2020 (January to date) are 41. Of which, 24

new empty homes cases were opened. During the same period, 35 empty homes cases were closed. At the time of this report, there were 105 open empty homes cases with the Empty Homes Team.

- 3.9 Homes become empty for a variety of reasons which may include:
 - The property is difficult to sell or let.
 - The property is undergoing renovation.
 - The owner is finding it difficult to manage the property.
 - The property has been repossessed.
 - A lengthy probate process.
 - The owner is being cared for elsewhere/is in hospital.
 - The property is classified as a second home.

4. Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026

- 4.1 Bringing empty homes back into use in the borough contributes to the Southend 2050 Safe and Well and Active and Involved outcomes of "people in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times", "we are well on our way to ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs", "a range of initiatives help communities come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment".
- 4.2 Southend's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy aims to provide "decent high quality, affordable and secure homes for the people of Southend" and "encourage good quality housing design, management and maintenance" and the draft Empty Homes Strategy contributes to this aim.
- 4.3 It is known that empty homes often have detrimental impacts on the local area such as through anti-social behaviour, over-grown or unkempt gardens, structural issues, pest control issues and can also negatively impact the local housing market. For these reasons, the draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 2026 sought a renewed approach with three key aims as:
 - **Aim 1**: Reduce the amount of long-term (those empty for two years or more) empty homes in the borough.
 - Aim 2: Work with owners early on to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period.
 - **Aim 3**: Utilise legislative tools to bring long-term empty homes back into use in a timely and effective manner.
- 4.4 The draft strategy includes an Empty Homes Action Plan (see **Appendix 1**) offering further details of how aims will be achieved, including timescales and outcome measures. This includes implementation of an updated RAG system to rate properties to correctly identify and priorities action as appropriate, introduction of a revised 'empty homes database' to track and forward plan appropriate action and updated standard templates of correspondence to owners to enhance engagement and support priority rating.

- 4.5 By engaging empty home owners early on, the draft strategy is intended to bring empty homes back into use and prevent properties empty for six months or more falling into a state of deterioration or long-term vacancy. While properties that have been empty for six months or more are classified and long-term empty homes for Council Tax purposes, it is important to note that enforcement action powers are designed to come into effect where a home has been empty for two years or more.
- 4.6 As part of an enhanced approach to engage owners of empty homes early on, a range of services and incentives are proposed as:
 - 1. An enhanced advice and guidance service to home owners, borough residents and multi-agency professionals to help bring empty homes back into use.
 - 2. A new empty homes website offering a comprehensive suite of advice and information to complement the range of advice and guidance available, offering a 24 hour information hub, signposting to wider resources where possible.
 - 3. Proposed incentives:
 - Interest free loans to rent and sell available to individuals and companies (not owner occupiers) of £25,000 per unit of accommodation and, in exceptional circumstances, the Council will consider higher amounts (subject to funds being available). Loan conditions include:
 - Loan to sell repayable either, immediately upon sale of the property, or within 2 years of the dated Loan Facility Agreement (whichever is the sooner).
 - Loan to let repayable within 3 years of the dated Loan Facility Agreement, or upon the future sale of the property (whichever is the sooner).
 - Properties must be brought back into use within the agreed project timescales and made available to rent within 12 weeks after the project has been completed (or marketed for sale).
 - Nomination rights for applicants on the Council's Homeseekers' Register linked to loans to rent.
 - Advice and guidance to support owners to achieve the Decent Homes Standard.
- 4.7 Nomination rights can be used to 'nominate' applicants on the Council's Homeseekers' Register as tenants for empty (rental) homes brought back into use, allowing guaranteed rent and property maintenance for the owner, with rent charged at Local Housing Allowance rate. As part of the interest free loans to rent, we are considering attaching nomination rights. While this supports provision of homes for those on the Homeseekers' Register, it is important to highlight this as not a long-term housing solution for those housed within nominated properties is not guaranteed.

- 4.8 Partnership working continues to be an integral aspect to the effectiveness of empty homes actions within the borough, including (but not limited to):
 - Council Tax
 - Community Safety
 - Strategic Housing
 - Regulatory Services
 - Trading Standards
 - Private Sector Housing
 - South Essex Homes
 - Waste Management
- 4.9 The Council's Acquisitions Programme may be able to purchase empty dwellings subject to investigation to determine value for money (purchase and ongoing management costs), subject to funds being available.
- 4.10 The Council may also wish to consider initiatives from other local authorities. For example, the London Borough of Croydon received the empty homes innovation award in 2018 and, while the work was not intended to bring empty homes back into use, it resulted in £200k in uncollected council tax by focusing on empty properties with a Class F exemption. This applies to properties where the owner has died and Probate has not been obtained. Upon investigation, it was apparent that 146 of the 183 class F properties had received their Grant of Probate 6 months earlier.

5. Commercial Properties

- 5.1 Whilst the draft strategy does not include empty commercial properties, the partnership approach at the heart of the strategy ensures that appropriate agencies are made aware of any empty commercial properties where necessary.
- 5.2 Within the Southend Town Centre Intervention Project (STCIP), £400k is allocated from the Local Growth Fund to provide interest free loans to bring empty properties back into use, either as alternative commercial or mixed use (residential/commercial). The project has a focus to bring upper floor commercial space back into use as residential property.
- 5.3 The South Essex No Use Empty project has £1.2m allocated from the Getting Building Fund (GBF) to be made available as interest free loans. The purpose of the loans is to bring long-term empty commercial premises back into use as alternative commercial or mixed use. The fund is available across the ASELA area (Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend and Thurrock). This is anticipated to fund 10-15 projects in Southend to ensure an equal split of funding between ASELA, with all authorities requested to identify potential projects ahead of the launch. There is also £100k of match funding available, contributed on a per project basis. In addition, the project is looking to secure another £1.2m of funding, bringing the potential total to £2.4m. Loan details include:

- The property must have been empty for more than 6 months.
- Loans are interest free subject to conditions.
- Loans will help landlords, owners and developers to meet the cost of repairs and improvements to bring their property back into use.
- Loans are awarded in units of £25,000 to a maximum of £175,000 per applicant.
- Loans to let repayment period currently up to 3 years.
- Loans to sell repayment period is on the sale of the first unit.
- Properties must be brought back into use within the agreed project timescales.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 The previous Empty Homes Strategy has now come to the end of its lifecycle and given that bringing empty homes back into use continues to be a priority for the Council, a renewed strategy is required to govern the Council's approach to undertaking this work.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 The draft Empty Homes Strategy contributes to Southend 2050 outcomes as highlighted in sections 4.1 and 4.2.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There is a capital budget for the Empty Homes Team which has been earmarked for the proposed incentives for owners of empty homes or those wishing to purchase an empty home to bring back into use. The 3 year capital budget is detailed below:

2021/22 Budget	2022/23 Budget	2023/24 Budget
£262,000	£261,000	£262,000

- 8.2 It is intended that this capital budget is a revolving fund for the purpose of bringing empty homes back into use thus when loans are repaid to the Council the funds will be reinvested back into the Empty Homes Capital budget.
- 8.3 The necessary Loan Facility Agreements and Legal Charge documents have been drafted for the purpose of the proposed loan processes. This agreement has been drafted in partnership with the Council's Legal team and will need sign off by the Council's Finance Team prior to implementation.
- 8.4 It should be noted that Local Authorities have been able to charge a premium of 100% of the standard rate of council tax on long-term empty properties (those empty for two years or more). The maximum premium local authorities can charge is 200% for properties empty for five years or more. From 1 April

- 2021, the amount a local authority can charge will increase to 300% if a property has been empty for 10 years or more.
- 8.5 The New Homes Bonus is calculated either positively or negatively based upon the amount of long-term empty properties (those empty for 6 months or more) in comparison to the previous financial year. As such, long-term empty homes are deducted from any subsequent New Homes Bonus.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 The Council's Legal team and Essex Legal Services have been fully engaged in the process of the drafting the necessary legal agreements and work will be ongoing to finalise these documents prior to implementation.

10. Property Implications

10.1 This draft strategy looks to bring empty homes in the borough back in the use. Empty homes often have detrimental impacts on the local area such as antisocial behaviour, over-grown or unkempt gardens, structural issues, pest control issues and can also negatively impact the local housing market.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 The draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 2026 consultation was live from 2nd November 2020 to 30th November 2020. A total of 44 responses were received. A full overview of findings can be found in the Consultation Report (**Appendix 2**). Key findings include:
 - Almost 60% of respondents felt that the Council wasn't achieving the right balance of assisting owners of empty homes and taking enforcement action. However, 61% of respondents were not aware of the current empty homes process or strategy.
 - 86.4% of respondents felt the Council should be taking more enforcement action against owners of empty homes where the property is negatively affecting others and/or in poor condition.
 - Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders and Enforced Sale Procedures were the top 3 enforcement actions selected by respondents.
 - 75% of respondents were in agreement to attach nomination rights to interest free loans to rent, although interest free loans to rent were the third lowest incentive selected by respondents.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is detailed in **Appendix 3**.

13. Risk Assessment

13.1 The necessary risk assessments have been undertaken in regards to the implementation of this strategy and will continue to be monitored throughout the process.

14. Value for Money

14.1 Value for money exercises will be undertaken in regards to the Empty Homes loans and will need to be accompanied by the necessary budget monitoring reports. Value for money will also be considered should the empty homes be considered for the Council's Acquisitions Programme.

15. Community Safety Implications

15.1 Bringing empty homes back into use will look to improve community safety as research has seen that empty homes can increase levels of anti-social behaviour, over-grown or unkempt gardens, structural issues, pest control issues.

16. Environmental Impact

16.1 Empty homes brought back into use will include energy efficiency works such as improving boiler standards wherever possible.

17. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026



Appendix 1- Empty Homes Strategy 202

Appendix 2 – Consultation Findings Report



Appendix 2- Empty Homes Strategy 202

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment



Appendix 3- Empty Homes Strategy 202







Empty Homes Strategy 2021–2026

Housing and Social Inclusion

Introduction

This strategy sets out the steps Southend-on-Sea Borough Council will take to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, maximise the re-use of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes.

The Council is strongly committed to reducing the number of empty homes, facilitating and assisting the creation of good quality and affordable homes in the borough and to making best use of existing housing stock.

Working in partnership with empty property owners, residents and partner agencies is integral to the successful delivery of the strategy.

This strategy seeks to support Southend 2050 'Safe and Well' and 'Active and Involved' visions by contributing towards:

- People in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times.
- We are all on our way to ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs.
- A range of initiatives help communities come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment.





The strategy also seeks to support and complement the Council's Housing,

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2018–2028, in particular to 'prioritise the supply of safe, locally affordable homes' and 'encourage good quality housing design, management and maintenance'.

This strategy sets out three key aims and associated actions which will help the Council continue to bring empty homes back into use. Working in partnership with empty property owners, residents and partner agencies is integral to the successful delivery of the strategy.

Councillor Ian Gilbert

Mu Willet

Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Housing

Aims

Over the next five years the strategy will help bring empty homes back into use and prevent properties empty for more than six months to slip into deterioration and long-term vacancy.

This will be achieved by the following aims:

Aim 1: Reduce the amount of long-term (those empty for two years or more) empty homes in the borough.

Aim 2: Work with owners early on to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period.

Aim 3: Utilise legislative tools to bring long term empty properties back into use in a timely and effective manner.

Associated actions

Please refer to the action plan (appendix 1) for full details of how aims will be achieved, including timescales and outcome measures.

Legislation

The strategy sets out a range of tools to engage and support owners to bring an empty property back into use.

Once informal routes have been exhausted the Council will undertake enforcement action using applicable legislation, to include (but not limited to):

- Housing Act 2004
- Building Act 1984
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Local Government Act 1976
- Public Health Act 1961
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Enforced Sale Procedure
- Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)
- Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

For full details of the type of problem, legislation used and power granted see **appendix 2**.

Enforcement

The Council will utilise legislative frameworks to the fullest, including undertaking enforcement action where applicable.

Once the Council becomes aware of an empty home, it will assess the property and take the necessary steps to address, for example, any hazards, anti-social behaviour or pest control associated with the property.

Where empty home owners are not working with the Council to rectify identified issues, the Council will undertake corrective take action on the owner's behalf and then adopt robust cost recovery plans.

Where cost recovery plans are unsuccessful and/or owners continue to not rectify identified issues with the property, the Council will undertake further enforcement action. This can include undertaking legal proceedings such as EDMOs, CPOs or enforced sales.

Background

Empty home definition

A property which has been empty for two years or more is considered to be a long-term empty home. Under the Housing Act 2004 and associated legislation government encourages councils to take action to bring empty homes back into use.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has historically used the following definitions to classify an empty home:

- The property is a domestic dwelling.
- The property has been empty for at least two years.

In addition to these definitions, the Council will also include:

 Homes empty for a period of six months will have action taken to bring them back into use.

Why homes become empty

There are a number of reasons leading to empty properties which may include:

- The property is difficult to sell or let.
- The property is undergoing renovation.
- The owner is finding it difficult to manage the property.
- The property has been repossessed.
- A lengthy probate process.
- The owner is being cared for elsewhere/is in hospital.
- The property is classified as a second home.

The Council will take a proactive approach to empty properties, understanding the reasons behind individual empty homes so that we can work with owners, offering advice and guidance to help bring properties back into use.

The impact

Empty properties have an increased risk of vandalism and crime and may require costly repair works to ensure the property meets the current Housing Standards.

Homes empty for a period of six months will have action taken to bring them back into use.

Empty properties can also have a direct impact on adjoining properties through damp, structural issues, looking unsightly and may impact neighbouring house prices.

Abandoned or long term empty properties can have an impact on the local community in terms of economic depreciation of adjacent properties.

They may cause additional pressures on the housing market, supressing market 'churn' and resulting in additional pressures on social housing and private rented accommodation.

Bringing properties back into use in a timely and cost effective manner will therefore have a positive impact on neighbourhoods, resident safety and increase the quality and volume of housing stock in the borough.

Local and National Perspective

National context

The number of long term empty homes in England has risen by 5.3% to 216,186 in the last 12 months to October 2019. According to government statistics, there are now over 216,000 long-term empty homes in England.

Engaging owners early on and signposting to the range of available options is anticipated to support bringing empty homes back into use in a timely manner.

The volume of empty properties are growing in two thirds of all local authorities, in both high and low value areas, with empty homes in the top and bottom council tax bands.

Action on Empty Homes highlight in their report 'empty homes in England 2019²' rises in London (up 11%), the South East (up 9%) and the East (up 11%). They report the highest regional occurrence of empty homes is in the North East where one in every 72 homes is long-term empty.

Local context

The latest population estimates for Southend indicate 182,500 residents across approximately 80,180 properties, of which 630 were long-term empty as of 2019 as per the latest government figures.³

This compares with 596 empty homes in 2018 and 615 in 2017⁴. These figures are based upon government 'live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants)' which use different criteria to classify an empty home and may not represent all properties under investigation as an empty home and/or subject to enforcement action.

Engaging owners early on, signposting to a range of available options and utilising legislation frameworks to the fullest will support bringing empty homes back into use in a timely manner.

The aim of such is to prevent properties being empty for a prolonged period and lessening the overall impact such as the need for major refurbishment or structural works.

Working in partnership

Partnership working continues to be an integral aspect to the effectiveness of empty homes actions undertaken within the borough. In this manner, key stakeholders include (but are not limited to):

- Council Tax
- Community Safety
- Strategic Housing
- Regulatory Services
- Trading Standards
- Private Sector Housing
- South Essex Homes
- Waste Management

Therefore, by adopting a robust approach to empty properties and working in partnership with

¹ <u>https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants</u>

² https://www.actiononemptyhomes.org/publications-and-research

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants table 615

⁴ Ibid

key stakeholders, it is intended to reduce the detrimental effect on neighbourhoods.

While this strategy does not include empty commercial properties, our partnership approach at the heart of the strategy ensures that appropriate agencies are made aware of any empty commercial properties where necessary.

It is important to note that Waste Management or Regulatory Services, for example, will only take action in relation to environmental or public health concerns raised.

The Council will however, seek to, separate from this strategy, utilise any funding or resources available to bring empty commercial properties back into use.

Council tax

From 01 April 2019 the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows local authorities to increase the stepped approach of council tax charging on empty homes.

In employing this legislation, from 01 April 2019 the Council applied a 100% premium on applicable empty properties.

Introducing a stepped approach to council tax premiums is intended to further support strategy aims and utilise enforcement action to the fullest in order to tackle empty homes in the borough.

Details of any future proposed council tax premiums can be found on the <u>Southend-on-Sea Borough Council website</u>.

Monitoring

The empty homes database will be used to log and track progress of empty homes as per the empty homes workflow (appendix 3). This will

help determine priority properties and ascertain the most suitable course of action to bring an empty property back into use.

We will offer updates via the <u>housing information</u> <u>website</u> of all reported empty homes and properties brought back into use.

The success of the strategy will be measured against aims set out. In addition, government statistical returns will be analysed to monitor and review the prevalence of empty properties in Southend-on-Sea against regional and national trends.

Our offer

Interest free loans

Interest free loans are available to individuals and companies (not owner occupiers) to help meet the cost of repairs and improvements to bring a property back into use.

There are two loans available – a **loan to rent** and a **loan to sell**. There are a number of conditions applicable, including:

- The property must have been empty for more than six months.
- Loans are interest free subject to conditions.
- Persons applying for the loan must be the property owner and they must be able to supply security for the loan.
- £25,000 per unit of accommodation is available up to a maximum of £175,000 (subject to funds being available).
- The amount available is dependent on the total cost of the eligible works. These costs will be assessed by the Council to ensure that they are reasonable and present value for money.
- Loan to sell repayable either, immediately upon sale of the property, or within two years of the dated Loan Facility Agreement (whichever is the sooner).
- Loan to rent repayable within three years
 of the dated Loan Facility Agreement, or
 upon the future sale of the property
 (whichever is the sooner).
- Properties must be brought back into use within the agreed project timescales and made available to rent within twelve weeks after the project has been completed (or marketed for sale).

 An administration fee will be required as a contribution to the costs of processing an application.

For further information and to make an application for a loan, visit the housing website.

Advice and guidance

In addition to interest free loans and the increased utilisation of legislative frameworks, the Council will offer an enhanced advice and guidance service to property owners, borough residents and multi-agency professionals to help bring empty properties back into use.

This includes awareness and signposting to national, regional or local initiatives that support strategy aims and working with owners on a case by case basis to identify available options.

The empty homes database will be used to monitor progress, track trends and identify best practice examples to enhance and improve service delivery going forward, including the range of information and guidance sought and offered.

A new empty homes website, offering a comprehensive suite of advice and information, will complement the range of guidance available and offer a 24 hour information hub, signposting to wider resources where possible.

Acquisitions

The Council currently operates an Acquisitions Programme which aims to purchase properties from the market to be utilised for Affordable Housing.

The Strategic Housing Team, in partnership with Assets and South Essex Homes aim to identify suitable properties on the market for acquisition, to be brought up to appropriate lettings standards and let via the Choice Based Lettings system at Affordable Rents (80% market) capped by Local Housing Allowance levels.

The acquisitions programme may be able to purchase empty dwellings subject to investigation to determine value for money (purchase and on-going management costs), subject to funds being available.

For more information and to discuss the Acquisitions Programme further, visit the housing website.

Further information

For further information on any of the content in this strategy or to report and empty property, please visit the <u>empty homes website</u>.

Alternative format versions of this strategy are available upon request.

Appendix 1: Empty Homes Action Plan

	Aim 1: Reduce the amount of long term empty homes in the borough		
	Action	Timescale	Outcome measure
1.1	Implement an updated RAG rating system to support a reduction in long term empty homes in the borough.	January 2021	Empty homes impact assessment in place and used to RAG rate properties.
1.2	Introduce a revised 'empty homes database' to capture core information, including all actions to date and forthcoming to provide a live project plan.	January 2021	Database in place and updated with every action undertaken.
1.3	Introduce a revised workflow detailing timeframes and appropriate courses of actions for empty properties.	January 2021	Workflow in place and available on the Council website.
1.4	Update all standard templates of correspondence to owners in line with workflow and priority rating.	January 2021	New templates in place and used in accordance with workflow.
1.5	Monthly updates of council tax database to ensure all empty homes are correctly classified and included in the empty homes database.	January 2021 and ongoing	Monitor council tax data and ensure the correct premium is applied.
1.6	Bi-annual updates of empty homes data on the Council website.	July 2021 and ongoing	Empty property data is collated and updated on the website.

	Aim 2: Work with owners early on to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period		
	Action	Timescale	Outcome measure
2.1	Ensure every identified property follows the workflow timeframes and is RAG rated to determine the appropriate course of action taken.	January 2021 and ongoing	Log all activity on database and every empty property is RAG rated.
2.2	Work with council tax and key partners to identify empty properties from six months empty on, with monthly updates received.	January 2021 and ongoing	Monthly quality assured data from council tax to support strategy.

2.3	Introduce an empty homes website to: report an empty; apply for a loan; offer advice and guidance; FAQs; quarterly updates of empty property data.	January 2021	Website in place and utilised by owners, residents and professionals.
2.4	Run a media campaign to raise awareness of empty homes, encourage reporting and advertise options available to owners.	January 2021	Initial media campaign in place and periodic reminders.
2.5	Support and guide owners to access wider Council schemes such as landlord incentives, private sector leasing and acquisitions programme.	January 2021 and ongoing	Log all activity on database and report outcomes quarterly.
2.6	Ongoing update of the empty homes website with relevant information and guidance to enhance the most up to date knowledge and best practice.	January 2021 and ongoing	Website is updated quarterly.

	Aim 3: Utilise legislative tools to bring long term empty properties back into use in a timely and effective manner		
	Action	Timescale	Outcome measure
3.1	Introduce a stepped council tax premium scale for empty homes in line with legislation.	April 2020 and ongoing	Council tax premiums in place and all empty properties taxed accordingly.
3.2	Maintain and monitor costs Council associated with direct works, reclaiming costs and taking further action where necessary.	January 2021 and ongoing	Log all costs and seek to reclaim in a timely manner.
3.3	Following the RAG rating and flowchart of actions, take the appropriate enforcement action.	January 2021 and ongoing	Log all activity on the database and quarterly update of enforcement.
3.4	Using the empty homes website, outline the range of legislative tools available to bring an empty property back into use.	January 2021 and ongoing	Information is available on the website and updated quarterly.
3.5	Monitor the use and outcome of varying legislative tools to ensure the most appropriate and cost effective measures are utilised.	January 2021 and ongoing	Quarterly updates of costs on website.

Appendix 2: Empty Homes Legislation

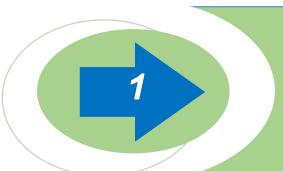
Nb. This list is not exhaustive. Alternative legislation may be used in accordance with property circumstances and legislation updates at the time of enforcement.

Problem	Legislation	Power granted	
Dangerous or dilapidated buildings or structures.	Building Act 1984 S.77 & S.78	To require the owner to make the property safe (Section 77) or enable the Local Authority to take emergency action to make the building safe (Section 78).	
	Building Act 1984 S.79	To require the owner to repair ruinous or dilapidated buildings seriously detrimental to an area.	
	Housing Act 2004 Part I	Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System local authorities can evaluate the potential risks to health and safety arising from deficiencies within properties and take appropriate enforcement action.	
Blocked or defective drainage or private sewers.	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, S.35	To require the owner to address obstructed private sewers.	
	Building Act 1984, S59	To require the owner to address blocked or defective drainage.	
	Public Health Act 1961, S.17	To require the owner to address defective drainage or private sewers.	
Unsecured properties (where it poses the risk that it may be entered or suffer	Building Act 1984, S.78 Local	To allow the Local Authority to fence off the property.	
vandalism, arson or similar).	Government (Miscellaneous	To require the owner to take steps to secure a property or allow the	
	Provisions) Act 1982, S.29	Local Authority to board it up in an emergency.	
Vermin (where it is either present or there is a risk of attracting vermin that	Public Health Act 1961, S.34	To require the owner to remove waste so that vermin is not attracted to	
may detrimentally affect people's health).	Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, S.4	the site, destroy any infestation and remove any accumulations prejudicial to health.	
	Public Health Act 1936, S.83		
	Environmental Protection Act 1990, S.80		
	Building Act 1984, S.76		

Problem	Legislation	Power granted
Unsightly land and property affecting the amenity of an area.	Public Health Act 1961, S.34 (see above)	To require the owner to remove waste from the property (see above).
	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, S.215	To require the owner to take steps to address a property adversely affecting the amenity of an area through its disrepair.
	Building Act 1984, S.79	To require the owner to address unsightly land or the external appearance of a property.
Recovery of debts against a property.	Law of Property Act 1925, S.101 & S.103	To apply for an order of sale of the property to recover council tax debts or debts secured as a legal charge after work in default carried out.
Properties empty for over 2 years and causing nuisance in the community.	Housing Act 2004 S.133 – S.183	To apply for an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) to enable the local authority to take over the management of eligible empty properties, to bring them back into use.
Long-term empty properties where no traceable owners, or where all efforts to return the property to use have been exhausted.	Housing Act 1985 S.17	To seek to acquire a property under a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

Appendix 3 – Empty Homes Workflow

Please note, the workflow is indicative of a standard process and may be subject to change, for example, if a response is received but the agreed action/s are then not undertaken by the owner.



Month 1

- Empty property query received – desktop checks and site visit undertaken.
- 2. If empty property, send letter one.

Month 2

- 1. If respond to letter one received, send s.16 information request & empty home questionnaire.
- 2. If no response, send second letter.

Months 3-4

- If no response to letter two, send final letter advising possible enforcement.
- 2. If no response and s.215 applicable, serve notice.



Months 4-6

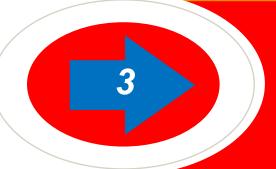
- If no response to s.215, commence works in default (if applicable).
- 2. If works in default completed, begin debt recovery process.

Months 6 – 12

- 1. Debt recovery process (if applicable).
- 2. Continue efforts to engage owners & signposting to available options.

Months 12 - 23

- 1. Council tax premium of 100% applied to empty property.
- 2. Further enforcement action to be taken (if applicable).



2+ years

- Continue efforts to engage owners & signposting to available options.
- 2. Further enforcement action to be taken (if applicable).

2+ years

- 1. Stepped council tax premium to be applied, where applicable.
- 2. Continue efforts to engage owners & signposting to available options.
- 3. Further enforcement action to be taken (if applicable).

2+ years

- Continue efforts to engage owners & signposting to available options.
- 2. Further enforcement action to be taken (if applicable).

This page is intentionally left blank





Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026

Consultation Report, December 2020

Outcome of the Survey

Background

The strategy sets out the steps Southend-on-Sea Borough Council will take to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, maximise the re-use of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes.

The Council is strongly committed to reducing the number of empty homes, facilitating and assisting the creation of good quality and affordable homes in the borough and to making best use of existing housing stock.

This strategy seeks to support Southend 2050 'Safe and Well' and 'Active and Involved' visions by contributing towards:

- People in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times.
- We are all on our way to ensuring that everyone has a home that meets their needs.
- A range of initiatives help communities come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment.

The strategy also seeks to support and complement the Council's <u>Housing</u>, <u>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018–2028</u>, in particular to 'prioritise the supply of safe, locally affordable homes' and 'encourage good quality housing design, management and maintenance'.

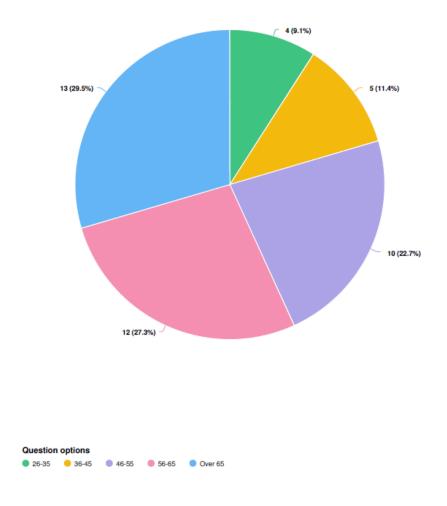
The draft strategy follows on from the Empty Homes Strategy 2015-2020, outlining the Council's continued commitment to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, maximise the reuse of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes.

Long term empty properties are a primary focus of the strategy, as is working with owners early on to prevent properties falling into a condition of deterioration.

In doing so, the role of the Council and partners continues to be integral to the effectiveness of actions taken in relation to empty homes, utilising available resources and legislative powers to achieve this.

Response to the survey

The consultation was live from 2 November to 30 November 2020. A total of 44 people responded to the survey, of the 22 respondents that shared this information, 45.5% were male and 54.5% were female. Of which, 56.8% respondents were aged 56 or over, with a further age breakdown below.



Of 40 respondents who provided this information, the geographical spread by postcode was 40% SS0, 20% SS1, 7.5% SS2, 17.5% SS3 and 15% SS9.

Of the 38 respondents who provided this information, 55.3% were other, 36.8% were someone who is aware of or lives close to an empty property, 10.5% were looking to purchase and redevelop an empty property, 5.3% were property developers, estate agents or other professional with an interest in an empty property and 2.6% owned an empty property.

Feedback was given via an online survey, comprising a range of questions designed to better understand the views of borough residents and owners of empty homes in Southend in order to shape our approach going forward and ensure all relevant factors are taken into consideration.

Respondents answered a range of questions, including multiple choice and open text questions to allow for further insight of views.

Survey feedback

Survey questions and responses are outlined below. All of which include all 44 responses, unless otherwise stated.

About the strategy

1. We believe the strategy should focus on properties that have been empty for six months or more. Our aims within this will be to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough,

maximise the re-use of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes. Do you think these are the right areas to focus on?

- o 90.9% yes.
- o 9.1% no.
- 2. What do you think we currently do well in relation to bringing empty properties back into use?
 - o 61.4% were not aware of the current process or strategy.
 - 11.4% noted other actions to bring back into use, including renovation and preventing property deterioration and anti-social behaviour.
 - o 9.1% outlined engaging or consulting owners to bring properties back into use.
 - o 9.1% nothing/not a lot.
 - 4.6% stated other reasons, including empty commercial space being let out to charities (NB. Not directly linked to this strategy as differing legislation regarding empty dwellings) and buying privately owned properties to add to council stock.
 - 4.6% as unable to comment or stating planning application turned down.
- 3. Which areas of work around empty homes do you think we could improve on, and how? 43 respondents provided a response which offered a total of 52 comments, themed as below.
 - 26.9% comments outlining empty homes monitoring and/or an improved process, with particular focus on speeding up the process.
 - o 17.3% don't know.
 - o 11.5% outlined enforcement action, including internal and external works.
 - 11.5% other, including resident involvement, reviewing the planning process, provide good quality housing, ensuring empty homes don't become HMOs, utilising local apprenticeships and hostel move-on.
 - o 9.6% outlined the purchase or utilisation of empty homes as council stock.
 - 7.7% stated better communication was needed, including the empty homes process and reallocations of empty properties.
 - o 5.8% outlined affordable rent.
 - o 5.8% outlined the utilisation of commercial/non-residential properties.
 - 1.9% highlighted to build more council homes.
 - 1.9% highlighted utilisation of partnership/investment opportunities.

Enforcement action

- 4. Do you think we are achieving a good balance between assisting owners of empty homes and taking enforcement action where the property is negatively affecting others and/or in poor condition?
 - o 59.1% no.
 - o 27.3% yes.
 - o 13.6% prefer not to say.
- 5. The draft strategy is looking to use legislative frameworks to the fullest, including enforcement action. Do you think we should be taking more enforcement action against owners of empty homes where the property is negatively affecting others and/or in poor condition?
 - o 86.4% yes.

- o 13.6% no.
- 6. An Empty Dwelling Management Orders is a legal device which enables local authorities to take control and manage a residential property which has been empty for over 6 months.

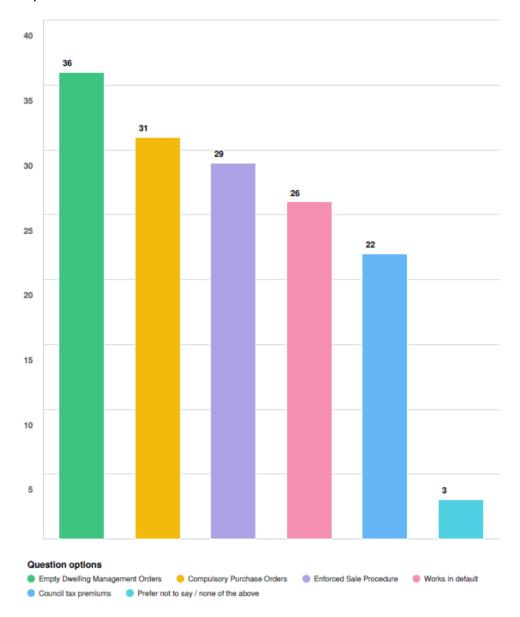
A Compulsory Purchase Order allows certain bodies, including local authorities, in certain circumstances to have a statutory right to buy a property or take it over without the consent of the owner.

An Enforced Sale Procedure enables local authorities to recover outstanding debts following actions that have resulting in a land charge against a property.

Works in Default allow the local authority to carry out works where an immediate risk is posed, such as structural damage or pests/vermin and recoup these charges to the owner.

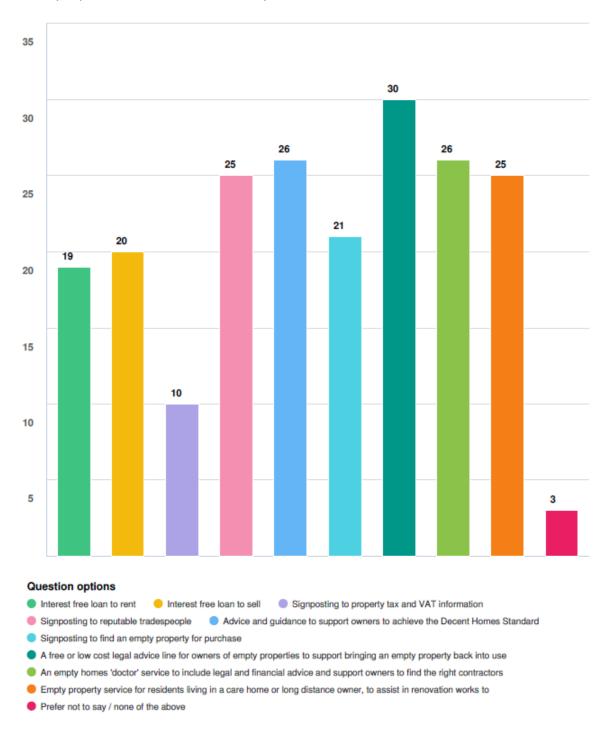
Local authorities have been able to charge a premium of 100% of the standard rate of council tax on long-term empty properties (those empty for 2 years or more). The maximum premium local authorities can charge is 200% for properties empty for 5 years or more. From 1 April 2021, the amount a local authority can charge will increase to 300% if a property has been empty for 10 years or more.

Respondents could select more than one answer.



Our offer

7. The draft strategy is looking to offer a range of incentives to support owners to bring empty properties back into use. Respondents could select more than one answer.



- 8. Nomination rights can be used to 'nominate' applicants on the Council's Homeseekers' Register as tenants for empty (rental) homes brought back into use, allowing guaranteed rent and property maintenance for the owner, with rent charged at Local Housing Allowance rate. As part of the interest free loans to rent, we are considering attaching nomination rights. Respondents were asked if they agree with this.
 - o 77.3% yes.
 - o 13.6% no.

- o 9.1% prefer not to say.
- 9. Is there anything else, not mentioned already, that should be considered within the draft strategy? 15 respondents offered additional information, comprising a total of 16 themes/comments as outlined below.
 - o 25% noted empty homes monitoring and/or an improved process.
 - 18.8% noted help and support to empty home owners, including taking their views into consideration.
 - 12.5% noted increased provision of social/council housing.
 - 12.5% noted to be aware of fraudulent applications and/or landlords taking advantage of legal loopholes.
 - 6.3% noted enforcement action with regards to housing standards.
 - o 6.3% noted to utilise commercial/non-residential properties.
 - 6.3% noted not to allow empty homes to become HMOs.
 - o 6.3% noted gardening apprenticeship schemes.
 - 6.3% noted planning application process improvements.

Summary

Almost 60% of respondents felt that we weren't achieving the right balance of assisting owners of empty homes and taking enforcement action. However, just over 61% of respondents were not aware of the current empty homes process or strategy, demonstrating greater transparency and awareness of the action the Council is taking in relation to empty homes is needed.

Respondents outlined a general agreement with utilisation of legislative tools for enforcement action, with 86.4% outlining the Council should be taking more enforcement action against owners of empty homes where the property is negatively affecting others and/or in poor condition.

Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders and Enforced Sale Procedures were the top three enforcement actions selected by respondents. In addition, over 75% of respondents were in agreement to attach nomination rights to interest free loans to rent, although interest free loans to rent were the third lowest incentive selected by respondents.

A free or low cost legal advice line, an empty homes 'doctor' service, advice and guidance to support owners to achieve the Decent Homes Standard, an empty property service for residents living in care or a long distance owner to assist renovation works and signposting to reputable tradespeople were the top five incentives listed by respondents.

Further information

For further information on any of the content detailed here or if you would like to discuss an empty property further, please visit the Council's Housing website https://www.southend.gov.uk/housing-information.



Southend on Sea Borough Council - Equality Analysis

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of policy, service function or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis:

Empty Homes Strategy 2021 - 2026

1.2 Department:

N/A

1.3 Service Area:

Housing and Social Inclusion

1.4 Date Equality Analysis undertaken:

July 2020

1.5 Names and roles of staff carrying out the Equality Analysis:

Name	Role	Service Area
Jodi Thompson	Project and Policy Support Officer	Housing and Social Inclusion Strategy

1.6 What are the aims or purpose of the policy, service function or restructure that is subject to the EA?

The draft strategy follows on from the Empty Homes Strategy 2015-2020, outlining the Council's continued commitment to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, maximise the re-use of empty homes and tackle issues surrounding empty homes.

The key aims of the draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026 are to:

- 1. Reduce the amount of long term empty homes in the borough (those empty for six months or more).
- 2. Work with owners early on to prevent properties becoming empty for a prolonged period.
- 3. Utilise legislative tools to bring long term empty properties back into use in a timely and effective manner.
- 1.7 What are the main activities relating to the policy, service function or restructure?

The Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026 sets out the Council's continued commitment to reducing the number of empty homes in the borough, facilitating and assisting the creation of good quality and affordable homes and to make the best use of existing stock.

2. Evidence Base

2.1 Please list sources of information, data, results of consultation exercises that could or will inform the EA.

Source of information	Reason for using (e.g. likely impact on a particular group).
Council tax database	Council tax database information as of 3 August 2020 as below. Demographic data linked to council tax is not available however, analysis of council tax classifications and numbers will support strategy aims, including efficient utilisation of resources, both in the medium and long term.
	Empty Properties Class G – Occupation prohibited: 2 Class I – Receiving care elsewhere: 7 (e.g. moves in with family to receive care) Class T – Difficult to let: 6 Premium100 (2 Yrs empty): 130 Premium200 (5 Yrs empty): 65 2 nd homes (PCLB): 652 Class E – 1 adult gone into care: 95
	Deceased Properties F2 – Prior to probate: 363 F1 – Probate granted: 91
	Disregarded vulnerable Adults Carer's disregard: 97 (not applicable for those caring for spouse/partner or child under 18 years) Gone into care: 192 (two adults in a property and one party goes into care e.g. husband and wife) SMI disregard: 396 (two adults in the property and one party disregarded) Class U – Severely mentally impaired: 563
	PCLC – Discounts have been exhausted: 1,753 Nb. this figure is constantly changing as and when accounts are open and close accounts daily.
Empty homes data	630 properties in Southend were long-term empty as of 2019 as per the latest government figures. This compares with 596 empty homes in 2018 and 615 in 2017. These figures are based upon government 'live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants). This

	data will support achievement of strategy aims and ensure resources are targeted effectively. This includes any increase or decrease in empty homes in Southend and take up of proposed incentives to owners of empty homes.
Council complaints / compliments	To determine if any equality implications are present from current empty home process. As of 29 July 2020 no complaints received relating to empty homes owners or matters associated with equality implications.
Draft Empty Homes Strategy 2021 – 2026 survey findings	To determine the views (including potential impact) of borough residents and those may own or be looking to purchase and empty homes. A survey report has been drafted and will be available on the Your Say Southend website at https://yoursay.southend.gov.uk/
Sheltered Housing Review 2016 demographic data	The Sheltered Housing Review, undertaken in 2016, offered real- time and projected demographic data relating to Southend residents. While some data requires updating, it offers useful background information on the volume of older people in the borough.
	While empty homes data does not currently link age profiles, it is hoped that collating and analysing such information going forward will help determine who empty home owners are in Southend, as well as the reasons for properties becoming empty. In this manner, it is intended that resources (including advice and guidance) to help bring empty homes back into use can be more successfully targeted towards those who may require assistance, including older people who require additional support to remain in their own homes or, for example, those in the process of a transition to supported living.
	 Numbers of people aged 50+ are projected to rise from 66,300 in 2015 to 87,100 by 2035, an increase of 31.4%. Numbers of 85+ population are set to increase by 103.8% between 2015 and 2035, rising from 5,300 to 10,800. 4,761 people aged 65+ providing unpaid care in 2015, rising to 6,322 by 2030 – increase of 32.8%. 2,520 people aged 65+ estimated to have dementia in 2015, rising to 3,867 by 2030 – increase of 53.5%. 12,600 people aged 65+ living alone in 2015, rising to 17,455 by 2030 – an increase of 38.5%. Higher levels of long-term limiting illness than the regional and national averages.
Southend Borough Council Covid- 19 equality	Linked to the above data. It is important to monitor and take account of the volume of residents, including older residents, in Southend to ensure they are receiving the right level of support

impact assessment	and/or advice and guidance to live independently in a home that meets their needs.
	As such, residents aged 70+ make up 15% (26,867 people) of Southend's 184,882 residents (ONS Population projections, 2020).
	In addition, 6.58% of Southend's 80,758 households are 76-80, live alone in small houses/flats, income <£15k, need support, and are not technology users.
DWP	820 working-age individuals in Southend receive Disability DWP payments, and 7490 receive ESA and incapacity benefits – however the true number of those with disabilities is higher as non-working age individuals are un-counted (DWP, 2016).
	This is a factor of consideration for advice or support in relation to empty homes.

Please Note: reports/data/evidence can be added as appendices to the EA.

2.2 Identify any gaps in the information and understanding of the impact of your policy, service function or restructure. Indicate in your action plan (section 5) whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

Demographic data on owners of empty homes is not widely available to determine age, disability or other socio-economic factors which may have an equality impact. Other sources of information as highlighted above will be used to gather or counteract this where possible, with the action plan noting further approaches to fill this gap and ensure the draft strategy does not negatively impact those with protected characteristics.

3. Analysis

3.1 An analysis and interpretation of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure should be undertaken, with the impact for each of the groups with 'protected characteristics' and the source of that evidence also set out against those findings.

In addition, the Council has identified the need to assess the impact of a policy, service function or restructure on <u>carers</u>, <u>looked after children</u> (as part of the age characteristic) as well as the <u>socioeconomic</u> impact of different groups, such as employment classifications.

Initial assessment of a perceived impact of the policy, service function or restructure. The impact can be positive or negative (or in some circumstances both), none or unclear:

Impact - Please tick				
Yes		No		
Positive	Negative	Neutral	NO	Unclear

Age (including looked after children)	Х	Х		
Disability	X	Х		
Gender			X	
reassignment				
Marriage and civil partnership			X	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Race			X	
Religion or belief			X	
Sex			X	
Sexual orientation			X	
Carers				X
Socio-economic	Х	X		
	1	I		1

Descriptions of the protected characteristics are available in the guidance or from: <u>EHRC - protected characteristics</u>

3.2 Where an impact has been identified above, outline what the impact of the policy, service function or restructure on members of the groups with protected characteristics below:

	Potential Impact
Age	Positive – the strategy aims to engage owners early on to prevent properties getting into a state of disrepair, potentially saving both older and younger owners time and money to bring empty properties back into use in a timely manner. Also, by engaging owners early on, it is anticipated that the council will be aware of any mitigating circumstances or long-term illness of owners, being able to offer advice and guidance as necessary.
	Negative – older or younger people in hospital or in supported living accommodation may not be aware or have the ability to address empty property matters that arise, potentially resulting in enforcement action being taken against them, including possible incurring of costs.
	It is important to ensure all empty homes information is fully accessible to support those with specialist requirements, including those who don't use technology and providing information in alternative formats where necessary. Tracking how people access empty homes information over time will

	support the range of possible options and ensure accessibility needs of all residents are met.
Disability	Positive – having an enhanced suite of services available to support owners of empty homes is anticipated to help identify properties in need of repair or structural works. This may include advice and guidance to bring properties to the Decent Homes Standard or signposting to approved tradespersons. This could have a positive potential impact for disabled owners or those with a long-term illness where the property poses a significant health risk in its current condition.
	Negative – should a property pose a significant risk or not comply with the relevant legislation, necessitating enforcement action, this may mean that disabled owners or those with a long-term illness undertaking works as a matter of priority. The council will take mitigating factors into consideration, provide information in alternative formats where required and help owners to make informed decisions. However, it is acknowledged that those with health conditions may be negatively impacted by the strategy, in particular engaging owners early on. Although, as noted, the council will make every possible effort to ensure all information and steps are clearly explained and understood throughout any processes undertaken.
	accessible to support those with specialist requirements, including those who don't use technology and providing information in alternative formats where necessary. Tracking how people access empty homes information over time will support the range of possible options and ensure accessibility needs of all residents are met.
Gender reassignment	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to gender reassignment.
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to marriage and civil partnership.
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to pregnancy and maternity.
Race	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to race.
Religion or belief	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to religion or belief.

Sex	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to sex.
Sexual orientation	N/A – the proposed strategy does not take account of or impact factors relating to sexual orientation.
Carers	Unclear – as noted above, demographic data on owners of empty homes is not currently available so it is difficult to determine the potential impact on the draft strategy on those who are disabled or have a long-standing illness, including those who may care for them, either paid or unpaid.
	Gathering and analysing data over time as the new strategy is implemented and taking account of customer feedback and utilisations of proposed incentives will help ensure no negative impacts for carers of those with protected characteristics are experienced.
Socio- economic	Positive – the proposed range of advice, guidance and incentives, including interest free loans, can benefit empty home owners who do not currently have the finances or knowledge to undertake costly repair work to bring the property back into use. Supporting empty homes owners to bring their empty property back into use can also benefit the local housing market and support other residents to access suitable housing.
	Negative – if enforcement action is taken, including subsequent recharge of works, this may have a negative impact of empty homes owners who are already struggling financially. However, by supporting owners to address repair works and access interest free loans to rent or sell, for example, this is intended to financially support such works to allow owners the opportunity to overcome financial obstacles.

4. Community Impact

4.1 You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure.

N/A

4.2 You can use the <u>Community Cohesion Impact Assessment</u> as a guide, outlining a summary of your findings below:

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

5.1 Use the below table to set out what action will be taken to:

- Ensure a full analysis of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure is undertaken.
- Mitigate/address identified negative impacts or unlawful prohibited conduct.
- To promoted improved equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. How the action plan will be monitored and at what intervals.

Planned action	Objective	Who	When	How will this be monitored (e.g. via team/service plans)
Review of council tax and complaints data	Establish if the strategy is having any negative impact on groups with protected characteristics.	Empty Homes Officer / Interim Head of Housing Supply	Bi-annual	Bi-annual review of council tax data in line with strategy stats/progress update. Complaints on ad-hob basis as and when received.
Analysis of empty homes data	To determine the causes and impact of empty homes to target resources more effectively and support achieving strategy aims.	Empty Homes Officer	Quarterly	Empty homes data
Analysis of empty homes advice and guidance	To determine how individuals are accessing the range of advice and guidance to ensure these are fully accessible or need to be updated or provided in alternative formats.	Empty Homes Officer / Interim Head of Housing Supply	Quarterly	Empty homes data; website data; advice and guidance issued
Housing and Southend 2050 work streams	Link the strategy and interconnected aims with wider housing and Southend 2050 projects to monitor resident feedback and ensure no equality implications.	Interim Head of Housing Supply	Ad-hoc	Via formal and informal Southend 2050 engagement communications and events and/or DMT meetings.

Signed (lead officer): J. Thompson		
Signed (Director): G. Halksworth		

Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA) to Tim MacGregor TimMacGregor@southend.gov.uk.

Agenda Item No.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment To

Cabinet

14 January 2021

Report prepared by:

Sharon Harrington, Head of Service

Controlled Parking Zones Policy

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Place Scrutiny **Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley** Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. **Purpose of Report**

Part of the Parking Review 2020 project, this report sets out a new approach to considering applications for, and administering Controlled Parking Zones

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet resolves to; -
- 2.2 Adopt the new policy for Controlled Parking Zones, as set out in this report, and the appendices.
- 2.3 Note that the new criteria will not automatically be applied to existing Controlled Parking Zones, until such time as they are subject to a full, comprehensive review.
- 2.4 Notes that the financial implications of a Controlled Parking Zones will vary depending on wider Council decisions on Fees & Charges, which will be considered on a case by case basis.

3. **Background**

3.1 The Council has statutory powers and duties to effectively manage the use of the road network, as set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and the Traffic Management Act 2004, along with associated legislation, regulations and industry standards.

- 3.2 The powers to create and enforce traffic and parking regulations set out in this legislation help the Council to ensure parking capacity is fairly distributed between differing road user needs, in the case of a Controlled Parking Zone, where resident access has been prioritised over other users.
- 3.3 There is no existing policy which sets out the criteria for provision of a Controlled Parking Zone, and historically requests for a review of parking issues or concerns has been coupled with a demand for a particular solution or treatment.
- 3.4 The aim of this policy is to set a new criterion which will ensure all concerned are fully aware of what is required for a Controlled Parking Zone to be introduced.
- 3.5 It is essential that Council Officers can properly review the issue, and consider the right solutions, to this end, the Council is also considering how to improve its consultation and engagement processes, including through the digitisation of the consultation portal and Traffic Regulation Order database, and a wider service review to ensure resources are available.
- 3.6 In many cases, a Controlled Parking Zone may not be the right solution, in such cases, the Council will work with those affected and their Elected Representatives to consider appropriate alternatives.
- 3.7 Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ)
- 3.8 A CPZ is an area defined by the Council in which the primary demand for parking capacity on street should be prioritised over other road users, for example, a residential area close to a large commuter hub, where unrestricted parking could make access to space for residents difficult.
- 3.9 Following consultation with those affected and engagement with stakeholders, a CPZ would be implemented using a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), signposted using large zone entry and exit signs, with repeater signs throughout, and enforced by the Council Civil Enforcement Officers.
- 3.10 This consultation will consider options for the extent of the scheme, days, and times of operation, and who may be entitled to exemptions.
- 3.11 The Council will provide access to permits for those entitled to park within the zone, the charges associated with each permit, and the maximum number of permits available to each property will be decided as part of the annual review into Fees & Charges.

3.12 Alternative Measures

3.13 A CPZ may not always be the right solution, even in cases where there is demonstrably high support from residents.

- 3.14 A robust policy will help the Council, and residents and businesses in the borough understand the criteria which must be met for a CPZ, and allow for open consideration of the wider impacts, including on related strategies and policies.
- 3.15 Where a CPZ is not considered the right solution, the Council will make efforts to explain the reason for this and where appropriate, propose alternative measures.

3.16 Existing CPZ Schemes

- 3.17 There are 23 schemes currently in operation in Southend, covering approximately 118 roads or parts of roads.
- 3.18 In the most recent year, the Council provided c4,300 resident parking permits.
- 3.19 Some of these permit parking schemes are legacy schemes, whereby the signage method and design of the road space is based on outdated criteria. There is no current proposal to review these schemes which are long standing, and work for those affected. Instead, the Council will review based on changing legislation, or where a significant, full review of the scheme is requested.

4. Proposed Controlled Parking Zones Policy

4.1 The new policy as set out in the Appendix to this report is designed to ensure the Council can respond properly to concerns raised by those affected by increasing demands on parking capacity.

5. Review

5.1 It is good practice to regularly review policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose. If approved, the Council will undertake and annual review of the criteria set out in this policy, against the requests received and any changes in national or local policy.

6. Other Options

6.1 This policy is a non-statutory document; however, its application is regulated by legislation and regulations. The Council could decide to vary some of the criteria set out in this policy, however, further legal consideration would be required to understand the impact.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 This policy will enable the Council to respond effectively and efficiently to challenges associated with competing demands for parking capacity. It is anticipated that a robust policy will help the Council, Elected Representatives

and all road users understand the criteria which must be met for a scheme to be taken forward.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map.

8.2 Opportunity & Prosperity:

8.2.1 It is anticipated that a well designed and managed Controlled Parking Zone will improve the lives of residents in Southend by reducing the stress and inconvenience of non-resident parking competing for capacity.

8.3 Safe & Well:

- 8.3.1 This policy aims to ensure the appropriate parking regulations are introduced to regulate the road network in such a way that it prioritises the needs of residents over other road users.
- 8.3.2 It is further anticipated that well designed Controlled Parking Zones will make residential areas safer for all, through improvements to parking habits and reduced competition for capacity.

8.4 Connected & Smart:

- 8.4.1 Related projects are underway to introduce virtual systems for administrating parking permits and visitor scratch cards. It is anticipated this work will be completed in early 2021 and rolled out as existing permits expire.
- 8.4.2 The Council is also introducing map based schedules for its Traffic Regulation Order database, ensuring information on regulations is available in a clear and easy to navigate format, improving the ability for customers to consider and respond to proposed schemes.

8.5 Financial Implications

- 8.5.1 There are no direct implications arising from this policy. The cost of implementing a Controlled Parking Zone will be considered alongside the proposal, including any opportunities for external funding through development agreements.
- 8.5.2 As part of any consideration, the Council will set out the cost of introducing the scheme, and anticipated annual revenue from permits, visitor scratch cards and enforcement activity.
- 8.5.3 It is anticipated that most schemes will be taken forward as part of the Capital Investment Programme, with surplus revenue from the scheme used to support administration and enforcement of all parking regulations.

8.6 Legal Implications

- 8.6.1 This policy sets out the way the Council will deliver its statutory obligations in respect of regulating the road network.
- 8.6.2 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and associated regulations, set out how the Council should consider and implement regulations on the public road network, including levying a charge for certain services, which are further set out in the Local Government Act of 1972,
- 8.6.3 Enforcement of parking regulations is undertaken by Civil Enforcement Officers, using powers in the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 8.6.4 The Council Constitution sets out how the Council will consider representations for or against proposed Traffic Regulation Orders, with powers delegated to Officers and the Traffic Regulations Working Party.

8.7 People Implications

- 8.7.1 The service has undergone a significant redesign to ensure its resources are managed in an efficient way, in order that Council priorities can be acted on in a timely manner.
- 8.7.2 It is anticipated this policy can be delivered within the existing resources, and will go some way to improving faith in the process and customer service.

8.8 Property Implications

8.8.1 There are no property implications associated with this proposed policy.

8.9 Consultation

- 8.9.1 The Operational Guidance for developing parking policy and undertaking enforcement activity is set out by the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 8.9.2 When taking forward any proposals to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order, the Council must undertake a statutory notice period, whereby any person may make representations for or against a proposal, which must then be considered by the Council. In Southend, this function is undertaken by the Traffic Regulations Working Party.
- 8.9.3 In practice, Elected Members in Southend undertake a further informal consultation and engagement exercise before proposals are brought forward, this is currently under review, with a view to improving customer engagement and ensuring Members have the tools and support available to respond to requests.

8.10 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 8.10.1 The Council has several duties to remove or mitigate potential disproportionate impacts on protected characteristics. These are set out in related Council policies and noted in the attached Equality Impact Assessment.
- 8.10.2 Controlled Parking Zones will discourage vehicles from entering into residential areas, improving road safety for all road user groups, this is particularly the case in areas of high population density, where it is often the case that a majority of residents could be identified as having protected characteristics.
- 8.10.3 As each proposal for a Controlled Parking Zone is considered, a new assessment will be undertaken to understand the particular impacts of each scheme.

8.11 Risk Assessment

8.11.1 Each Controlled Parking Zone will be subject to the criteria set out in the policy. As a scheme is designed, it will be subject to consultation and engagement, and a Road Safety Audit, or similar as required, to ensure the risks and benefits of each scheme are properly considered.

8.12 Value for Money

8.12.1 A Controlled Parking Zone will only be introduced where the relevant criteria set out in this policy are met. In almost all circumstances, the Council will be required to fund the up front costs of introducing a scheme, but it is anticipated this cost will be paid back through its life, with any surplus reinvested into administrating and enforcing the scheme.

8.13 Community Safety Implications

8.13.1 Reducing traffic flows and increasing the opportunity for residents o park closer to their homes will improve community safety, particularly in respect of car crime and risks associated with walking long distances between the nearest available space and home.

8.14 Environmental Impact

8.14.1 The Council has recently declared a Climate Change Emergency, whilst not introduced for this purpose, a Controlled Parking Zones will have the effect of reducing traffic and emissions within that area, as inbound commuter or visiting traffic is deterred by the CPZ entry signs, setting out the parking restrictions in force.

9. Background Papers

None

1. Appendices

- 10.1 Controlled Parking Zones Policy
- 10.2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Southend-On-Sea Controlled Parking Zones Policy

Document information

Title: Controlled Parking Zones Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out the Council approach to considering, delivering, and administrating Controlled Parking Zones.

It is designed to provide a clear and robust criterion that allow the Council to carefully consider the risks and benefits of providing a scheme and ensuring appropriate engagement and consultation with those affected.

In addition to this policy, the Council will consider related strategies and corporate objectives.

2. WHAT IS A CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE (CPZ)

Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) are car parking areas where parking is regulated in such a way that capacity is reserved for a particular road user group, usually residents.

Schemes are designed with designated parking spaces for permit holders, with drivers informed of the restrictions by zone entry and exit signage, and repeater signs in each space. Areas not within a designated parking space will be subject to time limited 'no waiting' restrictions (single yellow lines), and at junctions or places where parking can not be accommodated at any time, double yellow lines.

Designated parking spaces and single yellow lines will be in operation on the days and times as set out in the new Administrative Zones policy, which was adopted by the Council in September 2020.

Residents and other exempt road users will be required to purchase a permit to park in designated parking spaces during the operational times. Residents can also purchase visitor scratch cards. The price and maximum number of permits and scratch cards available for each property will be reviewed annually as part of the Council review of Fees & Charges.

Outside of the operational hours, permits and scratch cards are not required, however double yellow lines will always remain in effect. Residents must also take care not to cause an obstruction to other road users, including not parking across driveways and pedestrian crossing points.

Unless otherwise signposted, no vehicles are permitted to park on footways, cycleways, or verges, at any time.

3. WHO CAN APPLY FOR PERMITS IN A CPZ?

As a general principal, the following road user groups can apply for a permit to park in a CPZ, alternative permit options are available for certain groups, such as trades persons and those providing personal care, further information is available on the Council website or at the Customer Contract Centre.

A full list of eligible properties will be included in the Traffic Regulation Order schedule. Properties located on a scheme boundary will only be included in the CPZ if their address and main property access is within the scheme.

Residents

A property located within the CPZ is entitled to up to three resident parking permits. The definition of a property in this case includes any property subject to Council Tax, therefore houses of multiple occupancy or flats paying a single Council Tax bill, will be treated as a single property.

Business

A business with a premise located within a CPZ, and subject to Business Rates is entitled to up to three resident parking permits.

Visitor

The Council provides visitor scratch cards for residents and businesses located in a CPZ.as described above. Each is entitled to purchase up to ten parking sessions per month, this is due to increase to twenty sessions per month from early 2021.

4. HOW DO WE ENFORE PARKING RESTRICTIONS?

Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) patrol the whole of Southend to monitor parking and enforce restrictions.

The Council considers the priorities of residents when deciding how enforcement resources are deployed. To this end, particular attention is given to CPZs. When a contravention is identified a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) will be placed on the windscreen of the car, handed directly to the driver or sent by post.

The Council works in partnership with the relevant contractor responsible for parking management and enforcement. All our enforcement officers are clearly identifiable by their uniform and carry an identification card.

In some cases, the Council may utilise automatic number plate recognition cameras on cars or mopeds, to identify vehicles parked within a CPZ without a permit. ANPR can not be used to issue a Penalty Charge Notice, instead a Civil Enforcement Office on foot will be deployed to the area.

5. HOW CAN I REPORT ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLES?

Illegal parking can be reported via the "MySouthend" App which can be found on the website www.southend.gov.uk, or by calling the Council directly. Where there is an immediate risk to life or property, this should be reported to the relevant emergency service using 999.

6. DRAFT CRITERIA FOR A CPZ TO BE CONSIDERED

The Council will follow these stages and criteria when considering an application for a CPZ.

Prioritisation will be based on the available resources in the Council, the time an application has been pending and consideration of wider priorities as set by the Council in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Stage 1 – Identification

The Council receives requests for parking regulations directly from road users, through Ward Councillors and Members of Parliament, and through the service where officers proactively review how the road network is used.

In some cases, applicants may decide to undertake their own survey and seek support from those affected, these will be considered by the Council, but if undertaken outside of the Council policy on Consultation and Engagement, a validation exercise will be required, usually though an additional informal consultation.

Where applications are made using a formal petition, this will be considered using the Council policy on petitions, this may require the Council to consider the petition through a committee before being referred into this policy and could delay any decisions.

Before passing to Stage 2, there must be expressed support from the relevant Ward Councillors.

Stage 2 – Survey

The Council will undertake sufficient surveys and reviews to determine the following criteria are met; -

- a) demonstrable evidence that more than 40% of available parking capacity is regularly occupied by non-residents,
- b) not more than 50% of properties have access to off street parking, including driveways, car parks and garages, whether or not they are utilised for parking a vehicle.
- c) where road safety concerns have been identified, supported by accident data which it can be proven would be mitigated by a CPZ,
- d) introducing a CPZ must not have a likely impact of simply displacing parking to neighbouring streets,

Parking surveys will be undertaken by Council Officers, or where larger schemes are proposed, a consultancy may be engaged to provide a more detailed review. The Council will not advise when these surveys are to be undertaken, or for how long, such that a real understanding of the issue can be observed.

At this stage, if the survey does not find a CPZ to be the most appropriate treatment, Officers will work with the applicant, Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder to consider alternatives.

A proposal will only progress to Stage 3 where it can be demonstrated the criteria in Stage 2 has been reached, or that a proposal is part of a wider Integrated Transport Scheme, or part of a large development where not introducing a scheme would likely result in the criteria being met in the near

future, and where the costs of implementing a scheme on this basis are met as part of a development agreement.

Stage 3 – Outline Design

Once the Council is satisfied an application meets the criteria, Officers will set out the extent of the proposed CPZ to be considered. The criteria for designing a solution is as follows.

- a) Identify a suitable boundary for the scheme, usually incorporating the main road network where there is a feeling of transition to residential roads, and where suitable zone signage can be accommodated.
- b) Locate parking bay capacity, and ensure all anticipated parking demand from residents, businesses and visitors can be accommodated within, without relying on overflow capacity in neighbouring streets.
- c) Indicative costs for introducing the scheme, and anticipated revenue.
- d) Identification of alternative funding options, incorporation of other works or projects proposed in the same area, to minimise disruption to residents.

A proposal will only be taken forward to Stage 4 if it can be demonstrated that the design meets all local and national design standards, legislation and regulations.

Stage 4 – Informal Consultation

Once an outline scheme has been agreed, and support has been received from the relevant Ward Councillors, Portfolio Holder and Traffic Regulations Working Party, the Council will undertake an informal consultation with those directly affected.

An informal consultation will be delivered using the dedicated consultations portal, and with letters delivered to all properties potentially affected.

Proposals will only be taken forward to Stage 5 if the following criteria are met.

- a) The informal engagement exercise has been undertaken by the Council, and responses can be validated,
- b) Of the eligible responders, more than 20% respond to the informal consultation,
- c) A minimum of 55% of validated responses are in favour of the proposal, or any single option,
- d) A safety audit report identifies that the introduction of the scheme would mitigate road safety concerns.

Where there is evidence of fraud, or that pressure has been applied for responders to vote in a particular way, the Council may decide to cancel the informal consultation and seek further advice on the next steps.

Individuals and groups may decide to canvass support, but this must be done in a respectful manner and not involve any threats of any kind. Where there are established community groups, and if resources allow, the Council and Ward Councillors will try to attend before or during the informal consultation to answer any questions or concerns.

The relevant Ward Councillors may decide to undertake their own informal consultation, this must be delivered to these standards, in particular the ability to validate responses.

A proposal will only be taken forward to Stage 5 where there is expressed support as set out in Stage 4. Where there is no support, the Council will make a judgement on whether to propose an alternative or abandon it.

<u>Stage 5 – Detailed Design & Statutory Consultation</u>

With a decision made to take a proposal forward, the Council will undertake a detailed design, including the exact location of restrictions and associated signage, engaging with contractors to develop a cost schedule and delivery plan.

At the same time, the Council will advertise its intention to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order, through a statutory notice, after which a report will be submitted to the Traffic Regulations Working Group, along with any representations to the statutory notice, for a decision on how to proceed.

A decision may be taken to proceed in part, with some roads deciding to opt out of the scheme. In such circumstances, Officers will consider how such a change would impact on the scheme ability to meet all previous criteria considered before making a recommendation to the Traffic Regulations Working Party.

Any road opting out of a scheme will not be considered for a review for two years, ensuring resources are fairly used and other schemes are not delayed.

Stage 6 – Implementation

Once a decision has been taken to proceed, the Traffic Regulation Order will be made, and contractors instructed to implement the road markings and signage.

The Council will write to all those affected by the CPZ, who are entitled to permits, to advise how to obtain them.

Stage 7 – Review

The Council will monitor and review all parking regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. To give a reasonable period for restrictions to become established, a review will take place after two years has expired since introduction, unless significant issues are highlighted which requires more urgent action.

Southend on Sea Borough Council - Equality Analysis

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of policy, service function or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis:

Controlled Parking Zones Policy

1.2 Department:

Neighbourhood & Environment

1.3 Service Area:

Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.4 Date Equality Analysis undertaken:

07/12/2020

1.5 Names and roles of staff carrying out the Equality Analysis:

Name	Role	Service Area
Sharon Harrington	Head of Service	Traffic Management & Highways Network
David Pye	Consultant	Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.6 What are the aims or purpose of the policy, service function or restructure that is subject to the EA?

The Council is introducing a new policy to set the process for consideration, and minimum standards, required for an application to be considered for a new Controlled Parking Zone.

It is anticipated the new policy will provide a fair and consistent approach to considering applications, and properly understanding the concern being raised, enabling the Council to consider all options before engaging with those affected

A well-managed road network helps to ensure it remains safe and accessible for all road users.

1.7 What are the main activities relating to the policy, service function or restructure?

EA July 2018 v4 Page 1

The new policy sets out the design standards for new applications, and how the Council will administrate, implement and enforce the service.

2. Evidence Base

2.1 Please list sources of information, data, results of consultation exercises that could or will inform the EA.

Source of information	Reason for using (eg. likely impact on a particular group).
Peer Review 2018	This review highlighted several service areas requiring improvement, specifically in this case, the need for robust policies for certain functions.

Please Note: reports/data/evidence can be added as appendices to the EA.

2.2 Identify any gaps in the information and understanding of the impact of your policy, service function or restructure. Indicate in your action plan (section 5) whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

This policy aims to fill gaps in how applications are considered by the Council, where a Controlled Parking Zone may not be the most appropriate solution, enabling the Council to consider and promote alternatives. It sets out minimum criteria required for an application to be taken forward, ensuring resources are prioritised.

The approach proposed to be taken is in line with the relevant legislation and emulates that taken by other local authorities.

3. Analysis

3.1 An analysis and interpretation of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure should be undertaken, with the impact for each of the groups with *'protected characteristics'* and the source of that evidence also set out against those findings.

In addition, the Council has identified the need to assess the impact of a policy, service function or restructure on <u>carers</u>, <u>looked after children</u> (as part of the age characteristic) as well as the <u>socioeconomic</u> impact of different groups, such as employment classifications.

Initial assessment of a perceived impact of the policy, service function or restructure. The impact can be positive or negative (or in some circumstances both), none or unclear:

	Impact - Please tick Yes					
				Na		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	INO	No Unclear	
Age (including looked	X					
after children)						
Disability	X					
Gender			Χ			

EA July 2018 v4 Page 2

Reassignment			
Marriage and civil		X	
partnership			
<u> </u>	X		
Pregnancy and	^		
maternity			
Race		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Religion of Delier		^	
Sex		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Ockaal Orientation			
Carers	X		
Socio-economic		X	
222.2 222.1011110			

Descriptions of the protected characteristics are available in the guidance or from: <u>EHRC - protected characteristics</u>

3.2 Where an impact has been identified above, outline what the impact of the policy, service function or restructure on members of the groups with protected characteristics below:

	Potential Impact
Age	A well-regulated parking scheme helps to improve safety and accessibility for all road users, it is anticipated there will be a positive impact on residents and carers who are older or have a disability but do not meet the criteria for a personalised disabled parking space or a disabled persons blue badge, by removing non-resident parking and increasing the available capacity and opportunity to park closer to their home.
	Pregnant women and new mothers will benefit from this policy in much the same manner as described above, albeit more temporary in nature.
Disability	See 'Age'
Gender	Neutral
reassignment	
Marriage and	Neutral
civil partnership	
Pregnancy and maternity	See 'Age'
Race	Neutral
Religion or belief	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual	Neutral
orientation	

EA_July 2018_v4 Page 3

Carers	See 'Age'
Socio-economic	Neutral

4. Community Impact

- 4.1 You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure.
- 4.2 You can use the <u>Community Cohesion Impact Assessment</u> as a guide, outlining a summary of your findings below:

A safer and more accessible road network benefits the whole community, Controlled Parking Zones can increase the likelihood of a resident finding a parking space closer to their home, which may be safer than walking longer distances. Where a zone will remove significant non-resident parking, it is often the case that parking restrictions reduce through traffic, making the roads safer for all road users.

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

- 5.1 Use the below table to set out what action will be taken to:
 - Ensure a full analysis of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure is undertaken.
 - Mitigate/address identified negative impacts or unlawful prohibited conduct.
 - To promoted improved equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.
 - How the action plan will be monitored and at what intervals.

Planned action	Objective	Who	When	How will this be monitored (e.g. via team/service plans)
Annual Review	The Council will review the policy and its application on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	Head of Service	Annual	Regular reporting and monitoring between Officers and the Portfolio Holder.

Signed (lead officer):		
Signed (Director):		

Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA) toTim MacGregor TimMacGregor@southend.gov.uk.

EA July 2018 v4 Page 4

Agenda Item No.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment To

Cabinet

14 January 2021

Report prepared by:

Sharon Harrington, Head of Service

Domestic Vehicle Crossings Policy

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Place Scrutiny **Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley** Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report sets out the new policy for consideration of applications, implementation and enforcement activity associated with domestic vehicle crossings.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet resolves to adopt the new policy for Domestic Vehicle Crossings as set out in this report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes new enforcement activity will begin once the establishment of the new Highway Enforcement Team is completed.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes this policy will be utilised by the Traffic Regulations Working Party in its considerations of appeals to rejected applications, as set out in the Council Constitution.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Council is undertaking a review of its policies and procedures within the Traffic & Highways Service. This review includes the redesign of resources structure, and the creation of a new Highways Enforcement Team, a dedicated resource with a focus on ensuring the safe and efficient use of the road network.
- The Highways Act 1980 sets out the powers of the Council to construct or require the construction of a domestic vehicle crossing, specifically in Section 184.

- 3.3 Further powers in the 1980 Act enable to Council to use enforcement powers to take enforcement action where there is a demonstrable concern over an illegal or dangerous vehicle crossing already in use.
- 3.4 This policy is anticipated to replace all previous criteria, policies and procedures associated with the administration, implementation, and enforcement of domestic vehicle crossings.

4. Existing Situation

4.1 The following table shows the number of applications received each year.

Year	Applications
2017	322
2018	341
2019	362
2020	280

- 4.2 It is known there are many illegally or dangerously constructed domestic vehicle crossings which have been in place for some time, without an expensive borough wide survey, it is not possible to quantify the extent of the issue for the purpose of this report, however, Elected Members have indicated the issue is a priority area for Officers to dedicate resources to, given their experiences of complaints and concerns raised within their Wards.
- 4.3 There is no clear policy on domestic vehicle crossings and has never been any consistent approach to enforcement. A particular concern has been raised about the damage caused to footways and verges, and the utilities infrastructure which is at much higher risk of damage where a crossing point is not properly constructed to carry the weight of a vehicle.

5. Proposed Domestic Vehicle Crossings Policy

- 5.1 The new policy as set out in the appendix to this report provides robust criteria and processes required to achieve the following key objectives; -
 - Ensure the criteria are clear and transparent, enabling potential applicants to make an early judgement on whether their application is likely to be approved.
 - Consider the impact on the road network, environment and wider Council priorities and strategies, particularly the response to the Climate Emergency.
 - Understand the emerging challenges from the increase in use of electric vehicles and the requirement to facilitate charging points.
- 5.2 Once the new Highways Enforcement Team is established, a review of existing crossing points will be undertaken. Where illegal or dangerous domestic vehicle crossing points are found, the Council will work in line with the new Highway Enforcement Policy, if approved, to ensure in the first instance residents are

- advised of the requirements before moving through to possible enforcement action.
- 5.3 If an application is rejected by Officers, the appeals process set out in the Council constitution allows for an appeal to be heard by the Traffic Regulations Working Party, which can overrule a decision based on evidence presented by Officers, and verbal or written evidence submitted by the applicant.
- 5.4 There are no proposals to amend the rights to appeal, however, it is anticipated this policy will help Working Party members to consider appeals against an adopted policy.

6. Other Options

6.1 The Council could decide on an alternative approach, which would require further consideration of this report, or to do nothing.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 This policy will ensure the Council acts properly in its consideration of application, and provide a clear, robust set of criteria for potential applicants to consider before submitting an application which will likely require early investment in design and consents.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map.

8.2 Opportunity & Prosperity:

8.2.1 This policy aims to set out how the Council will support residents who wish to enhance their property, whilst also taking into account wider considerations on the use of the road network and impact on the environment.

8.3 Safe & Well:

8.3.1 The ability to park your vehicle on your own property reduces the stresses of returning home and not finding a place to park, improving the wellbeing of those concerned.

8.4 Connected & Smart:

8.4.1 The policy will be published on the Council website, with copies and further information available from Council Customer Contact Centres.

8.5 Financial Implications:

8.5.1 The cost of considering applications and undertaking any works will be met by the applicant.

8.5.2 Enforcement activity will be funded through existing resources, particularly the new Highway Enforcement Team. Before any legal action is taken in an individual case, the Council will review the potential costs associated with any advice or action which may be required.

8.6 Legal Implications:

8.8.1 This policy sets out the way the Council will deliver its statutory obligations in respect of regulating the road network, set out in the Highways Act 1980.

8.7 People Implications:

8.7.1 It is anticipated the resources required to administrative and operation of this policy can be delivered using existing resources.

8.8 Property Implications:

8.8.1 There are no property implications associated with this proposed policy.

8.9 Consultation

8.9.1 This policy will be published on the Council website and made available to any person requesting a copy.

8.10 Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.10.1 An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and found no disproportionate adverse impacts on any protected groups.

8.11 Risk Assessment

8.11.1 In each case, the Council will undertake appropriate assessments to understand and mitigate any risks.

8.12 Value for Money

8.12.1 It is anticipated this policy will help the Council reduce the costs of maintaining footways and verges, following damage caused by vehicles.

8.13 Community Safety Implications

8.13.1 This policy will help to improve the road network and reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls from damaged surfaces. It is further anticipated there will be a benefit to successful applicants who will benefit from the added personal security of being able to park their vehicle on their own property.

8.14 Environmental Impact

8.14.1 This policy will ensure the Council can consider the environmental impact of introducing domestic vehicle crossings and will help to promote sustainable construction methods and surface water management.

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

10.1 Domestic Vehicle Crossing Policy

Southend-On-Sea Domestic Vehicle Crossing Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

A key priority of the Council is ensuring the safe and efficient operation of the road network.

To achieve this, the Council sets out policies on how aspects of the network operates, and the procedures it follows when considering applications to change certain aspects.

When considering applications, the Council must also balance the consequences, particularly on the availability of kerb side parking capacity, increase risk of flooding and the safety of other road users.

A common issue in Southend is the presence of unauthorised or badly constructed crossing points. These can cause damage to the footway surface, increasing the risks to pedestrians and cyclists, damage to utility infrastructure, which can be costly to statutory undertakers and cause disruption for service users, and enable other hazards such as overhanging vehicles.

This Policy sets out how the Council will consider applications for new crossing points, and in what circumstances enforcement action will be considered.

2. DOMESTIC VEHICLE CROSSING APPLICATIONS

A domestic vehicle crossing, is an access across a footway, cycleway or verge, to an off street parking place, either on hard standing or in a garage.

Application

- a. An application must be made by the freehold landowner, or a freeholder or a person acting on their behalf, with the expressed written consent of the freeholder.
- b. All applications must be submitted using the online portal at (www.southend.gov.uk).
- c. No works are to be undertaken before an application, and any associated applications, are approved, this includes removal of a property boundary wall where doing so would damage the integrity of the footway.
- d. Under no circumstances should a person use an off street parking place before the domestic vehicle crossing is completed, doing so may affect the application.

Design Criteria

Off Street Parking Place

The following criteria must be met in all circumstances; -

- a. When parking at a right angle to the footway, there must be an unobstructed off street parking place of not less than 2.4 metres wide, and 4.8 metres long.
- b. For parking parallel to the footway, there must be an unobstructed off street parking place of not less than 2.6 metres wide, and 6.5 metres long.
- c. In all cases, the off street parking place must be sufficient to accommodate the entire vehicle, with no part overhanging the footway, cycleway or verge.
- d. The off street space must be level, or close to level, so as to prevent surface water run off, where this is not possible suitable drainage must be installed.

- e. The presence of a vehicle on the off street parking place must not obstruct the main door of the property.
- f. Consideration must be given in the application to control of surface water run off, proposing measures to prevent ponding on the footway or carriageway.

Property Boundary

The following criteria must be met in all circumstances; -

- a. The opening at the property boundary must be wide enough to allow the safe access and egress of a standard family vehicle, in all cases, not less than 2.4m wide.
- b. The opening at the property boundary must be no less than 10 metres from a junction with another road.
- c. Any gates must only open inwards or along the property boundary, under no circumstances are gates to open outward.
- d. Up to two openings will be considered on a single application, for use in cases where the design includes a separate entrance and exit. In such circumstances, further consideration will be required on the impact on parking capacity.
- e. Joint applications for two properties to use a single footway crossing will be considered, subject to all other criteria in this Policy. Only a single application is required.

Footway Crossing

The following criteria must be met in all circumstances; -

- a. A vehicle must be able to travel across the footway crossing in a single manoeuvre, a driver must not be required to undertake more than one manoeuvre to reach the off street parking place, or the carriageway.
- b. Where an adjacent footway crossing is located within 1 metre, the design must incorporate the lowering of the kerb and footway to create a single, common footway crossing.
- c. There must be a distance of not less than 1.2 metres of any street furniture, including utilities cabinets.

Planning Permission

A planning permission is required in the following circumstances, this is not an exhaustive list and it remains the applicant responsibility to check and obtain planning permission.

- a. The proposed PVX Is accessed via a Classified Road
- b. The property is classified as either a flat, a house of multiple occupation or commercial/business
- c. The PVX is part of a large development that requires Planning Permission
- d. Fall within a Conservation area
- e. The PVX is to serve or otherwise affected a Listed Building

Utility Infrastructure

Where the proposed footway crossing requires the removal, relocation or adaptation of infrastructure owned or maintained by a utility or statutory undertaker, it is the applicant responsibility to apply for

Miscellaneous

An application will not be approved if it requires the removal of a council owned tree, whether or not a Tree Preservation Order is in place.

Applications will be considered if the removal or relocation of any street light, sign or other Council infrastructure is required. However, applications will be rejected if the removal or relocation would create a road safety concern, or interrupt the continuous and consistent street lighting. In all cases, these costs will be met by the applicant.

In some circumstances, it may be nescessary to amend parking regulations, by varying a traffic regulation order. The Council will take this forward within the timescales set out in this and related policies. Approval of an application under this policy will be held pending until the TRO has been implemented.

Where an application affects infrastructure owned or maintained by the Environment Agency. The applicant is responsible for obtaining any consents and permissions before submitting an application under this policy.

3. DECISION MAKING

Any incomplete applications will be automatically rejected by the Council.

The Council will consider the impact on other works, including where it is likely works will be undertaken to improve the footway surface, in the near future. If works can be coordinated to reduce impact and cost, the Council will work with applicants to agree a timescale.

Once a completed application is received, it will be considered by the Council. Officers will consider; -

- a. Whether the application meets all criteria as set out in this Policy
- b. Possible impact on parking capacity
- c. Whether any other local conditions could impact the safe and efficient use of the road network.

Applicants will be informed of the decision, which will be; -

- a. Application Approved, the applicant may instruct the works as described in the application.
- b. Application Deferred, the application is required to undertake additional work, for example obtaining planning permission, consider additional costs such as relocation of a traffic sign, before submitting a revised application
- c. Application Rejected, the application has been rejected based on the conditions as set out in this policy.

Once an application has been rejected, the applicant will have the right to seek a review using the established process set out in the Constitution.

4. CONSTRUCTION

Unless otherwise expressly agreed by the Council, through this application process or a planning decision, the following construction standards apply as a minimum.

Domestic Vehicle Crossing Construction Standard; -

- a. Surface 25mm AC 6 Dense Surf 100/150 Rec to BS EN 13108-1 Asphalt Concrete
- b. Sub-Base 150mm Class C32 /40 concrete

The applicant may decide to use the Council preferred contractor to construct the vehicle crossing point, or may choose their own contractor. Where using an alternative contractor, the applicant must provide evidence the contractor is approved for undertaking such works by the Council, and that they retain the relevant qualifications and accreditations.

In all cases, the applicant must work with the contractor to ensure the relevant signage and barriers are in place during the works, to the standards set out in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.

During construction, the Council will undertake the following additional functions; -

- a. Site Survey / Trial Hole as may be required
- b. Inspection during works
- c. Post works inspection

Inspections may be undertaken at any time, without notice. Where a defect arises, the Council will engage with the applicant and contractor to ensure it is rectified. Where this is not possible, the Council may take enforcement action against the contractor, or undertake works required to make the road network safe, and seek recovery of the costs.

5. REMOVAL

Where a crossing is no longer required, it will remain in place until such time as the Council or other provider is undertaking maintenance or renewal works, during which it will be removed.

Southend on Sea Borough Council - Equality Analysis

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of policy, service function or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis:

Domestic Vehicle Crossing Policy

1.2 Department:

Neighbourhood & Environment

1.3 Service Area:

Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.4 Date Equality Analysis undertaken:

07/12/2020

1.5 Names and roles of staff carrying out the Equality Analysis:

Name	Role	Service Area
Sharon Harrington	Head of Service	Traffic Management & Highways Network
David Pye	Consultant	Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.6 What are the aims or purpose of the policy, service function or restructure that is subject to the EA?

The Council is introducing a new policy to regulate the creation, use and enforcement of domestic vehicle crossings, otherwise known as dropped kerbs and in Southend, a PVX.

It is anticipated the new policy will provide a fair and consistent approach to considering applications and taking enforcement action where appropriate, improving safety and accessibility for all road users.

1.7 What are the main activities relating to the policy, service function or restructure?

The new policy sets out the design standards for new applications, and how the Council will administrate and enforce the service.

2. Evidence Base

EA July 2018 v4 Page 1

2.1 Please list sources of information, data, results of consultation exercises that could or will inform the EA.

Source of information	Reason for using (eg. likely impact on a particular group).
Peer Review 2018	This review highlighted several service areas requiring improvement, specifically in this case, the need for robust policies for certain functions.

Please Note: reports/data/evidence can be added as appendices to the EA.

2.2 Identify any gaps in the information and understanding of the impact of your policy, service function or restructure. Indicate in your action plan (section 5) whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

This policy aims to fill gaps in how the service is administrated, particularly where the Council could and should consider applications which do not meet the criteria. The approach proposed to be taken is in line with the relevant legislation and emulates that taken by other local authorities.

3. Analysis

3.1 An analysis and interpretation of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure should be undertaken, with the impact for each of the groups with 'protected characteristics' and the source of that evidence also set out against those findings.

In addition, the Council has identified the need to assess the impact of a policy, service function or restructure on <u>carers</u>, <u>looked after children</u> (as part of the age characteristic) as well as the <u>socioeconomic</u> impact of different groups, such as employment classifications.

Initial assessment of a perceived impact of the policy, service function or restructure. The impact can be positive or negative (or in some circumstances both), none or unclear:

		Impact - Please tick			
	Yes		NI.		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Unclear
Age (including looked after children)	X				
Disability	X				
Gender reassignment			X		
Marriage and civil partnership			X		
Pregnancy and maternity	X				
Race			Χ		

EA July 2018 v4 Page 2

Religion or belief		Х	
Sex		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Carers		X	
Socio-economic		Х	

Descriptions of the protected characteristics are available in the guidance or from: <u>EHRC - protected characteristics</u>

3.2 Where an impact has been identified above, outline what the impact of the policy, service function or restructure on members of the groups with protected characteristics below:

	Potential Impact
Age	Illegal and dangerous domestic vehicle crossings significantly increase the risk of damage to surfaces on footways and verges, where not constructed to safely carry the weight of a vehicle.
	Informal domestic vehicle crossings are also often badly designed, with part of vehicle overhanging the footway.
	It is anticipated that, through a robust policy, administration and enforcement activity, there will be a demonstrable improvement in quality and accessibility for all road users.
	As illegal and dangerous domestic vehicle crossings are formalised or removed, it is anticipated there will be a reduction in the number of successful personal injury claims.
Disability	See 'Age'
Gender reassignment	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	See 'Age'
Race	Neutral
Religion or belief	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual	Neutral

EA_July 2018_v4 Page 3

orientation	
Carers	See 'Age'
Socio-economic	Neutral

4. Community Impact

- 4.1 You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure.
- 4.2 You can use the <u>Community Cohesion Impact Assessment</u> as a guide, outlining a summary of your findings below:

A safer and more accessible road network benefits the whole community. Whilst the Council is mindful of the environmental impacts of significant off street parking capacity, it is also aware of the potential to improve the standard of living for those with off street parking, and in some cases, other residents nearby through increased on street parking capacity.

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

TimMacGregor@southend.gov.uk.

- 5.1 Use the below table to set out what action will be taken to:
 - Ensure a full analysis of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure is undertaken.
 - Mitigate/address identified negative impacts or unlawful prohibited conduct.
 - To promoted improved equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.
 - How the action plan will be monitored and at what intervals.

Planned action	Objective	Who	When	How will this be monitored (e.g. via team/service plans)
Annual Review	The Council will review the policy and its application on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	Head of Service	Annual	Regular reporting and monitoring between Officers and the Portfolio Holder.

Signed (lead officer):
Signed (Director):
Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA) toTim MacGregor

EA July 2018 v4 Page 4



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment

To

CABINET

On

14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Sharon Harrington, Head of Traffic Management & Highways Network

Highway Enforcement Policies

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley
Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment)

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This Report seeks to resolve outstanding concerns raised as part of a peer review and following several Information Commissioner reports which recommended policy improvements.
- 1.2 The new policies set out how the Council will administrate and enforce the policies.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet adopts the new policies as described in this Report.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council is a Highway Authority and a Traffic Authority, as described in the Highways Act 1980 and Traffic Management Act 2004. The legislation sets out the duties and powers of the Council to maintain and regulate a safe and efficient road network.
- 3.2 A new Highway Enforcement Team is being established; its purpose is to administrate the licencing of temporary activity on the road network and undertake enforcement action where required.
- 3.3 Specific areas of responsibility for the team include;
 - a) unlawful crossovers, whether or not the kerb has been adapted

Highway Enforcement Policies

Report Number : 20

- b) highway obstructions
- c) placing of builders skips, scaffolds, hoardings, builders materials, cranes and mobile elevated working platforms
- d) abandoned vehicles
- e) selling vehicles on the highway
- f) car washing on the highways
- 3.4 The policies in this report are the first in a series of policy reviews to be undertaken, to underpin the new Highways Enforcement Team, specifically setting out the proposed management of the placing of builders skips, scaffolds, hoardings, builders materials, cranes and mobile elevated working platforms
- 4. Builders Skips, Scaffolds, Hoardings, Materials, Cranes, MEWPs and other Equipment on the Public Highway
- 4.1 Historically, the Council has lacked a robust policy which sets out how temporary works on or near the highway, should be undertaken.
- 4.2 Where there are no formal controls in place, the Council is unable to effectively respond to community concerns and ensure works are undertaken safely and with minimal impact on other road users.
- 4.3 The Council has several duties and powers to regulate the use of the road network, in particular the licencing arrangements as set out in the Highways Act 1980.
- 4.4 The new policies as set out in the appendix to this report aim to ensure the Council is properly administering the service, making sure applicants are aware of their obligations, particularly the standards and terms and conditions they are required to accept when applying for a licence.
- 4.5 Once adopted, these policies will enable the Council to take appropriate enforcement action, as set out in Part 5 of this report.
- 4.6 A related project is underway to digitise the service, this will include proposals to improve the application and licencing process using the Council website and mobile application.

5. Enforcement

- 5.1 Enforcement can take several forms;
 - a. No Action where the investigation reveals no offence has occurred, the offender makes a ready admission of the breach and takes immediate steps to remedy it, there are strong mitigating circumstances or where there is no jurisdiction to act.
 - b. Advice and education where informal action can effectively be used to secure compliance with legal regulations or where the offence is considered as minor/technical and not serious enough to warrant formal action.

- c. Warning Letter where a formal letter is appropriate to explain the legal requirements for compliance and what action will be taken in the event of non compliance.
- d. Statutory Notice where there is a clear breach of legislation, a history of non compliance despite advice having been provided, and/or where there is potential harm to the community or environment. Where there is a statutory power to serve a notice requiring remedial action to be taken and/or for a particular course of conduct to cease, this can be an effective mechanism to remedy conditions that are deteriorating or already serious. Where there is a right of appeal, advice on the appeal mechanism will be set out in writing. Failure to comply with a statutory notice can lead to prosecution.
- e. Fixed Penalty Notice where there is statutory authority to issue a fixed penalty notice as an alternative to bringing a prosecution.
- f. Simple Caution where an offender admits to committing a criminal offence and it is considered to be in the public interest to offer a formal caution in place of a prosecution. A simple caution may be cited in the case of any future offending. Home Office Guidance in Circular 16/2008 will be followed when administering a simple caution.
- g. Prosecution where there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest. Southend Highways officers will refer cases to Legal Services at Southend to prosecute for a criminal offence. In determining whether it is in the public interest, guidance set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors will be considered.
- 5.2 The list above is not intended and does not constitute a step-by-step escalation process, it is an illustration of the options available to the Council.
- 5.3 When deciding on the most appropriate action for an individual case, the Council will consider;
 - a. the degree of risk arising from the non-compliance
 - b. the seriousness of the contravention
 - c. the different technical means of remedying the situation
 - d. the particular circumstances of the case and likelihood of its continuation or recurrence
 - e. the general attitude of the offender to his or her responsibilities
 - f. the past history of the person(s), company or premises involved
 - g. the willingness of owners of new businesses to carry out required work
 - h. the impact of the enforcement choice in encouraging others to comply with the law
 - i. the likely effectiveness of the various enforcement measures
 - i. any legal imperatives
 - k. any legal guidance
 - I. any guidance or protocols issued by Local Authority Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services, the Department for Environment or any other Government Department or Agency.
- 5.4 In some circumstances, a less formal response may escalate into formal or legal action, therefore in all cases, considerations will be made following the

- principles set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, and associated regulations and codes of practice.
- 5.5 All parties involved in an investigation will be kept appropriately informed throughout. Personal information will be disclosed only in accordance with legal requirements and the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 5.6 The Council is not seeking to regulate the working practices or procedures of applicants or their contractors / clients, these policies only set out our requirements for a licence or permit to be approved. Works contained within a site, and how they are undertaken, are regulated by other bodies.
- 5.7 Where appropriate, the Council will report to, and work with other regulatory bodies, including the Health and Safety Executive, Building Control, Planning and Development Control, and Police.

5.8 <u>Surveillance</u>

- 5.9 On rare occasions, and for enabling the discharge of these statutory powers and duties, the Council may be required to monitor organisations and individuals to gather evidence in support of enforcement action.
- 5.10 In such circumstances, and before any activity is undertaken, the Council will consider the necessity and proportionality of surveillance, particularly covert, and will do so in line with the Council Policy and Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

5.11 Publicity

5.12 To maintain public confidence, the Council will publicise details of any successful prosecutions to draw the public attention to the action and promote compliance with the policies and legislation.

7. Summary of Proposed Changes

7.1 The policies proposed in this report set out how the Council will administrate applications for licences and undertake enforcement action where appropriate.

8. Other Options

8.1 Members could decide to amend any elements within the policies, subject to further legal and financial clearance.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 The Recommendations, as described in this Report will help the Council to deliver its obligations in respect of managing a safe and efficient road network, and ensure any enforcement action is proportionate and transparent.

10 Corporate Implications

- 10.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map
- 10.2 The Road Map for 2020 sets out the first five-year plan to achieve the Southend 2050 vision. These new policies will help the Council to achieve its objectives in respect of the public realm, environment and accessibility.
- 10.3 Financial Implications
- 10.4 There are no costs associated with introducing the new policies, related projects to digitise the service are being delivered within existing budgets.
- 10.5 It is anticipated the Council will see some increase in revenue from permits and licences as the team becomes established and action is taken against illegal operators.
- 10.6 Legal Implications
- 10.7 The policies set out how the Council will deliver its obligations as a Highway Authority in respect of the service areas identified in this Report. Before any enforcement action is considered, case specific legal advice will be sought.
- 10.8 People Implications
- 10.9 Administration and enforcement activity will be undertaken by the Highways Enforcement Team, as part of their core function. These policies will help to ensure a consistent and fair approach.
- 10.10 Property Implications
- 10.11 There are no property implications.
- 10.12 Consultation
- 10.13 No direct public consultation has been undertaken with members of the public. If adopted, the Council will engage in a publicity campaign to highlight the new Highways Enforcement Team, and the benefits that residents and businesses should expect.
- 10.14 Equalities and Diversity Implications
- 10.15 An Equality and Diversity Assessment has been completed and is attached in Appendix 4 to this Report. It is not anticipated there will be any disproportionate impact on any protected groups, to the contrary, as a properly regulated public highway will improve accessibility for all.
- 10.16 Risk Assessment

- 10.17 Once adopted, these policies will be used as a basis for developing operational procedures for the Highway Enforcement Team, each aspect of their new role will be subject to risk assessment.
- 10.18 Value for Money
- 10.19 Enabling the Council to take enforcement action, particularly where no licence is in place and the works are being undertaken illegally, will help to ensure the new Highways Enforcement Team represents value for money, and delivers on the priorities of residents and businesses.
- 10.20 Community Safety Implications
- 10.21 The policies will help the Council to regulate how works are undertaken on the public highway, ensuring it remains safe and accessible. Temporary works can attract anti-social behaviour and other crime, which the Highway Enforcement Team, using these policies will be better positioned to respond to.
- 10.22 Environmental Impact
- 10.23 It is anticipated the new policies will help the Council to achieve its objectives in respect of the environment, regulation of temporary works on the highway, for example with builders skips, will help to ensure waste is properly disposed of, reducing the likelihood of fly tipping.
- 11. Background Papers
- 11.1 None
- 12. Appendix
- 12.1 Policies

Builders Skips on the Public Highway Policy



Version 1 October 2020

Title: Builders Skips on the Public Highway Policy	

Document information

CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND	4
2.	COUNCIL POSITION	4
3.	RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION	4
4.	GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS	5
5.	SITING OF SKIPS	5
6.	ILLEGAL SKIPS	5
7.	LICENCE PERIODS	6
8.	CRITERIA FOR SKIPS IN BOROUGH	6
9.	REQUIREMENT FOR REGISTRATION IN THE BOROUGH	6
10.	CHARGES	6
11.	PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES	7
12.	RECORDING OF INFORMATION	7
13.	PROCEDURE FOR UNLICENSED SKIPS	7
14.	APPLICATION	8
15.	BUILDERS SKIP LICENCE TERMS & CONDITIONS	8

1. BACKGROUND

The Highways Act 1980 mandates that skips cannot be placed on the highway without the permission of this highway without the permission of the highway authority, and that the highway authority may specify conditions on the place of the skip in terms of siting, dimensions, reflectivity, signing and guarding, lighting, car of contents and removal.

Permission is not required where the builders skip is placed wholly on private land.

A builder's skip is defined in this policy as any container designed or able to be transported on a road vehicle, and placed on the public highway for the purpose of storing and removing any form of waste.

Where waste is hazardous or dangerous, further consent may be required from other regulating authorities – the applicant is entirely responsible for ensuring any other consents are in place <u>before</u> the application is submitted, and proof of consents must be provided along with the application.

A builders skip licence will set out the standard Terms & Conditions as described in this Policy, and any site or user specific conditions the Council may impose, entirely at its discretion, these may include; -

- The siting of the builders skip
- Its dimensions, colour, or construction material
- The use of lids and locks
- The way it is lit and guarded
- The timing of its delivery and removal

Where emergency circumstances arise, or where the presence of the builders skip presents a nuisance or danger to other road users, the Council may, without notice, require its immediate relocation or removal, amending or withdrawing the licence.

2. COUNCIL POSITION

This is a statutory power exercised by the Authority and delegated to Highways Enforcement Team.

3. RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Highways Act 1980 S.139 Control of builders skips

S.140 Removal of builders skips

S140A Builders skips charge for occupation of the highway

S140B Builders skips; charge determined by reference to the

duration of occupation of the highway

S140C Regulations under section 140A and 140B

4. GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS (Definition of Highway)

"Highway" in this instance is defined as either;

- Footway, verge and carriageway maintained at public expense
- The surface layers of any area considered to be a public right of way (including un-adopted streets) but not any areas of private land or private road that do not form a right of way

A public right of way is determined as any roadway or footpath that is not maintained at public expense, is not designated as Private and – under common law – is defined as follows:

"A highway is a way over which all members of the public have the right to pass and re-pass. Their use of the way must be as of right, not on sufferance or by licence".

A private road is considered to be one signed as such or one that is closed to public by means of barrier or gate (or possibly simply by the presence of a barrier or gate). The onus on proof of a highway being classed as private lies with the landowner making the claim.

The definitive record of Highways Maintained at Public expense is held by the Council, and is published online at

https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/download/411/adopted-roads

5. SITING OF SKIPS

Skips should be placed on the carriageway, parallel to the kerb line, in a manner that does not obstruct the passage of vehicles or pedestrians and that allows for appropriate sight lines to be maintained.

Skips should not be placed in no loading zones, bus stop clearways, bus lanes, on double yellow lines or on zigzag approaches to crossings.

Where a skip is placed on a block paved, or flagged area, suitable protection to the surface in the form, of plywood sheets (or similar approved) should be laid first before the skip is placed.

6. ILLEGAL SKIPS

The Highways Act mandates that;

- the skip is properly lighted during the hours of darkness [and, where regulations made by the Secretary of State under this section require it to be marked in accordance with the regulations (whether with reflecting or fluorescent material or otherwise), that it is so marked];
- the skip is clearly and indelibly marked with the owner's name and with his telephone number or address;
- the skip is removed as soon as practicable after it has been filled;

Any skip that does not comply with the above is unlawful and can be removed by the authority.

7. LICENCE PERIODS

Unless otherwise expressly agreed, a builder's skip licence will be valid for up to 21 days. In certain areas, the Council may require a shorter licence period, or other specific conditions with the following exceptions;

During the licence period, the Council may inspect the site, ensuring the Terms & Conditions of the licence are being adhered to. Subsequent action entirely at the discretion of the Council may include; -

- Verbal or written warning
- Imposition of additional specific conditions
- Revocation of the licence and a requirement to immediately remove the builders skip
- Enforcement action using Fixed Penalty Notices, or prosecution.

At all times, the applicant is wholly responsible for the builders skip, its contents and impact on the public highway or any of the conditions set out in this Policy, regardless of any disputes with a third party.

8. CRITERIA FOR SKIPS IN THE BOROUGH

Skips within the Borough should meet the following criteria over and above that required by the Highways Act;

- Be closed and lockable.
- Delivered before 8.00am and not removed until after 5.30pm
- Placed on plywood sheet boarding to prevent damage to surfaces.
- Have their exact location agreed with a member of the Highways team.

9. REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION:

Southend Highways Authority requests that all skip companies operating within the borough register with the authority, and provide the following details

- Registered name of the company
- Registered address of the company
- Name of the company owner
- Address of the company owner
- · Name of the company as it appears on the skip
- Companies House Registration Number
- VAT Reference Number
- Public liability insurance
- Environment Agency Waste Carriers Licence
- VOSA Goods Vehicle Operators Licence

All registered companies operating within the district will be displayed on the council's website.

10. CHARGES

Charges will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's fees and charges budget setting.

Fees can charges will be based on

- Skip Licence Fee
- Illegal Skip Fee
- Non-Compliant Skips

11. PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

- Prompt payment of fees and charges by skip companies is expected.
- Charges will be levied by invoice on a monthly basis until such time as new payment methods (BACS, Credit/Debit Card & Online payments) are available.
- Any company who does not comply with the Councils standard terms and conditions for payment will be referred to Sundry Debtors for collection.

12. RECORDING OF INFORMATION

All licenced skips on the highway network are to be recorded on the Symology system, which is to be used as the de facto licence register. These will then appear on the roadworks.org website.

13. PROCEDURE FOR UNLICENSED SKIPS

If a skip is found unlicensed on the Highway the following procedure should be undertaken:

The skip should be photographed, clearly showing any identifying marks and the location of the skip on the highway.

If there are no obvious markings on the skip itself, a statement should be obtained from the resident/company who ordered the skip ascertaining where it has been procured from. This statement should include names/telephone numbers and email addresses of the company who has placed it. If a receipt has been issued, a copy should be obtained where possible.

The company should be approached to either remove the skip immediately, or to pay a retrospective licence fee.

Where it has been identified that a company has placed 5 or more skips on the Highway consecutively without obtaining a licence or paying retrospective fees then a case should be prepared for prosecution via Legal Services.

The following information is required.

Dates and times that each skip was found on site.

- Statements from procuring residents/business naming the company the skip was procured from
- Excerpts from the licence register for the relevant date span showing the lack of licence.
- A letter under caution must then be sent to the owner of the skip company, via recorded mail asking why the skips were placed on the highway without a relevant licence, requesting a reply within 7 working days of the recorded receipt of the letter.

Upon receipt of reply – or if no reply has been received after 7 working days – the Head of Service will make a decision as to whether a formal prosecution is undertaken.

In all cases where prosecution is considered, intelligence regarding the company in question will be shared with bordering authorities, and details of the offences will be provided to VOSA and Environment Agency respectively for relevant licencing breaches

14. APPLICATION

The Council will only consider applications from waste management operators who in addition to retaining a Skip Operator Licence, demonstrate; -

- They retain all relevant operating licences
- Valid Public Liability Insurance, of a value not less than £5 million pounds for any single claim
- There is no evidence of repeated or serious breaches of the Terms & Conditions within the past 12 months.

Applications are submitted online via the Council website (www.southend.gov.uk).

An application must be submitted at least 5 working days in advance, unless in an emergency which must be agreed in advance. Applications will not be considered when submitted on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

Once an application is received, the Council will consider any specific conditions which may be required in addition to the Terms & Conditions.

If an application is approved, confirmation and the licence will be sent electronically to the applicant.

Where further information is required, or an application is rejected, the Council will contact the applicant to explain the reasons and whether any alternative options would be considered.

15. BUILDERS SKIP LICENCE TERMS & CONDITIONS

These Terms & Conditions are associated with a licence issued by Southend Borough Council for the placing of a builders skip on the public highway. A licence is valid only when these Terms & Conditions are adhered to.

Applicant

- 1. The applicant retains a Skip Operator Licence and any other associated licences and is not otherwise excluded from applying for a Builders Skip Licence.
- 2. The applicant has provided evidence of Public Liability Insurance of not less than £5 million for any single claim.
- 3. The correct fee has been paid to the Council, as set out in the Annual Fees & Charges Review.

Builders Skip

- 4. The builders skip dimensions do not exceed 5 metres in length, and 2 metres in width, unless other specific conditions are set out on the licence.
- 5. The builders skip is constructed of a suitable material and is maintained such that it can accommodate the weight of any materials to be placed within it, and to enable safe loading and unloading form the road vehicle.
- 6. The builders skip is painted yellow, and permanently marked with the owner's name, address and contact telephone number.

Prohibited Uses

- 7. Unless otherwise expressly approved, no builders skip licenced under these Terms & Conditions shall be used to store or dispose of any material which is inflammable, explosive, noxious, otherwise hazardous or dangerous, waste which is likely to putrefy or become a nuisance to other road users.
- 8. The builders skip must not be loaded higher than the upper limit permitted by the manufacturer recommendation, or otherwise beyond the upper edge of the builders skip.
- 9. No temporary boarding or netting is permitted to provide additional loading capacity, either by height or overhang.
- 10. A builder's skip must not be used as a container for setting or maintaining a fire as a method to dispose of waste.

Applicant Responsibility

- 11. Any liquid or material spillages onto the public highway, both from the builders skip itself, or activity associated with its loading, must be removed, and properly disposed of.
- 12. Where dust is likely from a builders skip, the material must be properly 'damped down' and / or a suitable cover be provided, and used. Any cover must not obstruct any lower sides or edges of the builders skip to as to obscure any safety equipment or the applicant name and contact details.

Positioning

13. The builders skip must not be placed closer than 150mm from the nearside kerb edge, so as not to obstruct drainage, and not greater than 300mm to minimise the impact on traffic flow.

- 14. No drains, manhole covers or any other form of access chamber is to be obstructed.
- 15. Unless otherwise expressly agreed, no part of the builders skip shall be placed;
 - a) Within 15m of a road junction or 45m of a road junction with traffic lights
 - b) Within 45m of a pedestrian crossing, refuge or island located within the centre of a carriageway
 - c) On a carriageway marked with Zig-Zag markings in the vicinity of a pedestrian crossing or school entrance
 - d) Within any part of the carriageway subject to an Order prohibiting waiting for any period, unless expressly agreed with the Council, and in such circumstances, the applicant should anticipate additional restrictions on the duration a builders skip may remain in that location
 - e) At or near a bend or in any other part of the highway where it would create a danger to road users
 - f) Where it would obstruct the visibility of any traffic sign or warning device
 - g) On a footway, verge or cycle track
 - h) Within a disabled persons parking place

Sighing, Lighting & Guarding

- 16. The builders skip must meet the relevant standards, as set out in the Builders Skips (Markings) Regulations 1984 and associated British or European Standards as may be relevant.
- 17. The requirements for signing, lighting, and guarding as set out in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual must be met, with the minimum requirements set out below:
 - a) not less than two amber lights, one placed at each end of the builders skip on the offside
 - b) if not located within a line of regularly parked vehicles, a series of cones placed at a 45 degree angle from the outer edge of the builders skip, to the nearside kerb.

Removal

- 18. The builders skip will be removed not more than two working days after it has been filled, or as soon as is practical, whichever is sooner.
- 19. Any materials or liquids remaining on the public highway once the builders skip has been removed, will be cleared and disposed of by the applicant.
- Any damage or defect to the public highway resulting from, and identifiable once the builders skip has been removed, must be notified to the Council within one working day.

Miscellaneous

- 21. If the builders skip is to be located within an off street car park, operated by the Council, an additional charge may be applied for the suspension of a parking bay. Not less than two bays will be required to protect other car park users.
- 22. The Council may inspect the site of a builders skip at any time, and without notice. Where defects are found, the applicant must make arrangements for

- any defects to be rectified within 12 hours, before nightfall where related to safety equipment, or otherwise as directed by the Council.
- 23. Notwithstanding any of the provisions in these Terms & Conditions, the Council reserves the right to amend or withdraw the licence entirely at its discretion.

Scaffold, Hoarding, Structures or other Items on the Public Highway Policy



Version 1 October 2020

Document information Title: Scaffold, Hoarding, Structures or other Items on the Public Highway		
Title: Scaffold, Hoarding, Structures or other Items on the Public Highway	Document information	
	Title: Scaffold, Hoarding, Structures or other Items on the	e Public Highway
Highway Enforcement Policies Report Number : 20	Highway Enforcement Policies Rep	oort Number : 20

CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND	4
2.	COUNCIL POSITION	4
3.	RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION	4
4.	GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS	4
5.	TEMPORARY STRUCTURES	į
6.	ENFORCEMENT	į
7.	VARIOUS LICENCES	ŧ
8.	LICENCE PERIOD	7
9.	CHARGES	7
10.	PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES	7
11.	HIGHWAYS LICENCES	8
12.	APPLICATION	9
13.	SCAFFOLD, HOARDING, STRUCTURE OR OTHER ITEMS LICENCE TERMS & CONDITIONS	9

5. BACKGROUND

The construction and use of scaffolds, hoardings and related structures on the public highway is regulated by the Highways Act 1980. No structure should be placed on the public highway without the expressed permission of Southend Borough Council, as described in this Policy.

Permissiion is not required where the structure is placed wholly on private land, however, a licence is required where there is any projections over the public highway, at any height.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how the Council uses its powers to regulate the safe and efficient use of the public highway. This Policy <u>does not</u> set out how an applicant should design, set up use or remove any structure, this function is wholly the responsibility of the applicant, to ensure their own safe systems of work.

It is acknowledged that a structure, once erected, may become critical to the safety and stability of a building or other permanent structure. Should the presence of the structure permitted by a licence issued under this Policy cause a nuisance or danger to other road users, or a further emergency situation arise, the Council will seek to engage with the applicant, and officers from the Council Building Control Service, to identify possible solutions, it does however reserve all rights to amend the conditions of a licence, or revoke it altogether, where an applicant fails to work with the Council, or the situation otherwise remains unresolved. In any such circumstances, the Council accepts no liability for any loss or damage incurred.

In an emergency, the Council Building Control Service or out-of-hours emergency service, may authorise a licence for immediate use. In such circumstances, the applicant must apply as required by this Policy, on the next working day.

6. COUNCIL POSITION

This is a statutory power exercised by the Authority and delegated to Highways Enforcement Team.

7. RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Southend-on-Sea Council, in exercise of their powers under Section 169/171 of the Highways Act 1980, hereby grant permission to erect or cause to be erected scaffolding or other structures in accordance with the above application and subject to any conditions set by the council.

8. GUIDANCE FOR OFFICERS (Definition of Highway)

"Highway" in this instance is defined as either;

- Footway, verge and carriageway maintained at public expense
- The surface layers of any area considered to be a public right of way (including un-adopted streets) but not any areas of private land or private road that do not form a right of way

A public right of way is determined as any roadway or footpath that is not maintained at public expense, is not designated as Private and – under common law – is defined as follows:

"A highway is a way over which all members of the public have the right to pass and re-pass. Their use of the way must be as of right, not on sufferance or by licence".

A private road is considered to be one signed as such or one that is closed to public by means of barrier or gate (or possibly simply by the presence of a barrier or gate). The onus on proof of a highway being classed as private lies with the landowner making the claim.

The definitive record of Highways Maintained at Public expense is held by the Council, and is published online at

https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/download/411/adopted-roads.

5. TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

A temporary structure licence is required to place some materials on or over the Public Highway. These include:

- Scaffolding
- Hoarding
- Building material
- Crane/Crane Over sail

A contractor wishing to carry out activities on the highway must have current Public Liability Insurance of at least £5 million.

6. ENFORCEMENT

Following a breach of the Terms & Conditions, the Council may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, an FPN could be issued for; –

- Placing a scaffold or hoarding without a licence
- A failure to comply with any Terms & Conditions
- A failure to remove or reposition a scaffold or hoarding when requested to do so by a person authorised by the Council, or a police officer.

For serious breaches, the Council may seek to prosecute the applicant.

Where an applicant fails to comply as set out in the licence, and after exhausting other solutions, the Council may itself or instruct a third party to reposition or remove a scaffold or hoarding, and seek to recover any costs incurred from the applicant.

7. VARIOUS LICENSES

7.1 Scaffolding

All scaffolding placed on the Public Highway requires a temporary structure licence which must be obtained before erecting the structure. To ensure compliance with permit conditions, applications will only be accepted from scaffolding contractors. Building contractors, businesses and residents cannot apply.

The licencee [the scaffolding company] is entirely responsible for the scaffolding and must adhere to the Terms and Conditions and to the individual licence issued. Failure to comply with these Terms and Conditions may result in enforcement action, including FPNs and/or prosecution. If any requirements of the licence are not complied with, the issuing Authority may take such measures as necessary to mark, guard, light or remove the scaffold, clean and repair the highway and the licencee shall be liable for the costs incurred in such measures.

A scaffolding licence will be granted providing the regulations are adhered to.

7.2 Hoarding

All hoarding placed on the Public Highway in Southend-on-Sea requires a temporary structure licence which must be obtained before erecting the structure. If a hoarding has been erected on the Public Highway without approval, it will be considered an illegal obstruction and the issuing Authority will require its immediate removal.

The licencee is entirely responsible for the hoarding and must adhere to the Terms and Conditions as well as to the individual licence issued. Failure to comply with these Terms and Conditions may result in legal proceedings, including FPNs and/or prosecution. If any requirements of the licence are not complied with, the issuing Authority may take such measures as necessary to mark, guard, light or remove the hoarding, clean and repair the highway and the licencee shall be liable for the costs incurred in such measures.

Enforcement officers patrol the streets of the borough on a regular basis to make sure that all hoardings are legitimately sited, adhering to the Terms and Conditions set out in the licence, and promptly removed following their permit expiry.

The hoarding and conveyor shall be erected and dismantled in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and compliance with the relevant safety legislation and standards. There shall be compliance with the HSE [Health and Safety Executive] conditions and guidance notes, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Highways Act 1980.

A hoarding licence will be granted providing all regulations are adhered to.

7.3 Building Materials

Placement of building materials on any part of the highway in Southend-on-Sea requires a licence. The materials, in total, must be no longer than five metres and no wider than two metres. If the building materials are on a parking bay, the parking bay must be suspended.

Parking bay suspension can be applied for online, see

https://www.southend.gov.uk/directory-record/655/highways-parking-bay-suspension

Parking suspension must be sought prior to the placement of materials on the highway and this must be accompanied with the Highway Activities application form when submitted.

Failure to comply with these Terms and Conditions may result in legal proceedings, including FPNs and/or prosecution. If any requirements of the licence are not complied with, the issuing Authority may take such measures as necessary to mark, guard, light or remove the building materials, clean and repair the highway and the licencee shall be liable for the costs incurred in such measures.

Enforcement officers patrol the streets of the borough on a regular basis to make sure that all building materials are legitimately sited, adhering to the Terms and Conditions set out in the licence, and promptly removed following their permit expiry.

A building materials licence will be granted providing all regulations are adhered to. Download an application form to place building materials on the Public Highway at the bottom of this webpage.

7.4 CRANE OPERATORS PERMIT

To use a crane on the Public Highway a crane licence must be applied for. To ensure compliance with permit conditions, applications will only be accepted from crane operators. Building contractors, businesses and residents cannot apply.

The following must be submitted (if applicable) along with the completed Highways Activities application form:

- A copy of public liability insurance
- Method statement
- Traffic and/or pedestrian management plan
- Proof of parking bay suspension
- Approved traffic order

Process of an application will take approximately 6-8 weeks if a crane licence requires a road/footway closure, and 14 days for parking bay suspension

8. LICENCE PERIOD

Unless otherwise expressly required, a licence will be valid for up to 21 days. In certain areas, the Council may require a shorter licence period, or other specific conditions.

During the licence period, the Council may inspect the site, ensuring the Terms & Conditions of the licence are being adhered to. Subsequent action may include; -

- Verbal or written warning
- Imposition of additional specific conditions
- Revocation of the licence and a requirement to immediately remove the builders skip

- Enforcement action using Fixed Penalty Notices, or prosecution.

At all times, the applicant is wholly responsible for the scaffold, hoarding or any related equipment or material, regardless of any disputes with a third party.

9. CHARGES

Charges will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's fees and charges budget setting.

Fees charges will be based on

- Skip bag (covered by a materials/plant licence)
- building materials and plant (both those bought direct from builders' merchants and materials / items ordered or used by contractors). Note that any sand, soil, gravel or other loose material has to be bagged or contained. Failing to do this can result in the responsible person being billed for clearing any drains affected
- containers and welfare units
- skips
- scaffolds
- hoardings
- cranes or mobile elevated work platforms

10. PAYMENT OF FEES AND CHARGES

- Prompt payment of fees and charges by skip companies is expected.
- Charges will be levied by invoice on a monthly basis until such time as new payment methods (BACS, Credit/Debit Card & Online payments) are available.
- Any company who does not comply with the Councils standard terms and conditions for payment will be referred to Sundry Debtors for collection.

11. HIGHWAYS LICENCES

Items placed on the public highway by contractors and householders are overseen by the Highway Enforcement Team.

The team licenses, monitors and controls scaffolding, skips, hoardings, plant, materials, containers and welfare units placed upon the public highway.

Anything placed on the highway is potentially dangerous. The council has a duty to enforce the Highways Act 1980.

Placing items without having the advance permission of the council is against the law and can lead to the removal of items and prosecution.

The Highway Enforcement Team only deals with the public highway. It has no authority over private or council property.

Contractors and householders who want to put things upon the public highway (including pavements, roads and highway verges) need to have a licence from the Council first.

All professional companies (scaffolders, skip companies, builders and suppliers of materials) should already know this. However, householders are advised to always make sure that a licence has been obtained before allowing deliveries or works to start. This is also true of things they have ordered for their own use.

Checking that a licence is already in place is important, since unlicensed objects can be removed and impounded, sometimes without warning. This can obviously interrupt, or delay works.

It can also involve extra expense should the council seek to recover the public money spent removing and storing / disposing of the objects involved.

If you want to check that an item is licensed you can ask your contractor to show you the licence, quote you the licence number and check with this office.

12. APPLICATION

The Council will only consider applications from waste management operators who in addition to retaining a Skip Operator Licence, demonstrate; -

- They retain all relevant operating licences
- Valid Public Liability Insurance, of a value not less than £5 million pounds for any single claim
- There is no evidence of repeated or serious breaches of the Terms & Conditions within the past 12 months.

Applications are submitted online via the Council website (www.southend.gov.uk).

An application must be submitted at least 5 working days in advance, unless in an emergency which must be agreed in advance. Applications will not be considered when submitted on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday.

Once an application is received, the Council will consider any specific conditions which may be required in addition to the Terms & Conditions.

If an application is approved, confirmation and the licence will be sent electronically to the applicant.

Where further information is required, or an application is rejected, the Council will contact the applicant to explain the reasons and whether any alternative options would be considered.

13. SCAFFOLD, HOARDING, STRUCTURE OR OTHER ITEMS ON THE PUBLIC HIGHWAY LICENCE - TERMS & CONDITIONS

These Terms & Conditions are associated with a licence issued by Southend Borough Council for the placing of a scaffold, hoarding, building, crane or other policy licence items on the public highway. A licence is valid only when these Terms & Conditions are adhered to.

Applicant

- 1. The applicant retains all relevant licences, accreditations and approvals to design, set up, use and remove a scaffold or hoarding.
- 2. The applicant has provided evidence of Public Liability Insurance of not less than £5 million for any single claim.
- 3. The correct fee has been paid to the Council, as set out in the Annual Fees & Charges Review.

Scaffold

4. The design of a scaffold will include consideration of the impact on the public highway, and promote suitable measures to ensure the continuing free flow of all traffic, including pedestrians, and will conform to all relevant British Standards or other relevant standards or statutory requirement.

Items Placed on the Footway, Cycleway or Verge

- 5. A pedestrian walkway must be maintained at all times, temporary walkways may be required subject to the following conditions
 - a) Where footway capacity allows for an unobstructed walkway outside the scaffold or hoarding of not less than 1.5 metres for its entire length, a temporary walkway is not required.
 - b) Where the footway capacity does not allow for an unobstructed walkway outside the scaffold or hoarding of 1.5 metres or more for its entire length, a temporary walkway must be provided either enclosed within the scaffold or hoarding, or into the carriageway, cycleway or verge, providing for a walkway of not less than 1.5 metres for its entire length, and with an unobstructed height of not less than 2 metres.
 - c) Where a temporary walkway is provided enclosed within the scaffold or hoarding, it must include;
 - i) A flat and weather resistant surface
 - ii) Internal lighting, ensuring continuity of lighting throughout
 - iii) A pedestrian handrail
 - d) Where possible, a temporary walkway enclosed within the scaffold or hoarding, should be designed in such a way that natural light and view from the carriageway is maintained, so as not to create an area for antisocial or criminal behaviour. Where this is not possible, the temporary walkway may be fully enclosed, but the Council may require additional conditions, such as CCTV or regular security patrols.
 - e) Where a temporary walkway is to be provided within the carriageway, cycleway or verge, the requirements set out in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual apply, the design of which must be included within the application.

f) In all circumstances, the outward facing, or otherwise accessible to the public, sections of the scaffold or hoarding must be designed in such a way that any sharp or dangerous protrusions are properly covered, or highlighted.

Items Placed in the Carriageway

- 6. Where a scaffold or hoarding is placed within the carriageway, additional conditions will apply.
- 7. If the presence of the scaffold will restrict or prohibit the movement of traffic, a temporary traffic regulation order may be required. For a TRO, additional timescales apply, see the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Policy available on the Council website (www.southend.gov.uk).
- 8. External lighting, illuminated the colour red must be provided along the outside edge of the scaffold or hoarding, at a height not less than 2 metres, and at intervals of not more than 10 metres.
- 9. Protections from vehicle damage may be required by the applicant to meet their design standard, these must be proposed within the application, and may include water filled or concrete barriers. These must be painted in a red / white alternating colour pattern, and are in addition to any requirements of Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.

Installation and Removal

- 10. Unless otherwise expressly agreed, no scaffold or hoarding should be set up or removed after 17:00 hours, and before 07:30 hours. Where on a walking route to or from a school or within a busy town or district centre, further restrictions may apply.
- 11. At all times during installation and removal, or at any other time where works are undertaken to the outside of the scaffold or hoarding, the appropriate traffic management measures must be extended to cover this works area. No works should be undertaken outside of the works area.
- 12. Works vehicles are not exempt from parking restrictions. Whilst loading or unloading materials, it may be appropriate for the essential vehicle to be parked close to the site. The applicant must include the method statement for this work in their application. A Civil Enforcement Officer or Police Officer may require a vehicle to be relocated or removed if it causes an obstruction to other road users
- 13. On completion of the works, any debris or other material must be removed and disposed of by the applicant.
- 14. Any damage or defect to the public highway resulting from, and identifiable once the scaffold or hoarding has been removed, must be notified to the Council within one working day.
- 15. At all times between installation and removal, a sign must be placed on or adjacent to the scaffold or hoarding, identifying the applicants name, address, and contact telephone number. The applicant must also provide the Council with a direct, emergency contact.

Applicant Responsibility

16. The applicant remains responsible for any and all impacts of the presence of the scaffold or hoarding.

Miscellaneous

- 17. If the scaffold or hoarding requires the suspension of a parking place, the applicant must apply separately using the Council website (www.southend.gov.uk).
- 18. Where works vehicles are required at any point, the Council may issue a dispensation for it to be parked within a designated parking place, the applicant may apply for a dispensation using the Council website (www.southend.gov.uk). Any vehicles parked in contravention of a traffic regulation may be issued a penalty charge notice.
- 19. Under no circumstances does this licence provide any consent or permission for a person associated with the installation, use or removal of a scaffold or hoarding to give a direction to traffic (either using hand signals or verbal instructions). If the temporary obstruction of traffic is required, this must be included in the method statement, and be delivered using a regulated means usually a hand held 'stop works' sign, as set out in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.
- 20. The Council may inspect the site of a scaffold or hoarding at any time, and without notice. Where defects are found, the applicant must make arrangements for any defects to be rectified within 12 hours, before nightfall where related to safety equipment, or otherwise as directed by the Council.
- 21. Notwithstanding any of the provisions in these Terms & Conditions, the Council reserves the right to amend or withdraw the licence at its discretion.



Southend on Sea Borough Council - Equality Analysis

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of policy, service function or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis:

Highway Enforcement Policy

1.2 Department:

Neighbourhood & Environment

1.3 Service Area:

Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.4 Date Equality Analysis undertaken:

07/12/2020

1.5 Names and roles of staff carrying out the Equality Analysis:

Name	Role	Service Area
Sharon Harrington	Head of Service	Traffic Management & Highways Network
David Pye	Consultant	Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.6 What are the aims or purpose of the policy, service function or restructure that is subject to the EA?

The Council is introducing a new policy to regulate temporary works involving skips, scaffolds, hoardings, building materials and other equipment on affecting the public highway.

It is anticipated the new policy will provide a fair and consistent approach to considering applications and taking enforcement action where appropriate, improving safety and accessibility for all road users.

1.7 What are the main activities relating to the policy, service function or restructure?

The new policy sets out the minimum standards which must be met for an application to be approved, and how the Council will administrate and enforce the service.

2. Evidence Base

EA July 2018 v4 Page 1

2.1 Please list sources of information, data, results of consultation exercises that could or will inform the EA.

Source of information	Reason for using (eg. likely impact on a particular group).
Peer Review 2018	This review highlighted several service areas requiring improvement, specifically in this case, the need for robust policies for certain functions.

Please Note: reports/data/evidence can be added as appendices to the EA.

2.2 Identify any gaps in the information and understanding of the impact of your policy, service function or restructure. Indicate in your action plan (section 5) whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

This policy aims to fill gaps in how the service is administrated and enforced. The approach proposed to be taken is in line with the relevant legislation and emulates that taken by other local authorities.

3. Analysis

3.1 An analysis and interpretation of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure should be undertaken, with the impact for each of the groups with *'protected characteristics'* and the source of that evidence also set out against those findings.

In addition, the Council has identified the need to assess the impact of a policy, service function or restructure on <u>carers</u>, <u>looked after children</u> (as part of the age characteristic) as well as the <u>socioeconomic</u> impact of different groups, such as employment classifications.

Initial assessment of a perceived impact of the policy, service function or restructure. The impact can be positive or negative (or in some circumstances both), none or unclear:

	Impact - Please tick				
	Yes		No		
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Unclear
Age (including looked after children)	Х				
Disability	X				
Gender reassignment			X		
Marriage and civil partnership			X		
Pregnancy and maternity	X				
Race			X		

EA July 2018 v4 Page 2

	X		
	X		
	X		
	X		
	X		
		X	X

Descriptions of the protected characteristics are available in the guidance or from: <u>EHRC</u> - protected characteristics

3.2 Where an impact has been identified above, outline what the impact of the policy, service function or restructure on members of the groups with protected characteristics below:

	Potential Impact		
Age	When equipment is placed and used on the public highway, there is an increased risk to all road users which must be mitigated through a robust administration and enforcement policy.		
	Poorly managed work sites increase the risk of damage to surfaces on footways and verges, where heavy plant machinery and equipment can cause damage to footway surfaces and verges.		
	It is anticipated that, through a robust policy, administration and enforcement activity, there will be a demonstrable improvement in quality and accessibility for all road users.		
Disability	See 'Age'		
Gender	Neutral		
reassignment			
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral		
Pregnancy and maternity	See 'Age'		
Race	Neutral		
Religion or belief	Neutral		
Sex	Neutral		
Sexual orientation	Neutral		
Carers	See 'Age'		
Socio-economic	Neutral		
Socio-economic	INCULIAL		

EA_July 2018_v4 Page 3

4. Community Impact

- 4.1 You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure.
- 4.2 You can use the <u>Community Cohesion Impact Assessment</u> as a guide, outlining a summary of your findings below:

A safer and more accessible road network benefits the whole community. Poorly managed work sites can attract antisocial behaviour and crime. This policy sets out the standards which must be met, and how the Council can better respond to community concerns.

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

- 5.1 Use the below table to set out what action will be taken to:
 - Ensure a full analysis of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure is undertaken.
 - Mitigate/address identified negative impacts or unlawful prohibited conduct.
 - To promoted improved equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.
 - How the action plan will be monitored and at what intervals.

Planned action	Objective	Who	When	How will this be monitored (e.g. via team/service plans)
Annual Review	The Council will review the policy and its application on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose	Head of Service	Annual	Regular reporting and monitoring between Officers and the Portfolio Holder.

Signed (lead officer):	
Signed (Director):	
Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA) toTim MacGregor@southend.gov.uk.	jor

EA July 2018 v4 Page 4

Agenda Item No.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment To

Cabinet

14 January 2021

Report prepared by:

Sharon Harrington, Head of Service

Highway Memorials Policy

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s): Place Scrutiny **Cabinet Member: Councillor Ron Woodley** Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report sets out the options and recommended approach to the sensitive management of temporary roadside memorials, and permanent infrastructure on the highway.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet resolves to adopt the new policy for Highway Memorials as set out in this report.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Council has several statutory powers and duties in respect of maintaining a safe and efficient road network.
- 3.2 Following fatal collisions on the highway, and in some cases a fatal incident elsewhere, there is an increasing trend for those close to a deceased person wishing to install temporary memorials, generally including floral tributes and cards, but often extending to larger items such as football shirts and soft toys.
- It is important the Council balances its duties in respect of the road network, 3.3 but also sensitive to the wishes of those recently bereaved, this report aims to set out how that balance is reached, and how the Council will support the community.
- 3.4 Permanent tributes, such as benches, trees or planted beds, are generally accommodated within parks or gardens maintained by the Council, however, in some circumstances there may be a desire to instead place such items on

the public highway, this report sets out how the Council will work to support these requests where appropriate to do so.

4. Temporary Roadside Memorials

- 4.1 In the immediate aftermath of a fatality, many people find comfort in memorialising their loss, and gathering at a roadside memorial.
- 4.2 A difficult balance to strike in these circumstances is the Council supporting the community during a time of grief and loss, and the transition to a return to normality, something the wider community may seek rather than a long standing reminder of a tragedy.
- 4.3 Often, memorials left in place for some time can become tatty, generally due to weathering, which be considered distasteful or otherwise disrespecting the memory of those lost.
- 4.4 The policy as set out in the appendix to this report sets out how the Council will facilitate temporary roadside memorials, and the timeframe for removal.
- 4.5 As a general principle, the Council will leave a temporary roadside memorial in place for 8 weeks following the date of installation. Where possible, operational teams will work with those affected to keep the area clean and tidy throughout this period.
- 4.6 Where the memorial is in place following a fatal road traffic collision, it is often the case that police will erect signage asking witnesses to come forward. In such cases, if these signs remain in place for longer than 8 weeks, the Council will leave the memorial in place until that signage is no longer required.
- 4.7 This is considered to be the right balance and will likely help to highlight the ongoing need for police, and therefore those directly affected, to seek closure through the successful conclusion of a police investigation.
- 4.8 In circumstances where a temporary roadside memorial requires any form of review due to safety or accessibility concerns, the Council will attempt to make contact with those affected through the designated Police Liaison Officer, to ensure contacts are kept to a minimum, and the issues can be discussed sensitively with a person already familiar to them.
- 4.9 The Council must also take into consideration the views and impacts on neighbouring properties, should concerns be raised, these too will be considered with the Police Liaison Officer with any action or further communication agreed between both parties.
- 4.10 On the anniversary of a death, a new temporary roadside memorial may be installed, though this should be for no longer than 2 weeks.
- 4.11 Once a temporary roadside memorial is removed, and degraded floral tributes will be disposed of, with any cards or other tributes retained by the Council for

- up to 2 months, giving the family the opportunity to recover any items they wish to keep.
- 4.12 The Council is aware that in certain circumstances, it may be asked to act outside of this policy to respond to concerns, specifically where there is some hostility or uncertainty surrounding the circumstances of an incident. In these cases, the Council will work with the Police Liaison Officer on what steps to take.

5. Permanent Tributes

- 5.1 Permanent tributes will be considered by the Council in parks and gardens, except where those acting on behalf of a deceased person to fulfil their wishes, or where surviving relatives and friends consider a particular place on the public highway to be the most appropriate place for a memorial, for example where the deceased person had a particular favourite place to sit.
- 5.2 When such requests are received, the Council will consider the following elements, before working with those close to the deceased person to consider the most appropriate tribute and location.
- 5.3 Any permanent tribute must meet the following standards
 - a) For benches or seating, be of a standard, material, type that would meet all national and local design standards as though it was being installed by the Council as a public amenity. It must be of a colour and design that is in keeping with the aesthetics of the area. Any plaque or marking must be of a standard which will withstand weathering, and will not present a hazard, for example sharp edges.
 - b) Trees and kept floral tributes will be considered by the relevant Council Officers to ensure the type proposed will not have any adverse impact on the local environment or habitat, and to ensure the surface, groundwater and soil are sufficient to reasonably ensure longevity.
 - c) In all cases, the endowment of a permanent tributed will remain in effect for up to ten years, or sooner if the tribute deteriorates to a standard that the Council would remove it in normal circumstances.
- 5.4 Where possible, the Council will attempt to contact the applicant for a permanent tribute before any works to alter, replace or remove it. However, this will not always be possible given the time which will have passed, and the availability of up to date records.
- 5.5 In all cases, unless otherwise expressly agreed by the Council, the costs of procuring and installing a temporary roadside memorial, or permanent tributed, will be met by those involved in its creation.
- 5.6 For all temporary roadside memorials, the Council will accept the cost of removal and disposal of any remaining items. Permanent tributes will be maintained by the Council in line with the Highways Asset Management Plan.

5.7 The Council is aware that in certain circumstances, it may be asked to act outside of this policy to respond to community concerns. Should a concern be raised, the Council will consider whether a permanent tribute remains appropriate. If it is to be removed, the decision and reasons for it will be communicated to the person or group which applied for it, and whether they would like it to be returned to them.

6. Other Options

6.1 The Council could decide on an alternative approach, or to prohibit any temporary roadside memorials or permanent tributes.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 This policy will ensure the Council is able to sensitively support those affected by the death of a loved one, and ensure their wishes can be facilitated whilst still delivering on statutory duties and powers in respect of the road network.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map.

8.2 Opportunity & Prosperity:

8.2.1 This policy aims to set out how the Council will support the community through difficult periods, and balance that need with the statutory powers and duties in respect of maintaining a safe and efficient road network.

8.3 Safe & Well:

8.3.1 It is anticipated a clear, published policy will help ensure those wishing to install temporary roadside memorials or permanent tributes are aware of the requirements. A policy helps to minimise the risk of adding to the distress of those involved.

8.4 Connected & Smart:

8.4.1 The policy will be published on the Council website, with copies and further information available from Council Customer Contact Centres.

8.5 Financial Implications:

- 8.5.1 The cost of procuring and installing temporary roadside memorials and permanent tributes will be met by the individual or group requesting or installing them.
- 8.5.2 The Council will fund the removal of temporary roadside memorials and any cleansing costs to return the highway to normal.

8.5.3 Permanent tributes will be funded by the individual or group requesting them, unless in exceptional circumstances there is a decision made by the Council to provide funding. The Council will include any permanent tributes into the Highways Asset Management Plan to ensure they are maintained to the same standards as other infrastructure. After 10 years, the Council will remove or replace tributes as required.

8.6 Legal Implications:

8.8.1 This policy sets out the way the Council will deliver its statutory obligations in respect of regulating the road network, set out in the Highways Act 1980 and related regulations, however there is no specific legislation or instruction from the Secretary of State in respect of roadside memorials, this is a discretionary decision for the Council.

8.7 People Implications:

8.7.1 It is anticipated the resources required to administrative and operation of this policy can be delivered using existing resources.

8.8 Property Implications:

8.8.1 There are no property implications associated with this proposed policy.

8.9 Consultation

- 8.9.1 This policy will be published on the Council website and made available to any person requesting a copy.
- 8.9.2 Essex Police has been consulted directly and responded positively to the proposals as set out, specifically pleased with the prominence of the Police Liaison Officer, who will be key to successful implementation of the policy.

8.10 Equalities and Diversity Implications

8.10.1 An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and found no disproportionate adverse impacts on any protected groups.

8.11 Risk Assessment

8.11.1 In each case, the Council will undertake appropriate assessments to understand and mitigate any risks.

8.12 Value for Money

8.12.1 Where the Council procures, maintains or removes memorials or tributes, care will be taken to ensure any works deliver value for money.

8.13 Safety Implications

8.13.1 A robust and compassionate policy will ensure the community can be supported in difficult times, and that the road network remains safe and efficient.

8.14 Environmental Impact

- 8.14.1 Disposal of any temporary roadside memorials will be undertaken by Council contractors in line with their obligations to ensure safe and environmentally friendly disposal.
- 8.14.2 Permanent tributes will be considered against established Council policies to ensure the environment and habitat impacts are mitigated.

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

10.1 Highway Memorials Policy

Southend-On-Sea Highway Memorials Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out how the Council will facilitate temporary roadside memorials and permanent tributes.

The Council recognises the sensitivities and feelings of those involved and has adopted this policy with a view to formalising our approach and ensuring it can support the community.

2. KEY ISSUES

The Council has a difficult balance to strike, between facilitating expressions of memorial and tributes following the loss of a loved one.

As a Highway Authority, the Council has a duty to ensure the safe and efficient use of the road network, and in the case of temporary roadside memorials can often be in a position of being reactive, with a limited ability to engage proactively with those involved.

Any permanent tributes must be considered for their wider benefit for the community, usually in the form of memorial benches, with engagement between the Council and the individual or group requesting it, both can work together to ensure it enhances amenities for all in the community.

The Council is committed through this policy to a fair and compassionate approach, ensuring that we work with those involved to ensure their wishes are met, and the impact on the wider community is mitigated.

3. TEMPORARY ROADSIDE MEMORIALS

The Council will facilitate a temporary roadside memorial subject to the following criteria being met.

Criteria

- A temporary roadside memorial includes tributes placed along the footway or verge of a highway and consisting of

Floral

Photographs, Cards

Soft Toys

- Any lit candles or lights must always be attended, care must be taken to minimise the risk of fire or injury, particularly to children.
- The layout should be such that it can be accessed or maintained without the need to stand on the kerb edge or in the carriageway or cycle lane.
- Nothing should be attached or secured to any infrastructure which provides for the safe use of the road network, for example traffic signals, guardrail or obscuring signage.

A temporary roadside memorial will remain in place for up to 8 weeks, unless the Council receives a request from the family affected to remove it sooner.

In circumstances where the Police are actively seeking witnesses to an incident, the Council is aware the presence of a temporary roadside memorial could help to attract interest from potential witnesses, therefore if police signage remains in place, the temporary roadside memorial can remain until that signage is removed.

Any floral tributes which have degraded will be disposed of immediately, any other tributes will be retained by the Council for up to two months, to enable the family to decide what, if anything they would like to retain. If there is no communication after two months, anything remaining will be disposed of.

Anniversary Tributes

In these circumstances, temporary roadside memorials will be subject to the same conditions as above but will be removed after 14 days.

Communications

The Council is aware that those affected by the loss of a loved one must be treated with sensitivity, and not be subject to unnecessary contact. To this end, the Council will ensure so far as is possible, that any communication with families or groups associated with temporary roadside memorials us undertaken through the Police Liaison Officer.

Urgent Responses

Where there is an immediate danger to road users, the Council or Police may be forced to intervene without notice to remove or relocate a temporary roadside memorial.

Where a memorial requires the closure or restriction of a road, this will usually be facilitated by Police, however, where a planned event is to go ahead, this must be notified to the Police Liaison Officer who will work with the Council to understand what further measures or input may be required.

4. PERMANENT TRIBUTES

In most cases, applications for permanent tributes will be considered for parks, gardens or other open spaces away from the public highway.

The Council is aware that there are sometimes exceptional circumstances whereby a specific location on the public highway may be of importance to the tribute, this policy sets out how the Council will consider applications.

A permanent tributed may take the form of a; -

Bench or other seating

Tree

Planted bed or planter

In all cases the individual or group requesting the permanent tributed must submit in writing an application to the Council which sets out the requested item, its design specifications and preferred location. An applicant must also include the likely impact on the use of the road network and any residents or businesses which may be affected.

5. EXCEPTIONAL ACTIONS

The Council is aware that in certain circumstances, it may be asked to act outside of this policy to respond to community concerns, in such cases, the Council will work with the Police Liaison Officer and / or the individual or group responsible for the memorial or tribute on any decision taken and the reason for it.

6. FUNDING

Under normal circumstances, the Council will not be responsible for funding any temporary or permanent memorials or tributes.

The Council will cover the costs of removal, storage and disposal of temporary roadside memorials, and the maintenance of permanent tributes for up to ten years, after which it may be removed or replaced as required.

6. LIABILITY

The Council accepts no responsibility for any injury, damage or loss associated with any temporary roadside memorials. Permanent tributes accepted by the Council will be maintained by, and the responsibility of the Council and included in the Highways Asset Management Plan.

Southend on Sea Borough Council - Equality Analysis

1. Background Information

1.1 Name of policy, service function or restructure requiring an Equality Analysis:

Highway Memorials Policy

1.2 Department:

Neighbourhood & Environment

1.3 Service Area:

Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.4 Date Equality Analysis undertaken:

07/12/2020

1.5 Names and roles of staff carrying out the Equality Analysis:

Name	Role	Service Area
Sharon Harrington	Head of Service	Traffic Management & Highways Network
David Pye	Consultant	Traffic Management & Highways Network

1.6 What are the aims or purpose of the policy, service function or restructure that is subject to the EA?

The Council is introducing a new policy to regulate the installation, maintenance and removal of temporary and permanent memorials on the public highway. It is anticipated the new policy will help to maintain a clean and safe road network, whilst being sympathetic to grieving friends and relatives who wish to memorialise their loved ones.

1.7 What are the main activities relating to the policy, service function or restructure?

The new policy sets out how memorials on the public highway will be facilitated by the Council, in what circumstances, and how the Council will work with partner agencies to resolve any concerns.

2. Evidence Base

EA July 2018 v4 Page 1

2.1 Please list sources of information, data, results of consultation exercises that could or will inform the EA.

Source of information	Reason for using (eg. likely impact on a particular group).
Peer Review 2018	This review highlighted several service areas requiring improvement, specifically in this case, the need for robust policies for certain functions.

Please Note: reports/data/evidence can be added as appendices to the EA.

2.2 Identify any gaps in the information and understanding of the impact of your policy, service function or restructure. Indicate in your action plan (section 5) whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

This policy aims to set out the Council position in respect of temporary and permanent memorials The Peer Review undertaken in 2018 highlighted a lack of policies in several service areas, this policy is one of a suite of new documents which will help to ensure the service operates in a fair and consistent manner.

3. Analysis

3.1 An analysis and interpretation of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure should be undertaken, with the impact for each of the groups with 'protected characteristics' and the source of that evidence also set out against those findings.

In addition, the Council has identified the need to assess the impact of a policy, service function or restructure on <u>carers</u>, <u>looked after children</u> (as part of the age characteristic) as well as the <u>socioeconomic</u> impact of different groups, such as employment classifications.

Initial assessment of a perceived impact of the policy, service function or restructure. The impact can be positive or negative (or in some circumstances both), none or unclear:

	Impact - Please tick				
		Yes			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No	Unclear
Age (including looked after children)	X				
Disability	X				
Gender reassignment			X		
Marriage and civil partnership			Х		
Pregnancy and maternity	X				
Race			X		

EA July 2018 v4 Page 2

	X		
	X		
	X		
	X		
	X		
		X	X

Descriptions of the protected characteristics are available in the guidance or from: <u>EHRC</u> - protected characteristics

3.2 Where an impact has been identified above, outline what the impact of the policy, service function or restructure on members of the groups with protected characteristics below:

	Potential Impact
Age	The Policy sets out how temporary and permanent memorials on the public highway will be facilitated, and how the Council will work with stakeholders where engagement with participants is required, ensuring a compassionate and fair approach.
	The increasing use of temporary memorials risks causing obstructions and safety concerns to all road users. It is anticipated this policy will help to ensure the road network remains safe and accessible for all road users, particularly those with mobility concerns, or using wheelchairs or pushchairs.
Disability	See 'Age'
Gender reassignment	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	See 'Age'
Race	Neutral
Religion or belief	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual	Neutral
orientation	
Carers	See 'Age'
Socio-economic	Neutral

4. Community Impact

EA_July 2018_v4 Page 3

- 4.1 You may also need to undertake an analysis of the potential direct or indirect impact on the wider community when introducing a new/revised policy, service function or restructure.
- 4.2 You can use the <u>Community Cohesion Impact Assessment</u> as a guide, outlining a summary of your findings below:

A safer and more accessible road network benefits the whole community. This policy aims to set out a compassionate approach to temporary and permanent memorials, often installed as a focal point for the community following a death.

5. Equality Analysis Action Plan

- 5.1 Use the below table to set out what action will be taken to:
 - Ensure a full analysis of the impact of the policy, service function or restructure is undertaken.
 - Mitigate/address identified negative impacts or unlawful prohibited conduct.
 - To promoted improved equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.
 - How the action plan will be monitored and at what intervals.

Planned action	Objective	Who	When	How will this be monitored (e.g. via team/service plans)
Annual Review	The Council will review the policy and its application on an annual basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	Head of Service	Annual	Regular reporting and monitoring between Officers and the Portfolio Holder.

Signed (lead officer):	
Signed (Director):	
Once signed, please send a copy of the completed EA (and, if applicable, CCIA) toTim MacGregor TimMacGregor@southend.gov.uk.	

EA July 2018 v4 Page 4

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Neighbourhoods and Environment

to

Cabinet

on

14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Paul Jenkinson Head of Parks and Open Spaces

Agenda Item No.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Tree Policy

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)
Cabinet Member: Cllr C Mulroney
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item) / Part 2 (Confidential Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek the adoption of the revised tree policy (Appendix 1).
- 1.2. To note the results of the public consultation on the tree policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **Agree** to adopt the tree policy (Appendix 1).
- 2.2. **Agree** to the development of a planting strategy that will consider the availability of land, its usage, and tree planting opportunities.
- 2.3. **Acknowledge** that the adoption of the tree policy will require ongoing funding to manage the Council's tree stock, which will need to be considered within future budget setting.

3. Background

- 3.1. In 2019 the Council committed to reviewing and updating its tree policy. As a result of this commitment, an interim tree management statement was agreed to guide tree management until a new policy is adopted.
- 3.2. The previous report set out the Council managed tree population as follows: approximately 28,000 urban trees made up of 20,000 recorded street trees and 8,000 trees planted in 'Green Corridors'. In addition, there is a significant tree population in the parks, open spaces and woodlands.

- 3.3. The tree population information provided was only part of the picture relating to the Borough's tree cover, and therefore set out the need for a tree canopy assessment to gain a better understanding of the overall tree cover, relating to trees managed by the Council and those on private land. The tree canopy assessment can be seen at (Appendix 2).
- 3.4. The updated tree policy considers best practice around urban tree management, the Council's response to the declared climate emergency, the safety of the public, the results of the tree canopy assessment for Southend-on-Sea and the challenges and limitations the dense urban nature of the Borough presents.
- 3.5. The Council recognises the importance of having diverse green infrastructure within the Borough and acknowledges that trees are an important part of the urban environment. The importance of trees as part of the green infrastructure is reflected within the tree policy.
- 3.6. The Council has committed to enhancing and maintaining the greening of the Borough but also to conserving essential habitats and green space for leisure and recreation.
- 3.7. As part of the ongoing commitment to green infrastructure, this planting season 5000 shrubs and 700 standard trees will be planted, this is a significant addition to the normal planting programme and demonstrates the | Council's commitment to the importance of the green environment.
- 3.8. The tree policy also recognises the importance of the contribution of our entire community, including groups, charities, schools and businesses to maximise the opportunity in achieving the Councils commitment to tree canopy cover.
- 3.9. The Council is also committed to applying for grants and external funding to support the delivery of planting projects.
- 3.10. Keeping Southend citizens informed about the Councils tree management works and how they can help with tree planting on their property is also recognised within the updated tree policy.
- 3.11. The updated tree policy has also considered the comments and views received during the public consultation on the draft policy (Appendix 3).
- 3.12. It was clear from the consultation results that people are interested in trees and the benefits they can have in an urban area.
- 3.13. It should also be noted that the majority of the people who responded to the consultation strongly agreed or agreed with the approach set out in the draft policy.
- 3.14. The consultation results further highlighted the importance of the need for proactive communications and information and how this would help inform

- the Borough's citizens about the need for a variety of green infrastructure and habitats and that sustaining and increasing canopy cover is about more than planting trees.
- 3.15. In reviewing the consultation comments, several respondents raised questions about increasing the Borough's canopy cover from the current 12% to 15%, with some querying if a higher percentage could be set. It should be noted that a target of 15% for coastal locations is set out in a report by Forestry Research, part of the Forestry Commission.
- 3.16. To put this into context, Southend-on-Sea has an area of 41.75km2 and the current canopy cover is 5.17km2. To achieve 15%, over an additional 1km2 of tree canopy will be required, the equivalent of 150 football pitches.
- 3.17. To meet and exceed the target of 15%, a collective community effort is required. Therefore, it is further advised that the Council embarks on a programme of community engagement that enables everyone in the Borough to contribute towards this goal maximising the opportunities of achieving the target and beyond.
- 3.18. With the benefit of the evidence from the canopy cover repoprt and to ensure the Council maximises the opportunities on its own land, a evaluation will be carried out early in the 2021 with the objective of ensuring as many sites as possible are identified that have the potential for tree planting. This survey and any decisions that are taken as a direct result of the survey will inform future tree planting programmes and give a strong indication of the potential in meeting and exceeding the target.
- 3.19. It is also recommended that as part of the survey and planting strategy, all communities in the Borough are asked to consider and put forward sites they own for potential tree planting thus helping the Borough as a whole in maximising the desired outcome
- 3.20. It is important to note that when managing an urban tree population, it is considered in the Borough as a whole. Due to the nature of the Borough, it is not possible to guarantee a 15% tree canopy cover in every location. Some wards will inevitably have minimal tree cover, possible below the 15% cover target for the complete Borough, whilst others will have more than 15%, supporting the average across the Borough.
- 3.21. A tree canopy assessment will only consider trees above a certain size. Therefore planting which has been undertaken in recent years as part of the Council's continued tree planting programme, will not have been included in the tree canopy assessment used in the preparation of the updated tree policy. However, these trees are likely to contribute to future canopy assessments, helping the Borough reach a 15% tree canopy cover. It is also important to note that maintenance work, including pruning and crown reductions, will influence the Borough's canopy cover. For further information on how canopy cover is calculated to see appendix 2

- 3.22. Development within the Borough also has an opportunity to contribute to the tree canopy cover by, where possible, protecting trees within development sites and including tree planting within the landscape. These issues would be considered as part of the planning application process.
- 3.23. Other free text comments received during the consultation have been grouped into categories, such as the planting of fruit trees. Appendix 3 includes officer feedback to the free text comments.

4. Other Options

- 4.1. Continue managing council trees as per the interim management statement and not adopt a new tree policy.
- 4.2. Stop managing the Council's tree stock and accept that the trees will decline and the risk to citizens and visitors will increase, resulting in a rise in claims against the Council and the potential for criminal proceedings to be taken against councillors as a result of any death or injury associated with a tree.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1. To help maintain the safety of our citizens and visitors and to support the increase in the Borough's canopy cover, it is recommended that the new tree policy, Appendix 1, is adopted.
- 5.2. The adoption of the tree policy supports the 2050 vision which includes several outcomes in which trees play a part.
- 5.3. Management of trees contributes to the response to the climate change emergency.

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1. Pride and Joy. "Our Streets and Public Spaces are valued and support the mental and physical wellbeing of our residents and visitors."
- 6.2. Safe and Well. "Green City We act as a green city with outstanding examples of energy-efficient and carbon-neutral buildings, streets, transport and recycling".
 - 6.2.1. The Council's tree policy provides clear guidelines on maintaining and increasing tree canopy cover within the Borough, supporting the 2050 ambition to mitigate the effects of Climate Change.

6.3. Financial Implications

6.3.1. As part of the commitment to increase canopy cover to 15% by 2050 there will need to be investment in both the capital cost of planting additional trees and the revenue cost of maintaining them.

- 6.3.2. The current tree maintenance budget provides for the cost of maintenance for the current tree numbers. A significant increase in the canopy coverage will require a permanent increase to the revenue maintenance budget. An increase from 12% to 15% is a proportional increase of 21% based on current canopy coverage.
- 6.3.3. The delivery of a planting strategy and land availability study will require officer time and numbers may need to increase to support this. External consultants may also be required to provide and review i-Tree data.
- 6.3.4. Arboriculture works are procured in line with Council procurement procedures. The retendering of the contract for the provision of tree works and associated services may have resource implications such as additional cost requirements and will need to be considered at the appropriate time pending the result of any tender exercise.
- 6.3.5. Not managing the Council's tree stock effectively could result in claims against the Council for damage to property or person.

6.4. Legal Implications

- 6.4.1. The Council has an obligation and duty of care to inspect and maintain trees under its control.
- 6.4.2. Not managing the Council's tree stock effectively could result in action being taken against the Council.
- 6.5. People Implications
 - 6.5.1. No people implications have been identified at this time.
- 6.6. Property Implications
 - 6.6.1. Not managing the Council's tree stock effectively could result in damage to council assets or private property.
- 6.7. Consultation
 - 6.7.1. Results of public consultation are included in Appendix 3.
- 6.8. Equalities and Diversity Implications
 - 6.8.1. An equalities impact assessment is to be undertaken on the draft new tree policy.
- 6.9. Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
Injury, death or damage to property from trees currently identified for removal remaining onsite.	Trees in a dead or declining condition should be removed.
Reputational loss from not removing dead, dying or diseased trees for which residents have already advised of the removal.	Adopt tree policy Appendix 1.
Increase in misinformed or incorrect information being posted on social media	Communications team to monitor and respond to social media as required.
Lack of understanding of why we manage our trees, including pruning, planting and removal.	Update FAQs on the Council website.
Insufficient available space to increase tree canopy cover to 15%	Planting over the last 5 to 10 years will be recognised within the next canopy assessment. Planning policy to be used where possible to encourage tree planting within developments. Review of potential sites for group tree planting to be undertaken.

6.10. Value for Money

- 6.10.1. Any associated works will be procured in line with Council policies and procedures.
- 6.10.2. Managing the Council's tree stock reduces the risk of claims against the Council.
- 6.10.3. The supply, plant and watering to establishment, (watering and establishment is over three years), of one standard container-grown tree is currently £290. Average tree planting per year is 300 standard trees. Current additional planting commitments and whip planting are not included in these figures.
- 6.10.4. The current maintenance expenditure on highways tree is £450,000 per year.
- 6.10.5. No dedicated budget is currently allocated to tree maintenance within parks and woodland. However, £95,000 on average is spent per year.

- 6.10.6. No data is available on the current expenditure on highways path maintenance that is as a result wholly or partly related to tree root damage. However, it is estimated that for streets with trees 15% to 20% of footway repairs are related to trees.
- 6.10.7. Southend's tree cover has a financial benefit to the Council. However, this is not easily recognised within the overall budget. The tree canopy assessment (Appendix 2) provides examples of these benefits, such as better health and reduced hospital admissions.

6.11. Community Safety Implications

6.11.1. No community safety implications have been identified at this time.

6.12. Environmental Impact

- 6.12.1. A well maintained and managed tree stock enhances the environment and helps provide an attractive and pleasant place to live.
- 6.12.2. Urban trees provide the following benefits:
 - Cool air by 2 °C to 8°C;
 - Reduce the need for air conditioning by 30% and save energy used for heating by 20 to 30%;
 - Absorb up to 150kg of CO2 per year and consequently help mitigate climate change;
 - Urban trees can help filter urban pollution and fine particulates;
 - Provide habitat, food and protection to plants and animals, increasing biodiversity;
 - Improve physical and mental health;
 - Increase property values by 20%.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1. Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Interim Tree Management Statement;
- 7.2. Southend-on-Sea Vehicle Crossing Policy and Application Guidance;
- 7.3. Council's We love Trees webpage. www.southend.gov.uk/welovetrees.

8. Appendices

- 8.1. Appendix 1 New Tree Policy for Southend-on-Sea;
- 8.2. Appendix 2 Tree canopy assessment of Southend-on-Sea;
- 8.3. Appendix 3 Results of Tree Policy consultation and comments on free text from the public consultation.









Tree Policy 2020-2030











March 2020





Contents

Foreward	3
Summary of the Aims of the Policy	3
Why do we need a policy?	4
Aims and Objectives	4
Where are we Now?	4
Overview	5
Tree Asset Database	5
Canopy Cover	5
Age Classification	7
Tree Health	8
Broadleaved and Coniferous Trees	9
Policy Context	10
National Policy	10
Local Policy	10
Southend's Vision 2050	11
The Benefits of Urban Trees	13
Tree Management	16
Tree Inspections	16
Who Inspects Council managed trees?	16
Trees and Risks	16
Inspection Methology	16
Why Inspect Trees?	17
Levels of Inspection	17
Frequency of Inspection	17
Highway Trees	17
Green Spaces	17
Woodlands	18
Tree Risk Assessment	18
When do we Prune Trees?	18
Why do we Prune Trees?	18
When we don't Prune Trees?	20
Why are Trees removed?	21
Informing residents and Councillors of Tree removals	22
Trees and Subsidence	22
Trees in Green Spaces	23
Woodlands	24
Trees on the Highway	24
Trees on Housing Land	25
Trees in Private Ownership	25
Trees and Planning	25
Tree Preservation Orders	25
Trees on Development Sites	26
Assessing the value of trees for development and replacement plan	ting 26
Rural Hedgerows	27
High Hedges	27
Community Involvement	27
Tree Planting Strategy	28
Tree Planting	28
Donated Tree Scheme	28
Street Tree Planting	28

Planting in new hard surfaces	28
Species Selection	29
Limitations on Planting	29
Canopy Cover Assessment	29
Annual Progress Review	30
Appendix 1 - List of Common Names	
Bibliography	
Tables, Graphs and Diagrams	
Map of Ward Canopy Cover	6
Table of Canopy Cover	6
Age Class	7
Tree condition	8
Composition of Species	9
Broadleaved and Coniferous Trees	9
Benefits of Urban Trees	12

Tree Policy

Foreword

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council directly manages many thousands of trees growing along its roads, in its parks and gardens and woodlands.

Trees are an essential part of the environment and vital to healthy urban living. At a time of growing awareness of global climate change, trees and the care of trees is more important than ever. The council has been committed to the responsible management of the borough's trees and has been planting trees in the town since the start of the 20th century.

This tree policy reaffirms the council's ongoing commitment to responsible tree management and to maintaining and enhancing the town's canopy cover. Tree canopy cover is sometimes referred to as urban canopy cover and also urban tree canopy cover. All of these terms refer to the area of leaves, branches and stems of trees covering the ground when viewed from above (Grove et al., 2006) and is expressed as a percentage.

Summary of the Aims of the Policy

Trees bring many benefits to the town and its residents. This policy document describes the current tree population in Southend-on-Sea and how these trees will be managed, inspected and maintained. It sets out how and why trees are pruned, the circumstances when they will not be pruned and the reasons why trees sometimes have to be removed.

The policy affirms a presumption against the removal of healthy trees subject to complaints unless the basis of a complaint has an over-riding justification and no alternative management practice is practicable.

The Council will take steps to protect its trees from threats such as the activities of statutory undertakers (including gas, water, electric and communications) and other excavation activities or building works.

There will be a continuation of street tree planting, in suitable sites, to help maintain and extend the tree canopy cover across the borough.

The policy will be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changes in national legislation and developments in arboricultural best practise.

Why do we need a tree policy?

Trees play an important role within an urban environment. There has been extensive research in recent years demonstrating the significant benefits trees bring to our physical and mental health, our social and economic wellbeing, to biodiversity, to the air we breathe, and the soil beneath our feet. They help offset the effects of heavy rainfall, helping to mitigate flood risk, and offset the urban heat island effect. They capture and store carbon and particulates which pose an increasing risk to human health.

This strategy sets out the council's approach to the management of its trees for the overall benefit of the borough and its residents.

Trees bring beauty to the town but it is central to the management approach that they are not simply considered individually as aesthetic objects, but recognised as a key element of the town's green infrastructure essential to the quality of life in Southend-on-Sea.

This strategy sets out the council's commitment to protect, enhance and maintain trees in the town. It describes how this commitment will be delivered and measured.

Aims and Objectives

The council recognises the significant value of trees as part of the town's green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is defined as the network of green spaces and features including parks, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, private gardens, rivers, streams and foreshore. This infrastructure is an integrated network of spaces which work together to provide multiple benefits. The benefits gained from trees in an urban landscape are set out later in this document. The key aims and objectives of this policy are:

- 1. To manage the current tree stock as an urban forest in accordance with sound arboricultural practise.
- 2. To extend the overall tree canopy cover to 15% by 2050 by planting more trees each year than are removed.
- 3. To protect trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and trees in Conservation Areas, ensuring that they are retained and protected in accordance with BS5837 on all development sites.
- 4. To promote greater awareness and knowledge of trees, their value and management
- 5. To encourage the community and local businesses to plant trees on their own land and to get involved in public tree planting initiatives.

These objectives will be delivered through the actions and policy statements in this Tree Policy.

Where are we now?

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council maintains many thousands of trees across the borough on various sites including:

- Highways
- Parks and open spaces
- Woodlands
- Cemeteries, crematorium and closed church vards
- Council owned land
- Council housing areas

The Arboricultural Section of the council directly manage trees or advises on the management of all trees except those on council housing land which are currently managed by South Essex Homes.

Overview

The tree population across the town are varied in terms of the mix of species, age and condition. At the start of the 20th Century it was common practice to plant streets with a single species of tree. This can still be seen today in areas of Westcliff and Central Southend which are characterised by mono-cultures of London plane and lime. These would have been amongst the first trees to be planted in the town and many of these are now maintained as pollards. Other species such as horse chestnut, ash and Norway maple commonly occur as pollarded specimens and characterise some of the older plantings. These days many of these 'forest' species would not be chosen as they outgrow the space available.

In more recent years, many different types of trees have been planted as more species and cultivars have become available. This has given rise to a greater variety of species and varied age groups across the town. The annual tree planting programme adds further new species each year. Many of the town's parks and green spaces have fine mature trees within them. Planting has been continuous over the years and in many parks and open spaces good tree cover is present.

Tree Asset Database

The vast majority of trees under the direct management of the Arboricultural Section are recorded on the tree management database. At the time of writing 29,242 individual trees are recorded within our highways, parks and gardens. The information is recorded and updated at the time an individual tree is inspected, when a tree is removed and when new trees are planted.

Canopy Cover

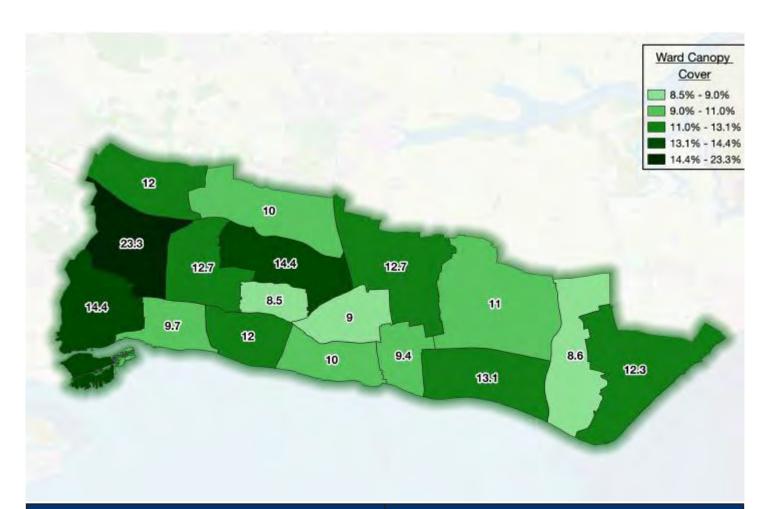
A report was commissioned by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council in October 2019 to quantify the tree canopy cover within the borough and by each council ward. Tree canopy cover can be defined as the area of leaves, branches and stems of trees covering the ground when viewed from above. It is a two dimensional measurement of the spread of canopy cover over a given area. Repeat assessment of the canopy over time can provide an effective means of monitoring the tree population, setting targets and tracking the effectiveness of planting programmes.

At October 2019 the canopy cover of the entire borough was measured at 12%. This includes both council-owned and privately owned trees. The cover ranged from a high of 23.3% in Belfairs Ward down to 8.5% in Westborough Ward. This reflects the high density tree population growing in Belfairs Park and Nature Reserve as compared to the very urban nature of wards such as Westborough where hard surfaces are the predominant ground material.

In comparison with other studies (Urban Tree Cover, 2018), the canopy cover in Southend-on-Sea is below the national average of 17% which was estimated in the 320 towns and cities surveyed in the UK. However, in general it can be said that coastal towns have lower canopy covers. A baseline study of canopy cover in the UK found that 20 out of 30 coastal towns had a canopy cover below 10% and the average canopy cover was 13.7%. (Treeconomics 2019).

The reason for this reduced tree canopy cover in coastal regions is that they have their own particular climate; there is less rainfall than there is inland, the sun shines longer and the wind is usually stronger with powerful gusts. The salt that the sea wind brings with it also means the trees are prone to dry out more quickly.

The overall canopy cover of an area can be affected by the presence of agricultural land, industrial estates and other commercial land, school playing fields, car parks and the presence of underground services along the highway.



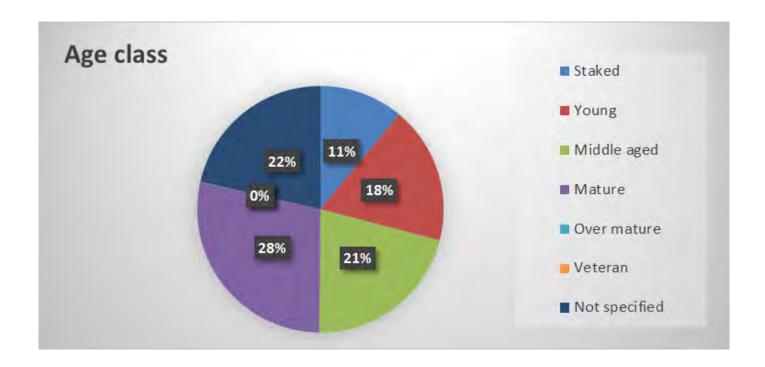
Ward	Tree Canopy Cover (%)		
Belfairs	23.3		
Blenhiem	12.7		
Chalkwell	12.0		
Eastwood Park	12.0		
Kursaal	9.4		
Leigh	9.7		
Milton	10.0		
Prittlewell	14.4		
Southchurch	11.0		
Shoeburyness	12.3		
St Laurence	10.0		
St Lukes	12.7		
Thorpe	13.1		
Westborough	8.5		
West Leigh	14.4		
West Shoebury	8.6		
Victoria	9.0		
Borough of Southend Average	11.95		

Age Classification

A diverse age classification exists amongst the recorded tree stock. Where age class is recorded 29% are staked or young trees, 21% middle aged and 28% mature.

The data available indicates an uneven age structure is present. This is a desirable trait of a tree population to allow for continuous cover.

As many of the trees are staked, young or middle aged this would indicate the canopy cover in the Borough can be expected to increase as these trees grow and planting is continued.





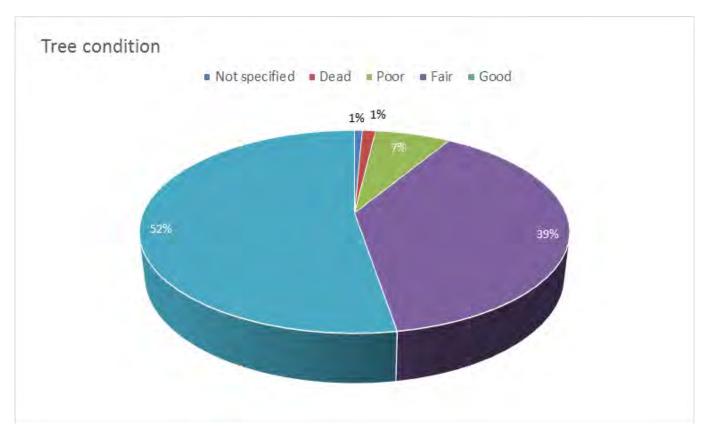


Priory Park Gardens Priory Park

Tree Health

Urban trees, especially street trees are generally growing in an alien environment. They can be subject to many stresses, such as pollution, bark damage, increased heat, water availability, salt damage, soil compaction as well as the activities of utility companies and vandalism.

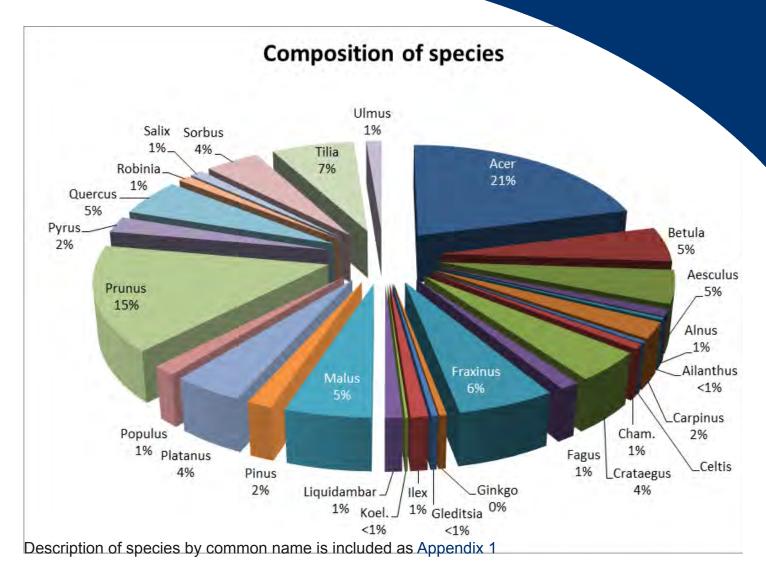
The data available would indicate that the overwhelming majority of trees were found to be in fair or good condition at the time of inspection.







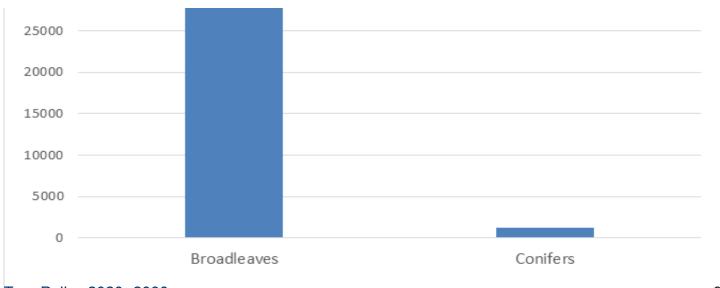




Broadleaved and Coniferous Trees

It is to be expected that broadleaves will outnumber conifers within our tree population. Evergreen conifers are useful for removal of pollutants and opportunities for planting should be sought. Their form, especially when young, generally makes them largely unsuitable as street trees. They are less amenable to pruning, create site line obstructions, are subject to leaf fall throughout the year and produce shade all year. The opportunities for park and larger verge planting should be considered..

From the data available it would indicate the overwhelming majority of trees were found to be in fair or good condition at the time of inspection.



Policy Context

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

The national planning context is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as updated in February 2019. This framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The role played by trees and woodland is intrinsically linked to a number of sections of the revised policy, namely

- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Creating attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Local Policy

Local Planning Framework

Southend-on-Sea's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in December 2007. This sets out the council's spatial strategy and strategic planning policy framework for the borough.

The 'Development Management' Development Plan Document, adopted in 2015, provides more detailed policy information. It states that all new development that creates additional residential and/ or commercial units should incorporate urban greening measures including tree planting. It highlights that the many benefits gained from planting and landscaping should be a major consideration at an early stage and should not be merely an afterthought or considered as purely a decorative element to be added once built structures are designed or constructed; that the use of plants and trees should be considered an integral part of every development.

It sets out how urban greening provides a wide range of benefits, including wildlife activity and connection, creates a positive sense of place, provides environmental protection for local communities, aids climate adaptation, and enhances quality of life providing health and recreational benefits. Furthermore it contributes to the emergence of a continuous linked network of varied landscapes that begins at the 'front door' and connects with the wider area.

New Local Plan

The emerging Local Plan identifies the significant pressures on local development. Government targets growth between 18,000 and 24,000 new dwellings and 10,000 – 12,000 new jobs in the next twenty years.

The first stage of consultation on the Local Plan Issues & Options document was undertaken between February and April 2019. It focuses on 12 key issues. Green infrastructure is relevant to many of these:-

Issue Three Securing a thriving local economy
Issue Four Promoting Southend as a major resort

Issue Five Providing for attractive and vibrant town centres

Issue Seven Facilitating good design, healthy living and built environment

Issue Eight Providing Community services and infrastructure

Issue Nine Enhancing our natural environment Issue Ten Planning for climate change

The most common comment in the consultation was a wish to see more trees and urban greening in the town centre.

Southend's Vision 2050

Trees and woodland contribute to four of the five key aims of the Southend 2050 vision.

Pride and Joy

Our street and public spaces are clean and inviting

Trees make our streets, green spaces and commercial areas more inviting and attractive. The presence of trees and other green infrastructure improves the attractiveness of an area helping encourage people to visit and take pride in the town.

Community tree planting projects help to bring the community together to enhance their public spaces.

Safe and Well

We act as a Green City with outstanding examples of energy efficient and carbon neutral buildings, streets transport and cycling.

Green infrastructure in our streets improves the climate resistance and visual appearances of the urban landscape. Increased greening and improving the proportion of green space benefits the urban environment

Trees are central to a cohesive approach to green infrastructure which brings significant benefits to mental, physical and social well-being.

Looking after existing trees and planting new ones helps the town with its green aspirations and helps with air quality, surface water management and reduces the urban heat island affect, which in turn reduces the need for air conditioning.

Active and Involved

A range of initiatives help communities come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment.

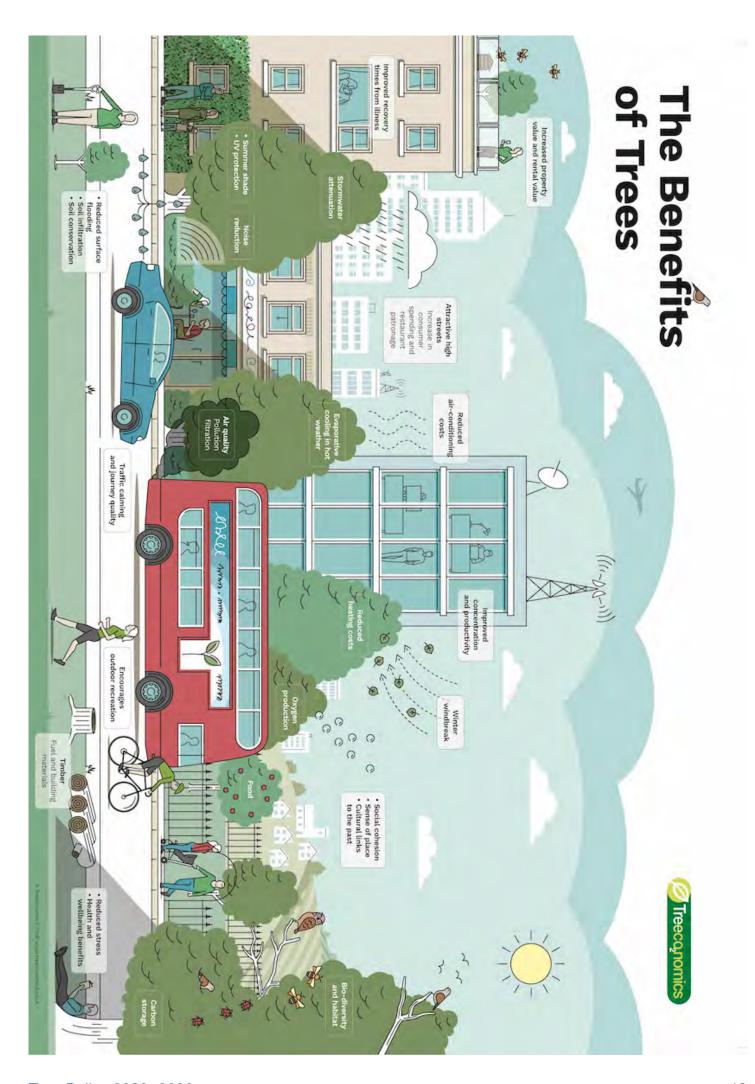
Community tree planting initiatives help the community come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment. Young people and school groups can become involved in planting trees and shrubs to create new areas of wildlife habitat. These projects provide great opportunities to learn about trees and plants and the environment.

Opportunity and Prosperity

We have a fast-evolving, re-imagined and thriving town centre, with an inviting mix of shops, homes, culture and leisure opportunities.

Trees can help to create a town centre which is more attractive, healthier and enjoyable for all.

Trees will contribute to the successful delivery of key regeneration schemes.



The Benefits of Urban Trees

Trees provide many benefits and services and as such they are valued by people in their own gardens and also in the streets and park areas where they live. Trees on publicly owned land are valued by different people in different ways. Some of the benefits come from the attributes of a single tree, while others are derived from groups of trees functioning together. Here are some of the benefits that we may enjoy from our local trees in Southend.

- 1. Being near trees is good for our health Japanese studies in 2009-2012 showed that being in the presence of trees (a pastime they named forest bathing) is proven to lower heart rate and blood pressure (Park, JB et al, 2010), reduce stress hormone production, boost the immune system (Qingyan Li, Maiko Kobayashi et al 2009) and improve overall feelings of wellbeing (Park, JB et al, 2010). City and town residents can also benefit from regular visits to a park or green space with even brief exposure to greenery reducing stress levels s (Tyrväinen, L., et al 2014). As it is now estimated that over 70% of people are now living in urban environments the importance of trees and green spaces within these urban areas is increasing as their benefits to us are still being discovered. The NHS has recognised that patient recovery rates can be improved by the presence of trees by introducing the NHS Forest project, https://nhsforest.org
- 2. Better air quality Trees absorb the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide as well as air pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and ozone and are able to intercept harmful particulates from vehicle engines, smoke, dust and pollen. In addition to this they produce and release oxygen via photosynthesis. Combined these tree functions help to reduce the incidence of diseases aggravated by airborne pollutants. (G., Quinn, J. et al 2008, and Stewart, H. et al 2002.)
- 3. Provide natural beauty which softens the hard urban landscape Trees and other vegetation break up the straight lines of roads, buildings and street furniture providing an attractive counterpoint. As such trees enhance the liveability of urban roads and streets as they are not just thoroughfares for vehicles but also serve as public spaces for people to walk, shop, meet and participate in activities.
- 4. Can be a tool for traffic calming Commuting by car can be a stressful experience of urban life. Trees and landscape along the sides or centre of roads can have a positive effect on driver behaviour and perception, resulting in safer roads. Drivers who have views of vegetation and trees







show reduced levels of stress and frustration compared to those driving though built up areas with no vegetation and landscaping (Parsons, R., et al 1998). There has also been research carried out which suggests that trees may improve driving safety. Trees in urban roadsides may be associated with reduced crash rates as it is thought their presence may produce a psychological cue to drive more slowly (Mok, J.-H., et al 2006).

- 5. Can help reduce flooding. The frequency and severity of flooding events has increased in the UK over recent years. Buildings and roads together with areas of compacted soil around urban settings are much less permeable to rainfall than natural land covers. For this reason water runs over these surfaces more quickly, often stripping off topsoil, to enter rivers, streams and brooks which can then burst their banks. Or surface water can cause flooding as it is unable to easily penetrate the ground. Trees, hedgerows and woods can be part of the solution. Strategic planting can have a positive impact in areas experiencing floods from waterways and surface run off. Trees are able do this in the following ways.
 - The canopy of the tree directly intercepts rainfall which will either drip from the leaf surface, run down the twigs, branches and trunk and see into the ground, or may evaporate from the leaves later on.
 - Under the tree canopy roots grow outwards creating minute channels in the soil through which rain water can penetrate more quickly and deeply so that flooding is less likely.
 - By absorbing water during the growing season trees near catchment areas reduce the pressure on drainage systems in urban areas.
 - Trees, shrubs and even deadwood along the banks of streams and brooks act as break on flood waters, holding back water and slowing the flow during heavy rainfall. (Soltis D. 1997)
- **6. Reduction in noise pollution** In urban areas noise can reach unhealthy levels. Many towns and cities have acknowledged the impacts of this increasing environmental issue and taken action to address noise pollution. By strategic planting and landscaping, trees and other plants can be used to improve the situation as leaves, branches and trunks help to scatter and absorb sound waves. Trees also provide 'white noise' by the movement of their leaves and branches in the wind. This noise helps to mask other man-made noises nearby.
- 7. Benefits to wildlife Trees are living systems that interact with other living things which share and recycle resources. Trees provide food and shelter for wildlife especially insects and birds. In urban areas they are an important source of nectar for pollinators, notably bees. (RHS 2015)
- 8. Reduce the heat island effect Urban heat islands describe how average temperatures are higher in built up areas than the surrounding rural land. They exist because of decreased wind, increased high density hard surfaces and through heat generated by human activities. Trees can be successfully used to mitigate heat islands as they provide shade making streets and buildings cooler in the summer, and they dissipate heat through the release of moisture which cools the air (Mayor of London, London's Urban Heat Island, 2006).
- **9. Food.** In woodlands, parks and towns trees provide fruit, berries and nuts.
- 10. Fuel. As a by-product of tree management and coppicing trees will provide biomass for domestic heating and industrial production of heat, electricity and biofuels. Solid fuel burning produces an invisible, ultra-fine particulate matter (PM2.5) pollutant which is harmful to human health. Short and long-term exposure to PM2.5 increases the risk of early deaths from respiratory and cardiovascular diseases as well as increased hospital admissions. The Clean Air Act says that you must not emit "dark smoke" from your chimney if you live in a smoke control area. Changes in legislation in 2021 will phase out the use of polluting solid fuels including wet or 'green' wood in favour of cleaner alternatives such as dry or seasoned wood with a moisture content of less than 20%.
- **11. Timber.** Trees provide a sustainable source of timber for construction.
- **12.Social development.** Trees and woods can help to bring people together and strengthen communities through volunteering. The involvement of people in the practical activities of planting and caring for local trees and woods can build a stronger sense of ownership and civic pride.

- 13. Education. Trees and woods can be used as an educational resource which can be linked to the national curriculum. Easy access to trees and woodland provides an invaluable facility for both formal and informal learning in the urban environment. The Forest School movement pioneered an innovative approach to outdoor education which demonstrated significant benefits to personal development and learning. The increasing number of Forest schools build self-esteem and confidence through regular visits to woodland sites. Children learn to appreciate nature, to practice and master tasks and acquire associated social skills.
- **14.Improved property values.** Research has shown that trees can provide significant benefits for property owners by increasing property values and selling prices.







Street Trees in Leigh

Tree Management

The council has a legal responsibility to manage its trees.

The principle areas of legislation relating to tree risk management are:

The Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 and 1984

The Highways Act 1980

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Tree Inspections

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council own and maintain many thousands of trees throughout the Borough. Statutory obligations dictate how the Council must manage trees that are within areas of its control; these are principally the Highways Act 1980 and the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 & 1984. Statutes such as The New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 govern how contractors working within the Borough must operate. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 places a duty upon the Council to assess the impact of tree loss within the Borough; where the loss is likely to have a significant impact upon the local and wider landscape the Local Authority must consider protecting trees through the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) process.

Who inspects council managed trees?

The council's Arboricultural Officers carry out proactive and reactive inspections. The Arboricultural Officers are qualified to at least National Qualification Framework Level 4 in Arboriculture. Qualifications can include Professional Tree Inspection Certificate, Technical Certificate Arboriculture, Bachelor of Science etc.

Trees and risk

The council has a statutory duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act 1957/84 to ensure that members of the public and staff are not put at risk because of any failure by the council to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safety.

There is a need to inspect trees in or near public places, or adjacent to buildings or working areas to assess whether they represent a risk to life or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.

Inspection methodology

Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) (Mattheck & Breloer 1994) is the industry recognised method for tree inspection. This method is used by the council Arboricultural Officers.

Inspections are recorded on the council's tree management database. The tree management system currently used is Ezytreev. This system is able to record each tree inspection and also any works to be carried out.

The Borough is divided into three areas, west, central and east. Each area has an Arboricultural Officer assigned to it.

Why inspect trees?

Generally trees are inspected, at a frequency set out in this policy, to monitor their structural and physiological state to ensure they are in an acceptable condition for their location. Highway trees are also inspected to ensure they are not impeding the passage of vehicles or pedestrians. Additional inspections will be undertaken if a valid customer enquiry is received or an incident occurs, to assess if remedial works are required.

Proactive tree inspection has the benefit of building a picture of the tree stock so its species make up, age class and condition is known. Proactive tree inspection should also identify those trees which have irremediable defects or have reached the end of their safe useful life expectancy this could mean that they are growing poorly, offering reduced amenity value, adversely affecting other, and better trees. These trees can then be removed and replaced.

Trees may be inspected for the following reasons.

- Proactive-as part of the cyclical tree inspection regime for highway and parks trees.
- Reactive-in response to a valid customer enquiry.
- In response to a planning application.
- To carry out a tree risk/benefit analysis. To ascertain whether a beneficial defective part of a tree can
 be safely retained in its situation. For example whether dead wood can be retained as a valuable
 habitat. This will be done by considering the severity and likely impact of failure.
- To assess either amenity or monetary value of a tree or group of trees. This would normally only be
 done as the result of a planning application or development which if approved would mean the loss
 of one or more healthy trees.

Levels of inspection

Various levels of inspection take place, both formal and informal.

Formal inspections:

- Walk over surveys. Examples being for the removal of basal and epicormic growth within a street, (this is the removal of shoots growing from the base and on the trunk of the tree) or to identify trees which require closer inspection within wooded areas where individual tree inspection is not practicable due to tree numbers.
- Detailed inspection: where tree data is recorded via hand held device and works recommendations made. Individual trees will be inspected using VTA, probes and sounding mallets or similar. These hand tools help to evaluate obvious decay pockets and cavities and to assess wood intergrity via sound.
- Advanced inspection using decay mapping drills or tomography. Informal inspections:
- Defects noticed by parks staff for example whilst carrying out daily tasks.

Parks staff may also report issues to Arboricultural Officers for further inspection.

Frequency of inspection

Highway trees

Highway trees are divided into 2 main inspection regimes, quiet roads and principal roads. The vast majority of highway trees are recorded on the tree management database.

Quiet roads

These are generally minor roads which buses do not use where the speed limit is normally 30mph or below. The aim is to carry out a detailed inspection of the trees alongside quiet roads every 3 years as part of the cyclical maintenance regime.

Principal roads

These are generally bus routes or major roads such as dual carriageways. These roads will have greater vehicular use and often have speed limits beyond 30mph. The aim is to carry out a detailed inspection of trees alongside principle roads every 2 years as part of the cyclical maintenance regime.

Green Spaces

Trees in green spaces which includes parks, open spaces, cemeteries and closed churchyards also require inspection to ensure they do not pose unacceptable risks to users. At present the majority of trees within the larger parks and open spaces of the borough are recorded on the tree management database.

Further work is required to ensure all parks' trees or tree groups are recorded and to fully develop a robust inspection regime. This will be in line with recommendations made by the National Tree Safety Group.

Green spaces will be allocated a 'usage zone' either, high, medium or low to inform frequency of inspection. This usage zone will be informed by visitor use and events which are held in parks. We aim to have all trees within parks and open spaces on the tree management data base and an inspection regime in place by April 2021

Woodlands

It is impractical to inspect every individual tree within woodlands and unnecessary as the vast majority of trees in woodlands have very low footfall or use beneath them.

Woodlands, or parts of woodlands will also be zoned for low, medium or high usage and inspection type and frequency will then be implemented by April 2021.

Examples of usage zones in the context of green spaces

- High: a main park, area within a park or open space which hosts lots of events with many visitors and large trees.
- Medium: a main park or area within a park, or open space without regular events and lower use.
- Low: informal open spaces with low tree cover or groups of scrub.
- No formal inspection: minor trails within woodlands or areas with little public access.

Tree Risk Assessment

The current system used where necessary is Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (Q.T.R.A.). This system is currently used by The Arboricultural Section to set inspection frequencies within woodlands and parks.

When do we prune trees?

Trees can be pruned and removed at any time of year but it is good practice only to carry out heavy pruning, for instance pollarding and crown reduction pruning works, in the winter and summer. During autumn and spring the sap flow within the tree is at peak levels. It is best to avoid major works during these two periods as this will benefit the health of the tree. In the spring the buds burst and sap flows

up and into the new leaves so it is best to wait until the leaves have fully flushed and hardened before any pruning is carried out. In the autumn the tree is withdrawing sugars from the leaves and storing it before they drop so waiting until winter is recommended.

The most common pruning operation carried out on Southend's street trees is a maintenance prune. This involves the removal of minor branches to maintain safety for road users and pedestrians. Growth at the base of the tree which could obstruct pedestrians is removed as are any dead or low hanging branches which could impede vehicles or pedestrians. This type of pruning work can be carried out any time of year.

Why do we prune trees?

A tree growing in a rarely visited field can be left unpruned to grow as nature dictates. However trees that we plant in our parks, open spaces and highways have to be inspected and maintained by pruning when necessary. The main reason for this is the duty of care that Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has towards its residents and visitors. They must be able to go about their lives safely amongst the thousands of street and parks trees. You may think that trees just look after themselves but the Council carry out routine inspections followed by a rolling programme of maintenance pruning. Not every tree will require pruning after an inspection. Unless there is a potentially hazardous structural defect in the tree it is best to prune it a little as possible as removing branches and foliage reduces the ability of the tree to photosynthesise (produce sugars) which can put the tree under stress. However some trees are able to tolerate extremely heavy pruning such as pollarding where the entire crown is removed. This can be carried out on trees such as London plane and lime trees. Generally this is carried out where trees are located in situations where it is not possible to allow them to grow into their full dimensions since they are too close to buildings and roads.

Reasons why trees are pruned

- To remove low growth obstructing vehicles in the carriageway
- To remove low growth obstructing pedestrians using the public footway
- To remove or reduce branches obstructing a clear view of street signs, road warning signs and traffic signals
- To remove or reduce branches interfering with street lighting and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council CCTV cameras
- To remove or reduce branches touching a nearby building
- To remove or reduce branches pushing heavily against overhead telephone cables
- To remove dead, decaying, diseased, damaged or defective branches
- To reduce the size of the crown where a tree has become too large for its location in the view of the council's Arboricultural Officer.
- To reduce the size of the crown where a tree is proven to be implicated in subsidence damage to a nearby property
- To reduce the crown back to the previous pollard reduction points
- To improve the structure of the tree for long term health and retention
- In emergency situations where trees have been damaged by strong winds or they have been hit by vehicles so as to leave them in a hazardous condition.
- To prune back roots where they are causing disruption to nearby hard surfaces when it is safe to do so.
- To address privately owned trees where they pose a threat to highway users. The Council has a legal obligation to ensure that all trees located close to the highway do not pose such risks to highway users. Where privately owned trees pose unreasonable risks to highway users, the Council will contact the owner of the tree to request appropriate action is taken within a stated timescale. If this action is not taken then the Council has the legal powers of enforcement to ensure that the required work is undertaken. All costs will be re-charged to the owner of the trees.

When don't we prune trees?

- The tree is blocking TV and satellite reception. (A television licence is a permit to operate a
 television receiver, but it does not guarantee any reception or any legal right to a reception).
- The tree is blocking a view. There is no right in law to a view and the Council has no obligation to improve a view obstructed by a tree.
- The tree is causing shading. There is no legal requirement for tree owners to remove or prune their trees to improve the amount of light that reaches a neighbouring property.
- The tree is blocking sunlight reaching solar panels placed on a neighbouring private property.
- The tree is perceived to be too large. Usually species of tree are selected taking into
 consideration the eventual size that the tree can achieve. However in some instances the
 tree may outgrow the space available in the location so a crown reduction may be considered
 appropriate in order to retain the tree.
- The tree is considered to be producing too much pollen. Tree pollen can influence people who suffer from hay fever and other allergies. However the presence of trees has positive benefits to the environment which help to alleviate serious respiratory problems caused by poor air quality.
- The tree is lightly touching telephone lines. The Council will however prune back branches which are seen to be heavily rubbing against overhead cables.
- A tree will not be removed or pruned due to the presence of bird droppings. Birds naturally roost in trees and whilst their droppings may be perceived to be a nuisance, this is not considered sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. The Council will not remove any bird droppings from private land.
- A tree will not be removed or pruned to alleviate the sap or honeydew falling from trees onto objects
 or surfaces beneath. Honeydew is the sticky excretion produced by aphids feeding on the sugary
 sap found within the tree's leaves. This is a natural and seasonal event. Some tree species like
 limes and sycamores are more prone to aphid infestation than others. When new trees are being
 planted species selection takes this into account, with trees less prone to aphids being chosen
 where possible.
- The tree drops leaves in the autumn. Autumn leaf fall is a natural event. The public footways and highways are cleared of autumn leaf fall by the Council cleansing department. The clearance of autumn leaves from private gardens, driveways and gutters etc. is regarded as being part of normal property maintenance and is the property owner's or tenant's responsibility. Even if the leaves originated from Council owned trees.
- The tree drops fruit. The Council will not fell a tree to prevent fruit from falling on to surfaces below.



Crown reductions before and after



Why are trees removed?

The council inspect highway and parks trees on a cyclical basis as part of their overall tree management programme.

Given the diversity of age range and urban land use it is inevitable trees may on occasion require removal. The decision to remove a tree will be taken by one of the council's qualified Arboricultural staff, based on sound arboricultural practice and appropriateness to the situation. In an urban environment trees cannot be left to die or become destabilised without intervention. The level of intervention has to be in proportion to the likelihood of death, injury or damage that would result from tree failure.

It should also be considered that just because a tree is alive and in full leaf this does not mean that it is not a hazard. It may have structural, internal or underground rooting problems which are severe enough to render the tree hazardous and would require removal. These hazards may not always be apparent to the untrained eye.

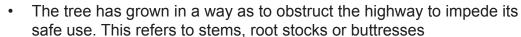
Trees will be removed for a number of reasons;

- The tree is dead.
- The tree has become structurally unsound due to colonisation by wood decaying fungi. Or the tree
 is colonised by wood decaying fungi and also has poor vitality and therefore unlikely to recover so
 retention is not viable.
- The tree is colonised with Meripilus giganteus (or similar decaying organism) where it is not practicable to quantify the extent of decay and the tree is growing close to people and property.
- The tree is infected with a disease from which it is unlikely to recover or infected with a pest or disease and removal is required for bio security reasons. This helps to prevent the spread of the pest or disease affecting other healthy trees.
- The tree is in poor physiological condition and unlikely to recover, due to drought or other reasons.
- The tree has poor structural form such as multiple bark inclusions or is a species prone to branch failure.
- The tree is an unsuitable species for its location and is being removed as part of a phased removal, or total removal and replanting programme. This could apply to a group of trees or a single tree.
- Where a tree is in competition with another or other trees and thinning is necessary to promote healthy growth of others.
- The tree is self-sown in an unfavourable location.
- The tree has suffered mechanical damage and has been rendered unviable for retention due to catastrophic damage to crown, stem or root system. This can be a result of actions such as traffic collisions or severe storm damage.
- The tree has caused significant root damage to a footway or other highway structure where alternative engineering solutions are not viable and root pruning is not viable due to the effect on tree stability, health or where the species is known to produce significant sucker growth.











- The tree has been proven to be the cause of direct or indirect damage to property and other solutions rather than tree removal are not practicable.
- The tree requires removal to allow statutory undertakers to repair apparatus.
- To implement an approved planning permission. Full planning permissions, where standing trees would impede the approved development, do not need to directly specify the trees to be felled in their application. However, where there's a desire to remove standing trees, and those trees are not, for example, within the approved footprint of a structure to be constructed, then those trees would need to be explicitly referenced in the planning application and permission in order to allow for their legal felling. This includes trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

Informing residents of tree removals?

Residents will be advised when a tree in a street is going to be removed by:-

- Hand-delivered letters to houses in the street in a 30 metre radius form the tree (not flats where more than four residences are in the same building)
- A notice will be placed on the tree at least 10 working days before it is to be removed
- Information will be posted on the council website
- · Ward councillors will be informed by e-mail

When a tree has to be removed in an emergency it will not be possible to issue letters or notices and residents will not be informed.





Trees and Subsidence

From time to time trees may be subject to complaint and claim for compensation on the basis of the allegation that a tree is causing damage to property. Trees are regularly and incorrectly blamed as the 'obvious' cause of damage.

Damage is categorised as either direct or indirect damage. Direct damage may occur from a falling tree or branch or where a tree is in direct physical contact with a neighbouring structure. Indirect damage may result from the actions of tree roots removing moisture from the soil on neighbouring properties resulting in subsidence.

Subsidence generally occurs in areas with an underlying geology of shrinkable clay. Such soils are prone to expand when wet and shrink when drying out. The resulting changes in volume can affect structures built upon them. Periods of drought or sustained wet weather are influential on this pattern. Tree roots are almost invariably chosen as the primary factor however damage may result from a number of factors, such as; inadequate foundations, structural failure, poor maintenance, vibrations from roads or railways, major work in neighbouring properties or leaking drains.

Tree roots typically will not cause any problems to drains in good condition, unless they are located very close to a tree where some larger roots may come into contact with the drains as they increase in girth.

When tree roots are found within drains the cause is usually a broken or leaking pipe which has attracted tree roots by increasing the moisture content of the soils surrounding the leaking section. Roots can then gain access through the broken pipe and may grow prolifically. Southend-on-Sea Borough Council will not prune, cut the roots, or fell a tree owned or managed by the Council to prevent root growth in the vicinity of drain networks.

Where it is alleged that council-owned trees are implicated in building damage, the council will require the property owner to provide technical evidence to support their claim. This evidence may include but not necessarily limited to:-

- Engineer's report detailing the damage to the building
- Details of surrounding trees/vegetation
- · Details of any findings from trial pit excavations
- Evidence of level or crack monitoring
- Root identification
- Drain survey
- Soil analysis

Claims against the Council are managed by the Risk and Insurance team supported by site surveys carried out by the Arboricultural team. Where it is considered that a tree has been justifiably implicated in causing damage there are several potential courses of action. These include:

- Crown reduction to reduce water uptake by the tree
- Excavate a trench and sever roots where this does not compromise the stability of the tree
- Remove the tree
- The course of action selected will depend upon the extent of damage and the details provided by the evidence







Trees in Green Spaces

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has a rich heritage of tree planting within its parks and open spaces and therefore has many fine trees within them.

Parks and open spaces offer greater opportunity to plant large growing species and allow them to grow to their full mature size. They are generally not subject to the same pressure for pruning compared to street trees since they do not ususally affect street furniture, highways or buildings and houses.

It is therefore the Council's aim to allow trees within parks to grow to their mature size although it is accepted on occasion that conflicts will arise and pruning may be necessary.

It is possible to plant cohesive groups of trees and native hedgerows where connection between canopies is made. Trees provide habitats for bats, birds, insects, lichens and mammals, especially in older trees which may contain cavities, holes and dead wood. It is therefore desirable to retain these features in trees where possible as long as the tree does not pose an unacceptable risk of harm to people or properties. To retain features such as this pruning may often be necessary to lessen the weight on a defective part of the tree.

Trees will continue to be planted in parks but care will be taken not to plant trees to the detriment of other habitats such as grassland or meadows.

Woodlands

The council currently maintains 41.00 hectares of woodland. Woodland makes an important contribution to the overall canopy cover of the town. There are three areas of woodland; Belfairs Nature Reserve and Park, Oakwood North and South and St Mary's Nature Reserve.

Belfairs Park is by far the most significant woodland covering 36.8 hectares. It is listed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as Hadleigh Great Wood and Dodd's Grove. The wood is part of the ancient Hadleigh Great Wood. The woodland is managed as coppice-with-standards oak woodland. It is recognised as one of the largest and best examples of ancient woodland in South Essex and the last known stronghold of the rare Heath Fritillary butterfly. Oak trees dominate as standards while coppice species include Hornbeam, Sweet Chestnut, Birch and Hazel. Some of the coppice stools are estimated to be 1,000 years old. The wood is a richly diverse habitat with many species of flora and fauna.

Oakwood North and South are ancient semi- natural woodlands of lapsed hornbeam coppice and oak standards. They are not currently under active management.

St. Marys Nature Reserve is secondary woodland.

Trees on the Highway

Tree roots can sometimes cause damage to the footways and the highway. The stems of trees may sometimes grow to a size that restricts the width of the footway.

The council has a duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1981 to ensure that pathways are reasonably passable without presenting a danger. It must also ensure that access is equal for all under the Equality Act 2010. This will mean that on some occasions it is necessary to remove a tree. However, this will be the last option after all other alternatives have been considered. The council will follow best practise and consider the engineering alternatives to the removal of trees.



Increased tree pit size, infilled with self-binding gravel

These will be considered on a case by case basis and include:

- Increase the size of the tree pit where footway width allows
- Use flexible infill materials such as resin bound or self-binding gravel where pavement width is restricted
- Replace wide kerb stones with narrow ones, construct concrete kerb 'in situ' or dispense with kerbstone
- Use tarmac surfacing to replace paving stones
- Prune the roots where this will not destabilise the tree
- Construct build-outs to accommodate existing trees or plant new ones

Trees on Housing Land

There are approximately 1500 trees growing on housing land managed on behalf of the council by South Essex Homes. These trees offer all of the benefits described in this policy and contribute to the overall canopy cover of the town. It is important that their maintenance is consistent with the management policy of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.

Trees in Private Ownership

Privately owned trees

In the vast majority of cases Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has no control over privately owned trees, either regarding their maintenance or with regard to planting of trees on private land. Legislation exists to enable the Council to protect trees or woodlands on private land by serving Tree Preservation Orders, or they can be afforded legal protection to an extent if they are growing within a Conservation Area.

Under the terms of The Highways Act 1981 Council may serve notice on the owner of a private tree if the tree presents a risk to the safe use of the highway. This can include removing dangerous trees, pruning branches to clear sightlines, road signs or traffic lights or to remove branches restricting safe use of the footway. If the work is not carried out then this can be carried out by the council with all reasonable costs recharged to the owner of the tree.

On occasions owners may not make dangerous trees safe. In exceptional circumstances the council has powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to undertake work on private land when a tree presents an immediate danger to people or property.

Trees and Planning

Tree Preservation Orders

Legislation exists to enable the Council to legally protect trees. This is by the way of a Tree Preservation Order (T.P.O.) or if they are growing within a Conservation Area.In either case The grant of planning permission overrides a TPO he trees have to be over 3.5m in height to be considered for protection.

If a tree is protected by a TPO a written application is necessary to the Council to gain consent for works to it. Applications will be assessed on the reasons for the work and the impact it may have on the tree either to its visual amenity or its health.

If a tree is growing within a Conservation Area six weeks written notice is required to be given to the Council of proposed works. This gives the Council an opportunity to assess the notification and serve a TPO if the works are detrimental to visual amenity or tree health.

The law on Tree Preservation Orders is in Part VIII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended and in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. The grant of planning permission overrides a TPO. At present there are 189 Tree Preservation Orders within the Borough. These individual orders may protect a single tree or multiple trees. Further information on TPOs and Conservation Areas can be found on the councils website at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas

Trees are assessed on their suitability for a TPO using the TEMPO system (Tree evaluation method for preservation orders) developed by Forbes Laird Arboricultural Consultancy. http://www.flac.uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TEMPO-GN.pdf

Trees on development sites

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 places a statutory duty on Local Authorities "to ensure whenever it is appropriate that in granting planning permission for any development, adequate provision is made by the imposition of conditions for the preservation or planting of trees".

The Council will not register applications for development unless full tree related information is supplied in line with BS5837:2012.

Further information can be found on the council website.

https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/5405/local_validation_list_document_-_march_2018_adopted

Assessing the value of trees removed for development and replacement planting

The Council will be opposed to the removal of A and B category trees on development sites and construction within their root protection areas will be resisted. A and B category trees are

A – Trees of high quality and value, in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (minimum 40+ years remaining lifespan suggested).

B – Trees of moderate quality and value, in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (minimum 20+ years remaining lifespan suggested).

If trees are proposed to be felled as part of a planning application, replacement planting will be sought. All trees proposed for planting should be accompanied by a full specification for watering and maintenance for a period of 3 growing seasons after planting. Trees proposed for planting on development sites should be procured and established as detailed in BS8545:2014. This is the Brirish Standard which details recommendations to assist people involved in planning, designing, producing, planting and managing new trees in the landscape.

As the general rule the council will not agree to the removal of street trees as part of private development schemes or for the provision of private vehicle crossings. In some exceptional circumstances tree removal may prove unavoidable. Under these conditions the council will assess the monetary value of the tree using the system Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT). This valuation will form the basis of the compensation for the loss and used to fund replacement tree planting.

Rural hedgerows

Hedgerows in some cases may be afforded legal protection under The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 if they meet certain criteria. Details can be found at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/contents/made. The aim of the legislation is to control the removal of rural hedgerows.

High Hedges

There is no set legal limit to how high a tree or hedge can grow. Neighbour disputes can sometimes occur when a high hedge causes shading and other problems. The council can intervene but this is on a case by case basis with a fee being payable. Full details of the legislation and advisory leaflets are available at.https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/high-hedges

The legislation does not apply to single trees and complaints are only considered if there are two or more trees growing in a line which are evergreen or semi-evergreen and more than two metres high.

Community Involvement

Residents, business as well as charity and community groups have a key role to play in increasing canopy cover across the borough, particularly in the areas which the council has little opportunity to plant. By these groups and individuals planting trees in their gardens or land they own they can help make a difference. To support groups and individuals the council will provide information and encourage residents to learn more about trees and provide opportunities for people to join in with tree planting projects in the parks and open spaces.

The current tree scheme will be extended to include fruit trees and packs of tree whips to be planted in community tree planting projects. The scheme will also be promoted as a way of gifting trees to celebrate special occasions, birthdays and other celebrations. The network of community orchards will be extended.

Community tree planting days provide opportunities for people to take part in tree planting initiatives in green spaces. Planting schemes can have multiple aims;

- To extend the canopy cover
- To create valuable new habitat
- To create and care for a network of new orchards
- To bring the community together





Tree Planting Strategy

Tree Planting

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council has a rich heritage of tree planting in its parks and streets. Records indicate the first plantings were carried out in 1901 when the then Corporation decided to 're-afforest the borough of Southend'.

The council has continued planting over the following years to ensure tree cover is maintained and increased. This has left us with a diverse range of ages and species.. Trees planted on council sites will be sourced and established in accordance with B.S.8545 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape-Recommendations.

At present the council carries out planting in parks and within the highway. However, previous planting has not been based on targeting areas of the borough with a lighter canopy cover.

Future tree planting will be based on maintaining and increasing canopy cover to achieve an average of 15 percent coverage by 2050. The council will seek to identify available sites to create new areas of woodland or extend existing woodland. This may be achieved by planting or allowing areas to regenerate naturally.

Tree planting will generally be avoided on Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) to protect and enhance the historic environment. These sites are the Danish Camp, Prittlewell Camp, Southchurch Hall Gardens and parts of Priory Park.

Donated Tree Scheme

The council offers a subsidised donated tree scheme and details can be found on the council website Under the scheme a tree can be purchased by a donation to the council and for planting in parks, open spaces and in suitable locations on the highway. Currently only standard trees can be donated. It is planned to develop the scheme to offer options to donate fruit trees, packs of tree whips and younger trees to be used in community tree planting projects.

Street tree planting

Many requests are received from residents for tree planting especially if trees are removed. These are noted and trees planted where appropriate. The Arboricultural Officers will also make note of streets with low tree stock or trees which require replacement during routine inspections.

Rather than adopting an ad-hoc approach to replacing individual trees a more strategic view will be taken when planting is considered within streets. where possible. This is due to operational efficiency with regard to planting and aftercare, particularly to watering. Where trees are removed it is often very difficult to plant again in exactly the same location due to stump remnants or roots, the presence of utilities or soil pathogens.

Planting in new hard surfaces

Within new highway schemes or other hard landscaping projects, special planting techniques which allow adequate soil volume to be available and avoid tree roots damaging the hard surface will be used. http://www.tdag.org.uk/trees-in-hard-landscapes.html.

Species selection

Tree species will be selected in line with the 'right tree, right place' approach. This considers the overall size and form of the tree. It considers its proximity to buildings, roads, street furniture, the historic environment, land typology as well as the prevailing use of the site.

Both native and non-native species will be used for planting, with a species best suited for the location being chosen. A diverse range of species will help establish a tree population resilient to climate change and the threat of pests and diseases.

The overall size and form of the tree will be considered along with its proximity to buildings, roads, street furniture as well as the prevailing site conditions.

Where woodland or natural habitat is to be created native species will be used.

Limitations to planting

There are occasions when planting is not possible this may be due to:

- Insufficient above ground growing room
- · Above and below ground utilities
- Sight lines being obscured
- Insufficient width of footway
- · Poor site conditions which cannot be reasonably improved
- Covering desirable architecture
- Street furniture
- Obscuration of road signage and traffic signals
- Proximity of private vehicle crossings
- Where tree planting will be detrimental to the existing habitat (grassland habitats etc.)
- Lack of funding

Canopy Cover Assessment

It should be noted that within the canopy cover report there are many areas Southend-on-Sea Borough Council do not own which have low tree cover. Some of these cover substantial areas of land. Existing land use can also influence the availability of land for planting which Southend-on-Sea Borough Council do own, for example, the airport and its flight approaches.

The canopy cover report commissioned in October 2019 will be used to inform future planting. Initially planting undertaken until 2023 will be focused on wards with the lowest cover where it is practically viable to plant new trees with planting above that which is normally carried out. After 2023 tree planting will continue to be programmed based on the overall canopy cover of the borough.

The council is committed to maintaining and enhancing tree canopy cover in the borough and it is our aim to increase the canopy cover to a borough average of at least 15% by 2050.

Annual Progress Review

Total number of trees removed in the year	
Total number of trees planted	
Total number of whips planted in the year	
Involvement in community events by volunteer hours	
Number of trees donated in the year	

Appendix 1

Acer Maple

Betula Birch

Aesculus Horse chestnut

Alnus Alder

Ailanthus Tree of Heaven

Carpinus Hornbeam

Celtis Hackberry

Crataegus Hawthorn

Chamaecyparis False Cypress

Fagus Beech

Gingko Gingko

Gleditsia Honey locust

Ilex Holly

Koelreuteria Pride of India

Liquidambar Sweet Gum Tree

Malus Apple

Pinus Pine

Platanus Plane

Populus Poplar

Prunus Cherry

Pyrus Pear

Quercus Oak

Robinia Locust

Salix Willow

Sorbus includes Mountain Ash, Whitebeam, Rowan

Tilia Lime

Ulmus Elm

Bibliography

Treeconomics 2019. Southend-on-Sea Tree Canopy Cover Assessment

(G., Quinn, J., Neckerman, K., Perzanowski, M. & Rundle, A. (2008) 'Children living in areas with more street trees have lower prevalence of asthma.' Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 62(7), pp. 647-649,

Stewart, H., Owen S., Donovan R., MacKenzie R., and Hewitt N. (2002). 'Trees and Sustainable Urban Air Quality'. Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Lancaster University).

(Parsons, R., L.G. Tassinary, R.S. Ulrich, M.R. Hebl, and M. Grossman-Alexander. 1998. The View From the Road: Implications for Stress Recovery and Immunization. Journal of Environmental Psychology 18, 2:113–140).

Mok, J.-H., H.C. Landphair, and J.R. Naderi. 2006. Landscape Improvement Impacts on Roadside Safety in Texas. Landscape and Urban Planning 78:263-274).

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations 2016. Guidelines on urban and peri urban forestry

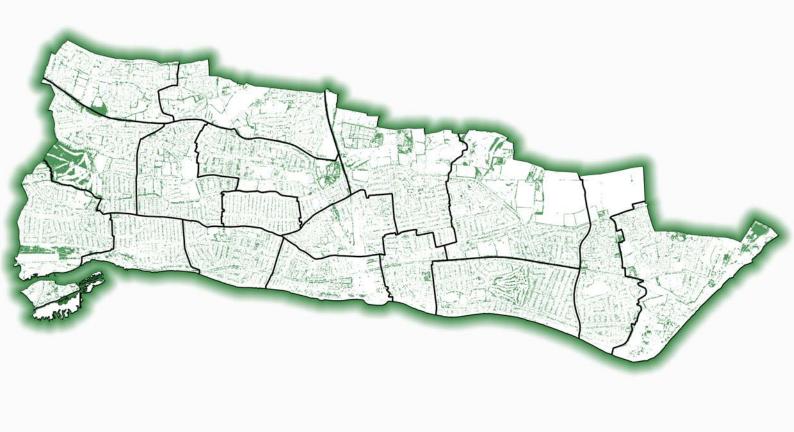
Van Renterghem, T. Botteldooren, D., and Verheyen, K 2012. Road traffic noise shielding by vegetation belts of limited depth. Journal of Sound and Vibration, 331(10),pp 2404 - 2425 Mattheck. C., & Broloer.H. (1994) The body language of trees: A handbook for failure analysis. London TSO.

National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) (2011) Common sense management of trees. Edinburgh, Forestry Commission.

British Standards Institution (2012) BS 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction-Recommendations. London.

British Standards Institute (2014) BS 8545: Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape-Recommendations. London.





Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Tree Canopy Cover Assessment

October 2019







Canopy Cover Explained

Tree canopy cover, which is often also referred to as canopy cover and urban canopy cover, can be defined as the area of leaves, branches, and stems of trees covering the ground when viewed from above.

Canopy cover is a two-dimensional metric, indicating the spread of tree cover across an area. Quantifying the spatial extent of the urban forest is one of the first steps in managing this important resource and helps to answer the fundamental questions: 'What canopy cover have we got?' and 'Where is it?'

Measuring canopy cover has helped city planners, urban foresters, mayors and communities to see trees and forests in a new way, focusing attention on green infrastructure as a key component of community planning, sustainability and resilience. It is an easy-to-understand concept that is useful in communicating messages about our urban forests with both the public and policy makers.

Understanding the extent of the tree canopy cover in the borough of Southend-on-Sea and its relationship with other indicators is a first step in 'measuring to manage' the urban forest. This appreciated asset (part of Southend's Natural Capital) can now be improved and maintained using this study and its data, with resources targeted to the areas that need it most.

The Authors

Danielle Hill - Treeconomics

James Watson - Treeconomics

This assessment was carried out by Treeconomics

Contents

	Exec	cutive Summary	4
	1.	Introduction	8
	2.	Data analysis	15
	3.	Results and Analysis	16
	4.	Canopy Cover and Quality of Life	21
	5.	Conclusions	35
	6.	Recommendations	36
Appendix I			
i-Tree Cand	opy Techi	nical Information	41
Appendix II	I		
Compariso	n with ot	ther UK towns and cities	44
Appendix II	II		
Trees in the	e Nationa	al Policy Planning Framework	45
Appendix I'	V		
Summary of	of Ecosys	stem Services Provided by Trees	49
Bibliograph	1V		52

Executive Summary

Trees are arguably the single most important component of Green Infrastructure (the mosaic of parks, street trees and all other 'green assets' found in urban areas), yet are often overlooked and undervalued. In particular, trees are important because they enhance and improve the urban environment by providing a wide range of benefits (or ecosystem services) at relatively little cost. There is a growing body of research which demonstrates that trees improve our health and well-being. Trees provide a 'sense of place', moderate extremes of high temperature in urban areas, improve air quality and act as a carbon sink¹.

Aerial imagery for each ward in the borough of Southend was used to calculate the canopy cover (Figure 1 illustrates the area of study). The results provide a snapshot of the current tree canopy cover (Table 1) and a baseline to allow for comparison with any future tree canopy surveys. The study also compared tree canopy cover with relevant statistics from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and reviewed other available sources of geographical data on human health, well-being and societal factors (including crime rates, social deprivation and life expectancy) to observe if there were any correlations with tree canopy cover.

Highlights of the report are:

The overall canopy cover of the borough of Southend is estimated at 12% In comparison with other studies², the canopy cover is below the average (17%) estimated in the 320 towns and cities surveyed in the UK. In comparison with London, Southend is below the average of 21% canopy cover. However, in general it can be said that coastal towns have lower canopy covers. A baseline study of canopy cover in the UK found that 20 out of 30 coastal towns had a canopy cover below 10% and the average canopy cover was 13.7%.

The relationship between Tree Cover and Social Indicators, demonstrated that areas with increased tree cover also score higher for community wellbeing in areas such as, Life Expectancy, Lower Crime Rate and correlates with Higher House Prices.

It is suggested that Southend could reasonably aspire to a canopy cover of 15% by 2050 subject to the production of a fully costed and resourced action plan, and in alignment with the average for coastal towns in the UK.

¹ Further details are provided in later sections of this report

² Comparable studies can be accessed at www.urbantreecover.org

Canopy cover by ward area figures and a selection of total canopy cover in UK cities are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

Canopy cover estimates across Southend range from just 8.5% in Westborough Ward to 23.3% in Belfairs ward. Canopy cover in Southend is lower than the national average of 17% within cities, and also below the London average, which is 21%.

Ward	Tree Canopy Cover (%)
Belfairs	23.3
Prittlewell	14.4
West Leigh	14.4
Thorpe	13.1
St. Luke's	12.7
Blenheim	12.7
Shoeburyness	12.3
Chalkwell	12.0
Eastwood Park	12.0
Southchurch	11.0
St Laurence	10.0
Milton	10.0
Leigh	9.7
Kursaal	9.4
Victoria	9.0
West Shoebury	8.6
Westborough	8.5
Borough of Southend Average	11.95

Table 1: Tree Canopy Cover by Ward within the administrative area of the borough of Southend



Figure 1: Ward map of Southend

City/District	% Tree cover	Source
Royal Tunbridge Wells	33.7	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2016
Dover	29.2	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2016
Winchester	27.4	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2016
Telford	25.2	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2016
Birmingham	23.0	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2012
London	21.9	i-Tree Eco Sample Project 2015
Oxford	21.4	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2015
Plymouth	18.5	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2017
Newcastle	18.1	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2018
Edinburgh	17.0	i-Tree Eco Sample Survey 2012
Ealing	16.9	i-Tree Eco Sample Survey 2018
Eastbourne	15.9	i-Tree Canopy Survey 2011
Manchester	15.5	Red Rose Forest survey 2007
Glasgow	15.0	i-Tree Eco Sample Survey 2014
Bristol	14.0	Bristol Tree Survey 2009
Southend	12.0	Southend Canopy Survey 2019
Torbay	12.0	i-Tree Eco Sample Survey 2011

Table 2: A selection of urban towns and cities throughout the UK and their estimated canopy cover

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Measuring tree canopy provides the means to help city planners, urban foresters and communities consider trees and forests as distinct elements of green infrastructure, as a key component of community planning, sustainability and resilience.

'Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.

Green Infrastructure also encompasses river systems and coastal environments (these are sometimes referred to as Blue Infrastructure).

Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.'

Natural England Green Infrastructure Guidance (2009).

The importance of vegetation in urban areas has long been recognised (e.g. Oke, 1982, Huang et al., 1987, Nowak et al., 2010). Amongst other benefits, vegetation provides shading, evaporative cooling and rainwater interception (Gill et al., 2007). Tree canopy cover has a strong influence on a number of factors including energy demand, air quality and noise pollution, biodiversity, ameliorating high urban summer temperatures and human health and wellbeing (Davies et al., 2017).

Canopy cover assessments help to observe change over time at a relatively low cost in comparison to field surveys. Quantifying tree canopy cover has been identified by many authors (Britt and Johnston, 2008; Escobedo and Nowak, 2009; Schwab, 2009) to be one of the first steps in the management of the urban forest.

There is a growing body of international research and literature which supports the theory that overall, increasing tree cover in our towns and cities provides multiple benefits at little cost. For example, a study in Torbay found that for every £1 spent on an Oak tree, £4.96 was returned in benefits, taking into account all the costs on management and maintenance, whilst only being able to value just 2 of the associated benefits (pollution removal and carbon sequestration - Sunderland et al., 2012). A similar study in New York found that for every \$1 spent on its street trees \$5 were returned in benefits (Wells, 2012).

Trees and urban tree cover are also implicitly linked to other key concepts that are emphasised and highlighted within The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Sustainability, ecosystem services and green infrastructure are all dependent on the significant contribution that trees in the urban forest make. Of the 16 sections in the NPPF trees are able to contribute to meeting the objectives of 11 of them. For example, increased tree cover can increase economic growth (Rolls and Sunderland, 2014) and prosperity as leafier environments improve consumer spending (Wolf, 2005). Additionally, businesses are prepared to pay greater ground rents associated with higher paid earners who are also more productive (Kaplan (1993), Wolf (1998), Laverne & Winson-Geideman (2003)), house prices increase and crime is reduced thereby "Building a strong, competitive economy", (Section 1 NPPF, paragraph 18). This is also directly linked to "Ensuring the vitality of town centres" (Section 2).

In addition:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy
- Improving journey quality and encouraging use of alternative transport corridors
- Increasing property prices and reducing crime
- Improving the 'liveability' of urban areas, increasing happiness and reducing stress
- Providing habitat, increasing biodiversity and therefore recreational value

A full summary of how trees benefit local communities within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework is provided in Appendix III.

Note: Canopy cover is not to be confused with total leaf area, which seeks to estimate (all of the layers within a tree) canopy expressed as a volume. Total leaf area is normally expressed in cubic metres (m³) or using leaf area index (LAI).

1.2 Aims and Objectives

This is a factual, evidence-based document which seeks to underpin the aspirational, ongoing aim of providing a positive argument to support policy development in favour of developing a robust, interconnected urban forest network. The urban forest "is the ecosystem containing all of the trees, plants and associated animals in the urban environment, both in and around the city" (Sands, 2005). This report uses the term 'urban forest' when collectively referencing the urban trees of Southend.

The main objective of this report is to provide a snapshot of canopy cover in the borough of Southend. It is important to be able to measure this vital component of green infrastructure to ensure that it will be embedded and enhanced as part of the growth agenda for the area.

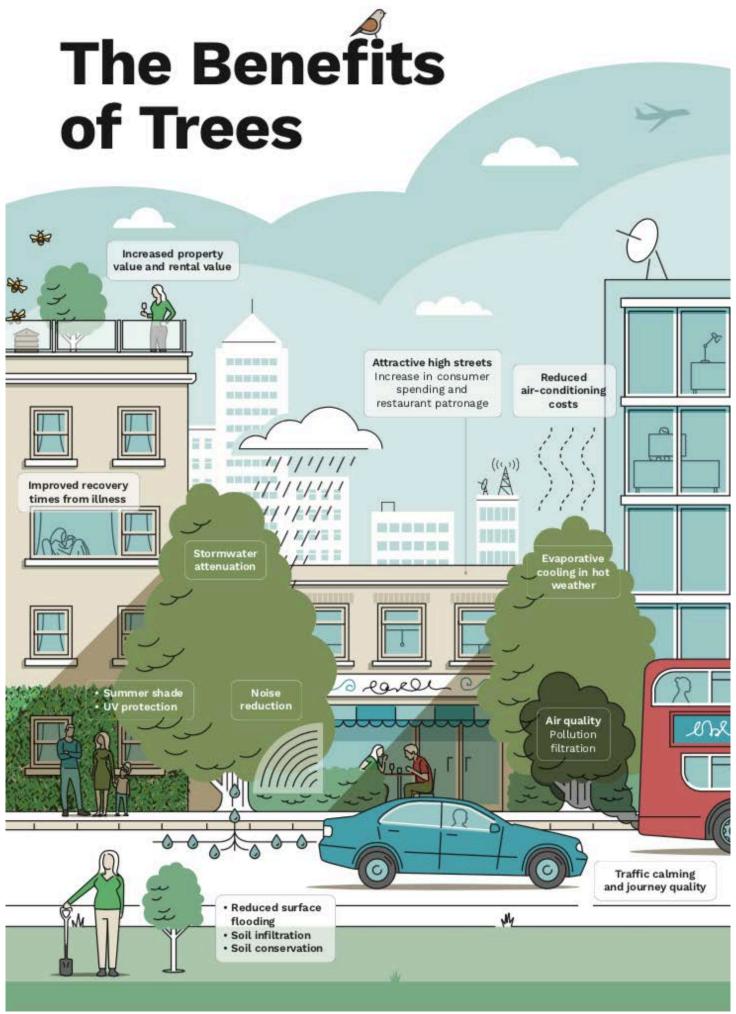
The original brief was to:

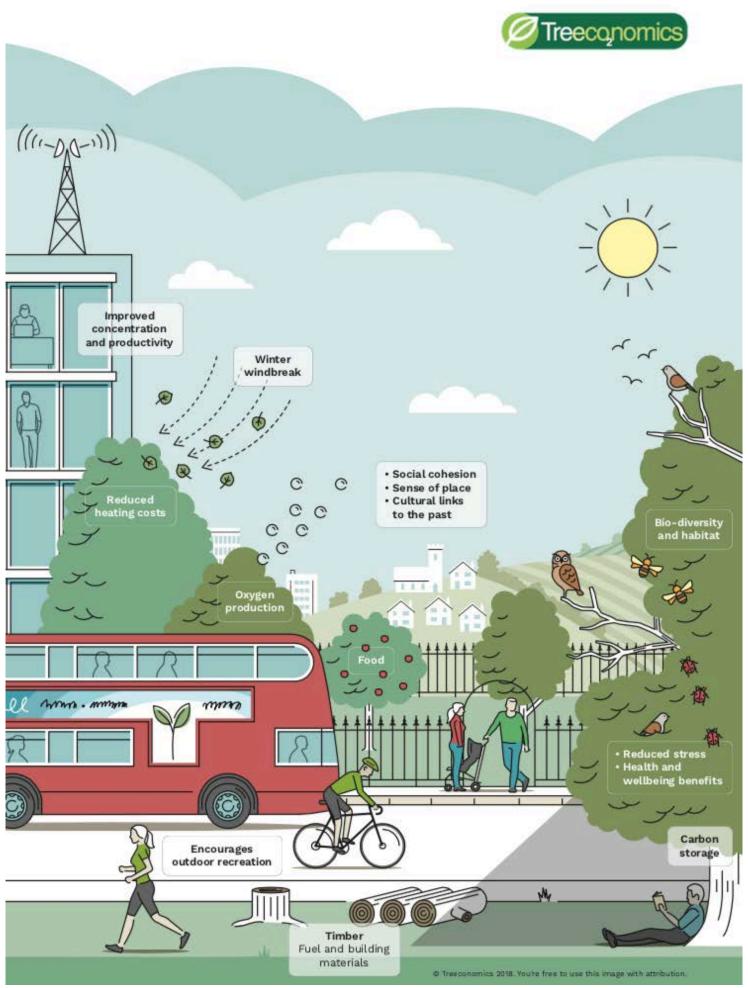
- use Bluesky's National Tree Map data to calculate percentage tree canopy cover for each of the 17 wards of Southend;
- compare tree canopy cover with available ONS statistical data on Health, Crime and Deprivation.

A key area where this information is particularly relevant is in planning and development; this document has been written with an emphasis on informing local planning policy (see also Appendix III and IV). However, its purpose is not to create policy within the document itself, but to highlight the importance of the urban forest as a distinct and unique element of green infrastructure networks.

The data presented here can be used to inform tree policies and other environmental strategies so that residents and visitors to Southend can continue to enjoy the benefits of urban trees long into the future. The information will be useful in targeting future planting and management schemes. Tree planting, protection and maintenance as a means to increase canopy cover will be an important part of delivering equitable access to the benefits trees provide.

This study also explores any possible correlations between tree canopy cover and human health and wellbeing, by comparing canopy cover information with selected, geographically explicit data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).





1.3 The Role of Trees in Cities

In 2014, around 54% of the world's population were living in towns and cities. That figure is set to increase to 70% by 2050 (Ekelund, 2015). In addition, it is estimated that almost two-thirds of the urban environment which will exist in 2030 is yet to be built. This suggests that the rate of urban development is set to accelerate considerably.

If we are to produce happy, healthy communities, it is paramount that we create and maintain healthy and sustainable urban environments, designed to incorporate inter-connected elements of green infrastructure and urban forest to improve the liveability of the places in which people live.

Understanding the value and extent of canopy cover in the borough of Southend will inform decisions that will improve human health and environmental quality.

In a study of 283 UK towns and cities, Doick et al. (2017) recommended a minimum canopy cover target of 20% (with 15% for coastal locations), and currently many UK cities are aiming to exceed this. For example, London is aiming for 30% canopy cover and both Torbay and Plymouth have set goals of 20% canopy cover. Bristol has set a target to double its canopy cover by 2050 from 15 to 30%. This therefore gives an indication of the potential canopy cover goals for the areas surveyed in this report.

2. Data analysis

2.1 Methodology

GIS Project boundaries of Southend and its individual wards were accessed using the London Datastore. Additional background mapping data was obtained from various open source web portals, referenced on the maps.

Tree canopy cover within the borough of Southend was assessed using Bluesky's National Tree Map. This data provides polygons of the canopy across Southend and idealised crown polygons, along with point data representing each tree³. This information can be used to estimate the canopy cover percentage for the area as a whole and for each ward.

Health and socio-economic data has been obtained from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Public Health England (PHE) official published data.

Where the data obtained was presented at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level, it has been aggregated to ward level. This was carried out using the 'Lower Layer Super Output Area (2011) to Ward (2018) Lookup in England and Wales' table provided by ONS.

The most recent and up to date available data has been used within this report, and the year of publication can be seen in the Bibliography. These three datasets were combined using Geographical Information System (GIS) software to provide the maps used in this report.

³Definitions of crown polygon types are provided in Appendix I

3. Results

3.1 Canopy Cover

3.1.1 Average Canopy Cover

The average canopy cover across the borough of Southend was calculated at 12%.

Canopy cover by ward is depicted in Figure 3 and Figure 4 (overleaf).

Canopy cover values range from 8.5% in Westborough Ward, to 23.3% in Belfairs Ward of Southend.

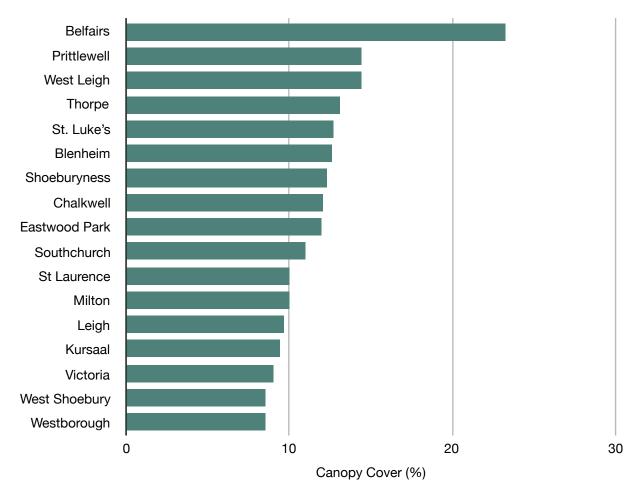


Figure 3: Canopy Cover ranked by % area per ward for Southend

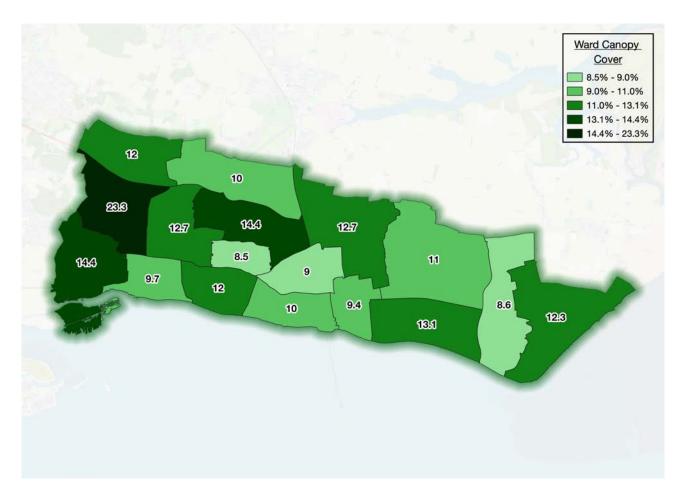


Figure 4: Map of Canopy Cover by ward

3.1.2 Canopy Cover by Ward (Individual Maps)



Figure 5: Belfairs Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 23%.



Figure 6: Blenheim Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 13%.



Figure 7: Chalkwell Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 12%.



Figure 9: Kursaal Park Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 9%.

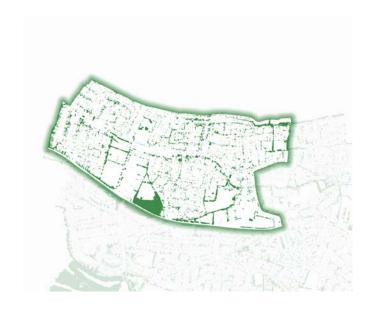


Figure 8: Eastwood Park Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 12%.



Figure 10: Leigh Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 10%.



Figure 11: Milton Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 10%.



Figure 13: Shoeburyness Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 12%.

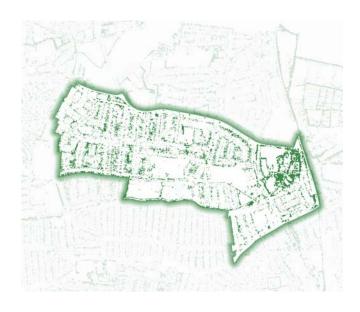


Figure 12: Prittlewell Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 14%.

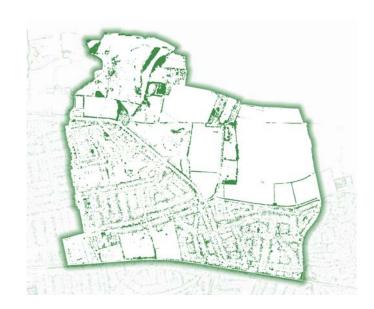


Figure 14: Southchurch Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 11%.

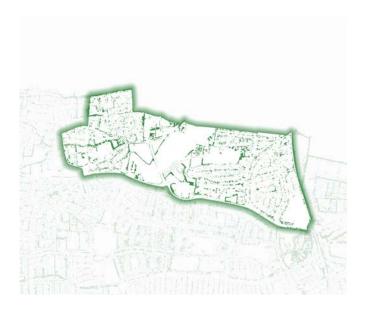


Figure 15: St Laurence Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 10%.



Figure 17: Thorpe Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 13%.

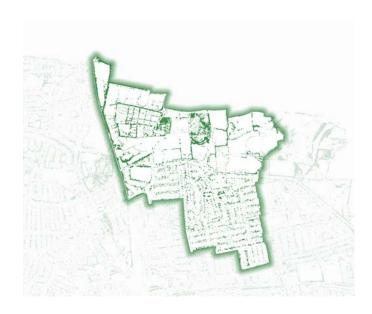


Figure 16: St Luke's Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 13%.

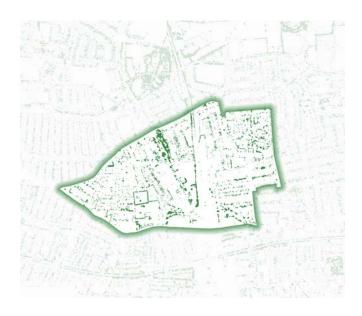


Figure 18: Victoria Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 9%.



Figure 19: West Leigh Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 14%.



Figure 20: West Shoebury Ward Bluesky Canopy Cover is 9%.

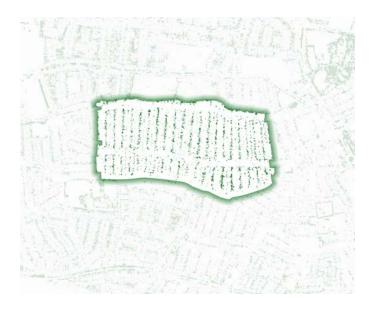


Figure 21: Westborough Bluesky Canopy Cover is 9%.

3.2 How does Southend compare to previous Canopy Cover Estimates?

Comparing canopy cover values between cities is an interesting exercise but should be made with caution as there are many attributes of a city which will affect urban forest structure and function. Furthermore, other studies may have used different methods to assess canopy cover. Nonetheless, these figures can be informative in providing an approximate benchmark for Southend.

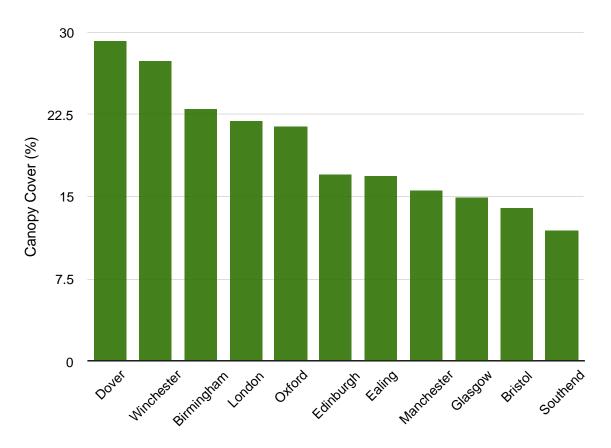


Figure 22: Canopy Cover estimates for selected UK urban areas

In comparison with other studies (Urban Tree Cover, 2018), Southend-on-Sea's canopy cover is below the average (17%) estimated in the 320 towns and cities surveyed in the UK. However, Southend-on-Sea's canopy cover does fall close to the coastal town average (13.7%) and is higher than the majority (20/30 towns, which had below 10% canopy cover) (Doick *et al*, 2017).

4. Canopy Cover and Quality of Life

This section compares canopy cover with various quality of life indicators for Southend-on-Sea. These are shown for the ward level, for appropriate comparison to the canopy cover assessment.

The information presented in the charts below does not necessarily show a clear correlation, nor does it show a causation. This is important to consider when interpreting or using the presented data. However, it highlights the fact that areas with higher tree canopy cover generally perform well on other indicators (e.g. greater tree cover = less "deprived").

The insert on each map shows the corresponding canopy cover replicated from Figure 4 (page 15).

4.1 Life Expectancy

Measuring life expectancy is increasing across the UK, and gives an indication of the health of the population. Across Southend-on-Sea, there are stark differences in life expectancy.

The difference between average male life expectancy between Kursaal and West Leigh is 8.4 years (Kursaal having lower life expectancy). For female life expectancy, Victoria ward presents the lowest life expectancy at 78.7 years, and Thorpe shows the highest with 88.2 years.

The results (see Figure 8) show that in areas with higher tree canopy cover, life expectancy is also generally higher. However other socio-economic factors will also influence the result (for example higher paid families and individuals, leading healthier lifestyles in leafier environments). Yet, these results do serve to highlight that access to tree canopy cover is not always equitable and issues of environmental justice need to be considered when devising tree strategies or developing new areas for housing.

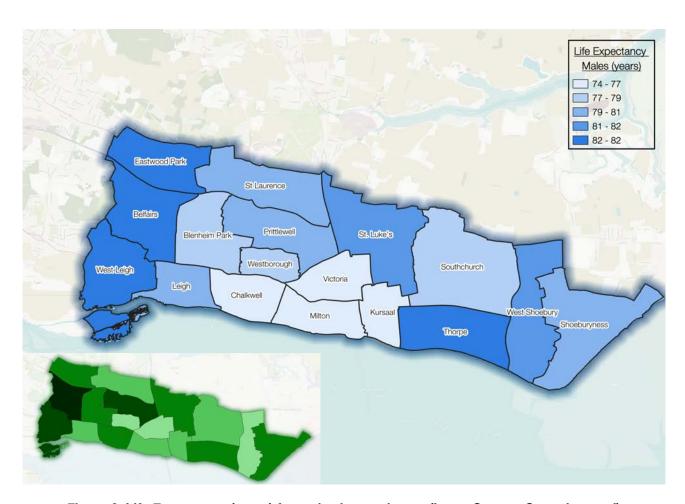


Figure 6: Life Expectancy (years) for males by ward area. (Inset: Canopy Cover by ward)

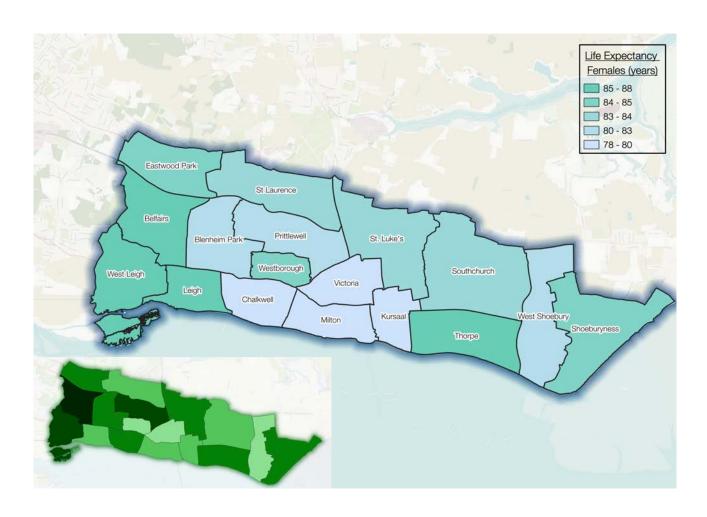


Figure 7: Life Expectancy (years) for females by ward area. (Inset: Canopy Cover by ward)

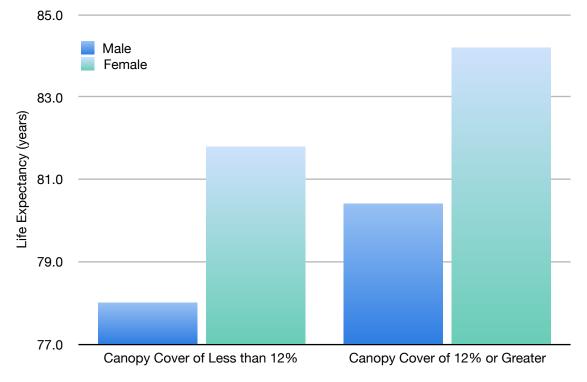


Figure 8: Healthy Life Expectancy and average ward Canopy Cover

4.2 Hospital Admissions

Trees help to promote healthy environments and there is a growing body of research which shows people are happier in leafier environments, with reduced levels of stress and blood pressure (Hartig, 2003).

Stress is one of the key contributing factors to mental health issues, which access to good quality green spaces can alleviate (White, 2013). Depressive disorders are now the foremost cause of disability in middle-to-high income countries and can be precursors to chronic health problems.

Increased tree cover can help to promote good health (and therefore reduced numbers of hospital admissions) passively, by filtering air pollution and lowering peak summer temperatures, for example, and by promoting physical activity. Where green space is available, it can be used for physical activity and may even help to reduce social health inequalities (Mitchell & Popham, 2008). This is important because in Europe 1 in every 15 deaths is associated with a lack of physical activity. A 2019 review of Southend-on-Sea's physical heath found that 24% of adults are "inactive", meaning they engage in less than 30 minutes of "moderate intensity activity on a weekly basis". This falls in line with the average for the UK. However, 74% of Southend-on-Sea's 15 year olds had a "mean daily sedentary time" of over 7 hours per day. This is "worse" than the UK average. Southend's 15 year olds were more physically active than then UK average, "for at least one hour per day, seven days a week" (Southend-on-Sea, 2019).

Areas with more than Southend-on-Sea's average canopy cover of 12% correlate with both higher life expectancy and lower average numbers of hospital admissions. Areas with less than 12% canopy cover correlate with lower life expectancy and higher average numbers of hospital admissions.

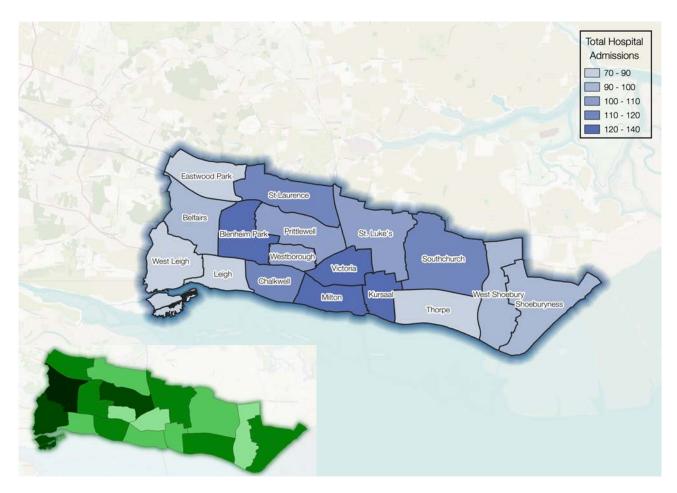


Figure 9: Total hospital admissions (emergency and elective) by Ward area. (Inset: Canopy cover by ward).

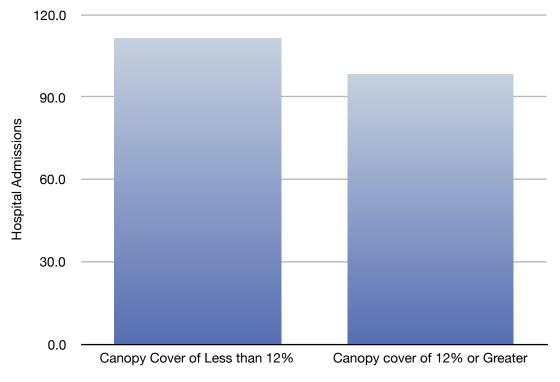


Figure 10: Hospital Admissions and average Tree Cover.

4.3 Index of Multiple Deprivation

Data concerning deprivation was collected at the LSOA scale. The average for each ward is displayed in the following charts and figures, contrasting the wards with less than 12% canopy cover and those with a canopy cover equal to or greater than 12%.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores relate to a proportion of the relevant population experiencing that type of deprivation.

The scores for IMD do not relate straightforwardly to the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation. For example, an area with an IMD score of 60 is not necessarily twice as deprived as an area with a score of 30. The scores are derived from the raw data, which is why the following maps do not share a common scale.

IMD combines information from seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.

The domains are combined using the following weights:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

The weights were derived from consideration of the academic literature on poverty and deprivation, as well as the levels of robustness of the indicators. Combining information from the seven domains produces an overall relative measure of deprivation - the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The relationship between canopy cover and IMD is illustrated in Figures 11 and 12 (below). These figures show that for IMD, on average, areas with above average canopy cover scored lower (18.2) than areas with below average canopy cover (30.0).

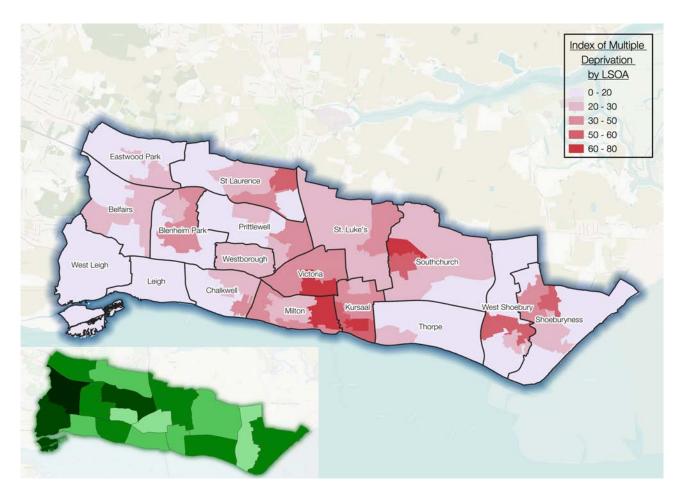


Figure 11: Index of Multiple Deprivation by Ward area. (Inset: Canopy Cover by ward).

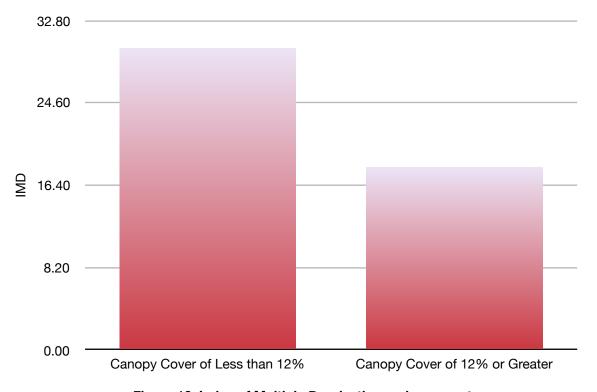


Figure 12: Index of Multiple Deprivation and average tree cover.

4.4 Crime

The crime domain measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at a local level. Crime levels have increased between September 2018 to August 2019 (Police UK, 2019). There are, however, variations between Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) data output areas across a small spatial area. Separating out the relative influences of a large number of factors on the presence of crime would require a detailed analysis, which is beyond the scope of this report.

Increasing tree cover can be one way to create safe and accessible environments, which are also visually attractive. However, poorly maintained areas can increase the perception of crime. Studies in The US have demonstrated that a 10% increase in tree cover correlated to a 12% reduction in crime (Troy, 2012). Furthermore, regarding minor crimes, there is less graffiti, vandalism, and littering in outdoor spaces with natural landscapes than in comparable spaces with little green open space (Brunson, 1999). There is a positive correlation between high canopy cover and lower crime rate in Southend-on-Sea, as shown in Figures 13 and 14 (below).

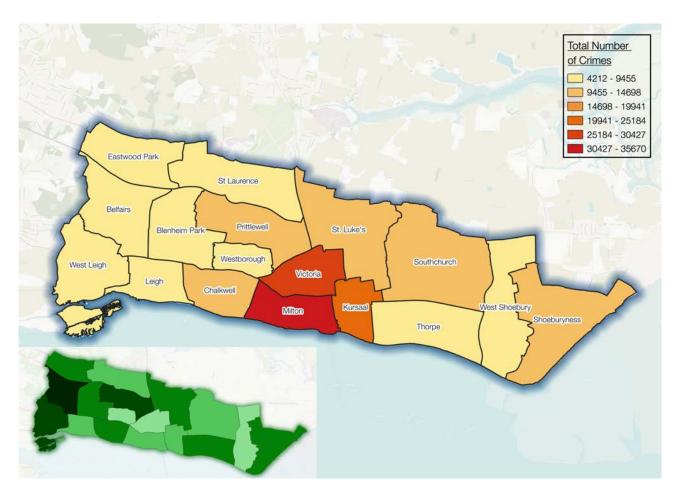


Figure 13: Total Crimes & ASB by Ward (Inset: Canopy Cover by ward).

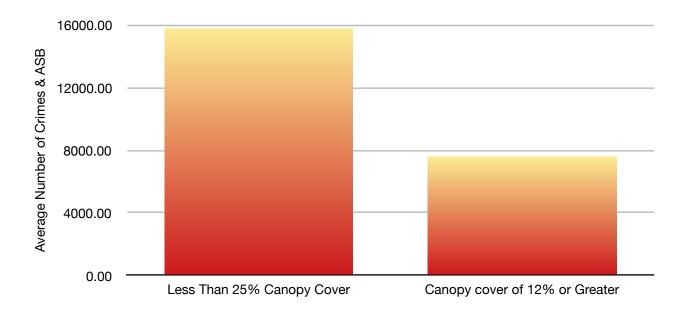


Figure 14: Total Crimes & ASB and Average Tree Cover

4.5 House Prices

Donovan *et al.* examined relationships between house prices and trees in Florida. The study found that house prices were significantly higher when trees were located within 152m of a property. The results of the study highlighted the relationships between house value and proximity to the natural environment (Donovan *et al.*, 2019). A similar study carried out in Australia also found that trees (in particular to this study, broadleaved trees) increased the "median property price" when located on street verges (Pandit *et al.*, 2013). Some studies have suggested that individuals should prepare to pay a higher price if they live in close proximity to woodlands and forests. One study reported that "many real estate professionals agree that houses with mature trees are preferred to comparable houses without mature trees" (Mansfield *et al.*, 2002). This may be the result of tree cover improving the "scenic quality" of a town as opposed to the houses being "more valuable"⁴.

The house price domain reports the median price paid for residential dwellings and are calculated using Land Registry data on property transactions. Please note that the most current house price data obtained were for the year 2015.

As the charts and the map in Figure 15 and 16 (below) show, house prices in areas of higher canopy cover are slightly higher than those in areas of lower canopy cover.

32

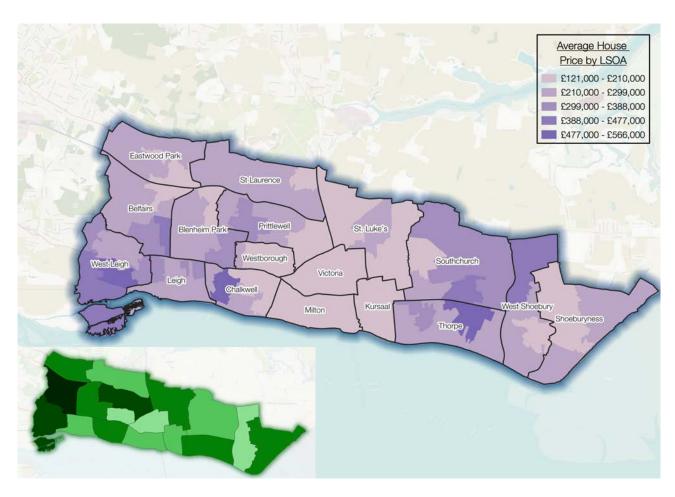


Figure 15: House Price (£) data (2018) by Ward area. (Inset: Canopy Cover by Ward).

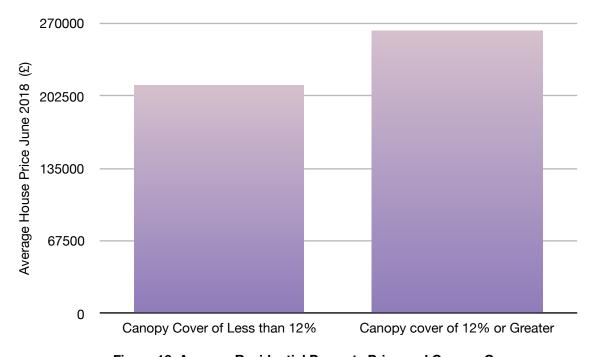


Figure 16: Average Residential Property Price and Canopy Cover

4.6 Educational Achievement

Studies have connected access to nature and the impact upon performance of students. 'Improved focus, vitality, productivity, and reduced stress' greatly contribute to educational success. It is suggested that improved urban design with a greater focus on green infrastructure could mitigate negative effects upon academic achievement (Hodson et al, 2017). A separate study supported this theory through concluding that the current body of evidence indicates that greater amounts of trees on campuses are associated with increased performance (Kweon et al, 2017).

Educational Achievement is reported at the ward level by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The variable used in this report is the percentage of pupils achieving five A*-C at GCSE Level. Whilst the grading system has now changed, only the historical data collected using the A*-F grading system is currently available.

The charts and map below show that between areas with less than average canopy cover and areas with more than average, there is a difference of 16.1% in GCSE attainment.

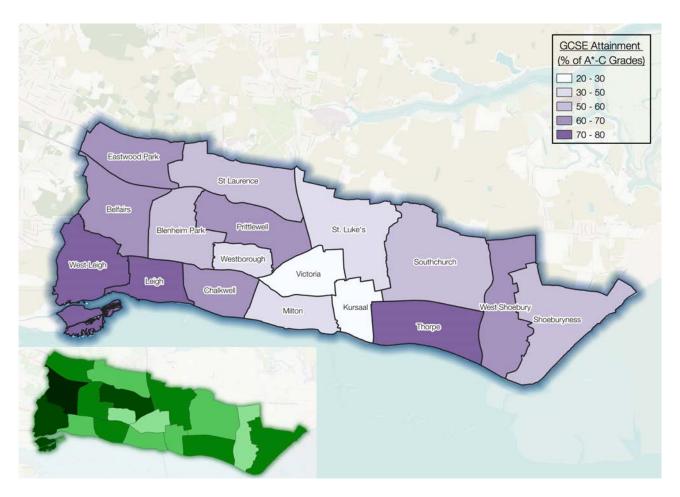


Figure 17: GCSE Attainment (% of 5 A*-C Grades) by Ward area. (Inset: Canopy Cover by Ward).

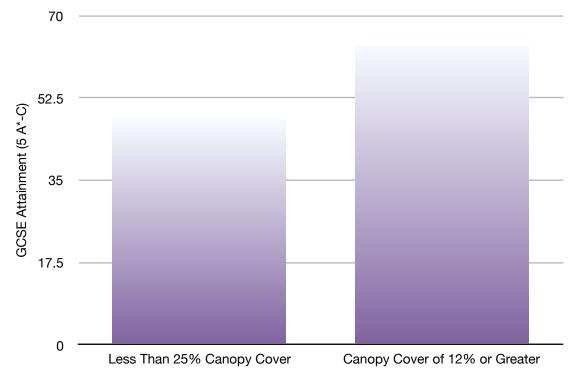


Figure 18: Number of students achieving 5 A*- C GCSE grades and Canopy Cover.

5. Conclusions

This preliminary study presents data on the canopy cover found in the borough of Southend-on-Sea and within its smaller administrative boundaries. It also establishes a baseline which can be used to monitor future progress, or for use in further research.

Primarily, the data collected can inform where there are opportunities to increase tree cover by highlighting areas of low tree canopy cover and the available plantable space within them. Furthermore, planting could also be targeted to the areas which are also the most deprived.

This report highlights the quantity of scientific research which supports the assertion that trees provide a wide range of valuable ecosystem services. Southend as a whole has 12% tree canopy cover, which ranges from 8.5% in Westborough Ward, to 23.3% in Belfairs Ward. Within many of the most deprived areas, the canopy cover is much lower, and so too is the value of ecosystem services provided.

Increasing tree cover in Southend-on-Sea will provide multiple benefits to the community and should be part of the solution in creating resilient places for people to live and work.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated to assist Southend Borough Council to make tree management decisions on the basis of the best available information and to ensure that resources are focused to maximise the benefits trees can provide, and that they can be targeted to areas where they are most needed.

6.1 Set a Canopy Cover Target

Many towns and cities in both this country and internationally have set a canopy cover target as a strategic objective. Typically, these are in the range of 20-30% (See Appendix II).

The level of ecosystem services increases as the percentage of canopy cover increases. However, it is clear that a canopy cover needs to not only be aspirational but also achievable, taking account of local geographies, land use and industrial heritage.

Decision-makers should seek to maintain rather than increase canopy cover in the wards with the highest canopy cover, whilst seeking to maximise tree planting in the most deprived areas that also lack tree canopy cover.

It is suggested that Southend-on-Sea should aim to increase canopy cover towards 15% as targeted for coastal towns by 2050. A further feasibility Tree Plant Strategy would identify a realistic and aspirational target.

6.2 Use the mapping to support future planting decisions

The canopy results presented within this report could also be used in a Tree Plant Strategy⁵ to look at opportunities for increasing canopy cover in the borough of Southend-on-Sea. Factors such as building density (includes all artificial surfaces: roads, paths, houses, etc.), air pollution, flooding and tree canopy cover could be combined within a Geographical Information System. All these factors could then be weighted and combined to give an overall score. The higher the score, the greater the opportunity to create woodlands and to plant trees.

⁵ Produced for Islington Borough Council, this Tree Plant Strategy is not currently publicly available.

At the most basic level the maps could identify areas where there is:

- a high level of deprivation;
- low canopy cover;
- room to plant more trees.

As part of this study, Southend-on-Sea now has readily accessible and useable map files illustrating the tree canopy cover over the city. It is a straightforward and easily repeatable task to identify new planting areas at the ward level. This will help focus where to target resources for future tree planting.

6.3 Conduct an i-Tree Eco Survey

An i-Tree Eco sample survey would:

- 1. Provide more detailed information on the structure and composition of the urban forest such as the species present, the size and age (structural diversity) and health of the trees;
- 2. Risk Assess the impacts of pests and disease upon tree health;
- 3. Inform and facilitate planning of future planting and maintenance activities to ensure that current canopy levels can at least be sustained, if not improved where appropriate;
- 4. Quantify and estimate the economic value of the benefits trees are delivering.

This comprehensive understanding of the tree population within the study area will provide a basis for evidence-led, strategic planning and management of the urban forest and associated benefits, including best practices such as:

- Strategic management of risks i-Tree Eco provides information on management concerns such as tree health, diversity, infrastructure conflicts and potential impact of pests such as Asian long-horned beetle, emerald ash borer, and chalara dieback of ash, enabling a thorough understanding of vulnerability. This can be balanced with the understanding of benefits and values that i-Tree Eco also provides, thus facilitating robust decision-making.
- Financial planning The value assessment i-Tree Eco provides enables adherence to asset
 management and good practice for financial planning allocating resources for investment based
 on needs and in commensurate amount to the asset value.

- **Benchmarking and monitoring** The figures i-Tree Eco provide are standardised, thus making it easy to carry out year-on-year comparison and to benchmark with other tree populations / areas.
- A compelling set of key facts for advocacy i-Tree Eco provides the information needed to
 develop strong headlines and a common language on the relevance of trees, allowing more effective
 communication and engagement of new audiences.

Example 1: The impact of the i-Tree Eco findings on tree planting in London Victoria.

In London Victoria, the i-Tree Eco study highlighted the dependence of the community on the large, mature London Plane for delivery of benefits, and a tree planting strategy was commissioned to seek to improve the age, size and species structure of the tree population.

Example 2: The impact of the i-Tree Eco findings on financial planning in Torbay. Torbay's study revealed that the trees stored $\mathfrak{L}5.1$ million pounds worth of carbon and removed 50 tons of pollutants from the air every year, a service worth $\mathfrak{L}1.4$ million per annum. This information was crucial in making the case for trees and to secure investment for their ongoing management. In Torbay it led to an extra $\mathfrak{L}25,000$ to the tree planting and maintenance budget in both the year of study and in 2014.

Example 3: The impact of the i-Tree Eco findings on public engagement in Wrexham. In Wrexham, on the day following the release of the i-Tree Eco report and before the local authority had issued their press release, the local media got interested in the key findings and put in the limelight the value of the benefits the local trees brings to the area. Such level of interest by the local press on the positive impacts of trees had never happened before.

6.4 Produce a Plan for Trees

The urban forest of Southend-on-Sea should be considered a unique attribute of the green infrastructure of the city with a variety of stakeholders who share an interest in its preservation and enhancement. To recognise its importance and uniqueness, the city would benefit from the preparation of a comprehensive tree strategy/urban forest masterplan for public and privately owned trees, which will:

1. Describe the nature and extent of the urban forest of Southend-on-Sea and provide a vision that is needed in the future, together with an action plan for delivery and monitoring;

- 2. Set individual canopy cover targets for key land uses and/or geographic areas as Key Performance Indicators, which is integral to the delivery of the Local Plan;
- 3. Set ambitious targets for cooperative development of the urban forest with communities, local business, utility companies and so on;
- 4. Monitor canopy cover as a Key Performance Indicator for management of the urban forest;
- 5. Identify and prioritise action through planting and management to ensure that tree cover is maintained, sustained and improved where this is appropriate;
- 6. Describe the role of trees within the landscape setting of Southend-on-Sea;
- 7. Develop a set of principles, standards, policies and constraints relating to trees that can be used to guide the design, development, deployment and operation of services delivered by trees in the borough of Southend-on-Sea.

The i-Tree Eco survey and the Plan for Trees will be essential tools to ensure trees are an integral part of the planning system as the population grows.

6.5 Tree Canopy Cover and Development Viability

This report highlights a lot of research which supports the assertion that trees provide a wide range of ecosystem services. Whilst the canopy cover for Southend-on-Sea as a whole is 12%, some of the more deprived areas possess much lower levels of canopy cover. Consequently, the value of ecosystem services provided by trees in these areas is much lower.

Many towns and cities in the UK have set a target for the level of canopy cover as a strategic objective. Typically these are in the range of 20-30%.

A previous canopy cover study for Wycombe showed that dwelling densities of 29 - 34 /ha could be designed to accommodate projected canopy cover of 25.6 - 32%. This projection also allowed for the prevailing trend of predominantly low-rise, detached residential development. More attached housing and multi-residential development, for example, would allow for more communal space with increased canopy cover without sacrificing total dwelling footprint size.

Many factors will combine to influence the delivery of a desired level of future canopy cover in a development. These include:

1. Level of existing canopy cover (i.e. retention of existing trees)

- Guidance and legislation (e.g. BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations; Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended))
- 2. Requirements from new tree planting (i.e. mature tree canopy projection)
 - Number, size and crown shape of trees
 - Soil requirements (quality and quantity)
- 3. Estimated time to achieve canopy cover target
- 4. Design of layout to accommodate future growth
- 5. Success in establishing trees and achieving longevity in the landscape. (BS 8545)

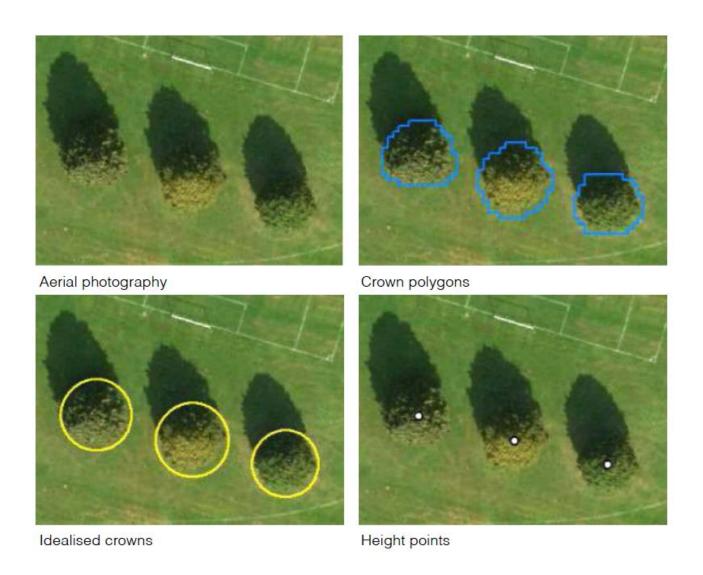
Incorporating these factors into the urban forest masterplan/strategy would help to engage a variety of stakeholders, including across the departments of the planning authority. This is key to incorporating canopy cover targets into the design process of new development.

Appendix I.

Blue Sky National Tree Map Technical Notes

The National Tree Map (NTM) by Bluesky International Ltd is a commercial product which seeks to identify all trees and shrubs in England and Wales over 3m in height.

Classification of trees is achieved using stereo aerial photography (RGB/CIR), Digital elevation models (DTM/DSM) and hydrological models. The process produces three datasets: crown polygons, idealised crowns and height points. The map operates a 5 year rolling update program (NTM, 2015).



The National Tree Map consists of three GIS datasets:

- 1. Crown Polygons (Vector Polygon) Representing individual trees or closely grouped tree crowns
- 2. Idealised Crowns (Vector Polygon) Crown polygons visualised as circles for ease of use. Area measurement remains true to original crown feature
- 3. Height points (Vector Point) Detailing the centre point and height of each crown.

The point locations of each tree in the NTM dataset allowed each individual tree to be assigned a ward, a lower layer super output area (LSOA) and a middle layer super output area (MSOA), allowing for comparing canopy cover with other statistics from ONS.

Bluesky claims that the product captures more than 90% of all canopy coverage and within 50m of buildings greater than 95% all canopy coverage (NTM, 2015).

Appendix II

Trees in the National Policy Planning Framework

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - February 2019) makes specific mention of trees and woodland more frequently than the document which preceded it, in which trees were only mentioned in the context of 'aged or veteran trees'. However, trees and urban tree cover are implicitly linked to other key concepts that are emphasised and highlighted within the framework.

Sustainability, ecosystem services and green infrastructure are all dependent on the significant contribution that trees in the urban forest make.

Of the 16 sections in the revised NPPF, trees are able to contribute to meeting the objectives of 11 of them.

Trees and the benefits which they provide are crucial to securing economic, social and environmentally sustainable development - NPPF Section 2 ("Achieving sustainable development"). Trees contribute to positive improvements in the quality of the built and natural environment and also have a central role to play in the strategic policy making of local authorities. Paragraph 20 of the NPPF sets out how council policies must make provision for the:

"conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation"

Increased tree cover can increase economic growth (Rolls and Sunderland, 2014) and prosperity (Wolf, 2005) as leafier environments improve consumer spending. Additionally, businesses are prepared to pay greater ground rents (Laverne & Winson_Geideman, 2003), associated with higher paid earners who are also more productive (Kaplan, 1993; Wolf, 1998). House prices increase and crime is reduced (Wolf (2007), Kuo & Sullivan (2001a, 2001b)). This accords with NPPF (Section 6) "Building a strong, competitive economy" and is also directly linked to (Section 7) "Ensuring the vitality of town centres". Furthermore, trees also contribute to "Supporting a prosperous rural economy" (included as a separate heading within Section 6 "Building a strong, competitive economy"), through the provision of non woody forest products, wood fuel and timber.

Trees also improve journey quality (Davies et al., 2014) (Section 9) "Promoting sustainable transport" and can encourage use of alternative transport corridors such as pavements and cycleways (Trees and Design Action Group, 2014). Additionally, trees near road networks absorb pollution and airborne

particulates, helping to fulfil obligations under local air quality action plans (Escobedo and Nowak, 2009), reduce noise (Van Renterghem, 2014; Van Renterghem et al., 2012) and lower traffic speeds (Mok et al., 2003).

The presence of trees helps to raise property prices thereby contributing to delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, a theme which is central to the NPPF. The incorporation of trees into new development, when done in the right way so that there is minimal conflict, will provide a positive contribution to good design. Section 12 of the NPPF "Achieving well-designed places" refers in many places to principles which would benefit from the careful consideration of the use of trees in development design.

Trees not only contribute to 'attractive' and 'comfortable' streetscapes (or tree-scapes) but also are an asset which appreciates, delivering even greater benefits as they grow, adding to the quality of the area during, over and above the lifetime of the development (paragraph 127). They are essential to the incorporation of 'green and other public space' (paragraph 127e) and in the 'provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure' (paragraph 91). Local authorities must also 'plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities...' (paragraph 92), which includes the provision of public open space. Increases in tree cover have even been shown to reduce crime therefore helping to ensure places are 'safe and accessible' (paragraph 91).

Trees help in delivering the requirements of Section 8 "Promoting healthy and safe communities". There is a growing body of research that shows people are happier in leafier environments and with access to the natural environment: hospital recovery times (Ulrich, 1984) and stress (Korpela et al., 2008; Hauru et al., 2012) are reduced and birth weights are increased (Donovan et al., 2011), meaning fewer health issues later in life. Conversely, when tree cover is reduced, asthma rates and respiratory problems often increase. Trees thereby promote healthy communities. They also provide a cultural link to the wider environment (paragraph 172) and act as a focal point for shared space and can improve the provision of high quality open space (paragraph 96).

In "Protecting Greenbelt" (Section 13), trees are also key to enhancing biodiversity and providing places of recreation (paragraph 141). Trees are also fundamental to strategies which aim to help "Meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal" coastal what? (Section 14). Trees reduce stormwater runoff by attenuating precipitation in their canopies (Thomas and Nisbet, 2007; Nisbet and Thomas, 2006) and also reduce peak summer temperatures in both the urban and wider environment by several degrees (Doick and Hutchings, 2012), thereby helping to:

"...shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure" (Paragraph 148).

Additionally, "Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures⁴⁸. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts" (Paragraph 149).

New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure - this means trees are often the single largest component of green infrastructure.

Perhaps most commonly understood are trees' ability to "Conserve and enhance the natural environment" (Section 15). Specifically, in Paragraph 170 of the NPPF it states that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment..." "...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland" (Paragraph 170 b).

A key reason for using tree canopy cover as a tool to maintain and enhance tree cover across Central Bedfordshire and within individual developments is that it offers a means by which improvements and "development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity (Paragraph 175)". Measuring canopy cover provides a means by which net change in habitat and biodiversity can be monitored.

As well as providing economic benefits, previously planted trees provide a cultural link to the past (Section 16) "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment" and protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Old, mature and veteran trees that have cultural significance will require more than just the consideration of their habitat and biodiversity and amenity value.

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Trees make a significant contribution to good design, which is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning, and should therefore contribute positively to making places better for people.

Regardless of any other 'external drivers', under the current legislation (TCPA Act 1990), Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a statutory duty to consider the protection and planting of trees when granting planning permission for proposed development. The potential effect of development on trees,

whether statutorily protected (e.g. by a tree preservation order or by their inclusion within a conservation area) or not, is a material consideration that must be taken into account when considering planning applications. In order to exercise that duty adequately, LPAs need to have an understanding of the existing tree resource so that they can make an informed judgement about what might be needed/appropriate, in terms of tree impact, from developments.

Appendix IV

Summary of Ecosystem Services Provided by Trees Provisioning services⁶

Food provision

Urban forests are regarded primarily as service providers rather than as sources of goods. However, trees and woodlands provide humans with food resources both directly (e.g. fruits, berries and nuts that are produced by the trees themselves) and indirectly (e.g. mushrooms and deer that reside in woodland habitats).

Fuel provision (wood fuel)

Woody biomass is the accumulated mass, above and below ground, of the roots, wood, bark, and leaves of living and dead trees and woody shrubs. Through the processes of harvesting and combustion, woody biomass can be used as a source of heat, electricity, biofuel and biochemicals.

Wood provision

Trees can provide timber for construction, veneers and flooring, as well as wood chip and pulp for boards and paper.

Habitat provision

Trees provide unique ecological niches for a variety of wildlife. This in turn adds to the biodiversity of the local environment and increases the enjoyment and attractiveness of an area for locals and visitors alike, thus increasing economic opportunities.

⁶ This summary is taken from Davies *et al.*, 2016, which should be referred to for more detailed information on each service.

Regulating services

Carbon sequestration and storage

Trees act as a sink for carbon dioxide (CO₂) by fixing carbon during photosynthesis and storing excess carbon as biomass. CO₂ sequestration refers to the annual rate of CO₂ storage in above- and below-ground biomass. Increasing the number of trees can therefore slow the accumulation of atmospheric carbon, a contributor to climate change.

Temperature regulation

Trees are not only good reflectors of short-wave radiation, but their canopies also shade low albedo surfaces that would otherwise absorb such radiation, reducing surface temperatures and convective heat. Trees also reduce warming of the local environment through the process of evapo-transpiration where the evaporation of water from leaf surfaces converts solar energy into latent rather than sensible heat, thus 'cooling' the surrounding air and improving human thermal comfort.

Stormwater regulation

Urban trees and woodlands regulate stormwater by intercepting and storing rainfall on their leaves, which either subsequently evaporates, or reaches the groundwater more slowly through gradual release as through-fall. Trees also improve infiltration into the soil by channelling water onto pervious surfaces around the trunk, and through the soil along root channels.

Air purification

Trees remove air pollutants from the atmosphere mainly through dry deposition, a mechanism by which gaseous and particulate pollutants are captured and transported to plants that absorb them through their leaves, branches and stems.

Noise mitigation

Urban areas can be a source of unwanted sound, for example road noise. Trees can mitigate urban noise through the scattering and absorption of (typically mid to high frequency) sound waves by the leaves, branches and trunks, thus obstructing the pathway between the noise and the receiver.

Cultural services

Health

By providing a setting where the activities can take place, the urban forest can support physical activities such as walking, running and cycling, and relaxing activities such as bird watching, reading or having a picnic; thus encouraging physical well-being, mental restoration, escape and freedom, and enjoyment and fun.

Nature / landscape connections

Benefits arise from visual aspects of an ecosystem, e.g. trees and woodland can obscure unsightly structures, as well as other senses such as the smell of honeysuckle or the sound of birdsong. People can gain a sense of place from their local or favourite woodland, whilst physical interactions with trees such as fruit picking or conservation volunteering can add to feelings of connection with nature.

Social development and connections

Activities undertaken within woodlands and parks can strengthen existing social relationships, while organised activities within treed environments can create the opportunity for new relationships, including people's involvement with volunteer groups and community forests (known as social capital).

Education and learning

This category includes personal development for people of all ages, gained through informal learning, such as parents teaching their children tree names or where wood and paper comes from, and formal education via approaches such as Forest School (O'Brien, 2009). Learning can also take place through activities such as volunteering, apprenticeships, and play for children.

Economy and cultural significance

The urban forest can contribute to the economy by encouraging inward investment, boosting tourism, providing a setting for recreation industries such as climbing and paint-balling, and by enabling environmental cost savings (EFTEC, 2013). The urban forest can also contribute directly to the economy through the generation of new employment, such as arboricultural consultants and tree surgeons, and to a lesser extent, through the provision of food, fuel or wood products.

Bibliography

Britt, C., Johnston, M. (2008). Trees in Towns II

– A new survey of urban trees in England and their condition and management. Department for Communities and Local Government, London.

Brunson, L. 1999. Resident Appropriation of Defensible Space in Public Housing: Implications for Safety and Community. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, IL.

Crompton, J.L. (2001a). The impact of parks on property values: A review of the empirical evidence. Journal of Leisure Research 33 (1), pp. 1-31.

Crompton, J.L. (2001b). Parks and economic development. PAS Report No. 502. American Planning Association, Chicago, Illinois.

Davies, H., Image, M., Calrow, L., Foulkes, C., Frandsen, M., Duigan, M. (2014). Review of literature - how transport's soft estate has enhanced green infrastructure, ecosystem services, and transport resilience in the EU. Natural England Commissioned Reports, Number 169 (NERC 169). London, UK: Natural England.

Davies, H.J., Doick, K.J., Handley, P., O'Brien, L., Wilson, J. (2016). Delivery of Ecosystem Services by Urban Forests. Forestry Commission Research Report, Edinburgh.

Davies, H.J., Doick, K.J., Handley, P., O'Brien, L. (2017) Delivery of ecosystem services by urban forests. Forestry Commission Research Report. *Forestry Commission Edinburgh*. I-IV pp.1-28.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2013).Government forestry and woodlands policy statement https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221023/pb13871-forestry-policy-statement.pdf

Doick, K., Hutchings, T. (2012). Air temperature regulation by urban trees and green infrastructure. FCRN012 Forest Research.

Doick, Kieron & Davies, Helen & Moss, Joe & Coventry, Rob & Handley, Phillip & Vaz Monteiro, Madalena & Rogers, Kenton & Simpkin, Phil. (2017). The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being.

Donovan, G.H., Michael, Y.L., Butry, D.T., Sullivan, A.D., Chase, J.M. (2011). Urban trees and the risk of poor birth outcomes. Health & Place 17 (1), pp. 390-93.

Donovan, G.H., Landry, S., Winter, C. (2019) Urban trees, house price, and redevelopment pressure in Tampa, Florida. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening. (38), pp. 330-336

Ekelund, U (2015). The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

EFTEC (2013). Green infrastructure's contribution to economic growth: a review. Report for Defra and Natural England, London.

Escobedo, F., Nowak, D (2009). Spatial heterogeneity and air pollution removal by an urban for- est. Landscape and Urban Planning, 90 (3-4) pp. 102-110. Gill, S., Handley, A., Ennos, A., Paulett, S. (2007). Adapting cities for climate change: the role of green infrastructure. Built Environment, 33 (1), pp. 115-133.

gov.uk (2015) English Indices of Deprivation 2015 [online] Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015

Hammer, T.R., Coughlin, R.E., Horn, E.T. (1974). The effect of a large park on real estate value. Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 40, pp. 274-277.

Handley, P., Doick, K. (2015). Compatibility and suitability of key datasets for mapping urban forests in the UK. Forest Research Internal Report.

Hardie, I., Nickerson, C. (2004). The effect of a forest conservation regulation on the value of subdivisions in Maryland. WP 03-01 (Revised). Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Maryland, College Park.

Hartig (2003). Tracking restoration in natural and urban field settings. Journal of Environmental Psychology,23,109-123.

Hauru, K., Lehvävirta, S., Korpela, K., Kotze, D.J. (2012). Closure of view to the urban matrix has positive effects on perceived restorativeness in urban forests in Helsinki, Finland. Landscape and Urban Planning, 107, pp. 361-69.

Hirabayashi, S. (2012). i-Tree Eco Precipitation Interception Model Descriptions, http://www.itreetools.org/eco/resources/
iTree Eco Precipitation Interception Model Descriptions V1 2.pdf

Hodson, C.B., Sander, H.A. (2017) Green urban landscapes and school-level academic performance. Landscape and Urban Planning. 160 pp. 16-27

Huang, Y.J., Akbari, H., Taha, H., and Rosenfeld, A.H. (1987). The potential of vegetation in reducing summer cooling loads on residential buildings. Journal of Climate and Applied Meteorology, 26, pp. 1103-1116.

Kaplan, R. (1993). The role of nature in the work- place, Landscape and Urban Planning, 26.

Korpela, K.M., Ylén, M., Tyrväinen, L., Silvennoinen, H. (2008). Determinants of restorative experiences in everyday favorite places. Health & Place, 14 (4) pp. 636-652.

Kuo, F.E., Sullivan, W.C.(2001). Aggression and violence in the inner city: Effects of environment via mental fatigue. Environment and Behavior 33 (4) pp. 543-571.

Kuo, F.E., Sullivan, W.C. (2001). Environment and crime in the inner city: Does vegetation reduce crime? Environment and Behavior 33 (3), pp. 343-367.

Kweon, B-S., Ellis, C.D., Lee, J., Jacobs, K. (2017) The link between school environments and student academic performance. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening. 23 pp 35-43.

Laverne, R.J., Winson-Geideman, K. (2003). The Influence of Trees and Landscaping on Rental Rates at Office Buildings. Journal of Arboriculture 29(5), pp. 281-290.

Lovasi, G. S., Quinn, J. W., Neckerman, K. M., Perzanowski, M. S., Rundle, A. (2008). Children living in areas with more street trees have lower asthma prevalence. Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 62 (7), pp. 647–649.

Mansfield, C.A., Pattanayak, S.K., McDown, W., McDonald, R., Halpin,P. (2002) Shades of Green:Measuring the Value of Urban Forests in the Housing Market. FAO [online] Available at: http://www.fao.org/uploads/media/ Shades of green measuring the value of urb an forests in the housing market.pdf

Mcdonald, A., Bealey, W., Fowler, D., Dragosits, U., Skiba, U., Smith, R., Donovan, R., Brett, H., Hewitt, C. And Nemitz, E. (2007). Quantifying the effect of urban tree planting on concentrations and depositions of PM10 in two urban conurbations. Atmospheric Environment 41, pp. 8455–8467.

McPherson, E. G., Simpson, J.R., Xiao, Q., Wu, C. (1998). Los Angeles 1-Million Tree Canopy Cover Assessment. Davis: United States Department of Agriculture.

Mitchell, R., Popham, F. (2008). Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequalities. The Lancet, 372.

Mok, J.-H., Landphair, H.C., Naderi, J.R. (2003). Comparison of safety performance of urban streets before and after landscape improvements. Proceedings of the 2nd Urban Street Symposium (Anaheim, California). Transportation Research Board, Washington DC.

More, T.A., Stevens, T.H., Allen, P.G. (1988). Valuation of Urban Parks. Landscape and Urban Planning, 15, pp. 139-152.

Nisbet, T. R., Thomas, H. (2006). The role of wood- land in flood control – a landscape perspective. In 'Water and the landscape: the landscape ecology of freshwater ecosystems'. Proceedings of the 14th Annual IALE(UK)

Conference, Eds B. Davies & S. Thompson, pp. 118-125. IALE(UK), Oxford.

Nowak, D. (1995). Trees pollute? A "TREE" explains it all. In: Proceedings of the 7th National Ur- ban Forestry Conference.

Washington, DC: American Forests, pp. 28-30.

Nowak, D. (2000). The interactions between urban forests and global climate change. In: Abdollahi, K. K., Ning, Z. H., and Appeaning, A. (Eds). Global Climate Change and the Urban Forest. Baton Rouge: GCRCC and Franklin Press, pp. 31-44.

Nowak, D., Civerolo, K., Rao, S., Sistla, G., Luley, C., Crane, D. (2000). A modelling study of the impact of trees on ozone. Atmospheric Environment 34, pp. 1601-1613. Nowak, D., Crane, D., Stevens, J. (2006). Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States. Urban Forestry and Urban Greening 4, pp. 115-123.

Nowak, D., Dwyer J. F. (2007). Understanding the benefits and costs of urban forest ecosystems. In: Kuser, J. (ed.) Urban and Community Forestry in the Northeast. New York: Springer, pp. 25-46.

Nowak, D., Hoehn, R., Crane, D., Stevens, J., Leblanc F. (2010). Assessing urban forest effects and values, Chicago's urban forest. Resource bulletin NRS-37. USDA Forest Service, Radnor, PA. NTM. (2015) National Tree Map (NTM) website. Available at: http://www.bluesky-world.com/#! national-tree-map/c1pqz PH[Accessed 15 September 2015].

Office for National Statistics (2019) Local
Authority District Boundaries, 2019 [online]
Available at: https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/local-authority-districts-april-2019-boundaries-uk-bfe [accessed 10 July 2018]
(used under Open Government Licence v3.0)

Office for National Statistics (2019) Health state life expectancy by 2011 Census wards, England and Wales: 2009 to 2013 [online] Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/ peoplepopulationandcommunity/ healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/

healthstatelifeexpectancyby2011censuswardsen glandandwales/2009to2013

articles/

Office for National Statistics (2019) Median house prices by ward: HPSSA dataset 37 [online] Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/

medianpricepaidbywardhpssadataset37

O'Brien, L. (2009) Learning outdoors: the Forest School approach. Education 3-13, 37, pp. 45-60.

Oke, T.R. (1982) The energetic basis of the urban heat island. Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society, 108, pp. 1-24.

Pandit, R., Polyakov, M., Tapsuwan, S., Moran, T. (2013). The Effect of Street Trees on Property Value in Perth. Landscape and Urban Planning. 110. pp 134-142.

Peachey, C. Sinnett, D., Wilkinson, M., Morgan, G.W., Freer-Smith, P.H., Hutchings, T.R. (2009). Deposition and solubility of airborne metals to four plant species grown at varying distances from two heavily trafficked roads in London. Environmental Pollution 157, pp. 2291-2299.

police.uk (2018) Crime in Southend compared with crime in other similar areas [online] https://www.police.uk/metropolitan/00AU01T/ performance/compare-your-area/

Public Health England, Public Health England 2014-2016 statistics [online] https://
https://">https://
https://
https://">https://
https://

Rolls, S. & Sunderland, T. (2014).

Microeconomic Evidence for the Benefits of Investment in the Envi- ronment 2 (MEBIE2).

Natural England Research Reports, Number 057.

Rogers, K., Sacre, K., Goodenough, J., Doick, K. (2015) Valuing London's Urban Forest.

Treeconomics. pp. 1-84.

Sands, R. (2005) Forestry in a global context. CABI Publishing, Oxfordshire.

Schwab, J. (2009) Planning the Urban Forest: Ecology, Economy, and Community Development. USDA Forest Service, NewYork.

Seila, A.F., Anderson, L.M. (1982). Estimating costs of tree preservation on residential lots. Journal of Arboriculture, 8, pp. 182-185.

Southend-on-Sea (2019) Physical Activity Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Summary [online] Available at: https://www.southend.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6232/
physical activity joint strategic needs assessment - summary.pdf

Sunderland, T., Rogers, K., Coish, N (2012). What proportion of the costs of urban trees can be justified by the carbon sequestration and airquality benefits they provide? Arboricultural Journal, 1-21.

Thomas, H., Nisbet, T.R. (2007). An assessment of the impact of floodplain woodland on flood flows. Water and Environment Journal, 21, pp. 114–126.

Tiwary, A., Sinnet, D., Peachey, C., Chalabi, Z., Vardoulakis, S., Fletcher, T., Leonardi, G., Grundy, C., Azapagic, A., Hutchings, T. (2009). An integrated tool to assess the role of new planting in PM capture and the human health benefits: A case study in London. Environmental Pollution 157, pp. 2645-2653.

Trees and Design Action Group (2014). Trees in hard landscapes: A guide for delivery. London: TDAG.

Troy, A. (2012) The relationship between tree canopy and crime rates across an urban–rural gradient in the greater Baltimore region. Journal of Landscape and Urban Planning, 106, pp. 267-272.

Tyrväinen, L., Miettinen, A. (2000). Property Prices and Urban Forest Amenities. Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, 39, pp. 205-223.

UK Crime Stats (2011) Crime Statistics [online] https://www.ukcrimestats.com

Ulrich,R. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. American Association for the Advancement of Science. 224. pp. 420-1.

Urban Tree Cover (2018) Urban Tree Cover.
Treeconomics, Forest Research & Barchams
[online] Available at: https://urbantreecover.org/
urban-forest-cover/

Van Renterghem, T. (2014). Guidelines for optimizing road traffic noise shielding by non-deep tree belts. Ecological Engineering(69), pp. 276-286. Van Renterghem, T., Botteldooren, D., and Verheyen, K. (2012). Road traffic noise shielding by vegetation belts of limited depth. Journal of Sound and Vibration, 331(10), pp. 2404-2425.

Wells, M., (2011)Using Urban Forestry Research in New York City. Proceedings of the ICF - Urban Tree Research Conference. Birmingham, April 13-14. Forestry Commission.

White, M (2013). Would You Be Happier Living in a Greener Urban Area? Psychological Science 24, 920-928.

Wolf, K. L. (1998). Urban Nature Benefits: Psycho-Social Dimensions of People and Plants, University of Washington College of Forest Resources, Fact- sheet 1.

Wolf, K.L. (2005). Business District Streetscapes, Trees and Consumer Response. Journal of Forestry 103 (8), pp. 396-400.

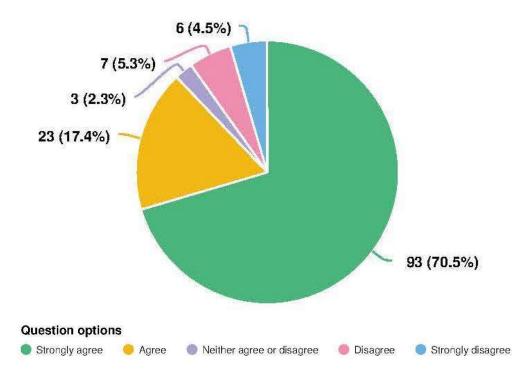
Wolf, K.L. (2007). City Trees and Property Values. Arborist News 16 (4), pp. 34-36.

Tree Policy Consultation Report

A total of 503 people accessed the campaign which ran from 17th August to 9th October 2020. 130 responded online, 5 emailed a response and 368 people were aware, informed but chose not to comment. The consultation included a survey with questions and a free text box for further comments, 3 quick polls requesting feedback on certain elements of the whole project and the Tree Policy Document which was available to download or view online which 396 used that option.

The consultation was promoted across social media and was available on the Councils interactive consultation portal https://yoursay.southend.gov.uk/ it was also made available in a hardcopy format if requested.

1. How much do you agree or disagree with the main aims and objectives of the draft tree policy?



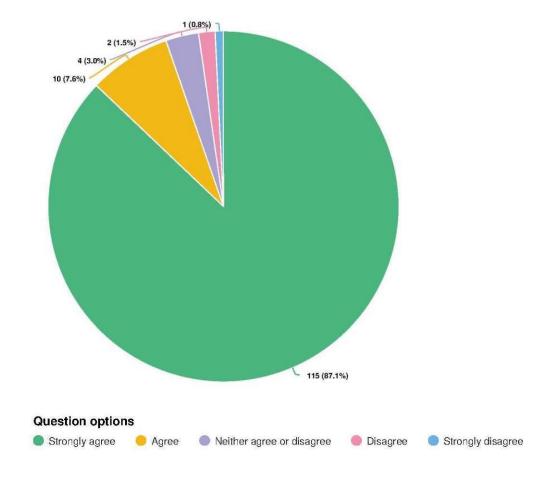
Summary

Overall 87.9% agreed or strongly agreed with the main aims and objectives. There were 26 comments in the free text commenting that the 15% canopy target should be higher. Suggested targets ranged from 17% to 25%.

In response

The target increase in tree canopy cover is based on local climactic conditions as set out in the policy, likely available land to plant trees and reflects independent expert view on canopy cover in coastal towns (The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being, K.J. Doick et al)

How much do you agree or disagree with the statement that trees bring many benefits to Southend?



Summary

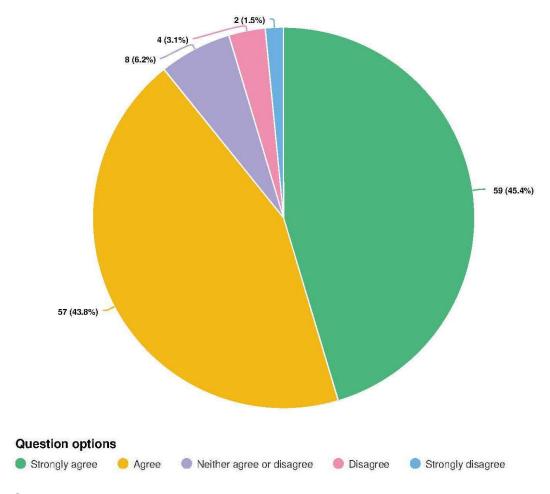
Overall 87.1% strongly agree with the statement that trees bring many benefits to Southend.

Comments in the free text recognised benefits to air quality (2), quality of life (2), education (4), wildlife (3) and for food (1).

In response

The policy sets out the many and varied benefits of trees in an urban environment.

2. How much do you agree or disagree with the policy statements of the reasons that trees are pruned



Summary

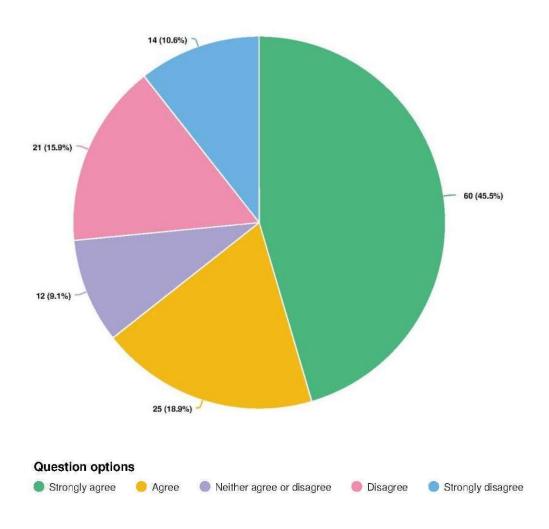
This was a single response question the overall majority agreed with the policy statement but it split with 45% strongly agreeing followed closely by 43% agreeing.

Within the free text three comments recommended that the practise of pollarding is reviewed.

In response

The policy states that pollarded trees will be pruned back to their previous pollard points. This is because new growth branches on pollard trees are less well attached and more prone to failure. Maintaining the pollard regime is therefore based on the health and safety of residents and property.

3. How much do you agree or disagree with the policy statements on the reason why trees will not be pruned?



Summary

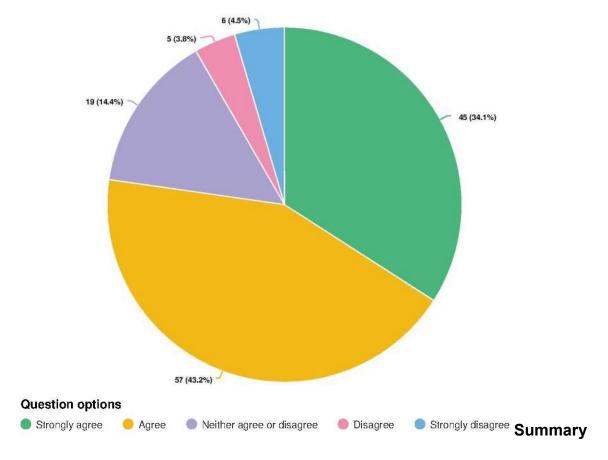
Overall 64% either agreed or strongly agreed with the general approach to tree pruning.

Comments in free text wanted to see trees pruned for solar panels (3), TV reception (1), for fruit fall (1), leaf fall, honeydew (1), phone lines (1), too big (2), damage to footway (2).

In Response

The Policy sets out the council's legal requirements in maintaining its trees. In the UK there is no legal right to light reaching a property whether this relates to shading or solar panels. TV reception is not guaranteed by a TV license. Leaf fall, fruit fall and the presence of aphids are naturally occurring events and an inevitable seasonal result of having trees. Branches will be pruned if they are heavily rubbing phone lines but pruning has no effect when they are only lightly touching lines. Engineering solutions will be considered to retain trees implicated in damaging pavements as set out in the policy.

4. How much do you agree or disagree with the policy statements on the reasons why trees sometimes need to be removed?



Overall 77% either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements on tree removal.

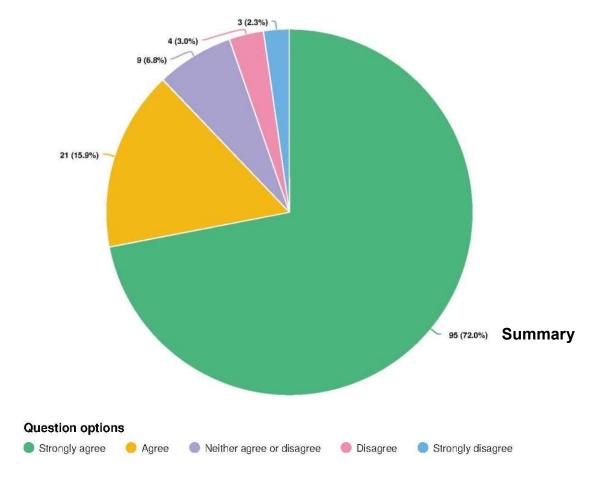
Within the free text there were views expressed both for and against the removal of trees. Two comments supported tree removal but only as a last resort. Two comments suggested trees should be removed because they are too big/may cause damage. One comment suggested tree removal should be planned 5 to 10 years in advance. Three commented on the importance of information being readily available on the reason a tree may be removed.

In Response

The policy sets out a clear aim to manage the existing stock of trees and to extend the overall canopy cover. It sets out specific reasons why trees sometimes have to be removed. While trees in parks and open spaces can sometimes be managed over a period of years as they decline this is rarely possible with highways trees growing in busy locations. This is due to the health and safety risks posed to residents and property.

Engineering solutions will be considered as the first approach to retain street trees as described in the policy.

6 How much do you agree or disagree with the aim to plant more trees in Southend?



The majority of those that responded agree with the proposed future tree planting based on maintaining and increasing canopy cover to achieve an average of 15 percent coverage by 2050.

Free text comments also suggested the creation of community orchards (1), identify sites for mass planting (2), plant more fruit trees (1), don't plant fruit trees (1), plant native trees (7), provide information of the type of tree selected and why (2), update 2 for 1 planting with 150 plus saplings to replace a mature tree, plant 10,000 trees each year for the next two years (2), commit to woodland creation (1), allow natural regeneration (1), apply CAVAT valuation (2), residents should be able to request trees(1), replace trees with semi-mature specimens (1), right tree, right place (1), do not plant trees in Scheduled Ancient Monuments (1), involve the community in tree planting, monitor planting.

Only one comment was received that no trees should be planted.

Numbers in () are the number of free text comments received relating to the matter.

In response

A number of community orchards have already been planted and the policy sets out to continue this practise.

The council will seek to identify suitable sites for larger scale planting of trees and the creation of new woodland or extension of existing woodland. This is necessarily limited by suitable sites being available and the exiting use of land i.e. sports grounds, meadowland, formal gardens, space for public events etc. Whip planting schemes or natural regeneration are both considered appropriate methodologies depending on the nature of the site. Scheduled Ancient Monuments will not be considered as suitable sites.

The policy sets out that native species will be planted in woodland creation schemes and will adopt the 'right tree, right place' for other locations. This approach considers the overall size and form of a tree for its location. Information on tree planting locations and the tree species planted is being listed on the council's website.

The policy sets out how CAVAT will be applied in conditioning replacement trees. Many trees are planted each year in response to resident's requests. Residents can also donate trees at a subsidised rate through the donated tree scheme. Information is posted on the council's website providing links with advice and recommendations on selecting trees to plant in private gardens.

Semi-mature specimens are planted in major schemes. It is not possible to plant semi-mature species in most roads as the size of the root ball is too big for the space available.

The council has involved residents in various community tree planting days in the past and aims to continue to do so in the future.

The policy identifies key measures in an annual progress review.

Comments

- 1. East Beach needs more trees. The lack of native flora in this area is a tragic waste of a diverse eco-system.
- 2. I think it's a shame the policy aims have been grouped together in this consultation. Whilst I understand the need for this in terms of making the consultation brief, I have found myself agreeing that trees do not need to be pruned if they are blocking solar panels whereas I am not sure I do agree. I have also agreed to tree removal if 'the tree is an unsuitable species for its location and is being removed as part of a phased removal, or total removal and replanting programme.' I don't agree with this unless the decision is a mutual one with local people i.e. who determines 'unsuitable species'. I am also concerned about the vicious pollarding of a beautiful cherry tree on Chelmsford Avenue that has killed the tree. The tree has neither been removed or replaced. As someone who requested we plant more trees on Chelmsford Avenue (we did - thank you SBC) it is important to understand what happens when our trees die and how they can be replaced. When the trees were planted on Chelmsford Avenue I contacted the tree officer and asked about the species once it was done. There is a lot of shared learning that could be done within streets and neighbourhoods when planting new trees e.g. the type of tree that can be selected and why, the benefits locally and to the climate, ongoing care and maintenance. It would be great if the tree officers could work with other organisations or council depts to provide some pop up learning at tree planting events and works. The other thing that

- would be great is a tree trail around Southend. We have some wonderful trees a map with tree species, facts, history would be a great project for schools/Southend Adult Community college/Trust Links to work together on. Monkey Puzzles at Cuckoo Corner, Fig in Priory Park, Cedar or similar in Chalkwell, Palms on the seafront etc.
- 3. I think we should be planting as many trees as we can. They make the area nicer and lessen our environmental impact
- 4. Trees should be pruned for things such as phone lines, as phone lines become brittle and could be a life lines for older generation
- 5. Some trees are now just too big for pavements they make it dangerous when it brings the ground up, they cause an obstruction so people have to walk in the road to keep social distancing. The roots ruin front gardens and can cause subsidence. Also prevent people from using their front gardens as off street parking.
- 6. Larger trees that cause obstruction/damage on pavements & potential subsidence would be removed
- 7. When trees are removed, if they are in a clump together, as in Neil Armstrong Way, a whole green has been left bare until replanting, however creative the planting will be, it has left the immediate area empty for the first time in possibly 30 years. That is a real shame.
- 8. 15% in 30 years is an increase of 2.8 trees a week not exactly a challenging target! Also the survey is flawed as there are up to 10 individual statements in some questions but you only allow one answer.
- 9. Please plant fruit trees wherever possible. I would like to see information on each tree about the type of fruit and when it's ripe. This way members of the public will feel empowered to harvest some of the fruit. It is more important than ever to grow and eat as local as possible, and what better way then utilising the council's tree growing policy as part of this!
- 10. Residents should be able to ask for trees to be planted in certain areas and a reply given back if this is possible
- 11. I have noticed the increase in tree planting which is fantastic but I wondered where there needs more trees planted & it's not possible, could some other form of greenery be planted instead? Such as bushes or wildflowers.
- 12. I agree with some elements of the questions but not others wheras there is only the option to agree or disagree?
- 13. 1. Avenues, such as where I live, are lined with trees. When a tree is removed for any reason it should be replaced with an appropriate alternative tree as soon as conditions permit. The very essence of an Avenue is the presence of trees; these trees, for some, will become a nuisance due to leaf drop etc so people should consider this before moving to such a road. Applications by the public to remove trees from the street should be declined, with no right to appeal, unless it is to do with safety. 2. Consideration should be made when trees are planted near street lighting: will it eventually infringe on the efficiency of the street light? 3. Years ago many mature trees were removed from The Cliffs along Southend seafront. This catastrophic move has meant areas of the cliffs being closed to the public for years and the annihilation of the band stage due to subsidence. Replanting with deep rooted trees should be a priority for the council along that same stretch and any other areas in the borough that have similar problems. 4. Council could offer the public free saplings to plant in their own gardens. 5. Perhaps smaller species of tree would me more suitable for the narrower streets of the town which also have

- narrow pavements or pavements which have given way to slopes for parking making the way for pedestrians and vehicles alike to be compromised. Sycamore, wych elm and the like are not suitable for such roads. 6. Native trees should be first preference when planting the street verges.
- 14. To plant trees that are of a suitable size for the roads they are in. To request that residents trim lower growth which can block footpath
- 15. Please get local schools involved in street planting to encourage understanding of the importance of street trees
- 16. 15% increase by 2050 seems unambitious for such a populous council area. I would challenge the council to aim for a 15% increase by 2030 Where possible there should be native species of trees as this is better for wildlife. Where suitable there should be trees with edible crops to provide free fruit for people, birds and animals. This will encourage more interaction with the trees and hopefully encourage people to value and protect the trees in their area
- 17. No more trees should be planted in Southend until the Council start and continue to remove their mess instead of it blowing into everyone's property because they can't be bothered to remove fallen leaves and seem to find it green to blow grass cuttings and dust everywhere instead of cleaning it up.
- 18. Public consultation should be utilised for any major tree works
- 19. It may be a separate policy but I also believe we need to promote and protect wild flower meadows and other food sources for pollinators.
- 20. I agree with the policy regarding trees however the council should look at the undergrowth and ivy around our trees.
- 21. An inclusion of wildlife areas which would include parks and woodlands/nature reserves. Ponds should also be encouraged as a means for amphibians to flourish. Also I would like bylaws to be implemented in regards to dog owners being responsible for keeping their dogs on leads whilst walking in nature reserves such as belfairs woodland. At present, this is not being a heard to.
- 22. The aim for 15% coverage would be more meaningful if accompanied by the current figure (apologies if I have missed it) Also, 2050 seems an awfully long way away, can we not be aiming for something a bit more relevant, like, say, 2030.
- 23. When planting trees on footpaths please do not plant fruit trees as the fruit makes the pavements slippery and gets onto footwear. Otherwise the more trees that are planted the better.
- 24. It would be useful if the policy had information on the type of trees that will be planted
- 25. I think all new properties built should have some version of green spaces even if its a roif garden or green wall including trees as part of its planning agreement. Any housing association buying up properties should also provide a green space or donate to local green spaces
- 26. Go further, faster!!!!... to achieve a minimum average of 15 percent coverage before 2050.
- 27. I would question whether the 15% coverage target by 2050 is ambitious enough a reform (if a reform at all). Why not push for a higher percentage, seeking a significant and eye catching shift in Southend tree coverage, to not only influence council policy but importantly to capture the attention of residents (shaping their behaviour) and attracting potential investment (e.g. Southend, the new garden city)?

- 28. Awaiting replacement of tree (outside Shoebury Road) requested Autumn 2019
- 29. Planting saplings does not of itself compensate for the loss of mature trees, as it may take 20 years or more to provide an equivalent diversity of ecosystem and habitat as was provided by a mature tree. The loss of so many mature trees in Southchurch Boulevard is an example of that new trees planted (assuming they survive vandalism or drought) will take several decades to replace those beautiful mature trees taken down. Also, to describe trees in Southend as an urban forest seems a bit fanciful. A forest requires dense planting of hundreds of trees together, not isolated trees lining streets. Wildlife needs genuine areas of woodland to survive and flourish. Isolated trees are better than no trees, but can't begin to replace genuine forest
- 30. 15% is an unambiguous target, should be more like 25%. Spaces where new trees are planted need more protection. Trees should be part of planning process, how many affected, how many to be planted. Use former common land I.e. gunners park, Fossets, to reforest.
- 31. I'd suggest the tree planting needs to be significantly higher than 15% in 30 years. I think that is a very small percentage for what could be done in the area. This needs to be reevaluated. There are certainly people in the area who are happy to take responsibility that the Council cannot shoulder, so we can plant more trees, increase more wildlife diversity and improve habitats. If it's been recognised that we have worse air pollution than London despite living near the Estuary, something much more radical on our green space needs to be done.
- 32. Reinstate trees in Southchurch Avenue, York Road.
- 33. Planting trees in parks is a good idea but trees should be removed from roadsides and near houses. The trees in my area have grown too big causing pavement damage, wall damage and soiling of houses and cars by aphids and birds causing constant misery.
- 34. The council to monitor and ensure all utility companies are responsible for protecting trees when carrying out work in the street and, where deliberate or accidental damage occurs, the company is to replace the tree/s within an agreed time frame. (So many healthy trees in my street have been lost this way over the last twenty years without any accountability).
- Adjoining neighbours sometimes take care of street trees, perhaps this could be encouraged. Vandalism to trees should be treated as serious damage. The policy of leaving parks open at night is not desirable. Labels on trees in parks and Tree guides would encourage interest and knowledge. There are many interesting trees in Southen Parks and in the streets, but few labelled. Maybe a tree trail, say in a park or round some streets would be good. We also have some special trees and memorial trees that could be highlighted.
- 36. Ensuring that appropriate trees are planted on highways. Too many recently planted trees are inappropriate for their location and are causing damage to footpaths and property.
- 37. Plant MORE trees. Re question 4, some of these need blanket refusals need unpacking. Pruning should be allowed if a tree blocks sunlight or satellite reception, if no other alternative solutions are available. A bit of real life application and compromise is required.
- 38. I am not sure what this survey hopes to achieve. Seems a waste of time!

- 39. It is unclear from your survey whether it is 15% per year, or 15% by 2050 -15% by 2050 isn't many trees!. You also mention 'by planting more trees than are removed' -- there needs to be a more specific target, as it might be that only one tree is removed in a particular year, so planting 2 trees is not a very stretched strategy is it??.... 15% per year would be a good target - is that what you mean? AND PLEASE help your residents who are currently blighted by trees in neighbours gardens blocking light, dropping leaves and general encroachment. Please advise residents NOT to plant any tree that could cause neighbour hood problems in years to come -- trees seem to live longer than people!! My example are Mountain ash trees and a huge Silver birch tree that were planted in my near neighbours garden years ago and have grown to huge heights, and cause untold problems in the neighbourhood with sunlight being blocked, orange berry droppings and huge amounts of leaves dropped late autumn...... the neighbour involved will not listen to neighbours concerns, and it causes bad disputes. For example, from around May thru to October, his trees block sun into our garden. So, trees in gardens must come with a health warning.... Perhaps the council could take control of trees in peoples gardens that become a problem!!!.
- 40. Reduce height of trees and allow residents to prune trees near their properties.
- 41. It is important, after all we learnt from all those painful times that we had join that kill full disease that might of kill everyone who is alive and living, that, we never take away the life of a living breathable, glorious creature (like a tree) just because you want to built it in a spacious place, or remove one to put another instead, or they can't be there because of this and that....... so on and so on......so you will not going to be dead over a small flue disease yourself from the beginning. So you kill a tree because one of them is giving illness to others, so kill other human beings whose ill like whose got viruses or hard illnesses so they won't give them to others too!! Please let us bear this in mind that trees and green areas from before and then, are most part of importance in building our LAND SCAPE Planning in our architectural studying and planning, and it can never ever be hurt, cut, removed for any kind of reasons that so could humans can live easier without them before we all go away from any kind of diseases and never come back again.
- 42. Can we do more to celebrate our oldest trees which might be a way of protecting them if privately owned and not otherwise protected? I am thinking of the beautiful old copper beeches in Leigh Park Road. Can a directory of street trees be made available so you can look up the trees in your street and why they were chosen and when they were planted? Eg There are walnut trees in Recreation Avenue -beautiful-why were these chosen? More information about street trees should be available to the public'. I think a lot of people would be interested. But generally keep up the good work. Street trees give me so much pleasure and can transform streets which otherwise look like car parks
- 43. Trees are a deterrent to parking on verges and pedestrian pathways especially important as signing of illegality and enforcement in residential roads is virtually non-existent. Trees which fall or are removed should be replaced as a matter of course the one which fell in front of my house some 18 years ago is still missing despite my requests, my offer to contribute to cost and undertake to water.

- I think there should be better leaf cleaning on roads with older forest trees (London Plane especially) which lose some of their leaves in summer. My son lives in Avenue Terrace and this lovely road is spoilt by the amount of leaves. I think householders could be encouraged to do small things like rub out the side shoots (when safe to do so I'm not suggesting they get a ladder) as they grow before they become too big and the tree fella has to come and remove them. Some householders might be happy to bag leaves if they are given sacks. I think the Council if they haven't already done so should commit to the retention of the forest trees planted in Victorian and Edwardian times so they don't get a "Sheffield situation". I know they take a lot of effort pollarding etc but are part of our heritage. I live in Redcliff Drive and a resident had e-mailed the Council about maybe having some trees but received no answer. We certaily are willing to have some trees so long as it is possible.
- 45. I would like larger trees planted or protected in cages when they are planted as the current small / younger trees are vandalized and killed as soon as they are planted. There are still too many enormous trees in streets which are not regularly pruned.
- 46. To plant more varied native species of trees and perhaps include some educational details. I.e. when planting an oak inform the public how many insect species it can host, how long it can live and how much carbon dioxide it can turn into oxygen.
- 47. I notice pruning roadside trees have been neglected these past three months and as a result the trees have overgrown untidily!
- 48. I would like to see trees planted all along the High St. Nothing improves the look of a place than the presence of trees and other greenery.
- 49. The council should be take more action where tree branches, and shrubs, or hedges on private land and gardens overhang or intrude into public carriageways or footpaths. As I go about the Borough I have often noticed examples of this. Similarly, at road junctions hedges extending over the footpath often unsafely restrict the view of drivers causing them to move out into a busier road before they can see approaching traffic.
- 50. It's all very well talking, but what about some action, particularly with pruning oversize trees
- 51. Whether you plant trees financed by others or at your own costs, we have seen young saplings vandalized or left to die by not being watered. They must be watered and must be better protected if we are to see an increased population of trees. We would be happy to encourage local business support, but they need some confidence that they will last and their financial support protected
- 52. Please consider Dane Street, Shoeburyness for new trees. It is a bare street with no trees currently. They would need to be on the council house side of the road.
- I am concerned that the council has removed trees for a variety of reasons in Fillebrook Avenue and failed to replace them. Additionally bushes and trees in the beds in the road are not properly maintained. They are given a 15 minute "chop down" twice a year.
- 54. I don't understand why we have such a low aim as 15%.
- New trees, where possible, should be native species, and not too liable to die if more hot dry weather becomes the norm...a difficult combination, but possible.

- 56. Some of the existing trees are too big in certain circumstances. They should be replaced with more suitable trees
- 57. New tree coverage should far-exceed 15% by 2050. Perhaps Southend council should discuss with Rochford Council about expanding existing woodland in the area.
- 58. 15% coverage is a far too low as a target. It should be at least 20%.
- 59. Community advice and guidance about what trees are suitable for which locations. Many residents may be interested in having a tree in their garden but may not know which trees are most suitable for the location and may therefore end up either not planting any at all or may plant trees which are unsuitable for the location and later cause problems for themselves and others. Access to affordable trees/saplings which are suitable for such locations as described above. I recall years ago the Council provided the opportunity for individuals to purchase hedge plants at a very good rate (unsure if it was due to surplus supply or encouraging development of new hedgerows, but something similar would be good). Actively promote schemes like the Woodland's Trust 'free trees for schools and communities' https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/ and support engagement with such schemes through granting permission where the Council is landowner. Help raise awareness about trees and tree varieties. For example more people have visited parks in recent months and many might have admired the trees, but sadly won't know what the tree is or anything about it. Greater awareness and knowledge may bring greater respect. More greenery such as trees in the town centre. Community fruit trees or community orchard such that locals could benefit from the harvest. Sponsor a tree schemes.
- 60. I'd like to see a higher target. I'd also like some consideration of planting shrubs along verges, particularly near/on the route to schools where they can help to protect children from traffic pollution.
- 61. Consideration MUST be given to the size to which a tree will grow too many footpaths, verges and properties in the town are being damaged and in some cases are dangerous due to the size to which the trees have grown. Additionally, many remedial works following tree removal are substandard, with bulk root systems left in place that still raise and damage the surrounding area
- 62.
- 63. FOOTPATH DAMAGE MUST BE ASSESSED CAUSED BY TREE ROOTS AND A BULGE LIFT LIMIT MUST BE APPLIED :- Path damage outside Nos. Briarwood Drive L-O-S is excessive.
- 64. I'm sorry but 15 % by 2050 is terrible and not nearly enough!! We're in a Climate Emergency! More needs to be done to stop building on flood lands and green belt land. It takes years for trees to be established enough to make a difference to our air quality. Please do more. Literally our lives depend on it!
- 65. 15% Canopy cover by 2050 is not enough. It is a reasonable aim, but you need to be aiming higher and you also need to acting on this now. You have considered tree planting but haven't considered the use of rooftop spaces.
- 66. There should be a focus on planting in areas with lighter canopy cover. There should be a tree for residents scheme, such as the trees for baby scheme in Cambridge. There should be education resources to encourage children to go out and observe trees.

- 1. I would like to see a policy on leaving some dead trees in appropriate safe places for the benefit of nesting birds and other wildlife to use, even if this means fencing them off for safety (with educational information available of course). Also a policy for allowing for bird and bat boxes on appropriate trees (perhaps this could be a sponsor scheme like benches). 2. In order to encourage home owners to install solar panels, there needs to be some consideration of their needs if trees block light to the panels. 3. If mature trees are removed for development reasons, then replanting should include more mature trees not just whips. 4. Where possible, native trees should be used. 5. I think that a target of 15% is quite low for 2050, and we should be more ambitious!
- 68. The type of new trees that are planted should be considered. In my road, the trees are very old and lovely but some drop huge conkers which can cause accidents and some drop a sticky sap. The trees are large so a build up of leaves can be a problem and slippery on pavements despite residents all doing their bit to sweep up, dispose of etc. it can be hard to keep on top of this so we do need more street cleaners in the autumn when they drop. Also, we have a problem with roots pulling up the pavement which again is dangerous.
- 69. I widely support the majority of the policies, aims and objectives outlined in this consultation. Clearly, nearly all of the UK is deficient in tree canopy cover which seriously needs addressing. I am therefore pleased to see this consultation being rolled out. I do feel that to many people in the borough are either ignorant or have disregard for trees and the environment generally, which is a pity. Hopefully education can play a role in increasing the tree canopy significantly in Southend borough and nationally in the forthcoming years. Good start! :-)
- 70. I think that Southend could plant a lot more trees than this. For example my children noticed down Southend high street there are no trees. Wouldn't it look lovely and be great for the environment to put trees down there? At the moment it looks baron and unattractive. I love the fact that areas like Belton way has been let as a nature reserve and it should be encouraged to have these places where nature can be largely untouched.
- 71. As part of planning I would like all new housing developments must have provision for tree planting. Please continue to plant trees in the borough wherever possible.
- 72. Plant more native trees such as Rowan, Silver Birch, Alder.
- 73. We need more trees in Southend, particularly in areas dominated by concrete/buildings like the High Street. More trees and pedestrianised areas would help to make the high street a more attractive area to meet, eat, drink and socialise outside, hopefully attracting businesses and revitalising the tired and frankly ugly area. More flora please!
- 1 would prefer if it is possible to plant more native species, there are smaller trees that would fit in the urban landscape. I think in particular the dark red leafed "cherry" trees do not fit in and are somewhat depressing. There seems to be a lot of "tarmacing" right up around the base of the trees which is then lifted as the tree grows causing very uneven pavements eg along Pall Mall in Leigh. When planting new trees if would be good if biodegradable covers around the trunk could be used, as a lot of trees have previously been planted with plastic wraps, which remain in place and eventually fall off and become rubbish, eg around Garons.

- 75. Please do not remove the Horse chestnuts in Victoria Avenue- can't anything be done to treat them? Please accompany tree planting with woodland plants and flowers to create wild areas.
- 76. 15% is too small a figure and the Council should be far more ambitious in its tree planting for the benefit of humans and wildlife and for averting extreme climate change.
- 77. Q1 15% should be our target now for 2050 it should be 21% as recommended by Natural England etc. Further to this what is the definition of an urban forest? Q3 Insurers can over implicate trees and removal can also effect movement/subsidence/ the water table and trees' hydrology. Q5 Decaying trees are absolutely fundamental for fungal/invertebrate life: these are at the base of food chains. Where safe or made safe to decay in situ as in Chalkwell Park sweet chestnut south west border, this would be good ecological practice. Re footpath damage: if a beautiful mature tree unique to its place is removed a canopy equivalant should be the criteria for its replacement(s).
- 78. I would like the target for overall canopy cover to be increased from 15% to 25% by 2050, and for there to be a commitment to continuing to increase that cover beyond 2050.
- 79. I agree on most parts above. However, the council must ensure that thorough due diligence by an independent professional is carried out before any tree removal is performed. This due diligence must also be carried out on any company carrying out the works on the tree and reviewed regularly. I also question whether the target of 15% by 2050 is sufficient enough. I would be interested to hear of any specific target areas and how this will be monitored to ensure the target is met.
- 80. MORE TREES THE BETTER
- 81. I have also read the submission from the local group Once Upon a Tree and I fully endorse all of their recommendations. I would like this endorsement to be recorded
- 82. In conservation areas there should be a duty of care to look after trees in private ownership. Planning permission is required to do any maintenance on trees in these areas whether or not they have TPPOs and this possibly deters people from looking after their trees
- 83. If the council has decided to remove any tree I think residents should be given the specific reasons why and should be allowed to object if they disagree. Planting saplings which may not all survive doesn't make up for removing mature trees.
- 84. When a mature tree is removed, you also displace the shade the tree produces together with the Wild life and the ability to store the carbon omitted by vehicles, if the trees are replaced by new trees, the new trees need to be semi mature trees. This will encourage the return of the Wild Life, give shade to the pedestrian, and help reduce the vehicle omission's
- 85. I believe the canopy cover target should be far higher than 15%. The Eu average is 35%. I think we should be aiming for 17% by 2025 and 20% by 2030. I think it would be a more effective target if the council were to commit to planting a certain volume of trees within the immediate future. For example, it could carry out a Great Tree Plant Challenge'; residents could be empowered to plant 10000 trees by end of 021 and a further 10,000 trees by 2022.

- 86. I believe the following reasons should be good enough reasons to prune a tree. The tree is blocking TV and satellite reception And The tree is blocking sunlight reaching solar panels placed on a neighbouring private property.
- 87. I was astonished to see such a weak target. From 12% to 15% by 2050 is appalling. It is beyond me how a target like that could be proposed. Please worth with all residents and let's get this sorted within the next two years. Please launch "The Great Tree Plant" in 2021, with the aim of getting residents to plant trees on grass verges, private gardens and designated parts of public parks and other public land. The work will be done by residents, with guidance provided by the council on tree species, watering and tree care. The Council target should be changed to plant 10,000 trees in 2021 and another 10,000 trees in 2022. I am very happy to help get residents organised and get the tree planting done.
- 88. 15% is still fairly low in comparison with national and neighbouring country averages. I would be in favour of increasing both the cover, and the speed with which it is introduced.
- 89. I'd love to see some more tree in my street. Avenue Road. I'd also like to see trees properly maintained when newly planted. So many times I've seen new trees planted but not watered. Within a few month they are dead. Also more native tree. Long lived tree in parks like cedar and yew trees
- 90. The more trees the better, is 15% coverage sufficient? Also could suggest local homes adopting a newly-planted tree nearby for watering etc.
- 91. As members of the Essex Wildlife Trust we agree that more trees are required, but the policy has to include planting the right tree in the right place large trees should only be planted in parks or other open spaces. The current policy places a financial burden on all residents as the removal or pruning of trees is paid for by them. Where it can be shown that appointed experts have applied a policy which then requires rectification, (and if it can be shown that the tree species is inappropriate), the cost of pruning or tree removal should be debited to the salaries of those responsible, if they have acted in error. In all matters the residents should be consulted prior to planting any trees; particularly on public highways.
- 92. Every residential street in the area should be considered for tree planting and that residents in them should be consulted regarding the suitable locations and type of tree!!
- 15% from 12% in 20 years is insufficient and will probably represent a relative 93. drop against the 2050 average - not good! Re purposing peripheral land could yield faster forestation and healthier trees - Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park (in Rochford) - over 35 acres planted with 32,000 trees during winter 2008/09 (so they say) - come on Southend !! SBC should demonstrate more sympathy towards its venerable housing stock, which may have shallower foundations and sectional ceramic pipe drains that were the adequate norm when they were built. All new tree planting required to have significant and positive support from close householders. Southend's seaside climate is not sunnier and dryer than the Adriatic where you will find splendid forested areas just back from the coast and towns with majestic trees providing shade. More trees in car parks - public & private - Western Esplanade's central reservation parking area could host many trees (I think it has just one) - move the lighting pillars to the pavements and replace them with trees. A good policy report but the subject and plan needs more public consultation and debate.

- 94. 15% tree cover by 2050 is not at all ambitious and you should be looking to have that level of cover already, I'd say 2025 at the latest.
- 95. There is an abundance of open space/ parks to plant more trees which can
- only enhance the local area for the future. Keep planting southend Council. 96. 1. Request the council make available sites for mass planting of Trees, over the next 1-5 years, including community woodlands pocket forests etc. Also to request that every tree removed from a street over the past 25 years should be replaced without delay. 2. Recognise Tree planning is a 100 year lifecycle – anticipated removal and replanting needs to be done systematically 5-10 years before removal to have any impact under the CAVAT value system. This would save the council the equivalent of £10,000's just by being pro-active To this end tree inspections need to be undertaken with a short medium and long term view – the omission of this approach has dramatically altered many Southend streets; undermining the Councils own tree policy and depriving a generation of SBC residents the many benefits that street trees bring. 3. Removing a street tree should be a matter of last resort - Ensure that the reasons for removal are clearly defined, in line with the 5 D's and that all other options have been explored before removal - including the "Safe useful life expectancy tree assessment" method – where trees that have disease or dieback can be managed more effectively over time whilst replacements (in line with the CAVAT system) are planted in the same vicinity many years before the removal of the effected tree. CAVAT reference: https://ltoa.org.uk/resources/cavat Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees (CAVAT) was developed by Chris Neilan and the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA) in 2008 and is regarded as one of the principal methods of tree valuation in the UK. CAVAT is now being presented for the first time in a formal publication in the Arboricultural Journal. Here is a link to the article, which is free to download https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03071375.2018.1454077. The reasons given for felling trees (adapted from Sheffield Tree Action Group) Southend Borough Council (SBC) have often stated that street trees are only removed as a 'last resort'. This reflects national best practice guidelines, which recommend that all other reasonable solutions be considered before a tree is removed – the option of last resort... The general criteria for removing trees are: 1. Dangerous 2. Dead 3. Diseased 4. Dying 5. Damaged (seriously) This classification system is not standard within the industry, nor is it an accepted system for categorising street trees. Regardless, some of these categories are easily addressed – OUaT do not oppose the removal of trees known to be absolutely dead or dangerous. If a tree is diseased or dying then, if after a thorough survey, felling is required for safety reasons or to prevent the spread of disease to other trees, then OUaT would not object. The emphasis is on the word 'thorough' and we would expect the survey process to be transparent and for there to be accountability. 4. Develop new tree policy in line with current and emerging UK Government (DRFRA), Tree Council, Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission policies so that Southend is up-to-date and aligned with UK policies with an evidence based tree policy system. 5. To develop a modern tree policy with more info graphics in line with The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG). Engaging the TDAG as a step to producing a coherent and modern tree policy in line with current best practice. 6. Acknowledgement of the iTree calculation system for Southend and to be explicit in exceeding the recommended minimum Tree Canopy Cover (TCC) in Southend and Leigh-

on-Sea. 7. Acknowledgement of UNWHO pollution measurements in Southend that are exceeding the recommended level of UNWHO maximum pollution index of 10 - by comparison, In 2016 Southend measured 11, equal to London, and in 2018 this had increased to 12, now one of the highest in the UK 8. Establish an independent Tree Review Panel made up of public and professionals without contractors or council members for the most celebrated local trees 9. Ensure that cosmetic tree removal does not happen (e.g. for amenity views) Ask for remedial highway and pavement solutions to be sought before removal is considered – Highways Dept. must inspect the highways and make sure these and underground services are "compatible with the tree" not the other way round – following Relevant NJUG guidelines is recommended. (The National Joint Utilities Group) 10. 2 for 1 replanting policy needs updating taking account of the CAVAT tree value system - to replace a mature tree requires the planting of 150+ saplings in the immediate area – or fewer trees if replanting 10-15 years in advance of planned/managed felling 11. Full disclosure of the genuine reasons for removals and improved record keeping going forward – all reports should be publicly available. 12. To review unnecessary hard pollarding at the wrong time of year (we appreciate difficult if pollarding was originally carried out when the tree was young, often decades prior) 13. Request that in light of the climate emergency that removed trees are NOT CUT FOR FUEL UNLESS DISEASED, but rather the whole tree removed by HIAB and taken to a sawmill for processing. This timber can then be used and it's carbon locked in by using the timber for memorial benches and even OAK for the pier deck where appropriate – Once Upon a Tree

97. 1. It would be helpful to have clarity around what constitutes a tree strategy and a what constitutes a tree policy. 2. A strategy would refer to aspirations and targets however: a) An increase in canopy cover from 12% to 15% in 2050 appears unambitious. This equates to an increase in 7500 trees over a period of 30 years (c250 trees per year) b) Other councils break down their figures into 'Administrative areas' and Urban Fringes' (e.g. Plymouth). This approach could be adopted to promote the increase in canopy cover to reflect all aspects of the town, and guards against the achievement of 15% cover being achieved by primarily planting a few thousand trees in one remote urban location. 3. The tree-planting strategy a) would need some development to ensure it focuses more on aspirations and facilitation mechanisms that encourages optimum opportunities for planting, with a proactive and sophisticated range of options for stakeholder engagement across the community (businesses, public sector organisations, community groups, and the general public). b) Currently this strategy tends to highlight the reasons tree planting cannot occur, and this tends to detract from a sense of vision and community engagement. c) There could be more options for the community to start the dialogue. The current strategy tends to put the onus on the Council to start these discussions. It might be helpful to develop opportunities for dialogue, to support any tree-planting programmes initiated by the Council. This would promote creativity and ownership from within different elements of the community The linkage between this policy and the two documents referenced could be made clearer. The first section appears to be a rationale for pruning and removing trees. This creates a strong focus on risk management, and tends to undermine the aspirations (with the potential excitement) for a greener Southend in the future. As such this document could act to dampen community enthusiasm. 4. Tree-planting plan Once the strategy and plan are developed with more clarity, a plan would be needed to help direct and monitor progress. This plan should also incorporate a focus on wards already identified as having low coverage. 5. Tree-planting budget It is clear that the Council is taking the greening of the town seriously, and as such it would be appropriate to see a ringfenced budget set aside specifically for tree planting. Separate to the budget for maintenance. We would also recommend that the budget for planting was sub-divided into wards identified by the plan. 6. Monitoring and evaluation This strategy should be regularly monitored to ensure that it is achieving its aims, rather than being left to run for 30 years. As such the plan/strategy needs to have specific points for review built into it. This would include regular full reports to the Council, against the targets. Finally, we would consider building those targets into individual officers' annual appraisals.

- 98. While I recognise that councils currently have a lot of strain on their resources, I don't think 15% is ambitious enough. We should aim for at least above the 17% average, regardless of local peculiarities. I think often tree planting is seen as a nice extra, and I understand that, but given the urgency and reality of the climate crisis, and the immediate local threat of air pollution, both rightly recognised by the council itself, we should view it as a vital necessity. So I agree with more planting; I disagree that 15% is enough. I also would like to say that we need to focus on maintaining young trees as well as planting new ones - they've vulnerable in the first two years, and the policy shouldn't be to plant, hope for the best and then plant more, but to care for and water them properly. Again, I realise that you are unlikely to have enough staff and money to do this as well as you'd like to. But I think the public could be mobilised! Perhaps making the process of planting/dedicating memorial trees (or just personal trees, it doesn't need to be for a death) could be made cheaper and easier, so children and families could have their own trees to care for near their houses or schools?
- 99. The information and explanation of the strategies are informative and citing the principles and research on which they are based is useful. The general presentation of the policy is clear and demonstrates a commitment to greening our urban environment. However, the target tree coverage of 15% in 30 years time is dangerously low. We need to match the national average recommended urban tree canopy coverage for coastal towns of 15% in the next FIVE years. We need this tree coverage now followed by more urban trees year on year. On some of my responses I selected 'agree somewhat' because although I support the principle of additional planting, the targets quoted are thoroughly inadequate. If the targets were higher I would have marked them 'agree completely'. re. allowing tree removal when trees are damaging private property - there should be an exception if the tree pre-dates the building. If a house has been built too close to an existing council-owned tree then the housebuilder is at fault. The current house owner presumably noticed the tree was present when they bought the property. The mature trees must be prioritised. If a resident's garden wall is compromised, the question should be whether a wall is necessary as a property boundary marker? Would a fence not be sufficient? I note and applaud your guidance are requirements for proof that the tree is in deed the cause of any damage. Suggestion: page 28 states that requests for replacement trees, made by householders, are taken into account. Please can a method for making this request please be outlined here?

- 100. Please note I have stated I strongly agree with no 1 and no 6 as it's blatantly obvious that more trees need to be planted. However, bearing in mind that the council have declared a climate emergency, 15 percent by 2050 is too little too late. Please be informed by the science and treat the issue with the importance it deserves by initiating a huge tree planting program. I have stated neither agree or disagree with the pruning and felling questions as the council does not have a good record in this respect often having felled threes stating one of the reasons stated in the question when in fact the tree did not need cutting. The council and needs to separate any link between the arboroculturalists who make felling decisions with a company paid to fell. Many thanks
- 101. I am making these comments on behalf of the Woodland Trust. Your tree policy is very comprehensive, covering trees on both public and private land and it sets out a strong case for the importance of trees, the need to retain existing trees where possible and to plant more of them. The document is very well presented with good use of graphics and artwork, which will make it more likely to be read and understood by councillors and members of the public. There are, however, one or two spelling/grammatical errors: for example in several places "practise" is used where you mean to say "practice" (ie where it is the noun, rather than the verb). Your list of the benefits of trees is excellent, although in the paragraph on air quality benefits, it might be useful to recognise recent research at Birmingham University Forestry Institute which shows that trees do absorb pollutants into their leaves but a bigger effect comes from rows of trees or shrubs acting as a barrier and thus shielding people from sources of air pollution, such as alongside busy roads. It is great that you have mapped the tree canopy in each ward of the council and identified where canopy cover is low. However, we would like to see you make a positive commitment to expand tree canopy cover specifically in these areas, as well as setting an overall canopy cover increase target for the town as a whole. You state that you want to increase tree canopy cover from 12% to 15% by 2050 but we think this is a very unambitious target and we would like to see it increased. Areas where there is new housing development are an ideal opportunity to build in high levels of tree cover from the start: in our Emergency Tree Plan published earlier this year we talk about the need to plant more trees to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies and advocate a target of 30% tree canopy cover in new housing development. The strategy talks about increasing canopy cover where street trees and other standard trees are removed: you could also do as some other councils have done and require two or three new trees to be planted for every one removed, as close to the site of the original tree as possible. The section in the strategy on woodland is quite short: it is great that you are committing to prortecting ancient woodland in particular but we would also like to see you commit to new woodland creation, as a means of helping you achieve a more ambitious tree canopy cover target. A good location for new woodland creation is next to existing woodland (particularly if it is ancient woodland) and natural regeneration should be considered as an option where it is feasible, although tree planting is also a good way of stimulating community participation. I hope these comments are useful. I would be happy to discuss them further with you and also talk to your officers about how the Woodland Trust can help you deliver your tree policy wnen it is finalised . - Woodland Trust

- 102. The aspiration Edda to be to plant many more trees the 15% goal is too little. Engage local residents, businesses and services (churches, hospitals, schools etc) and far more is achievable. Make links with RSPB/Essex Wildlife Trust and the MoD. All have land that can be used.
- 103. Yes. I live on Hildaville and I am so disappointed that we aren't on the council's leaf fall and you haven't looked after the tree outside our property. It's shameful when you happily take care of trees in Chalkwell and yet here in Westcliff you don't seem to care.
- 104. Native tree species especially rare and specimen trees should be planted.
- 105. I'm am very sad and angered to see a beautiful white blossom tree as been cut down in my road burdett ave I don't know why this was sanctioned as the tree was asset to our road and it's loss is a complete disaster and completely unnecessary. And don't make out it was diseased because it wasn't I have lived in burdett ave for 21 years and it hasn't changed. Your tree policy is terrible why are you trying to completely ruin Southend by turning it into a money grabbing concrete jungle with no soul.
- 106. I would just like to make a point about the replacement of trees on the highway. I completely understand the occasional need for complete removal of a mature tree. My concern is about species replacement. Could there not be something emphasised in the policy that ensures that in the case of larger species, a like for like replacement tree is planted. Nothing makes my heart sink more than seeing majestic limes or oaks felled and replaced with birch or rowan. The limes trees in Woodside and Belfairs Park Drive and the oak trees on London Road outside of Chalkwell Park all play a major part in giving character to those areas. Lesser substitutes take everything away from the street character. I do hope we are not seeing the demise of oaks, limes and London planes as significant roadside trees within the Borough. Thank you for all of your efforts in this matter.
- 107. I would like to see us double the amount of trees that we panted last season this season. We have made a terrific start so let's redouble our efforts this year.



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhood & Environment)

To

Cabinet

On 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Carl Robinson Director of Public Protection

Agenda Item No.

Enforcement Review Update & SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy

Cabinet Member: Councillor M Terry

1. Purpose of Report

To update Councillor on the progress of the Enforcement Review being undertaken to provide a more collaborative and coordinated approach to our front line enforcement services and also to consider the proposal for an Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy that includes universally shared principles that all enforcement services will adhere to, taking account of national guidance on the principles of good enforcement.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the progress with the enforcement review.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy attached at Appendix 1

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has a number of front line enforcement services operating in different teams, and while some good examples of collaborative and joint working exist between teams, it was felt that a review of these front line enforcement services could provide for a more effective service for the Council.
- 3.2 The review will support the Southend 2050 Outcomes, in particular around Safe & Well and Clean & Green, providing for more effective enforcement leading to people in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times, and a focus on environmental enforcement to improve the local environment for those that live, visit and work in the borough.

- 3.3 Developing the Southend 2050 Outcomes has identified that residents and local businesses want to feel safe from anti-social behaviour and other crime and disorder as well as wanting to enjoy an improved quality of life, including improvements in the environment
- 3.4 The scope of the review therefore reflects the Southend 2050 Outcomes and has included enforcement services from Highways / Community Safety / Waste & Environmental Care Team / Regulatory Services / Parks / Pier and Foreshore, and was started in early 2020.
- 3.5 The review has been undertaken in conjunction with the council's Service Design Team, adopting the agile double diamond approach to Discovery, Define, Develop, Deliver and has involved working with officers from each of the services to ensure a co-produced solution. This approach enables a fair, proportionate, consistent and transparent process of review.
- 3.6 The review has focussed on four recommendations:
 - 3.5.1 **Recommendation 1. Policies -** By defining a clear vision and outcomes; data, standards, policy and practice can all be aligned to ensure progression and achievement can be measured.

Currently, each service area has its own enforcement policy. While each policy deals with the specific remit within service areas, there is no unified and consistent approach to enforcement standards and the principles of how enforcement will be undertaken.

Progress: A new overarching SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy has been drafted collaboratively and is attached at Appendix 1. The policy has identified the universally shared principles that all enforcement services will adhere to whilst also making clear the unified objective of enforcement across the Borough and underpinned by the principles of good enforcement included in national guidance.

The draft policy demonstrates a proportionate approach to enforcement, similar to policies deployed by other enforcement agencies, including the Police, with their 4 E's approach, where (with some exceptions) Enforce is a last resort, with Engage, Explain, Encourage being the proportionate approach to achieving compliance by consent.

This policy will be supplemented by existing and more detailed service specific policies, some of which are already in review to complement this review work, including the Highways Enforcement policy.

3.5.2 **Recommendation 2: Digital Solutions -** Through the development and design of a more comprehensive and accessible digital solution, staff will be able to communicate and collaborate more effectively, record and report issues more effectively, whilst also making efficiencies in process and time.

Progress: Through a series of engagement exercises, ICT Business Partners, Product Developers and Service Design have scoped the needs and

requirements of a new digital solution. Frontline staff and managers alike have contributed to the developing specification.

The design specification principles include:

- Integration
- Global view and sharing of information
- Accessibility
- Evidence gathering ability
- Intelligence and data
- Customer friendly access / platform
- Compliant and safe

The size and scope of the specification is being considered by the ICT leadership team for consideration and agreement of next steps; taking a strategic view of other work and priorities across the organisation.

3.5.3 **Recommendation 3: Training -** By establishing a universal training and support package for Enforcement staff, culture and behaviour will align whilst also promoting new standards of practice. Enforcement will increase across the area and help promote improved collaboration.

Progress: Workforce Development will be brought into the design early next year to help identify a clear learning pathway for Enforcement staff to compliment any adopted enforcement model.

3.5.4 **Recommendation 4: Multi-disciplinary Service –** A multi-disciplinary approach to resourcing enforcement alongside the unification of its image will increase public confidence and increase the amount of enforcement taking place. Having a clear and simple hub of information on the council website will complement this approach.

Progress: A frontline staff working group comprising officers from each service area has been established and is undertaking collaboration exercises including:

- Multi-agency patrols to understand more about enforcement remits across service areas.
- Matrix building to highlight common practice and key differences in respect of enforcement and related powers.

A full staffing list from each service area has been put together with support from Finance, to identify all the existing front line roles within scope of the design project, and to provide a rough estimation of current enforcement costs across those services (estimated at around £2m).

Early modelling ideas have begun to explore how a multi-disciplinary service structure might look. HR have been brought in to advise on risks and consultation and a pilot project is being designed that would seek to prove/disprove some of the modelling ideas and is expected to take place over the course of 8 weeks, anticipated to start in January 2021.

The objectives of developing a new enforcement model are:

- 1. That officers record and report issues across a wider service remit
- 2. To enable officers to undertake enforcement across a wider service remit

- 3. To embed the issuing of FPN's as business as usual activity
- 4. To provide enforcement resource effectively and flexibly across the borough
- 5. To target specific issues/areas with a multi-disciplined team i.e. littering in parks, cyclists on pavements etc. or geographic hot-spots for crime.
- 6. To increase visibility and unification of services across the borough, increasing public confidence and perceived sense of safety

4. Other Options

4.1 SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy: the option would be to continue with individual enforcement policies in each service area, which can lead to inconsistency of approach on enforcement.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy: to provide an overarching enforcement policy, identifying the universally shared principles that all enforcement services will adhere to whilst also making clear the unified objective of enforcement across the Borough. We don't currently have such a policy.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map: Safe and Well Outcome – people in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times and Clean & Green Outcome - to improve the local environment for those that live, visit and work in the borough.

6.2 Financial Implications

SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy: None.

Enforcement Review: Existing enforcement costs for the enforcement services included in the scope of the review are approx. £2m. The review is aimed at providing better value for money in terms of enforcement services and may provide some additional financial efficiencies, yet to be calculated.

6.3 Legal Implications

None.

6.4 People Implications

Enforcement Review: Any new enforcement model adopted may result in restructured services and impact on existing enforcement officers.

6.5 Property Implications

None.

6.6 Consultation

As part of the service design approach, managers and officers from all service areas included in the scope of the review have been involved in the review. HR have also been consulted. Member views on enforcement service have also been taken into account as the review has developed.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Yet to be undertaken.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Enforcement Review: As any new enforcement model develops, a Risk assessment will be developed alongside that.

6.9 Value for Money

Enforcement Review: Enforcement costs for the enforcement services included in the scope of the review are approx. £2m. The review will provide for better value for money in terms of the cost of enforcement and may provide some additional financial efficiencies, yet to be calculated.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

The objectives of the review will provide for more effective enforcement across a wide range of front line services including those related to Community Safety, and will contribute to the Southend 2050 Safe & Well Outcome 1 - people in all parts of the borough feel safe and secure at all times

6.11 Environmental Impact

The objectives of the review will provide for more effective enforcement across a wide range of front line services including those dealing environmental issues, and will contribute to the Southend 2050 Safe & Well Outcome - to improve the local environment for those that live, visit and work in the borough

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 The Regulators-Code (www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code) and the Enforcement Concordant (Central and Local Government Enforcement Concordat, March 1998)
- 7.2 The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 (enforcement is proportionate, targeted, transparent consistent and accountable)

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft SBC Environment & Regulatory Enforcement Policy.





Southend on Sea Borough Council Environment and Regulatory Enforcement Policy

Version: 1.0, November 2020

Produced: In consultation with Neighbourhoods and the

Environment

Next Review: 2023/4

Contents

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Aims and Objectives
- 3. Principles
- 4. Standards
- 5. Monitoring
- 6. Formal Actions
- 7. Types of action to resolve non-compliance
- 8. Partnership Working
- 9. Equalities
- 10. Review

1 Introduction

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's shared ambition to transform the borough by 2050 is aligned to five themes, with related desired outcomes:

Pride & Joy - By 2050 Southenders are fiercely proud of, and go out of their way, to champion what our city has to offer

- •Safe & Well By 2050 people in Southend-on-Sea feel safe in all aspects of their lives and are well enough to live fulfilling lives
- •Active & Involved By 2050 we have a thriving, active and involved community that feel invested in our city.
- •Opportunity & Prosperity By 2050 Southend-on-Sea is a successful city and we share our prosperity amongst all of our people
- •Connected & Smart By 2050 people can easily get in, out and around our borough and we have world class digital infrastructure

This Policy also supports the more specific desired outcomes for each theme, including:

- Our streets and public spaces are valued and support the mental and physical wellbeing of residents and visitors. People in all parts of the Borough feel safe and secure at all times.
- A range of initiatives help increase the capacity for communities to come together to enhance their neighbourhood and environment.
- We are leading the way in making public and private travel smart, clean and green.

To help achieve these goals, our approach requires effective joined up enforcement and regulation.

This policy explains our approach within a framework of legislation in the areas of:

- Animal welfare
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Environmental Crime
- Food Safety
- Health and Safety

- Private Sector Housing
- Highways
- Licensing
- Trading Standards
- Private Hire/taxi licensing
- Private Sector Housing
- Public Health

This policy does not cover enforcement action relating to:

- Education (school attendance and child employment)
- Finance
- Planning and Development Control (including Building Control)
- Parking
- Social Services

For information on the above please refer to the Councils website www.southend.gov.uk

This policy is intentionally at a high level as it cannot cover every eventually, especially where there are specific local or national standards which have to be met.

The Council will also follow the principles of

- the Regulators-Code (<u>www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code</u>) and the Enforcement Concordant (Central and Local Government Enforcement Concordat, March 1998)
- Enforcement contained in the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 (enforcement is proportionate, targeted, transparent consistent and accountable)

2 Aims and Objectives

The Council's aim is to carry out its enforcement and regulatory approach in a fair and consistent manner across the borough. In doing so the Council will act in accordance with the standards set out in this policy and any other supplementary policy. This policy will be underpinned by more detailed service specific policies which are not contained here but will be available on the Councils website, they will link to the standards below.

The aim of the policy is to improve the local environment for those that live, visit and work in the borough.

In particular we will:

- Provide clear advice and guidance to those we could potentially enforce and regulate to help them meet their responsibilities, including through the Councils website, printed information, face to face visits
- Provide ways to engage with those we could potentially enforce and regulate to hear their views e.g. Stakeholder groups such as Pub Watch
- Ensure that staff are properly trained and adhere to Council policy and standards
- Ensure our approach is fair, consistent, and transparent
- Take immediate action where appropriate to protect people, animals and infrastructure

3 Principles

Our approach will adhere to the following principles:

- any action will be proportionate to the scale of any non-compliance
- the Council will apply a consistent approach to its activities
- enforcement and regulation will normally be a final means of securing compliance, except where there is wilful intention and/or advice has been ignored, or where a specific agreed policy is in place.

- the Council reserves the right to take immediate action, without warning, where the impact on the health or wellbeing of local people, animals, the environment and/or borough infrastructure will be significant
- prosecution will normally occur where it is in the public interest to do so
- action taken will take due regard of the Council's Equal Opportunities and Customer Care Policies
- regard shall be given to protect the rights of individuals e.g. the Human Rights Act 1998

4 Service Standards

The Council will endeavour to meet the highest standards of Enforcement and Regulation. The following service standards will apply:

Accessibility and Communications

- Submitting reports and enquiries will be a clear and accessible process
- Reports and enquiries will be dealt with professionally and timely
- Provision of clear advice and guidance to prevent non-compliance or further non-compliance

Staff Conduct and Behaviour

- Officers will always carry Identification and announce themselves except where it would impede the purpose of the visit
- Officers will provide their contact details when requested
- Officers will always be professional and courteous, adhering to the Council's values and behaviours
- Officers will be suitably qualified and trained, with ongoing access to continuous professional development

 All activity will be conducted in a manner that respects equality and diversity

Investigation and Enforcement Action

- Investigate non-compliance thoroughly and appropriately using an evidence-based approach
- Seek to build strong relationships with residents and local businesses which aid compliance and investigation
- Where non-compliance may result in further action, we will where appropriate, discuss the matter further with the individual or business concerned, unless to do so would impede the investigation or where immediate enforcement action is required
- The Council will consult with other Enforcement agencies or any agency it deems fit to ensure the correct action is being carried out

Appeals and complaints

- Where there are rights of appeal against formal action, relevant information will be clearly set out to maintain transparency
- The Council reserves the right not to investigate anonymous complaints if further evidence to support any non-compliance cannot be obtained
- Any complaint about an officer of the Council will be dealt with via the Councils Complaint Procedures (www.southend.gov.uk/complaintssubject/general-complaints/1)

5 Monitoring

To ensure the effectiveness of our enforcement and regulatory functions, we will:

- Provide the opportunity for individuals and businesses to report issues to the Council, monitoring the trend or reports to ensure we remain effective
- Regularly engage with service users so they can comment on the effectiveness of our services

• Collect and monitor the different type of enforcement and regulatory actions, including those listed in Table 1

6 Formal Actions

Formal enforcement and regulatory actions will normally be instigated where one or more (but not limited to) of the following apply:

- Informal approaches have failed
- Immediate action is required due to such seriousness that informal action is inappropriate
- To protect or remedy conditions relating to health, safety and the environment
- There is a need to ensure a decision or the policy of the Council is enforced

7 Types of actions to resolve non-compliance

The Council in line with the principles and standards set out above will make use of the following as appropriate

Table 1

Action	Explanation
General, education advice and guidance	Any material provided by the Council to support an individual or business in complying with their responsibilities
Verbal Warning	Warnings are appropriate for advising offenders about contraventions that are easily remedied. Officers will issue suitable advice and guidance and set an appropriate timescale for remedial action. A verbal warning will be recorded by Authorised Officers
Written Warning	Council officers have the option to serve the offender with a written warning regarding the offence stating the necessary future conduct. The warning will note that no formal action will be taken and can be used as a factor in any future assessment where a similar offence occurs

Caution	A Simple Caution (previous known as a Formal Caution) is a non-statutory disposal for adult offenders. It may be used for cases involving first time, low-level offences where a Simple Caution can meet the public interest. An admission to committing the offence is needed from an offender, which should be recorded by the Council officer. A Simple Caution forms part of an offender's criminal record and may influence how they are dealt with, should they come to the notice of the Council again. The fact of the Simple Caution may also be cited in &ourt in any subsequent court proceedings. Simple Cautions are not covered under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore, never become spent.

Formal Notice	The Council has a wide range of powers to require compliance for a person or business. We have the power to close premises and execute work in default. Failure to comply with a notice can result in prosecution
Surveillance	The Council operates a number of closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV) for the detection and prevention of crime, video recordings maybe used in evidence. At all times the Council will have the appropriate authorisation when using this type of surveillance
Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)	Authorised Officers of the Council can issue FPNs for various offences e.g. littering, dog fouling, riding on the pavement etc
Suspension, seizure, forfeiture or voluntary surrender of goods	The Council has a wide range of powers to carry out these actions, goods can include: unsafe products, counterfeit products, unfit food, sound equipment etc. Items may also be seized where they are required for evidence
Refusal, Suspension, amendment, or Revocation of a licence	Authorised Officers can carry these actions based on legislative requirements
Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) Community Protection Notice (CPN)	Issued by a court normally where an offence has occurred, the order intending to prevent re-occurence Authorised Officers can issue a notice with specific actions to prevent re-occurrence, a CBO may also result if this is
Community Protection Warning (CPW)	breached Authorised Officers can issue a warning, intended as first stage of compliance, which can lead to a CPN
Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)	Issued under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, Authorised Officers can issue a FPN if certain conditions are breached e.g. drinking in a no drinking zone, erecting a tent in a public place
Works in default	In relation to housing on occasions when works are not completed following a formal notice or when delay is unacceptable, the council may carry out those works and recover the cost from the responsible parties
Management Order	In cases of licensable dwellings which have no reasonable prospect of becoming licensed or where the council has concern for the health, safety or welfare of occupiers, the council will issue an Order to take charge of the management of the dwelling during which time it will use rental income to ensure pre-existing and continuing deficiencies are removed. Where the income is insufficient, additional charges may be applied to the dwelling.
Rent Repayment Order	In certain actions under the Housing Act 2004, the council may either seek, or assist occupiers in seeking, an Order to require repayment of some or all of rents paid while an offence continued

Banning Order	In addition to any penalty applied by the courts, the council may seek a Banning Order to be imposed on landlords who are convicted of Housing Act 2004 offences
Civil Penalty Notice	As an alternative to Formal Notice or prosecution under the Housing Act 2004, authorised Officers of the Council may issue a Civil Penalty Notice in line with the Council's CPN policy
Prosecution	Prosecution in Magistrates or Crown Courts. We will endeavour to ensure this only happens when other approaches have failed, or it is in relation to serious cases. We do not always warn or issue a statutory notice before taking prosecutions. We will seek to recover the costs that we have incurred in bringing the prosecution

7 Partnership Working

The application of this policy and in some cases the actions carried out by the Council are supported by (but not limited to) the following partners;

- Police
- Other relevant Government enforcement and regulatory agencies
- Other Local Authorities
- Local action and neighbourhood groups
- Housing Associations and housing representatives e.g. landlords
- Volunteers
- Businesses

8 Data Protection

Where relevant and appropriate, the Council may share data with partners to apply this policy. Any sharing that involves personal data will be carried out in line with Data Protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and/or the Data Protection Act 2018).

9 Equalities

Enforcement decisions will be fair, impartial and objective and will not be influenced by issues such as the ethnicity or national origin, gender, religious beliefs, political views or sexual orientation of the suspect, victim, witness or offender.

Officers carrying out enforcement will have had equality and diversity training.

10 Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years and amended as required to comply will all relevant legislation and national standards.

For enquiries about this policy please contact council@southend.gov.uk

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Neighbourhood & Environment) To

Cabinet

On 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Rob Dawson, Energy and Sustainability Project Pipeline Manager

Agenda Item No.

Green City Action Plan

Cabinet Member: Councillor C Mulroney

1. **Purpose of Report**

To present the Green City Action Plan and to update on the activities and projects currently being undertaken in respect to Climate Change and how we propose Southend -on-Sea becomes a 'Green City' and towards achieving Net -Zero emissions by 2030.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the work that is being undertaken to tackle Climate Change and that is being used to affect this Green City Action Plan.
- 2.2 That the Council endorses the Green City Action Plan.
- 2.3 That Cabinet continues to lobby Government via (LGA) with other Local Authorities to ensure that funds and resources are made available to increase the work towards carbon neutral status.
- 2.4 That Cabinet continues to support Adapting to Climate Change to deal with the impacts of embedded emissions is required to take equal priority with Climate Change Mitigation such as achieving Net Zero emissions.

3. **Background**

3.1 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its Report on Global warming in October 2018 describing the damage that warming at 2°C would inflict compared with 1.5°C and recommending that net-zero emissions be reached by 2030.

- 3.2 In September 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency.
- 3.3 A paper was presented to Council on 5th November 2019 outlining the work proposed and being undertaken towards the Climate Change agenda, and the preparation of work towards this Green City Action Plan.
- 3.4 Most parts of the Council and 2050 Outcomes have become involved in delivering and encouraging others to deliver the changes in behaviour and actions required from all parts of the community and are committed to delivering the outcomes listed in the Green City Action Plan.
- 3.5 During the development of the Southend 2050 Outcomes it was clear that local businesses and residents, including young people, wanted to see improvements to our environment, with tackling climate change being high on their agenda.
- 3.6 With the aspiration of becoming a net-zero emissions borough by 2030, it is vital that the Council works with all of its partners, including businesses and residents, who themselves will be required to show leadership. Through the actions contained in the Action Plan, we will continue to engage with these groups.
- 3.7 Significant progress has now been made in establishing 5 focus areas of priority namely,
 - Climate Leadership and Strategic Approach
 - Establishing a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon
 - Building Climate Resilience across Southend
 - Future Generations
 - Building Partnerships
- 3.8 Included in the Action Plan are a number of projects and initiatives that are ongoing, demonstrating the progress made already, as well as plans for developing other initiatives towards 2030, including:
 - Existing projects have shown that between 2005-2018 Southend Borough has seen a reduction in overall CO₂ Emissions by a total of 39%
 - 73% has been saved in CO₂ emissions in the Carbon Reduction Commitment scheme since 2012/13
 - £2m of funding has been obtained to build climate resilience across Southend
 - £1m secured to help tackle plastic pollution in Southend
 - £600,000 won to help our residents benefit from solar and battery schemes
 - £223,566 of energy saving grants provided to businesses across Southend
- 3.9 In addition to achieving net-zero emissions through the Action Plan, the Council is undertaking work to ensure that climate change mitigation is also achieved through adaptation to the impacts of embedded emissions including:
 - Work with Trees for Cities to identify suitable locations on Council owned land to deliver a carbon offsetting programme to support the delivery of net zero carbon targets for use by local developments, businesses and residents.

- Implement a carbon offset trial for new developments with funds going to deliver energy saving projects in other parts of the Borough.
- Undertake a feasibility study on a school to establish the concept of a 'healthy building' programme that combines energy efficiency projects with other benefits e.g. clean air quality and ventilation.
- Become a founding member of Better Planet Schools to provide primary schools in the Borough with free educational materials and resources on climate change and continue to deliver education to primary schools on environmental issues.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Major reductions in emissions are required across the world to mitigate climate change and hold global warning to less than 2°C, preferably 1.5°C.
- 4.2 To lead by example and reduce emissions across our own estate, provide opportunity for lowering energy bills, drive economic regeneration and new jobs, improve health and opportunities to tackle social inequalities, increase resilience to climate change and generally improve wellbeing.
- 4.3 To introduce circular economy principles into the Council's decision-making framework and encourage greater collaboration

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map:

The primary 2050 outcome that the Green City Action Plan will affect will be **Safe and Well**; We act as a green city with outstanding examples of energy efficient and carbon neutral buildings, green open spaces,, streets, transport and recycling.

5.2 Financial Implications

The work in the Plan is already funded, is subject to grant applications already submitted or other identified Government funding programmes.

5.3 Legal Implications

None at this time.

6.4 People Implications

Constant review needs to be maintained to ensure the Council has adequate resource dedicated to delivering the outcomes of the Green City Plan, both in quantity of staff needed as well as the appropriate skill sets needed.

6.5 Property Implications

Some of the future actions to reduce emissions and generate electricity will have property implications and the usual assessment process will be followed as appropriate.

6.6 Consultation

The following service areas have been consulted and have contributed towards the Green City Action Plan.

- Energy and Sustainability,
- Strategic Planning,
- Waste.
- Transport,
- Communications,
- Property,
- Schools,
- Better Queensway,
- Housing,
- South Essex Homes,
- Economic Development,
- · Facilities Management,
- Parks.
- Coastal Defence and
- · Consultation and Engagement.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

An Equalities assessment has not been undertaken on the totality of this report but individual assessments are being undertaken for the various projects.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are undertaken for each project and recorded in the relevant risk logs.

6.9 Environmental Impact

The Green City Action Plan outcomes will have some immediate effect upon Climate Change mitigation.

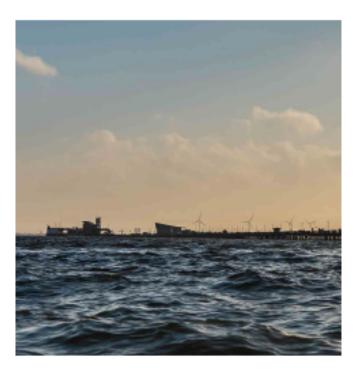
To achieve the requirements of the Climate Change Declaration further commitment and investment will be needed.

8. Appendices

- A. Final Draft Green City Action Plan December 2020
- B. 2018/19 Sustainability Annual report detailing our achievements to date
- C. Minutes of Cabinet 5th November 2019









Green City Action Plan 2021





This document sets out the actions that will be delivered under the Council's first year of work towards becoming a 'Green City'. It is the Council's intention to replace this document with specific Action Plans that are based on a series of new strategies that the Council will be launching in early 2021 (including strategies on achieving net zero carbon; climate resilience and urban greening; waste and recycling; transport; and the new Local Plan).

This Green City Action Plan sets out the initial steps that the Council will undertake to become a Green City and fulfil its obligations after declaring a Climate Emergency in Autumn 2019. Our progress towards achieving the actions set out in this document will be reported via the Council's annual Sustainability Report in 2021 and covers a 12-month period from January 2021 onwards. Actions that will be undertaken by the Council are split into the following five focus areas:

Focus Area One	Focus Area Two	Focus Area Three	Focus Area Four	Focus Area Five
Leadership and Strategic Approach	Establishing a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon	Building Climate Resilience across Southend	Future Generations	Building Partnerships

Focus Area Overview:

Green City Action Plan



Focus Area One: Leadership and Strategic Approach

To create the necessary leadership framework across the Council that will enable Southend to be recognised as a 'Green City'. This will include the delivery of new strategies; leadership training; reporting mechanisms; and regular communication around our progress. Our overriding objective across this focus area is to ensure that we are transparent with our progress and to demonstrate that we are on track to become a 'Green City'. This approach will also help us identify the areas where we need to take further action in the future.

Focus Area Two: Establishing a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon

To ensure that we create a clear pathway for our borough to achieve and support national net zero carbon targets. Our work will focus on the actions we can take to improve the energy performance of our own estate (including South Essex Homes properties) and how we can influence others (including local communities, residents and businesses) to support our ambition to become a net zero borough.

Focus Area Three: Building Climate Resilience across Southend

To build and increase the climate resilience of Southend's urban landscape and coastline. We will identify how a proactive approach to climate resilience and urban greening can result in avoided costs from the future impacts of climate change (e.g. flood damage). We will prioritise action on enhancing and improving our green and open spaces in Southend, so that we can benefit from associated impacts around health and well-being, air and water quality for our communities.

Focus Area Four: Future Generations

To ensure that future generations in Southend are actively engaged throughout the process to see the borough recognised as a 'Green City'. This will include supporting schools and colleges to become centres for environmental excellence, while creating a greener, healthier and climate resilient borough that future generations can be proud of.

Focus Area Five: Building Partnerships

To ensure that we build solid partnerships with a range of organisations who are actively engaged with us in moving forward to fulfilling our Climate Change commitments and moving forward as a 'Green City'. This will include working with local charities, interest groups and other citizen-led organisations to cocreate and deliver solutions that will see Southend prioritise work on climate action and sustainability.

Key considerations that help to shape this Green City Action Plan

- 1. Local authorities play an important role in supporting the delivery of net zero carbon targets. We are able to drive and influence emissions reductions in the wider borough through the services we deliver, our role as community leaders and a major employer, and via our regulatory and strategic functions. We must develop a net-zero carbon plan that focuses on emissions that we control and influence (buildings, transport, waste and renewable power generation). We must lead by example and reduce emissions across our own estate, complete our street lighting programme and identify how we can target emission reductions via transport and procurement.
- 2. Prioritising action on climate change delivers many local benefits. As well as contributing to national net zero targets, carbon reduction programmes can bring a large range of benefits. These include lowering energy bills, driving economic regeneration, creating new jobs, improved health and opportunities to tackle social inequalities. Increasing the borough's resilience to climate change can result in avoided costs from flood damage (buildings, infrastructure and services), enhancement of green and open spaces and have positive impacts on health and well-being.
- 3. Planning and Construction: Our planning functions are one of the key enablers for an urban landscape to reduce its carbon emissions and build a local areas resilience to the future impacts of climate change. We must ensure that our strategic plan-making and development management/building control functions are used to: enforce energy efficiency targets in new builds (and extensions); deliver air quality improvements (especially with particulate matter) support new regulations around net-gain for biodiversity; work with developers to increase the uptake of renewable energy schemes; plan for green infrastructure and sustainable drainage; and identify how we can reduce transport emissions.
- 4. Improving energy efficiency in buildings is a priority action area: One of the most important roles that we can undertake is to provide support to the residential sector to implement and benefit from energy saving measures. This could be through helping residents to insulate their homes or encourage the uptake in renewables (e.g. solar PV). Initial work will be prioritised around district heating and local energy grids that can be used to support households to increase their use of sustainable energy and support net zero targets. Improvements to indoor air quality will also be integrated into the net zero programme.
- 5. Transport. Reducing transport emissions in the borough through implementing sustainable travel programmes (e.g. encouraging 'Smarter Choices' through car clubs, travel plans, cycling infrastructure etc). Promoting low-carbon vehicles by rolling out electric vehicle charging infrastructure, is another priority action for the Council. These considerations will play a major role in delivering our new Local Transport Plan. Work will need to align with the Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy.
- **6. Waste.** This is another key focus area, where we have an important role in waste prevention and sustainable waste management through awareness-raising campaigns, providing separate collection for recycling and food waste, and implementing waste-to-energy schemes that link back into the net zero agenda. One essential action will be identifying how the Council can adopt circular economy principles into its decision-making framework, identifying how waste across the borough can be minimised.
- 7. Climate Adaptation: We have a crucial role in increasing the resilience of buildings and infrastructure in their localities, managing and extending natural resources to promote biodiversity and reduce the risk of flooding, as well as protecting their populations from the health impacts of a changing climate. This is particularly relevant for our borough due to our coastline and the extra vulnerability we face to rising sea levels and storm surges in the future.

Focus Area One:





Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
1.1. Deploying the Strategic Framework for Southend to become a Green City.	1.1.1. Deliver the borough's first 'Net Zero Carbon Strategy' that details the actions that are required to support Southend to become a net zero carbon borough.	New Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan adopted. Cost: Low (Staff Costs) supported with consultancy input.	Adopted Strategy and Action Plan.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021
	1.1.2. Deliver the borough's first Climate Resilience and Urban Greening Strategy.	New Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan adopted. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Adopted Strategy and Action Plan.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	1.1.3. Ensure that net zero carbon and 'climate positive' will feature as major considerations in the Council's new Local Plan (adoption in 2023).	Continued development of new Local Plan. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Increased awareness across the Strategic Planning Team regarding net zero carbon programmes.	Strategic Planning.	Ongoing.
	1.1.4. Deliver a new Waste and Recycling Strategy that considers measures to reduce associated carbon emissions by helping to accelerate the	New Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan adopted. Cost: Low (Consultants to draft the Strategy)	Adopted Strategy and Action Plan.	Waste Team.	Q3. 2021

uptake of the circular economy.				
1.1.5. Ensure that net zero carbon and 'climate positive' will feature as major considerations in the Council's new Local Transport Plan (adoption in 2022).	Continued development of new Local Transport Plan. Cost: Low (Consultants to draft the Local Transport Plan)	Increased awareness across the Transport Team regarding net zero carbon programmes and adoption on Interim Transport Plan.	Transport Team.	Ongoing.
1.1.6. Develop a Funding Plan that maximises opportunities to secure private sector finance and grants to deliver our Green City programme (identify how green bonds, policy performance bonds, green loans, commercial debt and equity etc can support the delivery of our work).	New Private Sector Funding Plan for our Green City Programme. Cost: est. £15,000. New Grant Funding Plan for our Green City Programme. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	An increased understanding of how the Council will finance its Green City programme and aspirations.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
1.1.7. Ensure that the Council's pension investments are directed towards clean growth and sustainable energy (divert from fossil fuels).	Policy that prevents investment in fossil fuels and ensuring that we lobby the Essex Pension Fund to ensure our goals are met. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	Pension funds investment that only supports clean growth and renewable energy portfolios.	TBC.	Q3. 2021
1.1.8. Embed the new National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management	Ensure that the new national strategy is considered in the Local Flood Risk	Increased future resilience to coastal flooding in the borough.	Coastal Defence Team	Q4. 2021

	Strategy for England into key strategic policies, strategies and work in relation to coastal defence and flood risk management.	Management Strategy; Surface Water Management Plan; Southend Shoreline Strategy; Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment / Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; and Local Flood Risk Management Plan (Combined Essex) Cost: Low (Staff Time)			
	1.1.9. Deliver a new Health and Well-Being Strategy for the borough that links green spaces to the positive impacts on our resident's health and well-being.	New Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan adopted. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Adopted Strategy and Action Plan.	Culture Team.	Q4. 2021
	1.1.10. Rename the Energy & Sustainability Team to Environment and Climate Team to accurately reflect the direction of work that the Council will be delivering under this Green City Action Plan.	Environment and Climate Team established. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Environment and Climate Team recognised across the Council.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	1.1.11. Ensure the alignment of the Council's net zero programme with the existing Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy.	Strategic alignment between net zero and air quality. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Adopt and review Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy to ensure it embeds net zero considerations.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Air Quality Specialist.	Ongoing

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
1.2. Ensuring that there is a robust monitoring and evaluation process to measure our progress.	1.2.1 Continue to publish an Annual Sustainability Report that details our progress against this (and future) Green City Action Plan.	Publication of Annual Sustainability Report. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	Publication on the Council's website and associated media coverage.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021 (published every Spring)
	1.2.2. Commit to making an annual submission under the Carbon Disclosure Project that will report the borough's progress on climate action (mitigation and adaptation).	Annual submission of the Council's work via the Carbon Disclosure Project website. Cost: Low (staff time)	Completion of the online return via https://www.cdp.net/en	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q3. 2021 (every August)
	1.2.3. Provide a bi-monthly update on progress to the leads on the Safe & Well, Southend 2050 work stream.	Publication of a bi-monthly report. Cost: Low (staff time)	Increased awareness across the Council with regards to progress made on the 2050 workstream to become a Green City.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Bi-monthly
	1.2.4. Publish a bi-monthly media release that provides an update on our work to become a Green City (intention to keep public aware of our work).	A bi-monthly press release that is issued by the Council's Media Team. Cost: Low	6 press releases issued.	Comms Team (supported by Energy & Sustainability Team).	Bi-monthly
	1.2.5. Agree a new approval process for ALL major/key decisions that are being undertaken by the Council, which must detail how that	An agreement by senior management around how this will be embedded into the Council's decision-making framework.	New decision-making criteria that ensures that the Council assesses the climate, environmental and	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021

and/or sup	vill impact upon oport work around City agenda.	Cost: Low	social impact of the decisions that it makes.		
external so that the G are applie Council's	iew of all ent procedures for ervices to ensure reen City principles d in respect of the outsourcing of nd contracts.	A modern progressive view of procurement within the relevant guidelines. Cost: Low	New procurement criteria that includes consideration around the Green City Agenda.	Energy and Sustainability Team in conjunction with the Procurement Team.	Q3. 2021
& Sustain decision-r Commissi they can a environme	point a ative of the Energy ability Team on making boards e.g. ioning Board so that advise on the ental/carbon tions of the	Appointment of representative to the Commissioning Board; Transforming Together Programme and Service Ideas Lab. Cost: Low	Attendance at various board and committee meetings.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
quality pe	vide updates on air rformance via the ty Steering Group.	Continue to update the Air Quality Steering Group on progress that is being made to improve air quality within the borough. Cost: Low (staff costs).	Clear and transparent process to update the Council on progress being made on air quality projects.	Air Quality Specialist.	Ongoing.
management that build	eure that coastal ent and schemes climate resilience sks (coastal, fluvial	Appointment of representative to the Commissioning Board; Transforming Together	Attendance at various board and committee meetings.	Planning Team.	Ongoing.

and groundwater) are monitored and progress reported regularly.	Programme and Service Ideas Lab.		
reported regularly.	Cost: Low		

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
1.3. Delivery of a new Climate Leadership / Green City Training Programme.	1.3.1. Provide mandatory training on climate change (and other environmental issues) to senior leadership and Members at the Council.	An increased understanding from senior management and Members at the Council on how they can help facilitate and enable progress around the Green City agenda through their ward work. Cost: Budget available from EU project programme and will include specific training on flood and coastal management.	Number of senior managers and Councillors completing the training programme.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	1.3.2. Deliver a new training/awareness programme for staff at the Council that focuses upon climate and carbon literacy, to include information in the induction for new staff.	New training programme that can be uploaded to the intranet and content to be added in the induction for new staff. Cost: Budget available from existing projects.	Number of staff that utilise the programme and complete the staff induction scheme.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	1.3.3. Continue to provide opportunities for a Staff Climate & Sustainability Forum to identify further opportunities for engagement and enable staff to help take climate action within the Council.	Staff Climate & Sustainability Forum. Cost: Low	A total of 12 meetings per annum that will take place virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic.	Green Staff Forum.	Monthly

	1.3.4. Provide net zero and climate training capacity building to members of the Energy & Sustainability Team to reduce reliance on consultancies to deliver work on the Green City workstream.	Staff completing training courses e.g. LED lighting and solar PV training. Cost: Low	Increase in staff capacity and understanding of how to deliver net zero carbon projects and build climate resilience across the borough.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Ongoing
	1.3.5. Establish a Green City Working Group for Council Officers.	To create a Green City Working Group, consisting of a cross-representation of officers from different departments across the Council to support the delivery of the council's Green City Action Plan. Cost: Low (staff time and Councillor time)	6 meetings per annum (bimonthly basis).	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Bi-monthly
	1.3.6. Establish a Climate Positive (+) Commission (Senior Management and Councillors).	The Climate Positive (+) Commission will consist of senior management and Councillors. Cost: Low (staff time and Councillor time)	Raised awareness of progress on the Green City Action Plan at senior management and Member level. Meetings to be held every 4 months.	Energy & Sustainability Team / with input from ALL relevant departments across the Council.	February – June – October 2021.

Focus Area Two:

Creating a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon



Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.1. Building Energy Efficiency Measures across our own Property Estate.	2.1.1. Undertake a review and audit of energy efficiency opportunities across the Council's property estate (to include civic buildings, leisure centres and theatres, South Essex Homes etc) – this will include identifying opportunities to improve indoor air quality.	Recommendation Report for the energy review / audit that aims to ensure that ALL of the Council's property estate has an energy rating of between A-C (DEC). Cost: £20k (est.)	Clear pathway to invest in energy saving measures across the council's property estate. Establish a baseline for carbon reduction targets. Understand opportunities to improve air quality.	Energy and Sustainability Team, Property and Asset Management Team, and Air Quality Specialist.	Q4. 2021
	2.1.2. Develop a priority investment plan to reduce carbon emissions across the borough's educational estate (to include academy schools).	Engage with Salix Finance to deliver an Investment Plan to reduce energy emissions across the borough's educational estate. This will link to the Council's carbon budget at 2.1.9. Cost: Low	Approved Investment Plan for School Energy Projects.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	2.1.3. Deliver a minimum of four energy investments across primary schools in Southend (Chalkwell Hall Infants; Chalkwell Hall Junior; St Mary's Primary;	New LED lighting and solar PV schemes delivered across four schools. Cost: £50k per school, all secured through Salix	Reduction in energy consumption and carbon emissions at four schools, together with a replicable template that can be rolled	Energy & Sustainability Team and Property Team.	Q2. 2021

Earl's Hall). The focus will be on accessing Salix Finance, an interest free load scheme that is designed to encourage energy efficiency measures across the public sector.	Finance interest free loans and supported by the EMPOWER 2.0 Interreg North Sea funding project.	out across ALL primary schools in the borough.		
2.1.4. Deliver an energy saving investment project at the Civic Centre, including a LED light replacement programme.	Delivery of the energy saving investment at the Civic Centre. Cost: Covered via a Salix Finance interest free loan.	Improvements in terms of energy efficiency at the Civic Centre, which will include new LED lighting.	Property Team.	Q3. 2021
2.1.5. Ensure that all energy tariffs are 'green' tariffs across the Council's propert estate.	Review of energy supplies and tariffs. Cost: Low	100% of energy used by the Council is to be from renewable sources.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
2.1.6. Create an energy efficiency investment programme that will detail how the Council can achieve net zero carbon targets across its property estate over a 5-1 year period. To include feasibility work on establishing a revolving fund to finance energy efficiency work on our estate	revolving fund for energy efficiency projects). Cost: est. £15,000. New Grant Funding Plan for our Green City Programme.	An increased understanding of how the Council will finance its Green City programme and aspirations.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q3. 2021

2.1.7. Ensure that the Better Queensway Regeneration Programme is delivered as an exemplar net zero programme, which supports the aspirations of this Green City Action Plan.	Review of energy supplies and tariffs. Cost: Low	100% of energy used by the Council is to be from renewable sources.	Energy & Sustainability Team and Better Queensway Team.	Q4. 2021
2.1.8. Deliver an exemplar new build at Launchpad (Airport Business Park) that prioritises net zero targets.	An exemplar new build that demonstrates how energy efficiency and renewable generation can be built into all future buildings that the Council has ownership of. Cost: High (covered within building costs)	BREEAM Rating.	Property Team.	Q3. 2021
2.1.9. Establish carbon budgets for departments within the Council to ensure that there is collective responsibility for taking action to deliver net zero.	The identification and establishment of carbon budgets across all of the Council's departments. Cost: Low.	Council-wide understanding of the actions that are required to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to the Council's net zero targets.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021

Sub-Priori	ty	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.2. Building Energy Efficiency Measures across Households in the Borough.	2.2.1 Continue to deliver an awareness raising campaign on energy efficiency throughout the borough to households (to include internal air quality improvements).	Delivery of public information campaign on the climate crisis, focusing on how households can reduce their carbon footprint. Cost: Low	Increased awareness of the climate crisis and energy efficiency measures across households in Southend.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Air Quality Specialist.	Ongoing	
		2.2.2. Identify opportunities to join the Essex Energy Switch and Solar Together schemes.	Approval to join the Essex Energy Switch and Solar Together schemes. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	To encourage residents to get better prices for their energy suppliers by changing their energy tariff and benefit from most costeffective solar PV panels.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q1. 2021
		2.2.3. Purchase the Energy Saving Trust Home Analytics software to provide data to develop an investment plan to improve the energy efficiency of Council's housing stock e.g. a retrofit programme.	A new investment plan for social housing in Southendon-Sea. Cost: Low	Agreement to deliver a retrofit scheme to support targets around the net zero carbon agenda from 2021/2022.	Housing Team and South Essex Homes.	Q1. 2021
	2.2.4. Complete a feasibility study to install a large-scale solar project on housing estates. Subject to feasibility, deliver the project in 2021 and extend beyond.	Completed feasibility study with investment proposal. Cost: Budgeted	Understanding of the business case for investing in solar PV across the Council's housing stock.	Housing Team, South Essex Homes and Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021	

	2.2.5. Undertake feasibility work to identify how the Council's large sites e.g. leisure centres, theatres, schools can be used to create local energy projects that link to nearby households.	Study on Council buildings and review of DNO (Distribution Networks Operator) constraints to deliver projects. Cost: Covered by EMPOWER 2.0 budget.	Increased understanding of how the Council can deliver net zero programmes to support local communities.	Energy and Sustainability Team (EMPOWER 2.0 project).	Q4. 2021
	2.2.6 Deliver a series of solar PV trial schemes to identify how the Council can best incentivise residents to install solar PV on their homes.	Trials based around Chalkwell Junior and Infant Schools; Earl's Hall Primary School and St Mary's Primary School. Cost: Budget in Capital Programme.	Installation of solar PV projects and development of proposition for residents.	Energy and Sustainability Team (EMPOWER 2.0 project).	Q2. 2021
	2.2.7. Identify how the current planning policies can be adapted to require all new dwellings to be built to zero carbon standards.	Zero Carbon Standards adopted into the new Local Plan. Cost: Low	Implemented into new Local Plan and Planning Guidance.	Planning Team.	Q2. 2021

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.3. Building Energy Efficiency Measures across Local Businesses	2.3.1. Continue supporting local businesses throughout the borough to improve their energy efficiency performance and reduce associated carbon emissions (link to improvements in indoor air quality).	More energy efficiency businesses in the borough. Cost: LoCASE Grant Funding	Successful uptake of the LoCASE (Low Carbon across the South East) grant programme by businesses in Southend.	Economic Development Team and Energy and Sustainability Team.	Ongoing.
	2.3.2. Ensure that 'Green City' considerations are integrated into business engagement programmes delivered by the Council – including regular updates at the Southend Business Partnership.	Green City is added to the agenda for future meetings of the Southend Business Partnership. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Increased business awareness of climate change and sustainability; and number of Climate + Briefings.	Economic Development Team.	Q1. 2021
	2.3.3. Support and encourage local businesses in becoming more environmentally and socially responsible, for example, by encouraging business to switch to renewable energy tariffs and use green suppliers and sign a 'Green City' Charter.	Guidance notes for businesses produced on how they can become more energy efficient and green their supply chain. Extend the Council's climate action training programme to benefit local businesses. Cost: Low	Increased business awareness around how to operate in a more environmentally and socially responsible manner; number of businesses in Southend that sign the 'Green City' Charter.	Energy and Sustainability Team & Economic Development Team.	Q4. 2021

2.3.4. Actively engage with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) to identify further opportunities to support local businesses in Southend improve energy efficiency.	Energy efficiency for businesses to be considered a key priority for SELEP. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Active role in placing sustainability and climate change higher on the agenda within SELEP.	Economic Development Team.	Q4. 2021
--	--	---	----------------------------------	-------------

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.4. Enabling Sustainable Transport in the Borough.	2.4.1 Continue to provide real-time bus information within the borough to encourage people to use	To encourage sustainable transport modes within the borough. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Increase bus patronage post Covid-19.	Transport Team	Ongoing.
	2.4.2. Liaise with bus operators within the borough to promote 'Green City' considerations in providing green transport.	Green City is added to the agenda for future meetings with bus operators. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Increased business awareness of the Council's work around the Green City agenda.	Transport Team and Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q1. 2021
	2.4.3. Continue to deliver sustainable travel behaviour change messaging through online digital content and targeted engagement opportunities.	Behaviour change messaging delivered throughout the borough. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Increased use of sustainable / active travel modes for journeys around the borough.	ForwardMotion	Q3. 2021
	2.4.4. Complete a total of five 'School Street' pilot projects that promote sustainable travel options around selected school sites.	Five pilot School Street projects and the identification of future sites for additional projects. Cost: Covered through Department for Transport Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 1 and Tranche 2).	Number of pilots delivered.	Planning Team and Transport Team.	Q2. 2021

2.4.5. Undertake a consultation that reviews holistic network wide cy audit and master planning the A13 active travel cor	cle Cost: Covered through g of Department for Transport	Increased understanding of the options to increase active travel.	Planning Team and Transport Team.	Q4. 2021
2.4.6. Undertake a consultation that identified lighting and connectivity improvements that can be undertaken along Prittle Brook Greenway.	Cost: Covered through	Increased understanding of the options and costs to improve the lighting and connectivity at Prittle Brook Greenway.	Planning Team and Transport Team.	Q4. 2021
2.4.7. Undertake a review identify cycling improvements to the pubrealm, which would inclusites to deploy secure grecycling parking and elect bike charging stations.	lic Cost: Covered through Ide Department for Transport Ide Emergency Active Travel	Increased understanding of the options and costs to improve the lighting and connectivity at Prittle Brook Greenway.	Planning Team and Transport Team.	Q4. 2021
2.4.8. Assess the feasibil and then demonstrate the opportunity to build EV charging network for onstreet residential parking	project partner in the VPACH project.	Increased understanding of the opportunities to deploy a charging network for on- street residential parking.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Transport Team.	Q4. 2021
2.4.9. Support the deliver the Innovate UK funded project NetX that seeks to	project partner in the NetX	Increased understanding of the opportunities to deploy	Energy and Sustainability	Q4. 2021

a new EV charger extension device that allows three cars to charge from a single EV charger.	Cost: Covered through the Innovate UK project NetX.	electric vehicle charging points in the borough.	Team and Transport Team.	
--	---	--	-----------------------------	--

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.5. Renewable Energy Generation	2.5.1. Undertake a comprehensive feasibility study to determine opportunities for the Council to generate energy from renewable sources.	Feasibility study and high- level investment plan for renewable energy in the borough. Cost: £20k (est.)	Approval to conduct a comprehensive costing of the renewable energy projects to determine their economic viability / return on investment.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Ongoing.
	2.5.2. Create a public database of all renewable energy installations in Southend.	New database that highlights where renewable energy installations have been delivered. Cost: Low	Greater understanding of where renewable energy installations have taken place in Southend and where future projects could be delivered e.g. to understand where grid constraints could materialise.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021
	2.5.3. Assess the different delivery vehicles that are available to the Council to deliver net zero projects on our own estate, community assets and local businesses.	Strategic recommendation and costing of establishing the different delivery vehicles that can be used to deliver net zero projects. Cost: Low	Full understanding of the most effective means to deliver net zero projects across our own estate, community assets and local businesses.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021
	2.5.4. Assess the potential for district heating scheme developments across the borough, which will be linked to the government's Decarbonisation Fund.	Strategic recommendation and costing of delivering district heating schemes in Southend. Cost: Decarbonisation Fund	Approval for feasibility studies to determine economic viability of district heating schemes (including biomass).	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
2.6. Reduce waste (and associated carbon emissions) by promotion of the circular economy within the Council's own estate and services.	2.6.1. Developing an Action Plan to reduce waste arising and increasing reuse and recycling within the Council's estate and own operations. Identify opportunities to implement the circular economy within the Council's own estate and services.	New Circular Economy Action Plan. Cost: Low (Staff Costs)	Adopted Action Plan.	Facilities Management and Waste Team.	Q4. 2021
	2.6.2. Build an understanding of the scale of 'lost plastics' throughout the borough and identify solutions that can help reduce the volume of plastic waste.	Report that details the scale of plastic waste in the borough and recommendations on how this waste can be reduced. Cost: Low (covered by PlastiCity).	Enhanced understanding of how the Council can tackle 'lost' plastic across the borough.	Waste Team.	Q4. 2021
	2.6.3. Implement a new policy to eliminate single-use plastics in Council premises.	New single-use plastic policy. Cost: Low (Staff Costs) linked to PlastiCity.	The elimination of single- use plastic across the Council's property estate, with priority action within the Civic Centre.	Waste Team (linking to activities in 1.3.3. and 1.3.5. above).	Q2. 2021
	2.6.4. Undertake a feasibility study for a sustainable waste disposal solution.	Feasibility Study. Cost: Low	Identification of the most appropriate waste disposal solutions that support the Council's net zero targets.	Waste Team.	Q3. 2021

2.6.5. Trial a plastic waste collection scheme across schools in Southend.	New plastic waste collection scheme at schools undertaken. Cost: Low (Staff Costs) linked to PlastiCity.	Improved plastic waste collection for schools.	Waste Team.	Q4. 2021
2.6.6. Review carbon saving opportunities for waste and recycling services within the borough.	A report on how the Council can save carbon emissions via its waste services. Cost: Undertaken by Waste Contractors.	Future carbon savings for the Council through the waste and recycling services that it provides.	Waste Team.	Q1. 2021

Focus Area Three:

Building Climate Resilience across Southend



Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
3.1. To build and increase the climate resilience of Southend's urban landscape and coastline.	3.1.1 Identify opportunities to 'green' the Council's property estate, looking to find appropriate sites to deploy green infrastructure (e.g. green walls and roofs).	Assessment of the Council's building stock to deploy new green infrastructure. Cost: Low	Understanding of the most appropriate locations for green infrastructure across the Council's property estate. Link to the net zero carbon investment programme.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	3.1.2. Review opportunities to extend the greening programme of lampposts in the borough, identifying how programmes like this can also support targets to improve air quality and enhance biodiversity.	Recommendation report to the Climate Commission about the greening lampposts programme and suggestions for future rollout in the borough. Cost: Low	Increased understanding of where green infrastructure can best be deployed in the borough.	Parks Team and Transport Team.	Q2. 2021/2022
	3.1.3. Deliver a series of green infrastructure programmes across high profile locations in the borough e.g. Southend's main High Street, Airport Business Park and the Pier, and coastline.	Undertake a series of green infrastructure pilot programmes in the borough to demonstrate the positive impact that greening has for urban landscapes. Cost: Covered through budget in EU co-financed projects Cool Towns.	A minimum of 4 new green infrastructure pilots of buildings owned by the Council.	Energy and Sustainability Team (supported by various teams involved in the investments).	Q4. 2025/2026

		Nature Smart Cities and SARCC.			
	3.1.4. Undertake a review of how nature-based solutions can be integrated into the borough's coastal defences and be built into schemes to reduce local flood risk.	A study of the borough's shoreline that identifies where nature-based solutions can be added to coastal defences to reduce the future impact(s) of rising sea levels and increased risk of storm surges. Cost: Covered by the Sustainable and Resilient Coastal Communities project.	Increased understanding of flood risks along the borough's shoreline and throughout the borough.	Coastal Defence Team, Energy and Sustainability Team and Planning Team.	Q2. 2021
	3.1.5. Review impact of climate change across the Council's services and operations.	A Local Climate Risks Assessment for the borough. Cost: Low (staff time)	A thorough understanding of how climate change could impact the borough in the future.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	3.1.6. Complete first draft of a business model to support local authorities to make the case for investing in green infrastructure solutions, over more traditional grey approaches.	A Business Model framework that can be used to make a business case for new green infrastructure projects and concepts. At its heart will be a multi-criteria analysis that enables a local authority to select priority climate resilience benefits. The accompanying guidance manual will support local authorities to identify funding options.	The Business Model is taken up and used across departments at the Council for all future green infrastructure projects / or projects with a green infrastructure component to demonstrate their climate resilience value in a clear and precise manner to aid the decision-making process.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q3. 2021

		Cost: Covered by the Nature Smart Cities project.			
--	--	---	--	--	--

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
3.2. To ensure that Southend's natural environment is protected, and local biodiversity enhanced.	3.2.1. Commence work to create a green infrastructure focus map and greenness index for the borough.	Initial work to commence with a view to complete in Year 2 of the Green City Programme. Cost: Funded through the Interreg FCE CIRCLE project.	Increased understanding of where current green infrastructure is in the borough and where targeted action can be delivered to increase green infrastructure in the future.	Parks Team and Planning Team.	Q4. 2021
	3.2.2. Undertake work that supports the idea behind 'Bee Friendly Cities' that helps to enhance habitats for key pollinators in the borough.	Five pilot projects that have helped to improve the habitat for bees and other pollinators. Cost: Low	Number of greening projects delivered across grant-maintained schools in the borough. Co-benefit – air quality improvement around school grounds. This will also link into a project around roadside diversity planting that is set to encourage populations of pollinators.	Parks Team.	Ongoing.
	3.2.3. Identify funding opportunities e.g. Veolia Trust to secure funding for local communities and charities to enhance the borough's natural environment.	Submission of funding applications in partnership with local communities and charities. Cost: Low (Staff Cost)	Development of a strong working relationship with local communities and charities to enhance the borough's natural environment.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q1. 2021

	3.2.4. Encourage local communities, businesses, schools etc to create better habitats for local wildlife across their sites e.g. the introduction of swift boxes and bug hotels at schools.	20 examples of organisations taking action to improve local wildlife habitats. Cost: Low (Staff Cost) and budget available through the Interreg FCE CIRCLE project.	Increased awareness across organisations in the borough to support local biodiversity and wildlife.	Parks Team.	Ongoing.
	3.2.5. Work with Trees for Cities to identify suitable locations on Council owned land to deliver a carbon offsetting programme to support the delivery of net zero carbon targets for use by local developments, businesses and residents.	Development of a robust carbon offset strategy, including analysing the markets for offsets, developing a management / assessment / certification process. Cost: Low (£10k est.)	An increased understanding of how offsetting can support the Council achieve its net zero aspirations; and identify appropriate sites within the borough to deploy future offsetting programmes.	Energy and Sustainability Team / Parks Team.	Q2. 2021
	3.2.6. Implement a carbon offset trial for new developments, with funds going to deliver energy saving projects in other parts of the borough.	To test a small-scale carbon offsetting trial in the borough, demonstrating how offsetting would work to support net zero aspirations. Cost: Low	Identifying developments where the carbon offset trial can be implemented. All projects will be delivered in Southend.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021

Priority Four:

Future Generations



Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
4.1. Prioritising action to enable schools in the borough to support net zero and climate positive aspirations.	4.1.1. Promote the benefits of net zero and climate positive initiatives to ALL schools in the borough e.g. via Street Schools and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods initiatives.	The delivery of a series of guides made available to schools outlining the benefits of greening programmes and how they can undertake work to ensure that the school building (external and internal) and grounds are greener. Cost: Low	Increased awareness amongst school decision-makers around the benefits of net zero and climate positive programmes.	Energy and Sustainability Team / Education Team.	Ongoing.
	4.1.2. Install a green wall pilot project at a primary school.	A new green wall pilot project at Earl's Hall Primary School has already been installed and a second green wall is proposed at St Mary's Primary School Cost: Low.	Understanding of how the Council can install green walls across the school estate (maintained). Co-benefit – air quality, health improvement around school grounds.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q1. 2021
	4.1.3. Identify appropriate sources of finance to expand the greening programme for schools.	New fund that provides schools with the opportunity to benefit from greening programmes.	To explore opportunities to link with S106 Agreements, Social Value (procurement) and Net Biodiversity Gain	Energy and Sustainability Team (coordinate work with Planning	Q2. 2021

	Cost: Low	(planning), link into existing net zero projects (e.g. energy paybacks to help finance green walls, roofs, pocket parks in schools).	re S106 and Net Biodiversity Gain).	
4.1.4. Link to 2.1.3 to deliver a minimum of four energy investments across the Council's maintained schools.	See 2.1.3. above.	See 2.1.3. above.	See 2.1.3. above.	See 2.1.3. above.
4.1.5. Undertake a feasibility study on a school that establishes the concept of a 'healthy building' programme that combines energy efficiency projects with other benefits e.g. air quality, ventilation.	Feasibility study on 'healthy buildings' and linking to energy investments in school buildings. Cost: Low	Increased understanding of how other considerations around air quality, ventilation, thermal health, safety etc can be integrated into energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmes.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q4. 2021
4.1.6. Become a founding member of Better Planet Schools to provide primary schools in the borough with free educational materials and resources on climate change and continue to deliver education to primary schools on environmental topics.	Delivering Better Planet Schools to a minimum of 20 primary schools in the borough at no cost to the schools. Cost: approx £150 per primary school taking part.	A minimum of 20 primary schools participating in Better Planet Schools each year, with pupils benefitting from increased knowledge on environmental issues (incl. climate change, carbon reduction and plastic waste).	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q1. 2021
4.1.7. Sign up secondary schools to a new campaign called Let's Go Zero (https://letsgozero.org) that	Work with the NGO Ashden to sign up schools in Southend to join the Let's Go Zero campaign. This	An increased understanding of what schools in the borough would like to take part in net zero projects and	Energy and Sustainability Team and Property Team.	Q4. 2021

promotes action in schools to cut their carbon emissions and support net zero targets by 2030. will include a focus on b maintained and academy schools. Cost: Low	th active engagement in supporting work to identify investments.
--	--

Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
4.2. Ensuring that young people in the borough are involved in the Decision-Making process on net zero and climate positive action.	4.2.1 Work with the Southend Youth Council to ensure that they are able to engage with leaders from the Council, businesses and other organisations (academia and third sector) about climate change.	To have representatives from the Southend Youth Council to attend the Climate Commission (see 1.3.6). Cost: Low	Increased awareness amongst school decision- makers around the benefits of greening programmes for their school and pupils.	Consultation and Engagement Team.	Ongoing.
	4.2.2. Create a Green Youth Charter for students/pupils and schools to sign and demonstrate their commitment to positively tackling climate change (mitigation and adaptation).	The Southend Youth Council will create a Green Youth Charter that will link to Southend becoming a 'Green City', aiming to secure young people to sign up and commit to taking positive action on climate change. It will act as a forum for young people to put forward their ideas into net zero and climate positive projects. Cost: Low	Number of young people signing the Green Youth Charter; and the number of schools that make the commitment.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Consultation and Engagement Team.	Q2. 2021
	4.2.3. Provide training on climate change (and other environmental issues, including air quality) to representatives of the Southend Youth Council.	A training programme will be provided to members of the Southend Youth Council via video link that provides an overview on climate change and the action that can be taken.	Number of members of the Southend Youth Council benefitting from the climate change training programme on an annual basis.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Consultation and Engagement Team.	Ongoing.

	Cost: Low			
4.2.4. Arrange an annual digital conference/ symposium for secondary schools on climate change.	To host a digital conference for secondary schools on climate change to help raise awareness on the subject across maintained and academy schools. Cost: Medium (£5-7k per annum estimated cost).	The delivery of the borough's first Climate Positive Digital Conference / Symposium for Schools; number of students that benefit from the event.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q3. 2021
Southend. This will be	To deliver a structured social media engagement project that raises awareness about the impacts of climate change in the borough. Cost: Covered by the Interreg 2 Seas co-financed project Cool Towns.	An increased understanding in young people (and citizens) in the borough about the impacts of climate change and what can be done to combat the issues.	Energy and Sustainability Team and Consultation and Engagement Team.	Q2. 2021

Priority Five:

Building Partnerships to Establish a Green City



Sub-Priority	Action	Output	Measure of Success / Outcome	Owner	Delivery Date
5.1. Building a Network of Green City Champions and Partnerships.	5.1.1 Develop a network of UK local authorities that are committed to working together to create, share and develop best practice around net zero and climate positive programmes.	To have a network of at least 8 local authorities that agree to work together in order to find solutions to common challenges around net zero and climate change. (Please note that the local authorities will be similar in terms of urban environment and population, with a focus on those based in the South-East of England). Cost: Low (Staff Time)	Closer working relationship with other local authorities; access to best practice and knowledge around net zero and climate change.	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
	5.1.2. Sign up to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.	A public declaration of the Council's commitment to take action on climate and energy by joining a growing network of cities that have signed up to the Global Covenant of Mayors programme.	Confirmed membership of the programme. More information about the programme can be found at: https://www.globalcovenant-ofmayors.org	Energy & Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021

	Cost: Low (Staff Time)			
5.1.3. Establish a Climate Commission in Southend that brings together leaders from the public, private, third and academic sectors to help steer work on making Southend greener, healthier and climate resilient.	To invite representatives from some of Southend's leading organisations to join a Climate Commission that will advise and support work to become a Green City. See 1.3.6. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	See 1.3.6.	See 1.3.6.	See 1.3.6.
5.1.4. Develop a series of strategic partnerships with leading charities, NGOs and academic institutions that specialise in working on delivering net zero and climate positive programmes.	Strategic partnerships are already established with Trees for Cities, Young People's Trust for the Environment, Imperial College London, University of Portsmouth and University of Greenwich. Additional strategic partnerships are set to be delivered. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	A total of 10 strategic partnerships to be completed within the first six months of this Action Plan.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021
5.1.5. Act as host and facilitator for Southend's work to join the National Park City family.	To run a series of workshops with National Park City Foundation that connects community members, Youth Council and organisations that would like to support the work around Green City	Deliver a series of community engagement sessions and develop a group of organisations that would be prepared to lead community outreach work around the Green City programme.	Energy and Sustainability Team.	Q2. 2021

		via the National Park City charter. Cost: £10,000			
r H C c	5.1.6 Develop stronger relationships with the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and central government with regards to net zero and climate change work.	To have a more active role in shaping funding opportunities and priority programmes for the SELEP area and lobby government to continue to financially support local authorities to achieve net zero and climate change investment programmes. Cost: Low (Staff Time)	At least two funding applications made to SELEP that support net zero growth and climate positive projects. To make central government aware of the Council's ambitions to drive forward its net zero and climate positive investment programmes.	Energy and Sustainability Team, Economic Development Team.	Q2. 2021



Contents

Welcome

Achievements in Brief

- 1 Reducing our Carbon Emissions
- 2 Sustainable Planning & Regulation
- 3 Delivering Local Low Carbon Growth
- 4 Creating Sustainable Communities
- 5 Mobilising Sustainable Transport & Travel
- 6 Climate Change Adaptation

Concluding Remarks



Our annual report allows us to show you what we are doing to make Southend a more vibrant and sustainable town for us all to live, work and visit.**

Councillor Carole Mulroney



This document includes:

- the Council's key achievements over the past 18 months; and
- 2015/2020 corporate vision to become a 'Low Carbon, Smart City' by 2020

Councillors and senior managers monitor progress against the targets set out in the Council's Low Carbon Energy & Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020 on a regular basis.

Images courtesy of the Council's Flickr Account, 2imprezs, ForwardMotion or Adobe Stock, unless otherwise stated.

For further information please contact:

Jeremy Martin, Energy & Sustainability Manager

T: 01702 215000

E: jeremymartin@southend.gov.uk

Welcome to our 2018/2019 Sustainability Report

Since our last Sustainability Report in 2017, environmental issues have taken centre stage at both the local and global level. Greta Thunberg, school climate strikes and Sir David Attenborough's Blue Planet II have all brought home to us the need for positive action to protect the environment.

Southend's first Low Carbon Energy & Sustainability Strategy was launched in 2015 and set a series of ambitious environmental targets for the Council to achieve by 2020. Topics ranged from reducing the carbon emissions associated with the Council's own property estate to supporting the growth of more sustainable communities across the Borough by helping residents to deal with fuel poverty and lead more active lifestyles.

We have also launched Energy Challenges UK, an exciting project designed to engage our primary schools in environmental topics, such as, climate change, energy and wildlife.

As a seaside town, Southend will see and feel the impacts of climate change and plastic pollution far more than other urban landscapes across the UK. A lot of the work we have done over the last 18 months has centred on these two issues. The Council has secured funding to address localised flooding, set in motion a significant urban greening programme, whilst our PlastiCity project will help us to reduce the impact of plastic waste upon the marine environment.

Above all, the Council is placing the sustainability agenda at the heart of its corporate strategies and work around Southend 2050. We have already set out our goals to become a 'green city' that delivers outstanding examples of energy efficient and carbon neutral buildings, builds climate resilience and enhances our local environment. I hope you enjoy reading about the progress we have made over the last 18 months and although there is much more to do, with your support we can ensure that the Southend Borough has a brighter, greener future.

Cllr Carole Mulroney.





2018/ 2019 HIGHLIGHTS **73%**

saved in CO₂
emissions in the
Carbon Reduction
Commitment scheme
since 2012/2013.

£1 million+



secured to help tackle the impact of plastic waste in Southend.

of energy saving grants provided to businesses in Southend.



of funding obtained to build climate resilience across Southend.

©£216,851

in savings delivered on our residents energy bills.

£600,000+

won to help our residents benefit from solar and battery schemes.

Reducing our Carbon **Emissions**

Section 1 | Page 7

A 73% Saving on our annual CRC submission since 2012/2013

In July 2018, we completed our annual Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) submission to the Environment Agency, reporting a total of 5,367 tonnes of CO₂. The annual CRC Report presents an excellent opportunity to record the progress that we are making in terms of reducing the overall carbon emissions associated with the Council's building stock.

Reporting 5,367 tonnes of CO₂ for the 2017/2018 CRC year represented a significant drop from the Council's first annual submission in 2012/2013 where we reported a total of 19,926 tonnes of CO₂. This represents a 73% saving between 2012/2013 and 2017/2018.

The saving can be attributed to a number of factors. The early phases of the CRC scheme included school buildings which were later removed as a reporting requirement. However, streetlights were then added to the CRC and this equalised the situation.

In 2016/2017 we were able to reduce our CO₂ emissions by 21.2%, due to the successful implementation of the Council's LED streetlight replacement programme and the energy efficiency work that we have undertaken across our property estate.

Our 2017/2018 CRC Summary:

Electricity = 3,923 tonnes of CO₂

Gas = **1,444** tonnes of CO₂

Feed-in-Tariff: 9 tonnes CO2

Total = **5**,**367** tonnes of CO₂

Reducing Carbon Emissions across our Primary Schools

One of the main objectives set in our Low Carbon & Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020 was to help schools within the Borough to cut their carbon emissions and reduce their energy bills. In 2018, we started to deliver Energy Challenges UK and provide support to 10 primary schools in Southend to help them reduce their overall energy consumption.

Energy Challenges UK aims to reduce schools' energy consumption, whilst engaging students and teachers in exciting projects to address key issues like single use plastics, waste and recycling and creating new habitats for wildlife to thrive. The ultimate challenge is helping schools to reduce their energy consumption by 30%.

Energy Challenges UK is possible due to funding provided to the Council through 2imprezs - an EU project that is co-funded by the North Sea Region Programme 2014-2020. The overall objective of the project is to act as a catalyst for energy saving measures in school buildings across the North Sea Region, which includes parts of the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

We are delighted to be working directly with the Young People's Trust for the Environment, who have designed a series of completely free learning materials for Southend's primary schools to use throughout the duration of the project.



Energy Challenges UK is proving a fantastic way of engaging primary schools on important environmental topics, including energy and climate change.

Peter Littlewood Young People's Trust for the Environment

To date 10 primary schools (including Chalkwell Hall Junior School, Heycroft Junior Schools and Temple Sutton Primary School) have benefitted from Energy Challenges UK, and teams of Eco Warriors have been tasked with helping their schools reduce their energy consumption. An Energy Challenges UK website will be launched in Autumn 2019.







Delivering New, Energy Efficient Classrooms at Chalkwell Hall

We approved new energy efficient classrooms to replace three wooden huts that have been in use at Chalkwell Hall Infants School since 1980.

The project at Chalkwell Hall Infant School is the first energy efficiency programme approved as a direct result of Energy Challenges UK. Three demountable classrooms will be replaced with a new energy efficient, modern building.

The building will be home to 4 new classrooms that will allow the whole year group to be taught in the same space and help improve the learning environment for over 120 pupils and their teachers, for example by providing better heating.

In addition, the project will fund an energy efficiency programme for the rest of the school building, with new LED lighting, solar panels, boiler room insulation and in-classroom heating controls.

We expect the project to deliver savings of 65 tonnes of CO2 every year once the work has been completed. The project has been funded through a combination of a Government grant and corporate borrowing, with the revenues generated from energy savings and generation used to repay the finance.

Sustainable Planning & Regulation

Section 2 | Page 11

'CRUNCHING' the Urban Planning System

CRUNCH* is a 3-year funded project led by the University of Portsmouth. It is a £1.6 million research project that brings together 18 research partners from around the world to learn about the food-water-energy nexus and how they connect across urban landscapes. We are a partner in CRUNCH.

The work focuses upon six Urban Living Labs in six cities around the world, including Eindhoven (the Netherlands), Gdansk (Poland), Uppsala (Sweden), Taipei (Taiwan), Miami (US) and Southend-on-Sea. The research explores how the links between food, water and energy can be exploited to make urban environments more sustainable and resilient in the face of climate change.

By the end of the project in 2021, the partners will have delivered a functional and freely available support system for urban planners to help them make rational decisions about climate change interventions across their own urban landscapes.

CRUNCH represents an exciting opportunity for the Council to become involved in future research and infrastructure proposals, not only to extend the finding from this project but to explore other topics that have emerged

during this collaboration with some of the world's leading sustainable cities.

The project was one of the first funded by the Sustainable Urbanisation Global Initiative, a global network of funding bodies helping urban areas become more sustainable.

The CRUNCH project has been a great chance for the Council to connect with some of the world's leading academics, learning how we can become more sustainable.

Stephanie Li

Project Manager

Creating a more Sustainable Urban Landscape across Southend

At the start of 2019, we were awarded £4 million for public realm and 'place-making' improvements by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) that together with funding from the National Productivity Infrastructure Fund, will be used to tackle urban mobility challenges around Southend High Street.

Our Southend Central Area Transport project (S-CATS) is our key programme that supports the continued growth and regeneration programmes set out by the Southend Central Area Action Plan.

Its main aim is to strengthen and transform the Town Centre by improving the quality of journeys for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst providing a more attractive welcome to Victoria Circus as a whole.

S-CATS will use funding secured through SELEP to improve the streetscape by providing better lighting, an improved drainage system, seating, block paving and enhanced landscaping along London Road (between Queensway and College Way).

Funding from Horizon 2020, has allowed us to deliver a project called SUNRISE, which aims to stimulate and support cocreation processes towards improving local mobility issues around Victoria Circus and the section of London Road between College Way and the High Street.

We have also secured well over £1 million from the National Productivity Infrastructure Fund to deliver a project called TRIP (Town Centre Redevelopment Improvement Project). The funding wiill be used to improve the connectivity between the Travel Centre and the High Street. Looking at how improvements, including new green infrastructure, can be placed along the side roads that connect the two areas.



These projects present an excellent opportunity to determine how the Town Centre can benefit from a more sustainable approach to urban design when tackling mobility challenges."

Amy Roberts

Senior Planner



Tackling Local Flood Risk through Sustainable Drainage Systems

Economic loss caused by flood risk is expected to increase five-fold by 2050 as a direct result of climate change. Urban areas need to take action now to reduce the future impact of flood risk. The SPONGE2020 project has presented the Council with an excellent opportunity to explore the implementation of innovative sustainable drainage systems across the town.

SPONGE2020 is a project partnership between Dutch, British and Flemish local government, which encourages the partners to co-create and implement innovative climate change adaptation solutions with local stakeholders.

The project will help pave the way for a wider rollout of these solutions across urban areas in order to reduce the risks of damage caused by flooding, whilst demonstrating that urban greening can provide more cost effective solutions than traditional grey infrastructure that is often deployed in cities and towns to combat flood risk.

SPONGE2020 presents an excellent opportunity for the Council to deploy

a series of pilot projects in the Borough that demonstrate how new surface water management systems can be implemented to deliver long-term sustainable flood risk management. The pilots will take the form of sustainable drainage systems, which are otherwise referred to as SUDs.

The pilots will each include direct engagement with local stakeholders, including residents, urban planners and businesses, in order to ensure that the climate adaptation measures that are deployed provide maximum benefit to those who are negatively impacted by the flooding. Work on the pilot projects will commence later in 2019.

Delivering Local Low Carbon Growth



Section 3 | Page 15

A Five-Year Roadmap to Deliver Local Growth in Southend

Our recently published 'Five Year Road Map to 2023' sets out how we intend to further develop the local economy and emerge as the leading economy in south Essex. This presents some fantastic opportunities that we can explore around the growth of the 'green economy', which is worth \$4 trillion per annum globally - that's as much as the fossil fuel industry.

Over the next five years up to 5,000 additional homes could be built across the Borough, providing a fantastic opportunity to deliver homes that prioritise energy efficiency and renewable energy, whilst looking at opportunities to enhance green space.

This is perfectly demonstrated with Better Queensway, where work is in progress to regenerate the Queensway area and create a new residential-led development made up of high quality housing and a better living and social environment.

We have also contributed to the South2 East local energy strategy, which has been developed to enable the Coast to Capital, Enterprise M3 and SELEP to achieve clean growth until 2050. Work is focusing upon growing opportunities in the region for sustainable energy across the power, heat and transport sectors.

SELEP is part of the Greater South East Energy Hub, which the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has funded. The Hub provides the Council with access to a team of specialists that will provide us with support and advice to identify and deliver a series of local energy projects.

The work that we have been undertaking in this area has all been designed to identify how the clean growth agenda can create new jobs and economic opportunities for local residents and businesses.

Our work links directly with the Government's Clean Growth Strategy that sets out the work to be undertaken to decarbonise all sectors of the UK economy. Some £2.5 billion (up to 2021) will be invested in low carbon innovation, which provides us with plenty of future funding opportunities to explore going forward.

Making the LoCASE for Businesses to Cut their Carbon Emissions

Since the launch of the Low Carbon Across South East (LoCASE) project in 2016 Southend businesses have received free business advice and grants that can be utilised to reduce business overheads and greenhouse gas emissions. Both are designed to help businesses increase profitability and promote business growth and support the low carbon economy.

The Council is a delivery partner of the £18.5 million funded European LoCASE project. It is a partnership with ourselves, Kent County Council, East Sussex County Council, Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and the University of Brighton.

Over the last three years, LoCASE has offered professional advice, support and match funded grants to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) across the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

There are two ways that the project helps businesses. The first identifies how a SME can implement energy efficiency saving solutions in its office space, which helps lower carbon emissions and reduces associated energy bills.

SMEs can also apply for innovation, marketing and consultancy support to help grow their business if they supply low carbon goods or services.

In recognition of the positive impact LoCASE has achieved to date, a series of targeted campaigns for specific sectors was launched throughout 2018. These included funds that were made available for catering and hospitality, care homes and nurseries.

LoCASE has also offered businesses, such as taxis, a 40% grant to replace their business fleet with more environmentally friendly hybrid and electric vehicles.

As of November 2018, a total of 7,695 tonnes of carbon had been saved across Essex alone - the whole project had set out to save 5,965 tonnes in total!

The remaining grants have all been allocated and payments have been made to SMEs in the first two quarters of 2019. This will help drive up additional carbon savings through the project. The LoCASE funding ends in July 2019, with case studies available at www.locase.co.uk.



A total of 231 LoCASE grants awarded to SMEs in Essex

A total of 231 grants have been awarded to SMEs across Essex, which has included grants for energy efficiency lighting, new heating systems and renewable energy technologies.

280 tonnes of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Achieved

As of November 2018, Southend businesses achieved an estimated 280.47 tonnes of greenhouse gas reduction as a direct result of the LoCASE project.

£223,566 worth of grants secured for Southend's SMEs

A total of £1.3 million in grants was secured for SMEs based in Essex. From that total, businesses based in Southend accessed £223,566 in LoCASE grants.

Creating Sustainable Communities

Section 4 | Page 19

Tackling the Issue of Plastic Waste in Southend-on-Sea

Of the 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic that has been produced over the last 60-70 years, around 6.3 billion tonnes has ended up in landfill or the natural environment - just 21% has been recycled or reused. This has created one of the biggest environmental issues of our lifetime and local authorities have a key role to play in instigating local responses to plastic.

2018 was a big year for action on plastic waste. The EU introduced its Strategy for Plastics in the Circular Economy*, which sets a series of ambitious targets around waste and recycling. This includes a requirement to increase municipality (residential and business) waste recycling targets to 65% by 2035. The present target set by the EU is for all Member States to achieve 50% waste recycling targets by 2020.

Central government embedded these targets into policy through its recently published Resources and Waste Strategy, 2018. It marks a significant overhaul for all local authorities in England to increase the volume of plastic waste that they collect (including increasing the types of plastic materials that are currently recycled by local authorities.

Both Strategies will have a major impact on waste collection within the Southend -on-Sea Borough. New approaches, new solutions and new ways of engaging householders and businesses will be required to reach the 65% target. In England, household recycling rates have largely flatlined since 2011, when they achieved 42.9%. By 2017, this figure had grown by less than 3% to 45.7%. There is a lot of work to do.

We have been very proactive on the plastic agenda and were part of a successful European consortium called PlastiCity, which enabled the Council to secure in excess of €1 million to work on delivering a new approach to plastic waste that will help us drive up our recycling rates over the next four years.

The funding presents an exciting opportunity to explore how we can benefit from developments within the circular economy and essentially, it will provide us with the opportunity to pilot a free plastic waste recycling service across some of our primary schools.

^{*} http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index en.htm

Taking a 'LEAP' to Help Residents Reduce their Energy Bills

LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership) is a free service that helps people keep warm and find solutions to reduce their energy bills. Since the publication of our last Sustainability Report we have helped our residents save £216,851.18 on their energy bills as a direct result of the LEAP service.

LEAP targets households that are either already in, or are at risk of falling into fuel poverty. It is open to all types of householders - homeowners, private renters and social housing tenants. It offers a free of charge in-home energy advice visit for those who are eligible.

The Home Energy Advisors can then identify opportunities to install simple energy saving measures, such as LED light bulbs and draught proofing; check whether a household is on the best energy tariff via a dedicated energy switching service; and also arrange a free money advice consultation that is designed to help find further funding for additional energy-saving home improvements that can help further reduce energy costs.

You can apply to LEAP by visiting their website (www.applyforleap.org.uk) or phoning (free) 0800 060 7567.

In addition to LEAP, we look to help our residents secure cheaper fuel bills by promoting the Essex Energy Switch and offering those who live in Southend access to our Southend Energy tariff. Switching energy provider is one of the best ways to save money on your utility bills, a process we actively encourage.

Latest Southend Energy Stats:

Savings since launch: £5million+

Total customers since launch: 6,524

Customers in April 2019: 3,865.



(EM)POWERING our Communities with Solar PV and Batteries

In December 2018, the Interreg North Sea Region funding body approved funding for a project called EMPOWER 2.0. The project will provide us with funding to engage with residents in Southend and explore how we can reduce household dependency on the national grid for energy supplies.

EMPOWER 2.0 will provide over €600,000 worth of funding to explore how we, as a Council, can best engage the energy consumer - our residents and businesses - to accelerate the uptake of technologies and innovations that can help buildings become independent (either partially or fully) from the national grid for their energy supply.

The funding will enable us to deploy a series of technology demonstrators that will include a combination of solar, battery and grid-rebalancing technology. From the demonstrator projects we will be able to engage with the residents and businesses of Southend to showcase how these combinations of technologies can potentially help bring income to solar PV and battery storage owners.



Our work on EMPOWER 2.0 represents an exciting opportunity to see how we can support local residents to generate their own energy and reduce the costs of their energy bills as well.





Section 5 | Page 23

Delivering Positive Action to Improve our Air Quality

In 2018, we launched our new Low Emissions Strategy, as part of our Air Quality Action Plan. It sets out the actions that we will undertake to reduce the harmful emissions and pollutants that are associated with transport. Priorities include reducing emissions from taxis, buses and passenger cars, whilst promoting the use of electric vehicles.

Road traffic creates many harmful pollutants, which include particulate matter, ultrafine particles and gaseous pollutants (including nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide). These pollutants have been linked to cancer, asthma, stroke, heart disease and even dementia.

They have also been linked in the UK to costs that add up to more than £20 billion annually. Over the course of the last 12 months we have prioritised action to reduce the impact of pollutants associated with road traffic.

We were part of a funding bid, led by Essex County Council, that secured £1.1 million to retrofit 60 buses with technology that reduces NOx exhaust emissions by up to 90% and particulates by 80%. The work in Southend has focussed on bus services running along the A127, where air quality issues have already been identified.



We need to ensure that we take positive steps to reduce pollutants from vehicle emissions, finding new solutions that help improve air quality across our Borough."

Bill Pegram

Air Quality Specialist

We have also established a new Air Quality Steering Group, which coordinates our work on air quality, including how we will implement the Government's new National Clean Air Strategy 2019.

Accelerating the Uptake of Electric Vehicles in Southend

Whilst the number of electric vehicles registered in the Borough has more than doubled since 2016, work still needs to be undertaken to increase the volume of our electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. We are delighted to have secured funding to deliver 3 new EV projects, which we hope will encourage more residents and businesses to switch to EVs.

Currently, there are a total of 15 EV charging points in Southend and we have created an E-Car Club for members of the public and local businesses that allows them to access 8 electric vehicles. We have looked to secure funding to help us deliver additional opportunities to increase the volume of EV charging points across the Borough.

Our main focus is to understand how we can provide the necessary EV charging points for people who do not have access to off street parking. It is estimated that between 50-60% of people living in Southend do not have such access - the national average is between 30-35%).

The V2Street project has allowed us to be part of a collaborative research project that looks at using the batteries of EVs to provide energy to the national grid. This is expected to provide revenue for the owners of EVs and could provide a new funding stream that will help us to increase the number of EV charging points through our street lighting.

We were awarded a grant of £90,000 from Central Government that will be used to fund 4 new Rapid Chargers that would be used exclusively for EV taxis in Southend. This funding is supplemented by a feasibility study (Wireless Semi-Dynamic Charging of Electric Taxis) that was recently completed. The study looked at how EV taxis could be charged wirelessly whilst waiting to pick up customers.

Whilst focus has been on EVs, we also made the decision to switch the fuel that we use for grounds maintenance and grave extraction from diesel to cleaner burning Shell GTL Fuel. The decision has helped improve air quality by reducing harmful levels of air pollutants (NOx and particulate matter) without the need for new equipment or machinery.

Switching fuels also led to a range of benefits around performance and efficiency, resulting in improved uptime of our plant machinery and extended periods between refueling, eliminating exhaust odours and a reduction in operational noise.



ForwardMotion: Navigating to New Opportunities

ForwardMotion encourages people to think differently about the way they travel around south Essex. The goal is to reduce reliance on cars and get people to consider alternative travel options such as cycling, walking or public transport.

Launched in April 2017, the initiative is a collaboration between Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Councils. It is funded by the Department for Transport. ForwardMotion provides ideas, advice and information to people across south Essex about how they can travel differently. Our messaging focuses upon saving money, time and improving health, as these are the major drivers of behaviour change.

Our Personal Travel Planning (PTP) service (where trained travel advisors give individuals tailored advice on alternative ways they could travel) has so far resulted in over 2,500 travel plans being created for people to benefit from.

ForwardMotion also runs a series of roadshows in town centres and local workplaces, whilst supporting community events such as Southend-on-Sea's Village Green Festival. Fun activities, such as, a smoothie bike and static cycling racing help to attract people, who can then find out more information about the overall campaign's mission.

ForwardMotion provides a range of services to support people cycling, walking and using public transport. We offer cycle training sessions, a bike loan scheme, walking workshops and discounted tickets. As of March 2019, 223 bikes have been serviced and 746 people who have had a PTP have attended cycle training sessions or guided walks.

In Spring 2019, ForwardMotion launched two brand new Cycle Hubs in south Essex, where you can buy refurbished bikes, recycle unwanted bikes or get your broken bike fixed. Find out more: www.forwardmotionsouthessex.co.uk.



Section 6 | Page 27

Southend set to become a Leading 'Nature Smart City'

Since completing the Environment Agency's 'Targeted Adaptation Support for Council's' programme in 2015, we have set building climate resilience across Southend's urban landscape as a high priority. Over the course of the last 12 months we are delighted to have secured funding on three projects that will allow us to achieve just that.

In June 2018 we led a consortium of European partners (including Bruges, Lille, The Hague and Imperial College London) that won in excess of €6.4 million through the Interreg 2 Seas programme to deliver a project called Nature Smart Cities (NSCiti2S).

The project will help local authorities understand how they can build a business case to approve urban greening projects, which have been shown to offer tremendous benefits across urban landscapes, such as reducing flood risk and providing relief to heat stress.

The benefits are not just limited to climate change - living in a greener environment is associated with better mental health and less risk from conditions such as circulatory disease and asthma, whilst it encourages increased physical activity, which helps to cut obesity levels.

The project will also benefit the new Queensway development. It will provide in excesss of €300,000 towards the costs of delivering an urban greening programme into Southend's largest regeneration project in decades. More information will be made available at www.naturesmartcities.eu soon.

Project Summary:

Value: €6.4 million (total)

Funding Body: Interreg 2 Seas

Partners: Southend-on-Sea Borough Council; Cambridge City Council; Bruges; The Hague; Lille; Kapelle; Antwerp; The Zuidrand Regional Association; Imperial College London; University of Gent; University of Antwerp.



Reducing Heat Stress by Creating a Cooler Town

We were part of a successful funding application called Cool Towns, which brings together expertise from the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands to build a greater understanding of how the impacts of heat stress across urban environments can be reduced through the deployment of urban greening programmes and solar shading structures.

2018 was confirmed as the fourth warmest year (average global temperatures) since records began, placing it just behind 2016, 2017 and 2015 in the record books. The impact of warmer temperatures is felt most across cities and towns, as surfaces such as buildings and roads all contribute to making urban areas around 3-4°c warmer than a surrounding countryside.

Cool Towns is funded by the Interreg 2 Seas programme and will enable the Council to deliver a series of pilot projects to test

and validate a number of measures that are designed to reduce heat stress in the Borough. This will include a €195,000 investment to green Southend High Street and deliver a series of pilots that are funded by project partners.

In total the Cool Towns project has secured €7.95 million across the consortium. It provides us with the opportunity to work with Kent County Council and University of Greenwich to deliver solutions to heat stress in South-East England.

Building a more Sustainable and Resilient Coastal Community

Damage caused by coastal flooding in Europe could increase from €1.25 billion per annum currently to €961 billion by the end of the century. With 8 miles of beaches, Southend is particularly vulnerable to sea level rise, tide and storm surges. This is why we have chosen to lead the €10.33 million Sustainable and Resilient Coastal Communities (SARCC) project.

With mean sea level rise anticipated to be between 1.5m-2.5m by 2100, it is vital that we undertake steps that build greater climate resilience across Southend's coastline. SARCC represents an exciting opportunity to enhance our understanding of how nature-based solutions can be deployed along Southend's coastline to help reduce the risk of coastal flooding.

The project has the objective to help mainstream nature-based solutions into coastal management and policy-making, moving away from traditional grey infrastructure and heavy engineering approaches that are currently major features of urban flood defence systems.

The project brings together expertise from the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium and France, who will work together in order to co-design and develop new nature-based solution techniques, methodologies and practices into coastal management.

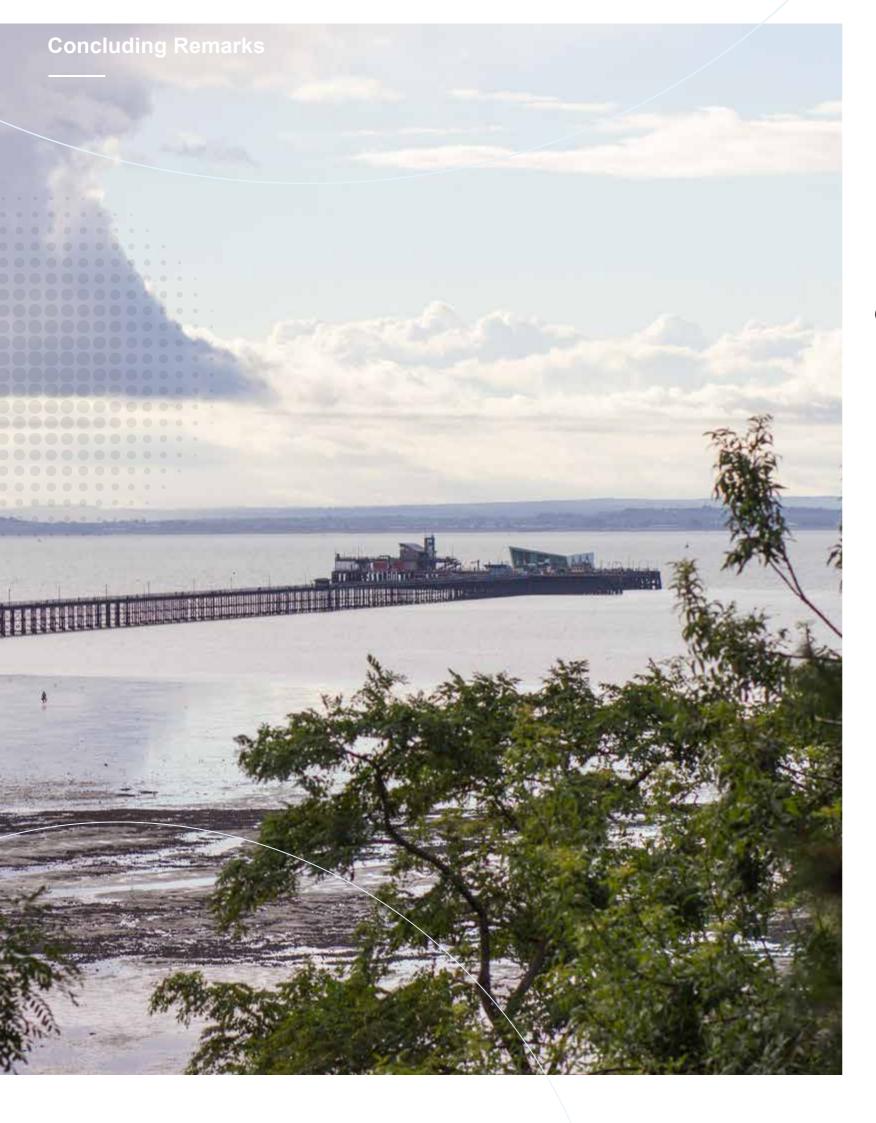
SARCC will provide us with a budget of over €460,000 to deploy a nature-based solution project along our coastline. It will be designed to support existing coastal defences and build more resilience to coastal floods in Southend.

Project Summary:

Value: €10.33 million (total)

Funding Body: Interreg 2 Seas

Partners: Southend-on-Sea Borough Council; Marine Archeological Trust; Environment Agency; Blankenberge; Vlissingen; Gravelines; University of Technology Delft; Flemish Government & Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services; Middelkerke; Exo Environmental; Ostend; HZ University of Applied Sciences; and Vives University of Applied Sciences.



Concluding Remarks: The next five-years

An important conversation has been happening right across the Southend Borough since the summer of 2018. Called 'Southend 2050', it's been an opportunity to explore what kind of place we all want Southend to become by 2050, whilst identifying the action that is needed now and in the medium-term to achieve this. Enhancing our local environment was a key theme throughout this discussion.

In early 2020 we will be publishing our third Low Carbon & Sustainability Report that will cover a five-year period up until 2025. To reflect the desires of local people and stakeholders the new strategy will need to be even more ambitious then its predecessor. It will need to build on the success that we have achieved over the past five years, embracing innovation and innovative solutions that build climate resilience across Southend's urban landscape, accelerate local low carbon growth and significantly reduce the threat of plastic waste to human health and the marine environment.

The new strategy presents an exciting opportunity to set out how Southend will become a 'green city' and what benefits this will bring to local residents, communities and businesses. It will set out new funding priorities and detail how we can align our work to new national strategies on clean growth, transport, clean air and waste, whilst demonstrating our support for the Government's commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissons by 2050.

Our 2018/2019 Sustainability Report demonstrates that we are on the right path towards establishing Southend as a 'green city', whilst highlighting the need for further action to improve air quality, mobilise sustainable travel (i.e. deploying an electric vehicle charging network) and reduce localised flood risk. Our Southend 2050 agenda will act as a major catalyst to pursue clean and growth throughout the Borough and look forward to continuing our journey with our residents, communities and local businesses.

Find out more about Southend 2050 at www.southend.gov.uk/southend2050



SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 5th November, 2019
Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor I Gilbert (Chair)

Councillors R Woodley (Vice-Chair), T Harp, A Jones, C Mulroney

and K Robinson

In Attendance: Councillors T Cox, M Dent, K Evans, N Folkard, D Garne and

D Jarvis

A Griffin, S Leftley, J K Williams, A Lewis, , J Ruffle, J Chesterton,

R Harris, E Cooney, M Gatrell, P Geraghty and C Robinson

Start/End Time: 2.00 - 2.55 pm

506 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry.

507 Declarations of Interest

(a) Councillor Cox – Agenda Item No. 8 (Notice of Motion – Dog Poo DNA) – disclosable non-pecuniary Interest: Works for Barking and Dagenham Borough Council which was mentioned (withdrew);

Officer interests:

A. Lewis declared an interest in Agenda Items 21 and 22 (Minutes of The Shareholder Board): member of the Porters Place Southend LLP.

A Griffin, A. Lewis, S. Leftley, J. Ruffle, J Chesterton, J. Williams, C. Robinson, P. Geraghty, E Cooney declared an interest in Agenda Item 20 (Senior Managers Pay Panel).

508 Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th September 2019

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

509 Parking Review Scope

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) setting out an approach and timeline to develop a suite of parking policies using service design principles, which once completed will form a comprehensive parking strategy for the Borough.

During consideration of this matter the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital and Inward Investment highlighted that, as part of the parking strategy, the potential for additional/more Electric Vehicle (EV) docking/charging stations would be explored.

Resolved:

- 1. That the approach to develop a parking strategy, be endorsed.
- 2. That the proposed policy objectives, priorities and timetable for introducing policy measures, be approved.

Reason for decisions:

In line with the Council's Vision and Aspirations, the approach ensures that the views and needs of our customers, residents and businesses are at the heart of the new service design and parking approach. Furthermore, the new strategy will align not only with their needs and views but enable a future proof for service innovation, climate change and efficiency.

Other options:

The Council could choose to develop the strategy as a single piece of work but this would delay work which could be progressed at a quicker pace.

Note: This is an Executive function.

Called-in to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

510 Housing and Regeneration Pipeline, Including Acquisitions Programme - Update

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) and Deputy Chief Executive (People) providing an update on the work underway looking at the pipeline of housing and development opportunities across the Borough and presenting recommendations setting out the proposed way forward.

Resolved:-

- 1. That the progress on the Acquisitions Programme for Council Housing as set out in Section 3.4 of the submitted report, be noted.
- 2. That the progress of initial works with PSP Southend LLP in Section 3.17 of the submitted report and of the first phase of housing and development pipeline sites currently in delivery as set out in Section 3.11 of the submitted report, be noted.
- 3. That the expansion of the MMC Pilot Project to include Archer Avenue as set out in Section 3.12 and the allocation of £450,000 from the Land Assembly Fund to fund the project, be approved.

(These are funds which the Council currently receives from developers in lieu of providing affordable housing directly and which are available for the Council to use in order to develop affordable housing)

Reason for Decision:

- 1. To update Cabinet on the progress of the HRA infill sites, Acquisition programme and PSP Southend LLP developments.
- 2. To update Cabinet on the next stages of feasibility work on the pipeline of sites.
- 3. To seek agreement to expand the MMC pilot project to include a further garage site at Archer Avenue.

Other Options:

- 1. Alternative arrangements for the Right to Buy spend such as grants to Registered Providers were considered for the Acquisitions Programme however this would not have resulted in the long term benefit to the Council in the way of HRA property.
- 2. Alternative uses were considered for the site in Archer Avenue earmarked for the expansion of the MMC Pilot Project such as selling on the open market however this option would have resulted in a potential loss of affordable housing and revenue income to the Council.

Note: This is an Executive function.

Eligible for call-in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllrs Gilbert and Woodley

511 Housing Management Partnership Agreement

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) providing an update on the progress in drafting new Partnership and Management Agreements for South Essex Homes in order to replace the existing Management Agreement.

The Cabinet also considered the recommendation of the Shareholder Board held on 4th November 2019 concerning the Partnership and Member Agreements to govern the relationship between the Council and South Essex Homes Ltd.

Resolved:-

That the new Partnership and Management Agreements for South Essex Homes Ltd, be endorsed.

Reasons for Decision:

The decision is made on the understanding that the new draft Agreements better reflect the mature nature of the relationship between both parties than the existing Management Agreement, and better capture the required outputs.

Moreover, it is believed that the new agreements better equip both parties to ensure that the partnership is able to progress and deliver high quality housing management and related services to existing tenants. This will be achieved through better client management of South Essex Homes by Southend Council, and will support the delivery of better value for money and better 2050-orientation. The re-organisation of the relationship that these Agreements describe will additionally allow joint exploration of opportunities available to South Essex Homes and South Essex Property Services to take on new work in keeping with the 2050 outcomes.

Other Options:

As it is not a statutory requirement to renew the existing Management Agreement and to replace it with the proposed Partnership and Member Agreements, the existing Agreement could be further extended if required. The proposed approach is to better reflect the needs of both organisations.

Note: This is an Executive function

Eligible for call-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

Notice of Motion - Climate Change and Southend-on-Sea - A Green City

At the meeting of Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion in connection with the Climate Emergency Declaration and the Southend 2050 Green City outcome. The motion was proposed by Councillors Davidson and Bright and supported by 17 other Conservative councillors (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with standing order 8.4).

Resolved:-

- 1. That the work that is being undertaken to tackle Climate Change, which will be used to establish the action plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030, be noted.
- 2. That it be noted that adapting to Climate Change to deal with the impacts of embedded emissions will need to take equal priority with Climate Change mitigation, such as achieving net-zero emissions.
- 3. That the new Low Carbon and Sustainability Strategy which will be brought forward to 2020 to cover the period 2020-2030, be noted.
- 4. That the Government (via the LGA) be lobbied with other Local Authorities to ensure that funds are made available to increase the work towards achieving carbon neutral status.

Reason for Decision

To respond to the Notice of Motion

Other Options

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Called-in to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulroney

513 Notice of Motion - Dog Poo DNA

At the meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion relating to Dog Waste DNA. The motion was proposed by Councillors Bright and Cox and supported by 16 other Conservative Councillors (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:-

- 1. That the Notice of Motion is rejected based on the evidence that there is a relatively low number of irresponsible dog owners, DNA testing would be cost prohibitive and have a low take up based on the experiences from LBBD and Thanet District Council and would place an undue obligation on responsible dog owners.
- 2. That the existing powers with additional targeting of hot-spot areas through enforcement, education and communications activity to address the issues with dog fouling continue to be utilised.

Reason for Decision:

To respond to the Notice of Motion

Other options:

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive function

Called-in to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mulroney

514 Notice of Motion - Housing on Fossets Farm

At the meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion relating to Housing on Fossets Farm. The motion was proposed by Councillors Davidson and Cox and supported by 17 other Conservative Councillors (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:-

That the Council continues to support Homes England with the development of their Fossett's Farm site, which includes the provision of affordable housing and as the scheme progresses through the planning process, the Council will continue to engage with Homes England to maximise and ensure that genuine affordable housing comes forward in line with the Council's Planning Policies.

Reason for Decision:

To respond to the motion.

Other options:

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive function

Eligible for call-in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

515 Notice of Motion - Kursaal Museum

At the meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion relating to the Kursaal Museum. The motion was proposed by Councillors Jarvis and Cox and supported by 17 other Conservative Councillors (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:-

- 1. That the officers maintain dialogue with the leaseholder and its representatives about their plans for the Kursaal.
- 2. That the possible opportunities to support evolving plans to enable the building to be let and re-occupied be considered, where appropriate and viable.
- 3. That it be noted that the current tenant has no plans to sell the leasehold interest at this stage and therefore the suggestions for the Council to purchase the building back for the Prittlewell Prince or any other use are not pursued at this time.

Reason for decision:

To respond to the motion.

Other options:

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive function

Called-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Robinson

Notice of Motion - Gender Neutral Language in the Council

At the meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion relating to Gender Neutral Language in the Council. The motion was proposed by Councillor McDonald and seconded by Cllr Dent (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:-

- 1. That male universals, such as 'chairman', be removed from the constitution, policies and all written and verbal communications and be replaced with gender-neutral terms, such as 'chair'.
- 2. Desist from making reference to a person's marital status unless they expressly request it is included.
- 3. That gender-neutral language be used where an individual's sex or social gender are not relevant or not known.
- 4. That these changes be communicated to all departments and members of staff within Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.

Reason for decision:

To respond to the motion.

Other Options:

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive function.

Called-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

517 Notice of Motion - White Ribbon

At the meeting of the Council held on 24th October 2019, Councillors received a Notice of Motion relating to White Ribbon in the Council. The motion was proposed by Councillor Cowan and seconded by Cllr Dent (this had been referred to Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8.4).

Resolved:-

- 1. That the Council recognises the importance of White Ribbon and its contribution as part of a global campaign taking action to stop male violence against women and resolves to become an accredited authority.
- 2. That the Council commits to making White Ribbon Day (25th November) part of the civic calendar with ambassador-led activities involving staff, members and the public.
- 3. That the Council agrees to raise awareness of the White Ribbon Campaign through regular updates and features in internal and external communications.
- 4. That the Council will provide support to staff and members to take the pledge never to commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women and to become ambassadors and champions.
- 5. That the Council work closely with local agencies and organisations involved in tackling male violence against women to work towards making Southend a White Ribbon Borough.
- 6. That the Council commits to hosting annual awareness training for all Councillors.

Reason for Decision:

To respond to the motion.

Other Options:

The Cabinet could respond to the motion in a different way.

Note: This is an Executive function

Called-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry

518 Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) providing an update on the preparation of an Essex Coast Recreation disturbance, Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will support the provisions of the emerging Southend New Local Plan (SNLP) in relation to the protection of important natural habitat sites on the Essex Coast.

Resolved:-

- 1. That the Essex Coast Recreation disturbance, Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Appendix 1) for a 6 week public consultation, be approved.
- 2. That the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, to make necessary minor amendments which may be required as a result of public consultation and to subsequently adopt the RAMS as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 3. That the implementation of a development tariff to be collected on all residential planning applications submitted in the Southend Borough as a contribution to funding mitigation proposals on the Essex Coast as defined and set out in the RAMS SPD, be approved. That this tariff charge of £122.30 per dwelling be reviewed on a yearly basis to permit inflation increases in accordance with the Retail Price Index.
- 4. That the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) act as the RAMS Project Delivery Board responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the project, and that elected Councillors from each local authority will also be involved with the governance and delivery of the project.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure that an appropriate strategy and supporting evidence is put in place to support the nature conservation provisions of the SNLP and to meet the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Other Options:

None.

Note: This is an Executive function

Eligible for call in to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet member: Cllr Mulroney

519 Licensing Policy

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) on the recent formal consultation process and set out a proposed final revision of the Statement of Licensing Policy.

Recommendation:

That the Statement of Licensing Policy set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be adopted.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To enable The Council to comply with its statutory duty to publish a timely Statement of Policy in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of The Licensing Act 2003.

Other Options:

There are no other options. Failure to fully consult on the draft Policy, or publish the final Policy by 7th January 2020, would put the Council in breach of its statutory duty under the Act.

Note: This is a Council Function

Eligible for call in to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Terry

520 Local Code of Governance

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive reviewing the Council's Local Code of Governance (now to be called 'A simple and effective governance framework').

Recommended:-

- 1. That the revised Local Code of Governance A simple and effective governance framework as set out at Appendix A to the submitted report, be approved.
- 2. That the Council's Constitution be updated to reflect the revised framework.
- 3. That it be noted that the work to help embed the principles of good governance will include a refresh to the Councillor/Officer Relations Protocol, as agreed by the Standards Committee on 3rd October 2019.

Reason for recommendations:

The Council is required to have in place a Local Code of Governance that sets out its governance framework.

Other Options:

Not adopting a revised simple and effective governance framework would mean the Council's governance framework would lack clarity and would hinder delivery of the Southend 2050 outcomes.

Note: This is a Council Function

Eligible for call in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

521 Corporate Budget Performance - Period 6

Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) providing an overview of the corporate budget performance.

Recommended:-

In respect of the 2019/20 Revenue Budget Performance as set out in Appendix 1 to this report:

- 1. That the forecast outturn and mitigating actions for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account as at September 2019, be noted.
- 2. That the planned budget transfers (virements) of £185,875 between portfolio services, as set out in section 3.7 to the submitted report, be approved.

In respect of the 2019/20 Capital Budget Performance as set out in Appendix 2 of this report:

- 3. The expenditure to date and the forecast outturn as at September 2019 and its financing, be noted.
- 4. That the requested changes to the 2019/20 Capital Investment Programme as set out in Section 2 of Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be noted.

Reasons for recommendations:

- 1. The regular reporting of Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring information provides detailed financial information to Councillors, senior officers and other interested parties on the financial performance of the Council. It sets out the key variances being reported by budget holders and the associated management action being implemented to address any identified issues.
- 2. It also informs decision making to ensure that the Council's priorities are delivered within the approved budget provision.
- 3. It is important that any adverse variances are addressed in order for the Council to remain within the approved budget provision or where this cannot be achieved by individual service management action, alternative proposals are developed and solutions proposed which will address the financial impact. Councillors will have a key role in approving any actions if the alternative proposals represent significant changes to the service delivery arrangements originally approved by them.

Other Options

The Council could choose to monitor its budgetary performance against an alternative timeframe but it is considered that the current reporting schedule provides the appropriate balance to allow strategic oversight of the budget by Councillors and to also formally manage the Council's exposure to financial risk. More frequent monitoring is undertaken by officers and considered by individual service Directors and the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) including the implementation of any necessary remedial actions.

Note: This is a Council Function

Called-in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllrs Gilbert and Woodley

522 Southend 2050 Outcome Success Measures - Quarter 2 Report 2019/20

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive providing an update on the second quarter of the Southend 2050 Outcome Success Measures for 2019/20.

Resolved:-

That the Quarter 2 performance, be noted.

Reason for Decision:

To drive the delivery of the Southend 2050 ambition through robust and strategic performance management arrangements.

Other Options:

None.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to: all three scrutiny committees

Cabinet member: Cllr Gilbert

Working to make lives better - How did we do? (Local Account Adult Social Care 2018/19)

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) presenting a draft of our 'Working to make lives better – how did we do?' summary for Adult Social Care in 2018-19.

Resolved:-

That the draft 'Working to make lives better – how did we do?' be noted as the Council's self-assessment summary for these services.

Reason for Decision:

The publication of the 'Working to make lives better' for 2018-19 ensures the continuity of information for the public about how we are doing. It also sets out our vision for the future.

Other Options:

None

Note: This is an Executive Function

Called-in to: People Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Harp

524 Treasury Management Report - Mid Year 2019/20

The Cabinet considered a report of Executive Director (Finance and Resources) covering the treasury management activity and compliance with the treasury management strategy for both quarter two and the period from April to September 2019.

Recommended:-

1. That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Position report for 2019/20, be approved.

That the following be noted:

- 2. Treasury management activities were carried out in accordance with the CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Sector during the period from April to September 2019.
- 3. The loan and investment portfolios were actively managed to minimise cost and maximise interest earned, whilst maintaining a low level of risk.
- 4. £1.067m of interest was received during this six month period. The total investment income earned including this interest during this six month period was £1.104m, at an average rate of 1.85%. This is 1.28% over the average 7 day LIBID (London Interbank Bid Rate) and 1.10% over the average bank rate. (Section 8).
- 5. The level of borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) (excluding debt relating to services transferred from Essex County Council on 1st April 1998) increased from £267.8m to £310.3m (Housing Revenue Account (HRA): £75.0m, General Fund: £235.3m) during the period from April to September 2019.
- 6. The level of financing for 'invest to save' schemes decreased from £8.73m to £8.67m during the period from April to September 2019.

Reasons for Recommendations

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Local Authorities should submit reports regularly. The Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2019/20 set out that reports would be submitted to Cabinet quarterly on the activities of the treasury management operation.

Other Options

There are many options available for the operation of the Treasury Management function, with varying degrees of risk associated with them. The Treasury Management Policy aims to effectively control risk to within a prudent level, whilst providing optimum performance consistent with that level of risk.

Note: This is a Council Function

Called-in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Woodley

525 Minutes of meeting of Senior Managers' Pay Panel held on 5th July 2019

The Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Senior Managers Pay Panel held on 5th July 2019.

Resolved:

That the recommendations of the Senior Managers Pay Panel held on 5th July 2019, be approved.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Eligible for call-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

526 Minutes of the meeting of the Shareholder Board held on Wednesday, 16th October 2019

The Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Shareholder Board held on 16th October 2019.

During consideration of this matter the Leader of the Council highlighted that early feedback on the Better Queensway scheme as a whole had been extremely positive. However, serious concerns had been raised concerning the proposed highway layout. Ongoing work was taking place to explore a range of options for the layout and all Councillors will be engaged in the process and the final plans will come back to Councillors prior to submission.

Resolved:

That the recommendations of the Shareholder Board held on 16th October 2019, concerning the Business Plans for South Essex Homes Ltd, Southend Care Ltd and Porters Place Southend LLP, be approved.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Called-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

527 Council Procedure Rule 46

Resolved:

That the submitted report be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Called-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: as appropriate to the item

528 Minutes of the meeting of The Shareholder Board held on Monday 4th November 2019

The Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Shareholder Board held on 4th November 2019.

Resolved:

That the recommendations of the Shareholder Board held on 4th November 2019 in respect to the Partnership and Member Agreements to govern the relationship between the Council and South Essex Homes Ltd, be approved. (See agenda item 6 above).

Note: This is an Executive Function

Eligible for call-in to: Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director, Children & Public Health to

Cabinet

on

14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Ruth Baker, Head of Children's Service Transformation and Principal Social Worker

Journey of the Child: Fostering and Adoption

People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Anne Jones
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- To report on the contribution that the work of the Fostering and Adoption services make to securing positive outcomes for children and to Southend 2050 ambitions
- To report on the success and challenges experienced during 2019/20 and Q1 and Q2 of 2020/21
- To provide assurance that the Fostering and Adoption service continues to meet required statutory duties as regulated provision
- To meet National Minimum Standard 25.6 of the Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003 which states that the Executive side of the Local Authority:
- a) receive written reports on the management and outcomes of the agency
- b) monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users
- To meet the requirements of The Local Authority Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 which states that the Executive side of the Local. Authority has a responsibility to monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users and that they are satisfied that the service is complying with the conditions of registration.

Report Title: Journey of the Child: Fostering and Adoption

Page Number 1

Agend Item No

2. Recommendations

That the report is noted.

3. Background

3.1 Statutory Framework

Fostering and Adoption Services are regulated services. Due to updates, amendments and changes to the legislation and statutory guidance relating to these regulated services several standards must be met for the services to operate. The statutory framework includes The Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003 (Updated 2005 & 2013 & 2014 & 2017), Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4, 2011 The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (amendment) regulations 2011, The. Local Authority Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (updated 2013, Fostering Minimum Standards 2011, Children and Social Work Act 2017, The Adoption minimum Standards 2011, Care Planning, placement & case review 2014, Adoption Reform Update 2018, and Adoption and Children (Coronovirus) Amendment regulations 2020.

3.2 Purpose

The fostering and adoption services have statements of purpose which can be accessed on the Council website. The current statements of purpose will be written to comply with document accessibility guidance in during Q4 2020/21. The statements of purpose are included as appendices to this report.

3.2.1 Adoption Service

The Adoption Service provides a comprehensive range of service to children requiring adoption, the birth families of children who are adopted, adopters and children who have already been adopted. The service recruits and assesses prospective adopters and provides support to adopters both pre- and post-placement of children and adoption. The service supports children's social workers to determine whether a plan for adoption should be placed before the court, the type of adoptive family who will best meet their needs. They find adoptive placements for Southend children for whom adoption is the agreed plan. The Adoption Service assess adoptors who wish to adopt from the United Kingdom, from overseas, foster carers wishing to adopt a child already in their care and step-parents and relatives wishing to adopt a child from within their family. The objectives of the Adoption Service are:

- To recruit sufficient adopters to ensure that children can be placed with a family that meets their needs
- Provide support post the making of the Adoption Order when needed
- Support contact between the birth family and the adoptive family when in the best interest of the child
- Provide full information to those considering adoption and welcome them without prejudice

 Protect all information held, including records to be held for 100 years from the making of the Adoption Order, in a secure and confidential manner

3.2.2 Fostering Service

The Fostering Service recruits, assesses, and reviews the continued suitability of foster carers. They provide training, support, and supervision of the foster carers. Each fostering household has an allocated Supervising Social Worker who meets with them, at a minimum, once a month to provide support, challenge and oversight of the carers. The objectives of the Fostering Service are:

- to provide the best possible placements or children and young people to reach their full potential
- To recruit, assess and support foster carer so they can. provide a wide range of placements, which meet the diverse needs of looked after children and young people
- To ensure that the Children's Pledge and Foster Carer Charter are embedded into all work undertaken by the service
- To ensure that sufficient resources are available through clear sufficiency planning, to meet the needs of children

The Fostering Service provide placements for Southend Looked After Children from birth to age 18. Foster carers provide 'Staying Put' placements for young people aged 18 and over if the young person wants to continue living with them after their 18th birthday. The Fostering Service assesses, trains, and supports kinship carers such as grandparents, aunts and uncles who express a wish to provide care for children in their family who cannot live with their birth parents.

3.3 Southend 2050

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Services contributes to each of the Southend 2050 ambitions. In providing safe and secure families to Southend Looked After Children, including adoptive families, they can thrive from what are often challenging circumstances. Working in partnership with the children's allocated social workers, the Virtual School for looked after children, schools, colleges, early years settings, community groups and health colleagues the services can contribute to positive outcomes for children and young people. The children and young people are safe and well, they are able to become active citizens and contribute to their communities, they join clubs and take up hobbies, form positive friendships and are supported to achieve well in education and employment.

The work of the services contribute directly to closing the attainment gap in education and ensuring looked after children live close to home.

3.4 Achievements

As with all services within Children's Services, and the Council as a whole, 2020 presented unprecedented and unpredicted challenge. The annual reports for the Fostering Service and Adoption Service are included as appendices and the reports contain detailed information about the volume, quality and impact of the work undertaken in 2019/20 and Q1 and Q2 of 2020/21.

In addition to the successful work to recruit, assess and support foster carers, adopters and the outcomes for the children placed with them, the service's achievements can best be seen in the response to Covid-19. Both services adapted their approaches to ensure that foster and adoptive families continued to receive high levels of support and for safeguarding processes to be robustly applied if required. They moved from face to face to virtual contact and foster carers have shared that they felt very well supported. The move to more virtual contact, and virtual meetings held using MS Teams, enabled the services to increase the contact they have with individuals. Due to the positive experience of foster and adoptive families this way of working will continue beyond the pandemic. The services currently conduct both virtual and face to face contact based on individual Covid-19 risk assessments completed for each family.

During 2019/20 23 children were adopted. This was the same number as in 2018/19. The Department for Education publish an adoption scorecard each year detailing the performance on local authorities on three key areas. The performance is reported for 3 year periods. Southend's position has remained high in the rankings of local authorities and our performance has improved year on year. Our children are matched with adoptive families with an average of 95 days against a national average of 178 days. For our children this means that they move into their forever family without delay. When permanence for children is achieved quickly it supports improved outcomes for them. Adoption agencies are now regionalised and our next adoption scorecard with report according to the performance of the Regional Adoption Agency.

During 2019/20 18 adoptive families were approved to adopt compared to 20 families in 2018/19. During Q1 and Q2 2020/21 a further 19 families have been approved to adopt despite the additional challenges brought by the pandemic. This is evidence of the strength of practice in the Adoption Service.

There have been no breakdowns of adoptive placements in Southend in 10 years. This is exceptional performance and shows that children placed with Southend's adopters thrive within their adoptive placement without needing to move back into the care system. The quality of the performance of the service was recognised by Ofsted in July 2019. They stated that 'Support for post adoption is currently mostly delivered in house by a highly trained team. Services are brought in and funded through the adoption support fund where needed. Given the size of Southend, decisions for support are able to progress in a timely manner and decisions are made into services to be provided without any delay. This we believe impacts the fact Southend has had no adoption disruptions for over 10 years.'

In January 2020, a foster carer conference was held. It was well attended by foster carers and officers. The Executive Councillor for Children and Learning attended the event. From the conference the fostering service co-produced parts of the fostering improvement plan with carers. This has resulted in foster carers leading on projects to offer support to new carers and taking roles in the development of training.

The number and diversity of Fostering Panel members has been increased during the last 18 months. This was an area for improvement identified by an assessment of our fostering service undertaken by Essex County Council on our behalf in 2018. Fostering Panel members have adapted to new ways of working due to Covid-19 and longer panel meetings. This has strengthened the resilience of the Fostering Panel and the new panel members are able to draw on the skill and experience of long-standing members.

The Fostering Improvement Plan is progressing well. We have seen an increase in the compliance with key National Minimum Standards such as completion of annual household reviews and unannounced home visits to carers. The improvement is supported by the increase in management capacity within the fostering service. This is increasing further in early 2021 to ensure practice improvement continues at pace and the targets within the Financial Recovery Plan, relating to the use of external placements, are met. The progress and impact of the Fostering Improvement Plan is monitored at Children's Services Performance and Improvement Boards as well as the Placements and Resources Management Team.

The commitment of foster carers and adopters to provide the very best care to the most vulnerable children has not been impacted by Covid-19. These families have continued to put children first in these difficult times and should be applauded for this. Although the pandemic has led to a small number of families, understandably, reassessing whether they want to continue as carers the majority have continued even when they have conditions which means they are vulnerable to the virus.

3.5 Areas of challenge

In April 2020 Diane Keens, Head of Placements and Resources, retired. She had led the adoption service in Southend, and subsequently the fostering service, for many years and her loss was felt keenly. Her role has been covered by Jo Hines who is an extremely experienced adoption leader and Chris Sandercombe, an experienced Head of Service.

Since March of this year the method of delivering the services has adapted to ensure the statutory duties continue to be met and children, carers and adopters continue to have positive contact with the services. Support groups have moved to being held virtually which has not always been as positive and accessible for all carers and adopters.

Since April 2020 16 foster carers have been de-registered. This is a large number for a small local authority. The reasons have been due to retirement, which links to the challenge of an aging foster carer population, young people being placed with kinship care becoming adults, Covid-19 leading to families reconsidering their priorities and deregistration due to the standards of care provided. In simple terms a backlog of deregistrations due to standards of care were robustly addressed during this period and it is not anticipated that the high number of de-registrations will continue.

The recruitment of foster carers continues to be a challenge. This is a challenge that is reflected nationally and regionally and actions to address the challenge are contained

within the Fostering Improvement Plan and the Sufficiency Strategy. Some methods of recruiting new carers have not been available due to Covid-19 such as attending community events such as Village Green.

Although performance on Fostering National Minimum Standards has improved it is not yet at target. We are confident that we will meet target during early 2021.

During 2019/20 a change in the view of the Judiciary of adoption as an option for permanence was seen nationally. This has resulted in fewer adoption orders being granted across England. In Southend, Essex, and Thurrock the use, by the Courts, of Special Guardianship Orders rather than Adoption Orders is becoming more common. This is despite a care plan for Adoption being agreed by the Local Authority Agency Decision Maker, a post held by the Director of Children's Services in Southend. The impact of this has been compounded during 2019/20 by the pandemic as Final Court hearings are being adjourned in an attempt to ensure all parties are able to meaningfully engage, and, due to caution on the part of some members of the Judiciary to grant final orders using virtual hearings due to the gravity and finality of the judgements. This will lead to delays in children securing permanence via adoption. The issue has been raised across with the Designated Family Judge by Directors of Children's Services in the region.

3.6 Plans for continued improvement and recovery

As detailed in 3.4 and 3.5 we have a Fostering Improvement Plan in place, the progress of which is overseen at Children's Services Performance and Improvement Boards. The plan focuses on improving the quality of practice, ensuring National Minimum Standards are met and increasing the number of in house foster carers.

The plans for adoption include:

- To recruit, assess and support people through all aspects of the adoption process
- To work closely within our RAA to develop stronger aligned practice across the region
- Further develop post adoption support
- Further develop family intervention work
- Learn from and embrace the creative practice
 achieved as a result of Covid 19 while seeking to ensure the needs of the children
 requiring permanency through adoption are met.

The plans for the fostering service include:

- Recruitment will remain a primary focus.
- Strengthen the Fostering Service embedding the progress made
- Increase the management capacity from January 2021 to support improvement work
- Ensure that Southend is competitive with the Independent Fostering Agencies and transparent with our carers
- Work with our fostering colleagues to support young people to feel safe and well, to maintain both stable placements and to fully engage and succeed with education placements so they in turn can embrace opportunity and prosper in their own future goals.

The success of Fostering Improvement Plan will contribute to meeting the need to reduce expenditure on external placements. It is a key element of the Financial Recovery Planning for Children's Services.

4. Other Options

None identified

5. Reasons for Recommendations

The requirement for the Local Authority Executive to review the annual reports of the Fostering and Adoption Service is contained with statutory regulation.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Services as described in this report makes a contribution to the 5 Southend 2050 ambitions. The areas of the road map, over the next 3 years, that are most strongly contributed to include, although are not exclusive to; the development of an agile working culture, reducing attainment gaps and increasing aspiration and educational attainment, increasing apprenticeships, targeted violence and vulnerability support, improving technical literacy and ensuring all young people including looked after children and care leavers have appropriate accommodation.

6.2 Financial Implications

The work of the Fostering Service is making a contribution to Children's Services Financial Recovery Plan as it will reduce the use of costly external placements for children.

6.3 Legal Implications

There are no identified legal implications as the fostering and adoption annual reports and statements of purpose will continue to be brought to Cabinet.

6.4 People Implications

There are no identified people implications to the recommendations.

6.5 Property Implications

There are no identified property implications to the recommendations.

6.6 Consultation

There is no identified consultation requirement with these recommendations.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The Journey of the Child report has no identified equality and diversity implications.

6.8 Risk Assessment

No risk has been identified.

6.9 Value for Money

There is no impact on value for money within the recommendations.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

There are no community safety implications identified.

6.11 Environmental Impact

There is no identified environmental impact.

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

- 1. Annual Fostering Report
- 2. Fostering Statement of Purpose
- 3. Annual Adoption Report
- 4. Adoption of Purpose

Southend Fostering Service Report 2019/20



Introduction

This has been a mixed year for Southend Fostering Service. While we remain committed to the priority of increasing the number of carers being recruited to care for our most vulnerable children, we have also had a year characterized by change. There have continued to be staffing challenges, not only with our longstanding Team Manager, Emmet Perry moving onto the next phase of his life in retirement but also with the great loss of our Head of Service Diane Keens too. We have been able to welcome a new manager to the service Penny Mercer who has brought with her a lot of experience and a clear focus for development and improvement.

The Southend Foster Families Community (previously council) and the Fostering Team have worked hard again this year to arrange a number of social events for carers and Looked After Children in their care. This includes the popular Christmas Party and the Foster Carers continue to make use of the Beach Hut in Thorpe Bay as a place to meet up and develop their own support networks within the Fostering Community.

Our LAC children were also invited to attend the Mad Hatters Tea Party organised by the Black Cabbies Charity to Grosvenor House in London. 37 LAC children attended for the first time in over 10 years.

Placement Stability has been facilitated by the Edge of Care team now offering additional support 7 days a week where placements are at risk or where older young people are on the brink of entering care.

MOMO has been introduced as an APP which enables our young people to communicate with their social workers directly to ensure their views, wishes and feelings can influence and remain a clear focus in all that is done.

Our Ethos

The core of what we do continues to be to strive to provide opportunities for children and young people to thrive in foster care, whether for a few days or for a few years and to find safe, high quality adoptive placements where this is required for children who cannot return to their birth families.

Carers have continued to show a real commitment to supporting Southend children and ensuring they have the best possible opportunities as they progress to independence themselves.

Working together with SBC Foster carers over the last 10months we have held 2 forums and a fostering conference to gather our foster carers views and share our vision to improve our Fostering service. It is known and acknowledged that the most successful recruiters of new foster carers are the existing foster carers themselves. What we have learned from our existing Foster carers is that they wish to work with us to create a service that includes foster carers and listens to their ideas. Together we want to create a fostering service that works together holistically to be able to create a Fostering Community that prospective foster carers will want to be part of and our carers will spread the word because they are proud to be part of SBC fostering service.

Purpose of This Report

The provision, standard and operations of the Fostering Service are governed by:

- The Local Authority Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011(updated 2013)
- Out of Authority Placement of LAC Guidance (2014)
- Fostering Minimum Standards 2011 and the
- Children Act 1989 Guidance & Regulations Volume 4, 2011
- Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) Amendment regulations 2020

The Executive side of the council has a responsibility to monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users and that they are satisfied that the service is complying with the conditions of registration. The aim of this report is to provide the information required to enable the Executive side of the Council to fulfil its duties in this respect.

Overview

2019/20 has been a mixed year with some good success whilst managing challenges with staffing and a significant increase in the LAC population putting greater pressure on the service to secure placements.

At the beginning of the year we took the opportunity to invite Essex Fostering Service to complete a Health Check on the Service from which an ambitious development plan

was created and is being driven forward to improve standards and practice across the service. The vision and development plan to develop a trauma informed Fostering Community has been presented and endorsed by the Improvement Board.

Chris Sandercombe is currently Head of Service for Fostering, with Jo Hines as Service Manager and Penny Mercer as Team and Registered Manager and together they are supporting the team to fully implement the many changes.

In Southend we recognise that the foster carers themselves are our greatest resource and one highlight of the year was the fostering conference which took place in Jan 20. This was well attended and afforded the opportunity to engage with the wider Fostering Service regarding the many changes being developed and provided an opportunity to identify Fostering Ambassadors who going forward will be an integral part in all Recruitment activity.

While still one service the team have split their roles, so the workers focus is either Recruitment and Assessment or Support and Development with the aim to increase time and energy on recruiting the required new carers to the service and strengthening the support offered to the foster families. This approach is tried and tested and many LA and Independent fostering agencies use it. It works because if a Supporting social worker is trying to support and develop foster carers and inevitably dealing with emerging crisis in the placement it is then hard to prioritize recruitment and assessment of potential foster carers. Having a dedicated team who can create a successful recruitment programme that not only meets our demand for in house foster carers but is able to raise our profile to a level that attract not only new Foster carers but experienced Foster carers who want to be part of our Fostering family.

This year there has been a primary focus on raising standards within the Fostering Service and has extended to training for social workers across Children's services to support and improve the quality of decision making when permanency planning for LAC children. The Annual Household Review process and supervision of foster carers has been redesigned along with a robust strategy for managing and investigating allegations.

Statistics 19/20

There has been an increase in the number of children Looked after, over the past 18 months. The needs of many of these young people, who have experienced a lot of trauma and challenges have been assessed as complex, and with the national shortage in placements for such children an increase in the use of residential placements has increased.

Specifically, since April 2020 there has been an increase in demand for placements for teenagers and we have had to significantly rely on the Independent Fostering agencies to meet this demand which places additional pressure on the budget.

The number of young people placed with relatives under connected person's

placements continues to place additional demand and impact on the fostering service capacity and while it is of course right that children are placed within their families where possible, it must be recognised that supporting Kinship placements does often need a high level of Supervising Social Worker input which can at times reduce the support available to our in house foster carers.

- Number of fostering Households approved 10 (7 in 18/19)
- Number of fostering households as at 31st March 2020 113 (104 At 31st March 2019)
- New Family & Friends carers 6 (8 in the previous year)
- How many young people over 18 remained in foster care (using our staying put policy where a young person can remain in their foster placement until the age of 21) 12

Since April 20 there have been 6 households approved with a further 8 in process of assessment.

The Breakdown of Current Carers which includes all foster carer types

April	20	Nov	20
	20	INUV	20

Foster Carer Households	113	101
Breakdown: Project	5	4
Fee Paid	44	35
Single Placement	33	29
Voluntary	6	4
Shared Lives	1	1
Connected Persons	9	15
Kinship	15	13

There have been 16 deregistration's of foster carers since April which is a significant increase to previous years.

This is for a variety of reasons

- Retirement impacted by the fact the foster carers are largely an older population
- COVID 19 living in such uncertain times has led some resignations where fostering can no longer be the priority
- Young people moving on from kinship placements to independence
- Standards some foster carers have been deregistered due to concerns re standards of care



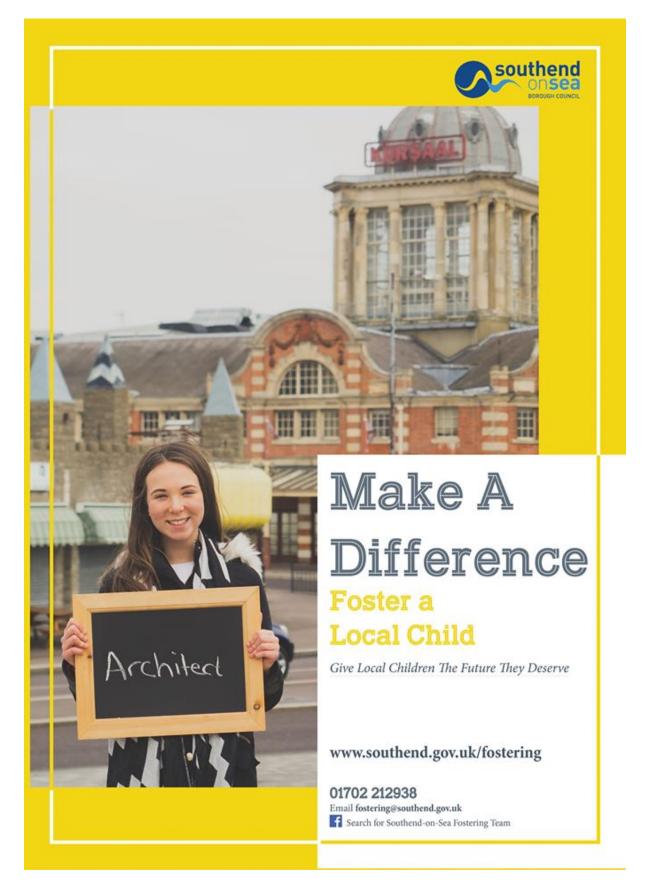
Recruitment

Recruitment is a current priority for the service. It is the aim of Southend Fostering Service to have sufficient suitable placements to enable all Southend children who require foster care to be placed with its own carers, local to their families and friends and who can meet their individual needs.

In order to meet the challenge of recruiting foster carers a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy has been developed which includes a range of advertising strategies. We have continued to develop alternative methods of recruitment to revitalise our programme such as through the use of social media sites like our active Facebook page. We continue to use proven methods such as bus back advertising and radio as well as attending a number of local events and activities within the community. Our newly appointed Fostering Ambassadors will be supporting this activity throughout the coming year as we believe it is those who are fostering themselves that are the best recruiters. We are also meeting with the public online offering question and answer sessions about Fostering. It is recognised that no single approach encourages someone who is interested in Fostering to take that first step. Today a variety of information platforms are accessed before the all-important phone call or email is made/sent. We are aware that we must create a campaign that utilizes as many of these platforms as possible, simultaneously in order to maximise public interest in becoming a Southend Foster carer. We are also working closely with the Comms department within the council and seeking to forge links with Community based projects in Southend.

Campaigns

A wide variety of foster carers are required to meet the needs of children in Southend and a variety of campaigns are run through the year in order to support this we use a variety of general and targeted campaigns for example we may target potential foster carers who are interested in fostering Teenagers or sibling groups.— some examples of our adverts are shown below.





CHANGE A YOUNG PERSONS LIFE



Statistics 2019/20

- Number of enquiries 176
- Number of Initial Visits 31
- Number of Information Events 10 (6 drop in events at the civic and 4 evening events)
- Number of Skills to Foster courses 5

Since April 20

- Number of enquiries 84
- Number of Initial Visits 14
- Number of Information Events 4 virtual events
- Number of Skills to Foster courses 1

Covid- 19 has had a big impact on recruitment locally and Nationally as all community events have been cancelled. The team have sought to be creative and held virtual events online and continue to seek avenues to promote the fostering message.

We are also currently working with Commissioning in the Council to develop stronger links with IFA's where required and are exploring the possibility of developing some in house residential provision.



Placement Activity

On the whole, stability of placement and care is associated with better outcomes for children. Proper assessment of the child's needs and a sufficient choice of placements to meet the varied and specific needs of different children are essential if appropriate stable placements are to be achieved. Inappropriate placements tend to break down and lead to more frequent moves for a young person. The % of looked after children with three or more placements in one year at end of March:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Ī	11.5%	9.5%	9.3%	10.3%	12.6%

For this indicator a lower score is indicative of good performance. Performance in Southend is in line when compared to statistical neighbours and the national average. The criteria for this indicator has changed over the past few years. Previously when a child returned from a missing episode this was classified as a new placement, even if a child returned to the same placement. These are no longer included in this indicator. The percentage of looked after children with three or more placements in one year has remained fairly stable over the past few years. It was expected that the % would increase slightly during 2019/20 due to the high numbers of children with parallel plans for adoption and where the making of a placement order has been delayed through changes in the level of court challenge and with a higher number of older children entering care, however the service worked hard with Edge of Care to support placements.

In a recent survey with LAC young people 91% stated that they felt safe in their foster placement. This is an improvement of 1% on last year's figure of 90%. One of the most important responsibilities of a foster carer is to keep children and young people safe and this data supports that this is happening

Placement location and type

There are many reasons why some looked after children are placed away from Southend. Whilst availability of placements is a factor, some young people need to live out of area to help to keep them safe from harm or from dangerous influences closer to home. Others may need specialist care that is not available locally or may be placed further afield but with family kinship carers.

Over the past two to three years, there has developed a national shortage of placements both fostering and residential which has led to challenges locally to ensure that placements are well matched.

For most of 2019/20 in house fostering services have been running at between 110% and 130% capacity, which leads to pressures within fostering families. The support of the Edge of Care Team has been invaluable to carers during what has been a challenging time.



Of the 315 children looked after by Southend at March 2020:

- 232 (73.6%) were placed with foster carers and
- 241 (76.5%) were placed less than 20 miles from their home.

As at 31 October there were 308 children looked after by Southend:

- 232 (75.3%) were placed with foster carers and
- 230 (74.7%) were placed within 20 miles of their home

The majority of those children in placements classified as 'at a distance' were placed in Essex or local authorities bordering Essex, were UASC or were placed for adoption. It is recognised that children placed away from their home area may need additional support. The quality and impact of care and support that they receive is carefully planned and closely monitored. Where young people are in any form of residential care, the placements are monitored through the Placement Panel & Funding and Exit Panel to ensure that their health, including mental health, education and care needs are appropriately being met with a clear exit plan in place.

Support

The aim of the Southend Fostering Service is to ensure we develop a team of highly skilled, experienced and dedicated foster carers who understand the therapeutic needs of vulnerable children impacted by trauma who will be able to support young

people to experience a sense of security and belonging as they navigate their journey through their childhood.

To support this we have run an extensive training programme for all of our carers throughout the year.

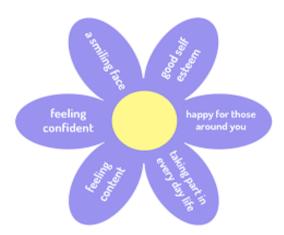
This coming year this will be enhanced further as we introduce a foundational training programme for all foster carers and launch a preschool theraplay support group. Theraplay seeks to strengthen the attachment connections for young children with their carers which in turn promotes a sense of safety. Children need to feel safe in order embrace opportunity and experience life to the full.



Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 and the venue being closed The Fostering Sparkles group has had to be postponed, although it is hoped to be launched as soon as it is safe to do so early next year. Some of the foundational training for foster carers has been able to proceed remotely and the TSD programme has been launched with online TSD support groups up and running.

It is recognised that as the integral resource in fostering we actively sought to engage and involve our foster carers at the fostering conference earlier this year to plan and highlight their support needs and while delayed by Covid 19, foster carers support groups are being run virtually encouraging them to take an active lead.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing of Looked after Children



Our senior MH worker continues to work with our young people and their carers to support and address the emotional health and wellbeing of the Borough's looked after children.

In the last year this included:-

- Direct work with Family Groups
- Dyadic Attachment-focused sessions with Foster Parents and Adolescents
- Long-term (30+ sessions) psychotherapy with 7 LAC.
- Short-term psychotherapy with 4 LAC.
- Short-term psych-education / CBT with adolescents.
- Support provided around Sexually Harmful Behaviour AIM2 work
- Parent Work with individual Foster Parents
- · One 'State of Mind' Assessment
- One Sibling 'Together or Apart' Assessment
- Monthly Clinical Supervision Groups for Foster Parents
- Support with Skills to Foster Training
- Provided consultation to colleagues regarding understanding the emotional health needs and impact of trauma on the developing child.
- Developed links and a working relationship with Children & Adolescent NHS MH Service (EWMHS). Liaised directly in relation to progress and outcome of referrals.
- Maintained a monitoring system for referrals across the two agencies.
- Written bespoke Therapeutic Care Plans for LAC.
- Facilitated two Just Right State Group Programmes.
- Collected and input the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires.

This work is integral in the wider development of the service as a whole and will focus in the coming year on supporting the development of a trauma-informed foster parent

group that have enhanced skills in understanding the impact of attachment difficulties and the ability offer a 'reparenting experience' to meet the emotional health and wellbeing needs of Looked After Children.

To help foster carers assist the children in their care in developing their emotional regulation capacities, the ability to form and maintain healthier relationships and engage socially with peers and other adults, and participate meaningfully in a healthy, active life. This will be achieved in through regular training events and consistent, high-quality support interventions as well as the continual recruitment of more foster carers.

Special Guardianship Orders

A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) means that while parental responsibility (PR) remains with the parents, a carer (including foster carers) or relative can apply for the child to live with them and make day to day decisions on behalf of the child. The Special Guardian is given over-riding parental responsibility and there are very few instances where a parent with PR needs to be consulted.

Since 2015/16 there has been a national increase in the use of Special Guardianship as a long term outcome for children leaving care. There are challenges with some directions from the Courts leading to Court ordered SGO Assessments when Viability Assessments are negative or the granting of SGO's to those with whom the Local Authority are not in support.

Over time, Southend has witnessed the outcome of some court decisions leading to SGO breakdown, reduced life chances for children and in some cases exposure to further harm. Since March 2019, a sibling group of 2 were removed under a Police Protection Order and are now living under the auspices of a Care Order with a plan for long term foster care. One young person was made subject to a Child Protection Plan and the Special Guardian for a baby advised that she could no longer care for the baby after 13 months in her care. In two of these cases, the Local Authority was not in support of the SGO being granted.

By 31st March 2020, there were 105 SGO's in place incorporating 129 children. In 2019/20, 10 SGO's were granted incorporating 11 children as one included a sibling group of 2. Of these, 10 of the children were LAC prior to the making of the SGO and one was a result of a private application. These figures have shown a slight increase from 9 the previous year. Regarding the relationship to the child, 4 were Grandparents, 3 were Aunts, one was a family friend and another a sister.

Since April 20 a further 8 SGO's have be granted.

In March 2017, the Department introduced mandatory SGO training as part of Special's Guardian's assessments in response to a variety of themes that previous Special Guardian's had expressed concerns about. As a Local Authority, the Department felt duty bound to ensure that Special Guardians were equipped with enough information about realities, impact and support available in order for them to make an informed decision. This training is well embedded and courts do ask if

applicants have attended. To date, 73 prospective Special Guardians have attended the training and their evaluation sheets frequently score the training as excellent followed by very good. Colleagues from Essex have attended the training to help them incorporate a similar training programme within their area.

'I feel this presentation/discussion should be provided to anyone who is asked to consider putting themselves forward to become a Special Guardian' – Grandmother 2020

'Good confirmation of some of the things we already knew and really useful and helpful about the things we didn't' – Grandparents 2020

The Southend Permanency Panel (formerly known as the SGO Panel) acts as a robust quality assurance panel who make recommendations as to the suitability of prospective guardians and also agree the SGO Support Plans. SGO Support continues to develop and 2 families were able to access Therapeutic Life Story Work and 1 family, Play Therapy as the result of successful applications made by the Local Authority to the Adoption Support Fund during the year 2019/2020. Proactive support is offered where placements are seen to be under pressure and there are close links with the Marigold Assessment Plus Team to ensure advocacy work and mediation regarding contact issues but equally in the provision of Life Story work. Where there have been two risks of breakdown during this period, Southend's Edge of Care Team have offered robust and intensive support. Where a family requests specific support, a review of their SGO Support Plan can be undertaken and presented to Southend's Permanency Panel for consideration.

Private Fostering

A child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) who is cared for, or proposed to be cared for, and provided with accommodation by someone other than a parent, person with parental responsibility or close relative for 28 days or more is described as being privately fostered. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. They may also be from extended family such as a cousin or great-aunt.

Local Authorities do not approve private foster carers in the same way as general foster carers but are required to assess and say whether or not they agree and accept a private fostering arrangement to ensure that the welfare of privately fostered children is being safeguarded and promoted. To fulfil this duty Local Authorities must take a proactive approach in partnership with other agencies and other key professionals in raising public awareness of requirements regarding notifications of private fostering arrangements.

Decisions made as to whether private fostering arrangements are suitable are agreed at Southend's Permanency Panel (formerly known as the SGO/Private Fostering Panel) which considers all initial and final assessments in addition to annual reviews where required. Statutory checks are completed in line with the checks which are

undertaken for any Local Authority foster carer and the panel ensures quality assurance and that safeguarding issues are followed.

All privately fostered children in Southend are deemed to be "Children in need" and as such have an allocated children's Social Worker and a formal Child in Need Plan. However, there are rare exceptions when a Child in Need Plan is not deemed necessary but any such decision has to be agreed by the Director of Children's Services.

During the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020, there were 12 children living in private fostering arrangements. Of these, 11 young people were aged between 10 – 15 years old with the youngest child aged 9.

Four young people within 3 households have lived in their private fostering arrangement for over 12 months. Of the total numbers in this period, one young person became LAC and her private foster carer was prohibited by the Local Authority in April 2019. One young person was a French Exchange student and has since returned home with another moving back to Nigeria to live with his mother. Two further young people have returned to their parents care and another child's private foster carers have obtained an Interim Child Arrangement Order and are currently being assessed for a SGO. At 31st March 2020, there were 6 young people living under private fostering arrangements across 5 households.

Since April 20 there are an additional 2 young people living in a private fostering arrangement.

As part of the Private Fostering Action Plan January 2019 – December 2019, the following actions have been undertaken thus far with more planned for 2020:

A one minute guide for private fostering has been produced and disseminated by Southend Borough Councils School Admissions Team to their admission colleague's forum which includes school admission colleagues across 17 Infant/Primary Schools and 8 Secondary Schools. This is an ideal opportunity to identify unknown private fostering arrangements. The One Minute guide was also sent to the Children with Disabilities Team and a piece will feature in the CWDT Newsletter.

The Senior Fostering Worker has delivered a private fostering awareness session to colleagues in the MASH+ Team which is particularly important given that all private fostering referrals are made via this team and therefore it is crucial that they are able to recognise these referrals and respond in line with our agreed processes. This has been effective as there is increased contact between MASH+ Team and the Senior Fostering Worker and private fostering processes are well embedded in Southend as highlighted in the Ofsted Inspection in 2019.

Following the discovery of French exchange students staying with host families in Southend, a meeting was held with Border Control from London Southend Airport to ensure that any young person who would be considered under the private fostering regulations are treated accordingly in line with the regulations. A meeting was held on 15th May 2019 with two representatives working for Jev Langues (non-profit

organisation founded by language Teachers). The next step is to establish if and how JEV Langues processes and Southend Borough Councils private fostering processes can be aligned to prevent duplication whilst still adhering to the regulations.

Due to intelligence gathering amongst agencies, prohibitions offer a layer of protection for other young people not just the privately fostered child. Should an individual who has been prohibited allow another young person to reside in their care, this will remain a criminal offence and allow the police to act swiftly and accordingly.

Since 2013, 6 households have been formally prohibited from privately fostering following presentation at Southend's Panel and none to date have appealed the decision to prohibit them. The most recent prohibition which came into force in April 2019 resulted in the young person in question becoming Looked After and the opening of the private foster carers own family for assessment by Children's Social Care which supported safeguarding of other children within her household.

Bi-annual reports are presented to the Southend Local Safeguarding Board to monitor both compliance and the multiagency approach to safeguarding these vulnerable children and young people.

Extra Activities

The fostering service has continued to offer a range of activities including ones which are fund raising; celebratory and as an opportunity for foster families to meet.

In the last year Southend Fostering Service has coordinated and supported the following activities in conjunction with the Southend Foster Families Community:

10/4/19 SFFC funded Kids Kingdom for Children & families.

29/4/19 Fund Raising Indian Meal for Foster carers & Children.

26/5/19 Barbara held Boot Sale for SFFC.

29/5/19 SFFC funded Bouncy Castle Day at The Scouts Hall.

7/8/19 SFFC Teddy Bears Picnic in Southchurch Park.

22/8/19 SFFC funded Kids Kingdom for Children.

8/12/19 SFFC funded Childrens Christmas Party for 100 Children & Families.

31/12/19 SFFC organised tickets for Pantomime at Cliffs Pavilion for 120 Children & Families.

SFFC held monthly Coffee Mornings/Support Groups and raised approx £400 from Cash for Clothes.

Feb half term 2020 Bouncy Castle Day funded by SFFC/ Fostering Team.

SFFC Beach Hut also brings in Funds for SFFC at £10 daily when in use.

Kind Donations from Foster Carers, Hawkwell Baptist Church & local people support our Fund Raising, along with Raffles and the support of all our loyal Foster Carers!

SFFC had a full Events Plan booked for this year which included Foster Care Fortnight and all activities were for both birth children and looked after children. They have continued to fund raise on a regular basis and use The Support Group / Coffee Morning for recruitment, training, raising funds and awareness, these have currently been impacted by COVID-19 as social gatherings have not been permitted, although we continue to explore further creative ways of staying connected.

Southend Virtual School

The Fostering service works closely with the Virtual School to ensure the Educational needs of LAC children are consistently supported.

Challenges for the coming year

To strengthen the Fostering Service there is a lot of collaborative development underway. To achieve this, it was also recognised that the service required additional management support and we are currently recruiting additional managers which will start in January next year.

To ensure that Southend is competitive with the Independent Fostering Agencies and transparent with our carers, we are currently seeking to review Southend's offer (payment, training, support etc). There has been a lot of research and currently ideas and views are being sought from a consultation with the carers to ensure they are actively involved in any change.

Recruitment will remain a primary focus.

Over the coming year we will continue to work with our fostering colleagues to support young people to feel safe and well, to maintain both stable placements and to fully engage and succeed with education placements so they in turn can embrace opportunity and prosper in their own future goals.

Jo Hines Service Manager





Southend Borough Council Statement of Purpose

Southend Fostering Service

Civic Centre Victoria Avenue Southend on Sea Essex

December 2020

Telephone: 01702 212938 Website: www.southend.gov.uk

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Aims and Objectives	4-7
Management, Staffing and Services	8-9
Placement Options	10-11
Services Provided	11
Carer Households	11
Procedures	12-13
Ongoing Learning and Development	13-14
Fostering Panel	14
Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning	15
Private Fostering	15
Complaints	15-16
Additional Copies	16



Introduction

Southend Fostering Service

The Fostering Service is managed within Children and Public Health and is led by John O'Loughlin, Director of Children's Services.

Status and Constitution:

The Southend Fostering Service is part of Southend Borough Council and is a 'Local Authority Fostering Service' as recognised within the Fostering Service Regulations 2011(amend 2013).

Southend Fostering Service is based at:

Civic Centre Victoria Avenue Southend on Sea Essex SS2 6ER Tel No: 01702 212398

The Service's Values

Southend's Success for All Children's Group has the following shared vision

'We aim to make sure that all children and young people who live in Southend are able to take advantage of the opportunities which are here now and to enhance these opportunities for the future. It is to

- Help them raise their aspiration and achievement, achieving a sense of pride and joy
- Ensure they have the opportunities they need for inclusion and prosperity
- Facilitate their participation to be active and involved in decisions that affects their lives
- Strive for excellence in the services we provide to ensure all young people are safe and well

The success of this will be measured against the OFSTED guidance for inspection of:

- Gaining Children & Young People's views
- Value for money
- Helping children to be healthy
- Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them to stay safe
- Success for children
- · Achieving economic wellbeing
- Helping children to make a positive contribution
- Promoting equality and tackling discrimination
- Helping children to achieve well and enjoy what they do

Children and Public Health believes that children and young people who cannot be cared for within their own family, whether that be for a short or longer period of time, are often best served by being cared for within another family. Children and Public Health has sought to develop a Fostering Service that can meet the physiological, psychological, emotional, ethnic, cultural and religious needs of children who are looked after by Southend Borough Council. The agency's primary aim is to provide safe, high quality family care for children and young people.



Aims & Objectives

The overall aim of Children's Services is to provide safe, secure and effective services that enable all children to fulfil their potential, maximise their health and live successful adult lives. The aims of Children's Services are:

- To give all looked after children the same opportunities and benefits as other children to live in a safe, secure and stable environment.
- To enable children in care to reach their potential.
- To create a safe environment for looked after children.
- To ensure that looked after children are not disadvantaged or excluded by giving them a sense of belonging in their homes, schools and community.
- To develop and meet the emotional needs of looked after children.
- To provide looked after children with the ability to build and maintain stable relationships.
- To provide looked after children with life opportunities that will assist them to grow into autonomous healthy adults who will be responsible citizens and parents themselves.

In particular the Fostering Service's objectives are:

• To provide the best possible placements for children and young people to enable them to reach their full potential.

- To recruit, assess and support foster carers so they can provide a wide range of placements, which meet the diverse needs of looked after children and young people
- To ensure that the Children's Pledge and Foster Carer Charter are embedded into all work undertaken by the service.
- To ensure that sufficient resources are available through clear sufficiency planning, to meet the needs of our Looked after Children.

How will this happen?

These outcomes will be achieved by:

- Providing placement choices that reflect equality, diversity, individual and personal needs
- Delivering local placements wherever possible to allow ongoing appropriate levels of support
- Active leadership that delivers clarity of purpose to the fostering service
- Clarity about the purpose of individual placements
- Providing access to support services (e.g. health) for children and foster carers.
- Facilitating the maintenance of contact and valued relationships
- Support Friends and Family Carers in the same way as any other Foster Carer
- Avoiding drift and working with time scales that meet the child's best interests
- Designing and managing effective processes and ways of working
- Joint working and partnership
- Ensure that there is a 'Staying Put' procedure in place so that when a young person reaches the age of 18 and they cease being looked after, they have the opportunity to remain with their current foster carer under a supported lodgings agreement.



By working in partnership with foster carers within Southend-on-Sea to improve the quality of foster care.

- The Agency and Fostering Families have established Southend Foster Families Community in partnership, which plays a key role in the strategic and operational development of the service.
- Provide a grant to the Southend Foster Families Community.
- Adopt and carry out our work as set out in the Foster Carer Charter and Pledge to Looked After Children

To recruit, train, support and supervise foster carers the service organises:

- Advertising, publicity campaigns and recruitment initiatives
- Initial visits to applicants
- Safeguard checks on applicants
- Fostering preparation courses called Skilled to Foster
- A Foundational Training in Core course for all carers
- Assessments of foster carers and Family and Friends carers
- Presentation of foster carers and Family and Friends foster carers to the Fostering Panel
- A wide range of post approval training e.g. De-escalation and Behaviour Management and Valuing Diversity Support to carers during the assessment process and post approval
- Monitoring and improvement of standards of care
- Annual Fostering Household Reviews
- Provision of adequate allowances to enable foster carers to purchase equipment and furniture required for the purpose of fostering
- Support to carers at children's reviews and in the preparation of reports
- Supervision of carers to develop and maintain good standards of practice

To ensure the highest quality of care for Looked after Children:

- Standards of care are monitored through regular supervision, including unannounced visits. Any concerns about standards of care are addressed by the supervising social worker.
- Annual household reviews are undertaken and take into account the views of service users.
- Unannounced visits at least annually and more frequent where concerns or difficulties arise.
- Where concerns are noted or investigations are commenced following allegations against foster carers, the Fostering Service will ensure that these are investigated and that the foster carers are supported through the process.
- Following any formal Section 47 inquiries, the Fostering Panel will consider the Fostering Service's appraisal of the foster carers continued capacity to care for children.
- Support and advice for carers is available 24 hours a day.

To provide an in-house placement service for Looked after Children:

- A duty worker is available during office hours to take referrals from the Fieldwork Service and match children with appropriate in-house foster placements.
- Details of carers willing to take emergency placements are provided to the emergency duty team when the office is closed.

To promote a positive image of fostering for foster carers, the children of foster carers and children and young people placed with foster carers:

- Build a positive sense of identify for carers and foster families
- Appointed Fostering Ambassadors to support recruitment.
- Positive media coverage
- Fund raising and promotional events
- Awards for looked after children (delayed this year due to Covid-19)
- Annual celebration event for sons and daughters of foster carers (delayed this year due to Covid-19)
- Annual Foster Carers Conference

To create an environment of continuous improvement and innovation in everything we do:

- Consult with carers and their representatives about the service and how to improve it.
- Consult with children and young people who are looked after
- Consult with foster carer's children
- Consult with service users and their representatives about the service and how to improve it.
- Consult with staff and their representative about the service and how to improve it.
- Consult with partner agencies about the service and how to improve it.
- Undertake reviews of the service.
- Ensure that staff are trained and motivated to deliver a child centred service
- Learn in order to deliver continuous improvement through:

The assessment and review of the service

Responding positively to complaints and feedback

Learning from any placement disruptions

Involving children in policy and decision making

Ensuring that children's wishes, and feelings will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages

Taking corporate responsibility within Children's services for the effective management, quality and support of placements

Being vigorous in challenging poor practice and addressing problems effectively.

Management, Staffing & Services

Management Structure

The Fostering Service is part of Children and Public Health. The Director of Children's Services is John O'Loughlin who is also the Decision Maker. The Fostering Service is part of Placements & Resources which is managed by the Head of Service Placements, Chris Sandercombe Quality assurance issues are managed by this Head of Service and Head of Service for Quality Assurance. It is also managed through the Fostering Panel.

Staffing

- 1 Service Manager Jo Hines (Full time) has worked for Southend since 2007. Jo has BA in social work, Dip SW and a Masters in Professional Practice including management and leadership. Jo has a particular interest in Theraplay in which she holds level 1 & 2 training, which brings an added dimension to the Team. She has level 1 & 2 Dyadic Development Psychotherapy; levels 1&2 Sensory Attachment Intervention, NPP level 1, Foundations in Attachment training, Therapeutic Life story Work, NVR and also has training in facilitating The Just Right State. Her Masters focused on developing policy and practice in the area of sibling assessment.
- 1 Team Manager Penny Mercer (full-time) and is also the Registered Manager. Penny
 joined the service in March 2019 bringing extensive experience in fostering. She
 obtained her DipSW in social work in 2008. In addition Penny is trained in the use of the
 Adult Attachment Interview and is qualified to deliver the fostering changes programme.

4 Advanced Practitioners

Toni Bisaccia (full-time)

Catherine Sturrock (full time)

Abbie Osbourne (full time)

Senior MH worker – Karen Eves (Full Time) Karen joined the service in and Sue Snoxell (Full time senior fostering worker for SGO and Private Fostering)

2 Placements Commissioning Officers –

Howard Cecil (full-time)

Magdalena Wach-Sowa (full time)

• 7 Supervising Social Workers

Gabriela Zaharii (full-time)

Nikki Seaden (full-time)

Caroline Dolby (full-time)

Suz Sawtell (part time)

Eunice Charangwa (Part-time)

Nehal Eldeeb (full time)

Penny Parvin (full time)

• 1.5 Fostering Administrators

Sally Andrews (part-time)

Lorraine Little (full-time)

1. Marketing and Recruitment Officer - Dawn Webb (part time)

All of the social workers have appropriate qualifications and are registered with Social Work England.

There is a detailed development plan in place for The Fostering Service and it has been accepted that the size of the team requires additional management oversight. Two additional managers have been appointed which who start in Jan 21

Services provided:

Southend Fostering Service exists in order to provide foster care for children and young people looked after by Southend Borough Council. The Fostering Service aims to recruit sufficient carers in numbers and range of skills to enable children and young people to be placed local to their families and other support networks. The agency offers placements with carers who meet National Standards and receive comprehensive support and training. Career progression for foster carers is recognised to be a priority and the current Southend structure is under review. There is an arrangement in place for independent support in the case of allegations, by support is obtained from Fostering Network.

Placement Options

Long term (permanent):

Duration: Until adulthood

Purpose: Permanent, substitute care

Task centred:

Duration: 1 to 2 years including preparation for independence

Purpose: Provide substitute care where a lengthy piece of work is required, or for

teenagers.

Short term:

Duration: Up to 1 year

Purpose: Provide substitute care while plans are formulated or a specific piece of work is

carried out, e.g. assessment of parents.

Parent and child:

Duration: Up to 1 year (occasionally longer)

Purpose: Support parent, protect baby, and assess parenting skills.

Respite:

Duration: 1- 28 days; may be one off, or a planned series of placements, not exceeding

110 nights per year.

Remand and bail support:

Duration: Up to a year (very occasionally longer)

Purpose: Provide a placement when a young person is remanded to Local Authority

accommodation by the Court.

Emergency:

Duration: Up to 28 days (may then evolve into short term or other type of placement)

Purpose: Emergency substitute care at very short notice.

Supported Lodgings

Duration: Ongoing until young person is able to move to independent living.

Purpose: To provide a supportive home environment to aid transition to independent living.

Short Breaks

Duration: No longer than 17 days in any one period and for no more than 75 days per anum

Purpose: To provide short term care and support for CWD and children in need

Staying Put

Duration: 18-25 years

Purpose: To provide ongoing support post 18 for care leavers within their foster placement



Services Provided

Southend Fostering Service offers a trauma informed therapeutic service for children and young people through the Marigold Assessment +, the Southend Emotional wellbeing Mental Health service (EWMHS) services, and where needed, with adjoining EWMHS services e.g. where carers live outside the boundaries of Southend on Sea.

We have a senior mental health worker, working directly with the fostering service, to support the emotional health and wellbeing of Looked after Children in Southend specifically through equipping our foster carers with the skills, knowledge and strategies they need to fulfil their role.

Specialist education support is available through the Virtual Head Teacher and Advisory Teacher for Looked after Children, who are based within the Civic Centre. Children with special educational needs are provided with services through the special educational needs service. Specialist health support is available through the agency's Lead Nurse for Looked after Children.

The Virtual School Headteacher's role is to co-ordinate services for looked after children and their families, so that all school-age children in the care of Southend Borough Council are receiving the best possible education. The Virtual School approach is to work with looked after children as if they were in a single school, liaising with the schools they attend, tracking the

progress they make and supporting them and their carers to help them achieve the best possible outcomes.

The Edge of Care Team and Family Engagement Team has dedicated workers to support foster carers to prevent placement breakdown.

Children Placed

The majority of children are placed with in-house foster carers. The remaining children in foster placements are largely placed with independent fostering agencies (IFAs) that have an agreement with Southend Borough Council and provide local placements. Southend will usually only place with independent providers deemed 'good' or 'outstanding' by OFSTED.

The foster carer recruitment strategy, aimed at attracting local families to become foster carers, is focused on increasing the number of available in-house placements.

Carer Households

The Fostering Service currently has 101 approved carer households across all the categories. Whilst several new Foster Carers have been approved, others have resigned or retired over the past year, however we continue to successfully recruit locally. The recruitment campaign is in place to recruit additional carers to reflect the needs of Southend's looked after population. Foster Carers need to reflect the ethnic and religious backgrounds of the children looked after by Southend Borough Council. We are particularly seeking carers from black and minority ethnicities, carers who can offer a home to large sibling groups, carers for children with a disability and carers willing to take adolescents Fostering Allowances are set in detail in the Fostering Allowances booklet and policy. These figures are reviewed annually.

The Southend Fostering Team continues to carry out foster care and Family and Friends assessments and to assess and formally support and supervise all Connected Person's placements.

Procedures for the Recruitment, Approval, Training, Support and Review of Foster Carers

Southend Fostering Service has undertaken to ensure that its practices comply with the National Minimum Standards (2011). Furthermore, the policies in relation to the recruitment,

assessment, approval, training, management, support and supervision of foster carers reflect the expectations set out in the preceding Code of Practice.

Southend Fostering Service undertakes all its work within the principle, set out in the 1989 Children Act, that the welfare of children is paramount. This principle is applied to the agency's decision making, planning and daily work.

All social work tasks, including the assessment, support and supervision of foster carers, are carried out by qualified and experienced social workers.

All enquiries to the agency by people expressing an interest in becoming a foster carer are responded to promptly. We aim to have formally acknowledged the enquiry within two working days by sending an acknowledgement letter and information leaflets. This will be further supported by a phone call and a home visit within 7 working days of their confirmation that they wish to proceed.

Applicants are then invited to attend the Skills to Foster course. These are run at least every 3 months. Subject to satisfactory safeguard checks and the agreement of the Team Manager, applicants are also invited to make a formal application and are immediately allocated for assessment.

The target date for presentation to the Fostering Panel is within 6 months from the date of the initial enquiry. Applicants are invited to read the assessment report and to attend the Fostering Panel considering their application. The Fostering Panel's recommendations are then considered by the Director of Children's Services who is the decision maker. Each foster carer is allocated a named supervising social worker, who visits them on a regular basis. The agency also provides a 24 hour on call system through their Out of Hours service, staffed by specialist, experienced foster carers. Foster carers are offered respite as required by the Care Plan and Placement Agreement for each child.

Foster Carer Allowances

Fostering Allowances are set in detail in the Fostering Allowances booklet and policy. These figures are reviewed annually.

Ongoing Learning and Development

A foundational training programme for all carers is a requirement and includes:

Basic Foster Carer Skills

Paediatric First Aid Understanding Trauma and Attachment Sexually harmful Behaviour Managing Transitions

All Foster carers must complete the Statutory TSD programme

In addition, an extensive programme of training is provided for foster carers, including courses on:

- Fostering Challenge
- Apprentiships
- Valuing Diversity
- Managing difficult behaviour
- De-escalation
- The effects of separation and loss
- Substance misuse
- Life story work
- Court work
- Theraplay
- Child Protection
- Health of Looked after Children
- Fostering changes

Southend Fostering Service has full membership to Coram BAAF and the Fostering Network and all carers have membership to Fostering Network (funded by the Fostering Service) where they can gain additional support and advice.

Fostering Panel

- The Fostering Panel is independently chaired.
- The Panel is compliant with the Fostering Regulations 2011 (updated 2013).
- The Panel meets on at least a monthly basis
- The Panel considers recommendations for the approval of foster carers and matches between foster carers and specific children where a long term placement is planned. It also oversees Annual Household Reviews and the de-registration of foster carers and helps with quality assurance.

Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning

The Fostering Service keeps statistical records and undertakes analysis in order to inform judgement on the quality of the services offered and to provide information on which to strategically plan future placement requirements.

The Borough has a Commissioning Strategy, drafted in line with Department of Health guidance on 'Planning & Providing Good Quality Placement for Children in Care'. Information is kept and monitored on:

- The number of referrals of children/young people by age, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender and disability,
- The number of enquiries to approval, number of carers by age, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender and disability
- The number of Annual Foster Home Reviews conducted to timescale
- Disruption rates

There is a clear audit programme for all foster care files.

Private Fostering

The Fostering Service is responsible for:

- Information on Private Fostering within the local community together with the Local Safeguarding Board.
- The completion of a Private Fostering Assessment to ensure that the placement can meet the child's needs.
- The maintenance of a register of people privately fostering and children placed with them
- The monitoring of standards within private foster homes.
- Awareness raising within the local community

Complaints

Complaints leaflets are provided to foster carers. Complaints leaflets are provided to children and young people by their own social worker and the fostering service provides further copies when requested or when circumstances indicate that this is relevant. Adults and children are encouraged to discuss any concerns about the service with their social worker and/or the team manager.

Making a Complaint

Southend Borough Council, Department for People has a Complaints Manager. Complaints, or indeed general comments or compliments, about the service can be lodged. Any complaint will be acknowledged and the Complaints Manager will organise an investigation of the complaint according to the three stages of complaints (Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3).

The Complaints Manager can be contacted at Children and Public Health Civic Centre Victoria Avenue Southend-on-Sea Essex SS2 6ER

Telephone 01702 215085 or by email childrenscomplaints@southend.gov.uk

Comments and Complaints can also be made to Ofsted:

OFSTED
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
03001231231

Anne Longfield Children's Commissioner for England

0800 528 071 Advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Additional Copies

Copies of this Statement are routinely given to people using the services provided by Southend Fostering Services.

A Children's Guide to our services is also available.

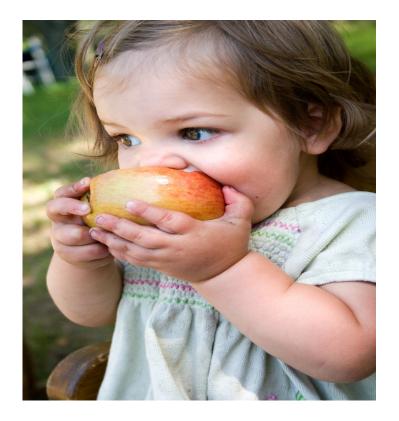
For a copy of this document in any other format/language, or to order more copies, please contact:

Southend Fostering Service Civic Offices Victoria Road Southend on Sea Essex SS2 6ER

Tel No: 01702 212938



Southend Adoption Service 19/20



Purpose of this report

The provision, standard and operations of the Adoption service are governed by:

- The Local Authority Adoption Services (England) Regulations 2003 (Updated 2005 & 2013 & 2014 & 2017)
- The Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (amendment) regulations 2011 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Adoption minimum Standards 2011
- Care Planning, placement & case review 2014
- Adoption Reform Update 2018
- Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) Amendment regulations 2020

National Minimum Standard 25.6 states that the Executive side of the Local Authority

- a) receive written reports on the management and outcomes of the agency
- b) monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users

The aim of this report is to provide the information required to enable the Executive side of the Council to fulfil its duties in this respect.

<u>Introduction</u>

The service has continued to place a number of children with new families and has also been successful in selling adopters to mitigate against the costs of some required placements to meet the specific needs of individual children requiring adoption from Southend.

Our commitment to quality and the best outcomes for children remains our priority focus. The SPARKLES parent and preschool group has gone from strength to strength and has become embedded in what we do, at times having over 20 children attending at any one time. We have continued to run our own post adoption training and support group and birth parent drop-in, both growing and developing.

Covid 19 has had an impact on the service in recent months as the Service has needed to respond to nationwide pandemic. The coronavirus amendments to the regulations has supported us in keeping the service moving forwards at times when access to certain procedures have been restricted.

Our Ethos

We strive to provide opportunities for children and young people to have secure futures and to find safe, high quality adoptive placements where this is required for children who cannot return to their birth families. We recognise adoption is challenging as the children placed have all invariably experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma and we therefore promote our families to stay in touch and access support from the outset of placements, developing adopters insight and capacity to manage the challenges they face.

We work closely with our partner agencies and birth families to ensure that we achieve the best outcomes for all young people.

I am pleased to say that throughout 2019/20, placement stability in adoptive placements has been maintained with no disruptions this year whilst timescales have continued to reduce allowing children to be in their new families at an earlier stage.

Highlights

The Christmas party and summer post adoption events have been a great success and were enjoyed by all who attended.

Developing a partnership with Cornerstone in the continued use of Virtual Reality Trauma and Attachment Training which has gone far beyond the service itself.

Adopters said

- ' everybody should experience this, has made me more me more determined than ever to adopt'
- 'I never thought unborn babies would be impacted, to think some babies must be born sad is tragic'

Regionalisation

There continues to be a drive by the DFE to establish Regional Adoption Agencies, to widen adoption recruitment; improve support for adopters and to place more children with adoptive families within shorter timescales. This has been driven by both the DfE in conjunction with the Adoption Leadership Board, a national board with a remit to drive significant improvements in the national adoption system of England. Southend are members of the Eastern Region Adoption Board. The Regional Adoption Board brings together Local Authorities and Voluntary Adoption Agencies and adopters, with the purpose of creating more opportunities for children within the region, to have timely access to secure permanent homes and to provide children with the best possible life chances.

In addition, Southend have continued over the past year to work closely with Essex, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Luton, Bedford Borough, Norfolk and Thurrock and Adoption plus and Barnardo's (Voluntary adoption agencies) and Adopter Voice to form a Regional Adoption Alliance (Adopt East). It is envisaged that this will create a larger pool of approved adopters with whom to match children and drive performance and outcomes for children. The DFE has given approval for Adopt East to go live as an RAA, and despite the actual launch being put on hold due to the COVID – 19 crisis this was achieved in October 2020 and Adopt East is now up and running.



Children placed for adoption

In 2019/20 a total of 23 Southend children were adopted, the same as 2018/19 but a decrease from the 38 children adopted in 2017/18. It is noted the amount of children referred for parallel planning increased to 56 in 19/20 an increase of 8 from 2018/19

when 48 children were referred. This decrease was partly due to a number of Adoptions being carried over to 2020/21 as a result of court adjournments.

In addition, 8 children were made the subject of special guardianship orders, where the parallel plan was adoption.

It is noted that due to the successful support of Social Care, 13 children were able to progress reunification plans with their birth parents.

Number of looked after children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted:

	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Southend	25	28	38	23	23

Of the 23 children in Southend in 2019/20, 14 were girls and 9 were boys. An age breakdown is included below of the children's age at the time of the adoption order being granted (this will be different from the age when the children were placed with their adopters).

Children's age when the adoption order was granted in 2019/20:

Age in years	Number of children
Under 1	2
1-2	10
2-3	4
3+	7

Since 1st April 20 we have placed a further 13 children using carefully risk assessed transitions to ensure permanency decisions have not been delayed. Of these, 6 are boys and 7 girls and range from 0- 6yrs in age.

There have been significant delays in the conclusion of some care proceedings partly due to Covid-19 and since April 7 adoption orders have been finalised.

Children's age when adoption order granted since April 20

Age in years	Number of children
Under 1	1
1-2	3
2-3	3
3+	1

As of Nov 20, there are 9 children placed with their adoptive families but the adoption orders have not been granted. 7 children have a formal plan for adoption with placements order granted and a further 16 children have an ADM recommendation for

adoption but are still in court proceedings. 3 children are placed via foster to adopt placements which have yet to finalised via the Adoption Panel. For these children they have had the opportunity to be settled within their permanent families and avoided further transitions to emotionally navigate and time in Local Authority Care

In addition, a further 8 children were made the subject of special guardianship orders, where the parallel plan was adoption.

One family said

'We're so grateful for you Anna, you have absolutely been the right person for our whole family and we are so glad to be able to stay within the Southend fold as we trust you and the wider team so much. Thank you for making today happen'

Adoption scorecard

The adoption scorecard aims to show how swiftly children are placed for adoption in each local authority. The local authorities' performance is measured against key indicators which are applied to the number of children who have been adopted over a period of three years. As the numbers of children adopted each year in Southend remains relatively small, one child's journey through the system can have a large impact on the average figures for a number of years.

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with an adoptive family has continued to decrease in Southend from an average of 309 (2015-18) to 280 in the latest scorecard. This is well below the national average of 376 days and shows a continuous downward trend. It is expected that average timescales may begin to rise in 2020/21 due to national court delays from adjourned appeals and delays in court dates for final hearings.

Whilst we will continue to work to reduce the average time between a child entering care and moving in with an adoptive family, our approach will always be to take the necessary time to find the right families for our children.

Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (3 year average):

	Adoption	Adoption	Adoption
	Scorecard	scorecard	scorecard
	2014/17	2015/18	2016/19
Southend	313 days	309 days	280
	-	-	days
Southend's	1 st of 149	3 rd of 149	N/A
ranked position			
England Average	520 days	486 days	376
			days

Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (3 year average)

	Adoption	Adoption	Adoption
	Scorecard	scorecard	scorecard
	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn
	2014/17	2015/18	2016/19
Southend	107 days	107 days	95
	_	_	days
Southend's	4 th of 149	8 th of 149	N/A
ranked position			
England Average	220	201	178

Impact:

Southend continues to do significantly better than the national average in the time taken to match a child to an adoptive family once a court decision is received with an average of 95 days against a national average of 178 days. This shows a continued high performance from the previous scorecard.

This ensures that where children in Southend require permanency through adoption, they are not delayed allowing them to move into their permanent families in a timely manner.

As Adoption Agencies are Regionalised new Adoption Scorecard will report according to RAA's

One family said

I've been meaning to send you an email to say thank you for all your time and support. It's been a really positive experience and your hard work and dedication has made it all feel so effortless. We have been lucky to have you as our social worker, you really were a perfect fit for us and have been brilliant to work and spend time with! Thank you so much!

Recruiting Adopters

18 adoptive families were recruited in 2019/20 against 20 in 18/19 and 10 in 2017/18. By the 31 March 2019 there were 6 families approved but not yet matched or linked with children.

Since April 2020 a further 19 families have been approved to adopt. Currently 8 families are approved but not yet linked with children. For some this has been an active choice due to uncertainty afforded as a result of Covid-19.

All other families currently being supported by the adoption team have either had children placed with them or are linked to children and are waiting for the placement to be approved at panel.

Recruiting the right adopters for children remains a challenge for all local authorities and the situation in Southend is no different.

Considerable work has been undertaken to attract prospective adopters to Southend. Monthly information events are held during the evenings / weekends to reach a wider section of the community. Drop-in sessions are also held for members of the public to attend to learn more about the adoption process. We have adopters who support with these events and share their experiences of adopting through Southend. Raising the profile of the team is also achieved through the use of social media and targeted advertising all of which has proven successful.

Due to Covid -19 the team have sought to be creative in terms of continuing to run virtual information sharing opportunities but despite a National Recruitment Campaign 'You Can Adopt' running we have seen a drop in enquiries in recent months leading the cancellation of Adoption Preparation Groups in October for the first time in the last decade.

As well as completing Adoption Preparation Workshops as part of the assessment process all prospective adopters attend a core set of Continued Adoption Training (CAT groups) which enables us to equip our adopters with additional insight and knowledge that helps prepares them for the task ahead.

As Adopt East we are exploring new ways to target recruitment to meet the needs of the children who wait the longest and ensure the best recruitment across the region of prospective adopters. Our profiles of children have been aligned to produce an Adopt East approach and use good quality photographs a digital media. Adopt East utilises Link Maker in a space dedicated to the RAA.

Responses to requests for information about children are made in timely way and the team are creative in the way that the matching process is managed to be most effective for individual children.

A matching co-ordinator appointed for Adopt East has focused work across the region for the matching of children. Regular Adopt East profiling events and Family Finding Craft Days are held throughout the year. Although these have been impacted by Covid -19 virtual profiling events are being piloted across the RAA

Adoption Support

Adoption is a major event in the life of a child and it has lifelong implications for all of the parties involved. The adoption team recognises that all parties may need a variety of support at different stages of the adoption journey.

When you adopt with Southend you are given the clear message that it is expected you will need additional support and a range of services are provided.

The adoption service provides support to adoptive parents, their children and birth family members to enable them to remain in touch after an adoption order is granted. There is a clear message that contact should be promoted wherever it is safe to do so. The letterbox co-ordinator supports a regular indirect exchange of information between birth families and adopters. The team also provides support to help to maintain direct contact arrangements for adopted children and their birth relatives where this is in the child's interests.



We have a developed Peer Mentor Scheme in Southend which all new applicants are invited to utilise throughout their adoption journey. Ofsted highlighted the Adoption Community that has been established in Southend.

Financial reviews are provided to families in regard to adoption allowance/support payments provided by the service, and adoptive families' needs are assessed when there is a change in circumstances.

Ongoing therapeutic support is provided for adoptive families before and after the adoption order has been granted and the team will intervene whenever necessary to prevent the disruption of an adoption.

The service offers support to adopted adults to access their records and works as part of intermediary services with birth families and adopted adults.

The adoption team have a range of skills that enable them to support families which include Theraplay, DDP, Therapeutic Life Story Work, NVR (non-violent resistance) and Sensory Attachment Intervention.

Adoption support is generally provided within the team and therefore is undertaken by staff who have already developed a strong relationship with the adoptive families; the service is diverse in the services offered and support is developed on an individual basis to meet the very individual needs of each child and their family.

Impact:

Support for post adoption is currently mostly delivered in house by a highly trained team. Services are brought in and funded through the adoption support fund where needed. Given the size of Southend, decisions for support are able to progress in a timely manner and decisions made into services to be provided without any delay. This we believe impacts the fact, Southend has had no adoption disruptions for over 10 years.

Southend adoption team run a monthly STAG (Support Training and Guidance) group for both families approved and not yet linked with a child and families who have children placed. This allows the team to offer ongoing training.

The STAG group continues to go from strength to strength and is very much supported by our adoption community itself.

Where preschool children are placed for adoption in Southend families are encouraged to attend SPARKLES. SPARKLES is a group in which adopters are shown and encouraged to play with their own child using Theraplay techniques; a therapeutic approach that promotes the development of attachment relationships. SPARKLES has added benefits for adopters who have often gone on to develop supportive relationships and networks.



One adopter has given her feedback on attending SPARKLES

'My daughter and I have been attending Sparkles for over a year and will continue to for as long as possible. It is such a good group for young adopted children. My daughter has great fun, she gets to see her friends, play, and do different activities, and I have the opportunity to speak to fellow adoptive parents which is a great support. We both have a vital bond and trust building experience. She also asks to do the tasks when we are at home which shows that it is fun as well as therapeutic. As a parent it helps me learn techniques which help us bond while playing, more so in the early days of adoption but even now it continues to be a benefit. It's also helpful to be able to speak to a Social Worker for advice or reassurance.'

The post adoption support provision affords the team the opportunity to identify stresses within certain placements at an earlier stage and to pick up and undertake direct work with the family before a placement disrupts.

The need for families to be supported post placement continues to be on the increase as families seek to re- parent children impacted by the trauma experienced in their early childhoods.

In addition to Southend's on-going Sparkles group and adopter training programme during 19/20 over 40 families requested additional post adoption support many of whom continue to engage and access this service. In reality this means over 60 children have received on-going support. This has continued to increase with more children being brought into Southend and families seeing the impact of the support offered.

Following therapeutic life story one adopter described the experience as excellent

'my son and I are in a much better place; he is showing affection for me for the first time ever which is lovely'

The Southend adoption team have continued to optimise access to the government Adoption Support Fund Scheme accessing over £29K in 2019/20 despite further restrictions on the availability within the fund. Of this funding additional services are purchased but a significant proportion funds the skilled work the Adoption Team itself is able to provide.



In recognising that most adoptive families will require additional support at different times throughout their child's own journey the Adoption Team is seeking to be proactive and preventative before major crisis occur aiming to minimise the risk of any disruption.

Since April 2020 the team have again sought to be creative in the post adoption support is offered. Certain activities had to be stopped due to social distancing rules.

The ASF offered additional funding for virtual support which many of our families have engaged with. However, it has been recognised that the social isolation experienced by families has led to increase in requests for support which we have responded to.

While Sparkles had to be stopped for a while, we have been able to re start this with a clear risk assessment in place as the need for the support became the primary concern.

STAG groups have become a virtual support group and a virtual NVR parenting programme was offered. We continue to seek the views from out adopters regarding the support needed to ensure our families do not feel alone in such challenging times.

As young people are themselves approaching maturity it is recognised that the need for them to consider how their own history integrates with their experience of adoption is more prominent.

Southend adoption team seek to support adopted young adults who have been adopted. Before a young person reaches the age of 18, there is a review of the information exchange and direct contact made with the adoptive parents and young person. The numbers of young people reaching 18 is beginning to rapidly grow due to the increase in adoptive placements made over the past few years. It is recognised that just because a young person is reaching the age of 18 they may not be at a point in their lives where they wish to trace their birth family or request access to their adoption files. The team believe however that it is important that they know what services are available to them as young adults. Our young adults up to 21 years are offered further support to continue to have a service through the Information Exchange if they choose.

Southend Adoption Service recognises that when a child joins an adoptive family it is not only the immediate family that are impacted, but also their extended families and networks. The team regularly hold information sharing evenings for this group, to raise their awareness of the challenge's adoption can bring and to explore practical support they may in turn be able to offer.

The groups are well attended and continue to prove a great success in supporting placements where difficulties arise and allows the team to tap into the extended support with training to give them the understanding to help. Where families have large support networks or where a child being placed brings additional complexities individual events for families are arranged.

Feedback from friends and family:-

Good advice given to us- thank you

Gave us ideas how to help

We know the adopters won't be alone, and have support

We now have a better understanding of the process

We are reassured to contact the social workers if we are concerned

We know the new parents and child will need space at the beginning



Southend adoption service recognises it can be a challenging and difficult time for existing children within a family who are approved to adopt to wait for a child to be placed in their family. In July 2016 the team started a group for six children aged between 6-8 years. The group gave the children an opportunity to share their feelings, ask any questions, make new friends and generally have fun together. Theraplay activities were introduced, which the children will be able to play with their new sibling and help them to understand the importance of these simple games. The feedback from the children was very positive and is a group which the children have asked to continue for both themselves and for new children in the same position.

The children wanted this group to be called the "Super Sibling Group". In 2019/20 this group did not run due to not having enough children to attend; however with a number of new families now in Southend with siblings, this will be re-introduced during 2020/21.

Southend continues to be successful in recruiting adopters and often being able to utilise these placements for children nationally forming a positive funding stream for Southend. This is financially beneficial to Southend Council with over £63,000 income generated in 2019/20.

This income helps to offset expenditure for placements which in 2019/20 was £238,000. It does however have an impact on the level of post adoption support required.

Income	302,000.00
Expenditure	-238,850.00
Net total	63,150.00

Birth Parent Support Group

Through 2019/20, Southend adoption team continued to run a birth parent drop in which directly supports birth families that have been affected by adoption and Special Guardian Orders. The Birth parent drop in continues to meet on a monthly basis in a

local community centre. Evidence has shown that the quantity and quality of letters received has continued to improve and has allowed some children to receive contact with birth families that they otherwise would have missed. The group seeks to offer birth parents a nurturing experience, e.g. they are offered warm drinks and toast and in turn they present as less defensive and more open to receiving support.

The group is advertised in local community areas to ensure that as many families as possible can be supported. The team have supported several young mums through a second pregnancy and have been able to continue to support several very vulnerable parents, post adoption.

They have worked closely with the Marigold Rise project for several of these vulnerable young mums. During 2019/20 the team again successfully engaged with some birth parents who previously had no on-going contact with the Department, allowing their adopted children to receive information about their birth families and therefore to begin to really make sense of their backgrounds. This service remains small but is well embedded in practice and understood across the community.

Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 we have not been able to run the drop in due to the venue being shut and social distancing rules. The team have continued to support birth parents remotely and at times met with birth parents at the Civic in a risk assessed way.

In 2019/20 the team continued to support Mindfulness Meditation Training. This course recognises that in order to manage the continuous challenge of being parents the parents themselves need to be valued and develop strategies. In addition, there has been a robust post adoption training agenda looking at parenting techniques and strategies; sharing difficult information; health and social media issues. There has been a clear plan set up for 2020/21 based on the needs and wishes of our adoptive families.

The team have continued the project with Cornerstone regarding the use of virtual reality. Cornerstone is a Social Enterprise set up by adoptive parents to support adoptive families who began to develop this project in 2017. The initial focus was to find a way to support prospective adopters and foster carers to achieve a greater understanding of the actual reality that children known to social may have previously experienced, more than intellectual understanding. The adoption team from Southend were involved in this from the start with the opportunity to meet with the film crews and influence how the films were initially developed.

The VR films have been filmed in 360 to give the full immersive experience which allows parents and carers to understand the impact of trauma and attachment from the child's perspective. In turn this can elicit a greater degree of insight and empathy. Through the immersive films individuals can open up worlds never seen before; that of a child in the care system. What they have been through, how this affected them and, more importantly, how the parent, adopter, foster carer, social worker and teacher can see things from the child's perspective.



The VR films engage with a different part of the brain to the cognitive rational side most function in which means the experience taps in the emotional and physiological parts as well.

The adoption service while taking the lead have expanded this project in terms of training for social workers, recruiting foster carers / adopters, supporting schools to gain greater understanding of the roots of presenting behaviours, supporting young people to gain insight into their own history, preventing placement disruption.

During 2019/20, the VR training has continued to develop its reach across all departments and external agencies. In addition, it is now fully embedded as a part of adoption and fostering initial training and within the SGO training for potential special guardians.

The virtual school have fully engaged in this project to ensure the VR experience was taken into a number of Southend schools during 2019/20 to train staff across all aspects of school life.

One Head Teacher stated -'It was incredible / awful - I get why all staff need to see this'

'it makes it clear why some children behave as they do'

For prospective adopters who have no actual experience of trauma it brings the reality to life and promotes the discussions re helpful strategies and approaches to managing presenting behaviour, as what we know is the way we were parented ourselves is often not effective with children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences.

'Its very different from my childhood, I guess I just never knew'

'this will help me to think about and respond in a PACEful way'

The VR brings PACE (The DDP approach) to life and this is reinforced in other training offered.

'I now realise how hard it would be to trust any parents after being neglected'

What it achieves is it helps families to refocus on the child and think beyond how they are feeling, even though their own experience needs to be accepted and validated

Professionals said

- Its refocused my energy to where it should be
- I felt it in my body and realised how desensitised I've become to the families I work with

Looking forward

For 2020/21 we will continue to provide a quality service which is value for money with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes for Southend Looked after Children.

We aim to:

- Recruit, assess and support people through all aspects of the adoption process
- Work closely within our RAA to develop stronger aligned practice across the region
- Develop further post adoption support
- Develop further family intervention work
- Learn and embrace the creative practice achieved as a result of Covid 19 while seeking to ensure the needs of the children requiring permanency through adoption are met.



Interim Head of Service		
Interior Head of Comica		
Jo Hines		
Tall Discours		





Southend Borough Council

Statement of Purpose

Southend Adoption Service

Civic Centre Victoria Avenue Southend-on-Sea SS2 6ER

December 2020

Telephone: 01702 212004

Website: www.southend.gov.uk

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Aims and Objectives	4
The Service's Values	5
Policies	6
The Structure of the Service	7-8
The System(s) in place to Monitor and Evaluate	8-9
The Services Provided	9-20
Adoption Panel	20-21
How to Complain	22



Introduction

The following Statement of Purpose is intended to set out clearly the aims and objectives of the Southend Adoption Agency as required by Schedule I of the Local Authority Adoption Services (England)Regulations 2003 (amended 2005, 2013 and 2014) and the Adoption Agencies regulations 2005, amended by the Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the Adoption Agencies (Panel and Consequential amendments) Regulations 2012 and the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011. As required under these Regulations, the Statement of Purpose will be presented to the Council's Cabinet for endorsement and will be reviewed and updated annually.

The Statement of Purpose will take into account the following:

- The Southend Adoption Agency Policy Document
- The Adoption Act 1976 as amended by Adoption & Children Act 2002
- The Local Authority Adoption Agencies (England) Regulations 2003 (amended 2005 & 2013 & 2014)
- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The National Minimum Standards for Local Authority Adoption Services in England and Wales 2011
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 amended 2011
- Children and Adoption Act 2006
- The Children's and family Act 2014
- Any relevant Local Authority Circulars and Good Practice Guidance
- Adoption Scorecard
- Southend Improvement Plan
- Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020



The Aims and Objectives of the Local Authority in Relation to the Adoption Service

Southend Sea Borough Council Adoption Service aims to provide a comprehensive range of adoption services to children requiring adoption, birth families, adopters and those who have already been adopted. In meeting its aims and objectives, the Adoption Service will work within the relevant policies of both Southend Borough Council and the Adoption Service.

The objective of Children's Services is for every child to remain with their birth family and every reasonable effort will be made by the Authority to enable and support the birth parents, or the wider birth family, to provide a permanent home for the child where the child's needs can be met within a safe environment. However, if this is not possible then the child is entitled to grow up as part of a loving, adoptive family that can meet their needs during childhood and beyond. At all times the child's best interests come first with their welfare and safety being paramount.

The Adoption Service aims to recruit sufficient adopters to ensure that children can be placed with a family that not only meet the child's day to day needs but also the ethnic, cultural, religious, physical and emotional needs of the child. However, no child should wait indefinitely for an ideal placement.

The Adoption Service recognises the importance of a child retaining some form of contact with their birth parent(s) or birth family. Any decision about the possibility, type and frequency of contact will be based on the needs of the individual child and what is in the child's best interests. Decisions will remain flexible to the changing needs of a child. Where a child is of an age to understand, the child's views and wishes in relation to adoption will be considered when making plans for the child.

The Adoption Service aims to provide anyone enquiring about adoption with full information on the adoption process so that they can make an informed judgement about whether or not to proceed with their application. This will include those wishing to adopt from within the United Kingdom and from overseas, foster carers wishing to adopt a child already in their care and step-parents and relatives wishing to adopt a child from within their family.

Prospective adopters will be welcomed without prejudice and will be provided with clear eligibility criteria. They will also be given information on children waiting and what is required to meet the children's needs. The adoption provision aims to provide a service to birth parents and birth families that takes into account the lifelong implications of adoption and treats each individual fairly and with respect.

Birth parent(s) and birth families will be given information on local and national support groups, and where an adult adoptee requires information from their birth records, the adoption service aims to provide a supportive and informative service at all times.

The Adoption Service aims to provide information, help and support for all those who have been affected by adoption whether prior to, or after, the making of an Adoption Order. The Adoption Service also aims to protect all the information held and will provide security and confidentiality for all records, including those to be held for 100 years from the making of the Adoption Order.

The Adoption Service will maintain management information systems in order to monitor and evaluate the service provided and ensure all work is undertaken with the requirements of the National Minimum Standards, current legislation and Regulations, current policy statements and with accepted good practice in mind.

Where can I see this Guide

Written copies are available at the Adoption Team. If you would like a written copy please contact the Adoption Service Manager at the address above or by contacting johines@southend.gov.uk

The guide is available on the Southend Borough Council website

The statement will be translated into other languages or made available in a format that is right for someone with physical, sensory and learning impairments and communication difficulties, upon request.

The Service Values

Southend's Success for All Children's Group has the following shared vision

'We aim to make sure that all children and young people who live in Southend are able to take advantage of the opportunities which are here now and to enhance these opportunities for the future. It is to

- Help them raise their aspiration and achievement, achieving a sense of pride and joy
- Ensure they have the opportunities they need for inclusion and prosperity
- Facilitate their participation to be active and involved in decisions that affects their lives
- Strive for excellence in the services we provide to ensure all young people are safe and well

The Adoption Service's values include:

- Being child centred; their best interests being paramount
- Focusing on outcomes for children
- Being outward looking, flexible, adapting to new ideas and ways of working and being responsive to individual need
- A commitment to learning
- Listening to children and their families
- Ensure that the services promotes equal opportunities and does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, religion or culture
- Contributing to the RAA Adopt East and other, regional and national agencies to improve standards and offer a complete service, taking every opportunity to share best practice as openly as possible
- Improving standards of practice and service continuously to respond to changes in law and challenge poor practice
- A commitment to Children Services Practice Priorities and 2050 vision for Southend

How will this happen?

These Aims and Objectives will be achieved by:

• Providing placement choices that reflect:

Equality

Diversity

Individual and personal needs

Social and cultural background preferences

- Delivering Regional placements wherever possible and appropriate to facilitate ongoing appropriate levels of post-adoption support
- Active leadership that delivers clarity of purpose to the adoption service
- Clarity about the purpose of individual placements
- Matching placement availability to requirements
- Providing access to support services (e.g. health, therapy) for children and adopters.
- Facilitating the maintenance of valued relationships, where appropriate, especially with siblings and anyone identified by the child and birth family where possible.
- Avoiding drift and working with time scales that meet the child's best interests
- Designing and managing effective processes and ways of working
- Joint working and partnership
- Ensuring that staff are trained and motivated to deliver a child centred service
- Learning in order to deliver continuous improvement through:

The assessment and review of the service

Responding positively to complaints and feedback

Learning from any placement disruptions

- Involving children in policy and decision making
- Ensuring that children's wishes and feelings will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages
- Taking corporate responsibility within Children's Services for the effective management, quality and support of placements
- Being vigorous in challenging poor practice and addressing problems effectively
- Providing appropriate and pro-active guidance and support to birth parents
- Undertaking ongoing quality assurance and consultation to ensure that the service focuses on outcomes for children

The Policies

There are detailed adoption policies and procedures to guide the way in which the principles are practiced. These cover children, adopters, birth families, adoption support, and non-agency adoption and inter country adoption.

New staff and panel members are given a copy of the adoption policies and informed of any changes.

A written copy can be obtained as above in 'Where can I see this guide?'

There is also a complete range of more general Southend Borough Council's policies which all staff first access as part of their induction.

The Structure of the Service

The Service is committed to monitoring the quality of its services and the outcomes of placements and collects data that measures the service's performance. The Head of Service for 'Placements and Resources' and for 'Specialist Resources and Quality Assurance' are responsible for the quality standards of the services and the Adoption Panel also plays a key role in this.

Staff with relevant qualifications, usually a CQSW, DipSW or Degree in Social Work, are appointed by interview in accordance with equal opportunities, good practice and human resources recruitment policy. Copies of staff qualification, references and checks are kept on Personnel files for inspection and oversight by the appropriate inspectors and managers. Regular supervision, training and annual employee development appraisals are conducted.

The core Adoption Team currently consists of 1 Service Manager, 1 Part Time Team Manager, 1 Senior Practitioner, and 5 Social Workers. Administrative support is provided by 2 Adoption Administrators. All social workers within the team are suitably qualified with experience in varying degrees of children and family social work and fostering or adoption itself and are registered with Social Work England.

The Adoption Team is part of Children and Public Health. The Director of Children's Services is John O'Loughlin, who is also the Agency Decision Maker and the Deputy Chief executive is Michael Marks. The Adoption Service is part of children's services which is managed by the Head of Service Placements & Resources (see below and attached structure chart)

- John O'Loughlin is Director of Children's Services and ADM. He holds a Dip SW; Dip HE and Msc (distinction) in Public Sector Management. John has worked in the public service for over 30 years across Health, Education and Social Care.
- Jo Hines is interim Head of Service for Adoption and Service Manager. She has worked for Southend Adoption Service since 2007 and brings extensive adoption experience having worked previously in the Adoption Service in Essex since 1997. Jo has BA in social work, Dip SW and a Masters in Professional Practice including management and leadership. Jo has a particular interest in Theraplay in which she holds level 1 & 2 training, which brings an added dimension to the Team. She has level 1 & 2 Dyadic Development Psychotherapy; levels 1&2 Sensory Attachment Intervention, NPP level 1, Foundations in Attachment training, Therapeutic Life story Work, NVR and also has training in facilitating The Just Right State. Her Masters focused on developing policy and practice in the area of sibling assessment.
- Aimee Fossett, Advanced Practitioner, was a student social worker in the team in 2009 and joined the team on a permanent basis in 2010 having gained her Degree in Social Work at Southend University. She has level 1 Dyadic Development psychology; levels 1&2 Sensory Attachment Intervention, level 1 & 2 Theraplay, NPP level 1, Foundations in Attachment training, NVR and also can train in The Just Right State. (Aimee is currently on maternity leave)
- Karina O'Keefe, Advanced Practitioner, joined the service in October 20 on a fixed term contract to cover the maternity leave. She completed her Masters in Social Work from Canterbury University in 1999. She has a Post Graduate Diploma in Systemic Practice with Families and Couples from the Institute of Family therapy. She has worked for various local authorities as Child Protection, Looked After Children and Fostering Social Worker. She has also worked an Independent Social Worker and more recently for an Independent Fostering Agency as a Supervising Social Worker.

- Faye Khraud, (since July 2012) part time. Faye gained a BA in Social Work at the University of Essex in 2010 and worked in the Care Management Teams in Southend prior to joining the adoption team. She has level 1 Dyadic Development psychology; levels 1&2 Sensory Attachment Intervention and foundation & level 1 Just Right State and level 1 & 2 Theraplay.
- Anne Caine holds an NNEB Nursery Nurse Examination Board (Distinction) Child Development. Higher National Diploma in Child Care and Education and a Social Work Degree 2:1. In September 2007 after qualifying as a social worker she worked in First Contact Team as a front line social worker. In August 2013 she moved to the Southend Adoption Team. Anne holds level 1 Sensory Attachment Intervention and foundation & Level 1 Just Right State.
- Anna Harris, Part time completed her BSc in Applied Psychology and Sociology at Surrey in 2007, and an MSW at Kingston University in 2012. She has undertaken training in Motivational Interviewing, Pervasive Neglect, Using the Assessment Framework, Theraplay level 1, Working with sex offenders in child protection work, and Suicide and Self harm.
- Rebecca Christian joined the Adoption Service in June 2019, although has been employed by Southend Borough Council since June 2017 having held positions as a Child Protection Social Worker and as a Reunification Social Worker. Rebecca has been accredited by the Anna Freud Institute in the rating, coding and administrating of Story Stem Assessment Profile (SSAP), she has also completed leve1 in Theraplay and conducting sibling assessments.
- Melanie Griffiths joined the service in September 2019. She has a degree in Social Work which she obtained from the University of Essex and recently completed her AYSE year.
- Beth Andrews joined the service in March 2020 she gained her degree in social work from the university of Oxford Brookes in 2017 and has previously worked in assessment and intervention as a children's social worker and also in a fostering as a supervising social worker.

The System(s) in place to Monitor and Evaluate the Provision of Services to ensure that Services provided are Effective and the Quality of those Services is of an Appropriate Standard.

Statistical records are kept of the adoption service's activities, these are analysed to evaluate and monitor the service and to ensure children's plans are moving forward within timescales that meet their needs, and that adopters are being assessed and approved within the timescales of the National Adoption Minimum Standards. Monitoring is also undertaken to provide information on the needs of the children requiring adoption, the numbers of adopters required, and to ensure sufficient staff are available to provide an effective and efficient service.

The Government introduced an Adoption Scorecard in 2012 which set priorities for all Adoption Services. Southend uses this as an additional tool to monitor and evaluate the provision of services within the Agency.

Following approval, adopters are reviewed every year and are referred back to the adoption panel if they have not been linked within two years of approval.

Statistical records are also kept of all post adoption activity.



The following systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the service given:

- ❖ Preparation courses, the value of the training, information and preparation given.
- Case work supervision and performance management of staff.
- Quality assurance of papers going to the Adoption Panel.
- ❖ Adoptive applicants attending panel are asked to provide feedback on their experiences.
- Feedback on cases presented by members of the Adoption Panel.
- Review of how members of the Adoption Panel fulfil their functions.
- ❖ Following the making of an Adoption Order, adopters are asked to complete an evaluation form so that the service they have received can be monitored, and where necessary, improved.
- Various consultation exercises undertaken into specific areas of the service
- Southend participation survey
- File audits as part of the corporate audit process

Systems for providing feedback and evaluation from the following groups are in place. These include:

- ❖ Initial information given to enquirers and the time taken to respond to Adopters' experience of introductions, placement and the information given on the child.
- Adoption Panel attendance feedback
- ❖ Birth parent(s) and birth families and the service they have received.
- ❖ Where they are of an age to understand and communicate, the views of children placed for adoption.
- Inter-country adopters and the service they have received.
- Non-agency adopters, e.g. step-parents and relatives, and the service they have received.
- Schedule 2 / BRIC users (birth record counselling and adult adoptees) and the service they received.

The Services Provided

The Service is part of Adopt East Regional Adoption Alliance which went live in October 2020. The Team covers all areas of adoption including recruitment, assessment and training of prospective adopters, preparation of children for placement, counselling of adopted adults, step-parent adoptions, birth parent counselling, post adoption services and inter country adoptions.

Who receives Adoption Services?

- ✓ Children requiring adoption
- ✓ Birth relatives
- ✓ Prospective adopters
- ✓ Approved adopters
- ✓ Children and their adoptive families who need adoption support
- ✓ Adopted adults and members of their birth families



What services are provided?

The Adoption Service provides adoptive families for Southend as part of Adopt East as well as the National Register. The Agency offers placements with adopters who have been approved and who are provided with comprehensive support and training.

The Adoption Service offers a therapeutic service for young people through the local EWMHS, and where needed with adjoining EWMHS services, where adopters live outside the boundaries. The Marigold Assessment + also undertakes therapeutic life story work with children.

Specialist education support is available through the Looked after Children's Advisory Teacher and Virtual Head Teacher, until the making of an adoption order and beyond if the family reside in Southend.

Specialist Health support is available through the agency's Looked after Children Nurse and Consultant Paediatrician service.

Adopters are supported through the process of adoption by the allocation of an adoption Social Worker, where possible the worker who has completed their assessment with them. They visit regularly according to need, pre and post placement and have telephone contact in the intervening periods. They are responsible for advising on the linking & matching of placements, practical support and advice to adopters, acting as a key liaison person with the child's social worker and completing reports for the Court.

A post approval group meets on a monthly basis for approved adopters awaiting placement to offer ongoing training and to share profiles of children needing adoption. As Adopt East there is also access to Link Maker which supports the Family Finding process

A Southend post adoption support group meets on a monthly basis, which looks as issues such as managing difficult behaviour, the effects of separation and loss, first aid and life story work as well as offering a Christmas Party and other social events throughout the year.

Family events take place at least twice a year enabling adopters and their children to meet and integrate with other such families within their immediate and wider networks, further seeking to normalise adoption for all and strengthening the links developed between them further.

A Theraplay parent and toddler group for adopters with pre-school placements to support the development of secure attachment. (Sparkles) and thus improve outcomes for children placed for adoption.

Non Violent Resistance and Just Right State programmes are run according to demand as is 'super siblings' a group supporting other children in a family approved for adoption.

A Birth Relative support group runs on a monthly basis to support birth parents / relatives with issues regarding adoption and to support the ongoing development of their Information Exchange and challenges arising from contact. This aim is to help support and facilitate contact between adopted children and their birth parents in a meaningful way.

Any family living in the Southend area whose lives are affected by adoption are able to apply to the Southend Adoption Service and request an assessment of need. This will be undertaken by a qualified adoption social worker to identify support required and available to the family or person concerned. A Support Plan will then be drawn up and agreed by the Adoption Support Services Advisor.

Southend also has close links with Adoption Plus and Barnardos as part of Adopt East, to help advise on the most complex cases.

Recruitment of Adopters

Any person expressing an interest in adoption is invited to one of the local open events held monthly.

Adoption information is also available on the Southend Borough Council website. The team also have an active Facebook page which gives information and activity news.

Key Aims of the Recruitment Strategy;

- Recruit a variety of adopters to meet the ever-changing needs of children in Southend requiring placements.
- Attract adopters from black and ethnic minority communities, those interested in taking older children, those with disabilities and larger sibling groups.
- Increase stability of adoptive placements through appropriate support packages
- To provide a choice of placements to match the needs of children and young people thereby decreasing the possibility of disruption
- Make adoptive families available through Link Maker in a timely manner.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to attend one of the monthly information sharing events run by Southend. Following this, applicants are encouraged to explore their interest in adoption further and to inform us if they wish to proceed with Southend.

As soon as we are in a position to pick up the application, a Registration of Interest Form is sent. Once received, they will be notified within 5 working days as to whether Southend will proceed with their application and statutory checks are then started. The applicants then enter stage 1 of the process which is completed within 2 months. Southend allocate an agency advisor to support the family through stage 1. At the end of stage 1 there will be a formal interview after which applicants will be invited to formally apply and a written agreement completed.

At this point applicants begin stage 2 of the process. A decision re the suitability to adopt must be made by the Agency within 4 months of the acceptance of the formal application – 6 months in exceptional circumstances.

If the preceding processes follow each other without a gap, it will be the aim to complete the whole process within eight months from start to finish



Placements for Children

Placements for children are considered on the basis of seeking carers from within the child's family first (Connected Persons). If this is not possible, placements from within Adopt East will be sought, unless this is not in a child's best interests. If this is then still not available, an external resource will be located by the Adoption Team. This is achieved in a variety of ways including through linking with Adoption Link, advertising in specialised publications, featuring children via exchange events and through continually developing links with other adoption agencies throughout the country.

The Adoption service receives requests for parallel planning for adoption from the child's social worker. The request is provided in writing and outlines the reasons for placement, care needs, ethnicity, religion and language and intended timescales, legal status, forum in which the decision for

adoption or foster to adopt was made and any other key information that enables a suitable match to be identified.

An Adoption Notification Meeting then takes place to clarify what information is required for the Agency Decision Maker and by when and who will take responsibility for this.

Prior to the "preferred option decision", a worker is allocated from the Adoption Team to link up with the social worker and begin family finding and hopefully direct work with the birth family. This support they can continue for as long as it is required and certainly until the making of the adoption order.

Once a child has been referred for adoption, a child's permanence report and adoption placement report are prepared. During this work it is ensured that:

- Children are carefully listened to where they are old enough.
- Children's views about their situation, in particular, who they live with in the future and who they continue to have contact with are recorded and actively taken into account at each stage.
- Children should receive support services that meet their assessed needs
- Children should receive proper preparation for placement and support after placement.

(For more information see Adoption Agency Policy Statement)

Birth families views about placements are sought and taken into account.

Every effort is made to find a placement, which meets the child's emotional and developmental needs. This considers their trauma history, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, gender and disability. However, no child should be unduly delayed identifying an ideal match. Placements that cannot match all identified needs, but are sympathetic and committed to them, should be explored.

The child is provided with a full and realistic family history and helped to maintain their heritage. A letter for later life is prepared and includes information about the child's birth and early life, and provides up-to-date information about themselves and their situation. The child's social worker writes this letter to be read by young adopted people when they reach their teenage years.

Social workers, foster carers and others staff work to prepare children for adoptive placement. Work is undertaken with children in regard to their wishes and feelings about adoption and the kind of family they would ideally like to live with.

When a family has been matched, children are given appropriate information about their new family in a format they can understand. This often includes welcome books including photos and films, prepared by the prospective adopters.

Adoptive Applicants

Adoptive applicants from all sections of the community: married people; couples living together, single people, same sex partnerships and members of the diverse ethnic, cultural and religious groups, are sought in order to meet the diverse needs of children in this area.

People who are interested in becoming adoptive parents will be welcomed without prejudice, responded to promptly and given clear information about recruitment, assessment and approval. They will be treated fairly throughout the adoption process.

(For procedures, criteria and more detailed information see; Adoption Agency Policy and Information for Adopters leaflet)

Adopters will need to show that they can:

- ✓ Learn from their experiences
- ✓ Cope with stress
- ✓ Meet the ethnic, cultural, health and educational needs of the child needing adoption
- √ Offer consistency of care
- ✓ Work with children's social workers and other agencies to secure necessary services for the child
- ✓ Build and sustain close, intimate and reciprocal relationships
- ✓ Understand other people's points of view and their feelings
- ✓ Be in touch with sad and angry feelings
- √ Resolve past wrongs or losses
- ✓ Build secure attachments and share difficulties

At all stages of referral people are informed about a wide range of people who can adopt. These include:

- √ Families from all types of backgrounds
- √ Couples with or without children
- ✓ Couples who are married or not; from the LGBTQ community
- ✓ Single people
- ✓ People from all ethnicities
- √ People with disabilities
- ✓ People who are not 'perfect'
- ✓ People who have had problems in the past
- ✓ People who rent their houses
- ✓ Some overweight and older people and smokers (subject to medical advice)
- ✓ People whose infertility treatment has ended.

Further explanation is available for each bullet points. For instance, when discussing weight, smoking and age this is qualified by explaining that adopters need to have the likelihood of maintaining the health and vigour needed to meet the many and varied demands of children throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

Adopters are clearly told that if they smoke they are unable to adopt a child under the age of 5 years. They are also told that they are not deemed to be a non-smoker until they have given up for a period of twelve months.

Further information is given about the qualities needed to adopt, which are:

- √ The ability to see and accept the child as he or she is, not how you would like them to be
- ✓ Acceptance, commitment, flexibility, stickability, sensitivity and openness.
- ✓ The ability to cope with a bit of a mess and disruption
- ✓ Ability to ask for and accept help
- ✓ A sense of humour.

The information for the assessment is brought together in a format known as the PAR (Prospective Adopters Report). An adoption social worker visits applicants in their own home. They are seen together and separately if there is more than one applicant. Applicants are invited to make their own written as well as verbal contributions to their assessment. Work with the adopters own children is also undertaken if appropriate. Other members of the household are also interviewed. Significant

relatives and referees are seen at this stage, also ex-partners. The assessing social worker will analyse the information and make a recommendation about the suitability of the applicants to be adopters.

Applicants see the completed Prospective Adopters Report (PAR) and are asked to sign to say that they agree its contents. Prospective adopters are invited to attend the adoption panel where their application is considered.



Post Approval

The Agency will review approved adopters every twelve months whilst on the register and continue to provide advice, support and counselling. After two years the assessment will be updated and represented to panel.

Every effort will be made to match the applicants with a suitable child or children. Applicants should be clear however that our priority is to find appropriate families for children. Approved adopters will be added to Adoption Link to support the family finding process.

Prospective adopters receive preparation for a child being placed when they attend the preparation course and during their assessment.

When a link with a particular child or children has been agreed at the linking meeting, the adoption social worker and child's social worker will tell the prospective adopter about the child and give some written information too. If the prospective adopters wish to proceed, they will receive further detailed information including the child's permanence report. They family finding social worker and child's social worker will visit them and they will have the opportunity to meet the child's foster carer.

All prospective adoptive parents have the opportunity to meet with the medical advisor prior to the matching adoption panel.

Where the child's case has been considered by court, leave of the court will be sought to disclose specialist written reports about the child that may help adopters to make informed decisions.

The agency is committed to developing a comprehensive range of services aimed to support adoptees, both as children and adults, prospective adopters and adopters in the periods before placement, after placement and post adoption. An Adoption Placement Report is prepared prior to the full adoption panel to make clear what support will be offered to the child and their new family. This will include services such as financial support, payment of legal expenses where agreed; referral to specialist local services; information exchange and ongoing support and training.

Following approval of the match at the full adoption panel, an adoption placement planning meeting will be called. The Adoption Team Manager or senior practitioner will chair this. The meeting includes the adopters, their social worker, the child's social worker, foster carer and the foster carers supervising social worker.

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the adopters have all the relevant information available about the child. We provide the prospective adopters with a copy of the child's permanence report, matching report and adoption support plan. An introductions programme is devised in consultation with the adopters.

After the child is placed with the adopters, the child's social worker and the adopter's social worker continues to support the placement. Where more in-depth work is needed, the child and prospective adopters can be referred to services both in house and by other agencies as part of the adoption support plan.

Reviews are chaired by an independent reviewing officer until an adoption order is made. The review first considers the child's progress and then the adoption support plan and whether changes need to be made to it. Adopters are informed that they can make contact with the agency at any time in the future if they wish the adoption support plan to be reviewed.

Financial Support and other Support Arrangements

For placements arranged through Southend Adoption Agency, the Agency is able to pay introductory expenses and will meet costs of legal expenses where the adoption is contested or particularly complex.

At the point of matching, all children must have an adoption support plan, which highlights any financial implications. Adopters are provided with a leaflet setting out what benefits they may be entitled to. When all possible benefits have been claimed and if there is still a financial need, the Agency assesses whether it should assist. The adoption support plan must be agreed by the Adoption Services Support Adviser (the Service Manager or Head of Service) and with the adoptive family before being presented to the Adoption Panel.

Subsequently, the child and adopters circumstances will need to be reassessed before any help is offered. Where there is a specific need for financial help related to the placement for adoption and subject to means testing (which is required by government regulations). Southend will consider assisting adopters before and after the child is adopted. This support is available to any adopter living in the Southend area, whether the child has been placed by Southend or not.

Unless the circumstances are exceptional, most financial help given will be in the form of a one off rather than regular payments. One exception is where existing foster carers are adopting, where Southend Borough Council may agree to regular payments for a period of up to two years.

Where a need for therapeutic support is identified an Application to the Adoption Support Fund may be completed.

Making, maintaining and reviewing Contact Plans

Southend Adoption Agency recognises the importance of children and young people having suitable contact with their birth families and other significant people. Such contact is entirely governed by the best interests of the children. Contact can vary from the annual exchange of written information to face-to-face contact with members of the birth family at intervals appropriate for the child. The Agency Decision Maker will review contact plans at the Preferred Option Stage and later as part of the matching process.

The agency operates an Information Exchange scheme for the exchange of information between adoptive families and birth families. Birth families are also supported in arrangements for the Information Exchange and direct face-to-face contact with the child by adoption support social workers.

There are usually mutual benefits from holding at least one meeting between the child's birth parent and the adoptive parents around the time of introductions, although where appropriate these can take place at a later time. Other significant birth relatives may also be involved.

After placement, contact arrangements continue to be revisited at each review, but not after an adoption order is made. If there are any issues that arise later, these are addressed through the adoption support social workers.

A birth parent drop-in is run on a monthly basis to offer birth parents support and advice in all matters relating to adoption, but in particular to support with contact arrangements.

The Adoption Agency recognises that the contact requirements in each individual case, vary and need to remain flexible in order to meet a child's ever changing needs, therefore when approached Southend Adoption Service seek to review any request, ultimately the child's new parents will make decisions according to what they feel is in their child's best interests.

When adoptees approach adulthood they are written too to advise them of the support available to manage their own contact plans.

What happens if placements break down?

Very few placements for children do disrupt. However, where there is a disruption the Agency convenes a disruption meeting in order to try to understand the factors, which led to the breakdown of the placement. This helps in planning future placements. These meetings are chaired by an Independent Chairperson. A summary of the conclusions of this meeting are considered by the management team, and with the Adoption Panel to inform future practice.

Birth Families

Birth parents and birth families are entitled to services that recognise the lifelong implications of adoption.

Birth parents will be informed and consulted at the earliest stage when the agency has decided parallel plans, which include adoption. They will have the opportunity to give their account of events and to see and comment on what is written about them in reports for the Adoption Panel and in information passed to adopters.

Birth Parents will be offered a worker from the Adoption Team to advise and support them throughout the adoption process. If requested, this service can be provided by another local authority or purchased independently.

The Agency will provide a service for birth parents that wish to relinquish their child for adoption, usually babies. When the agency is approached before the child's anticipated birth, as much preliminary work as possible will be undertaken with the birth parents before the child is born, to ensure that the decision to place for adoption is based on the fullest possible consideration of all the alternatives available.

All birth parents will be encouraged to provide information and contribute to their child's life storybook and letter for later life. The life storybook provides a simple and age appropriate explanation of what has happened to the child up until they join their adopted family. It includes pictures of important people and places in the child's life so far, mementoes and other information relevant to the child. The child's social worker usually does this work with help and advice from the adoption worker. (For more information see Adoption Agency Policy Statement)

A Birth Parent drop-in runs on a monthly basis to support Birth Parents with any issue relating to adoption and especially to support in the provision of letterbox contact.

Step-Parent Adoption

The Service also provides advice, information and counselling for those who are seeking to secure the adoption of their partner's children. The same service will be provided for adoption by relatives.

Enquirers are sent written information about non-agency adoption within 2 working days. If having read the information provided, families wish to proceed, they are asked to apply in writing. Applicants are asked to complete the forms for statutory checks in line with agency adopters.

The adoption team will provide a detailed report for the court having considered all alternatives to adoption with the applicants. The Agency has a duty to only recommend adoption where it is in the best interests of the child for an order to be made.

In order to assess whether adoption is in the best interests of the child, it is necessary to seek the child's own views and the views of the birth parent who is not making the application. Similarly the views of wider family members will be taken into consideration where appropriate. (For more information see Adoption Agency policy Statement)

Services for Adopted Adults

The Service offers counselling and acts as an intermediary with the birth family where adoptees over the age of 18 years contact the Adoption Service seeking information or seeking contact with their birth family. This includes those seeking access to their adoption records, referred to the team by the General Register Office.

This service is available both to those adults adopted through this Agency and those living in this area whose adoptions were arranged through other Adoption agencies. (For more information see Adoption Agency policy Statement)

Where adoptees are under the age of 18 and are seeking further information and possible contact with the birth family, the agency will offer counselling and act as an intermediary, taking into account the views of the adoptive family.

Support is offered to all young adult adoptees as they reach 18 regarding on-going information exchange and where appropriate the tracing of birth records and/or their birth parents.

Birth Relative Initiated Contact

Requests from adult birth family members for help seeking information or making contact with adult adoptees, placed by the Agency, will be facilitated by the team, who will act as an intermediary, approaching the adult adoptee, where their whereabouts can be found.

Recognising the potential impact that this work may have upon the adopted person, their separated sibling and other involved people; the work will be guided by the following general principles:

- The welfare, safety, needs, current circumstances and wishes of the adopted adult and others involved will inform any work undertaken.
- The role of the Service will be to assist the individual to understand and accept the situation they are in and the choices open to them, not to advocate on their behalf.

(For more information see Adoption Agency Policy Statement)

Applications for approval as an Inter-country Adopter

The Service believes that with inter-country adoptions, as with all other adoptions, the child's needs are paramount. The service will provide initial written information and counselling to applicants seeking to adopt a child from another country and offer advice on how further specific information regarding the legal and good practice arrangements for adoption in a particular country might be obtained. The team will apply the same standards as for domestic adoptions. (For further information see Adoption Agency Policy Statement)

Equal Opportunities

The Adoption Team is committed to working in an anti-discriminatory way, incorporating the Authorities Equal Opportunities Policy in all its work. Ensuring services to children meet their

individual needs such as racial and cultural identity, religious and linguistic needs, disability, gender and sexuality.

The service endeavours to make a positive commitment to address these needs and promote respect and celebrate difference.

Child Protection

The Service complies with the SET procedures and Southend's Safeguarding Board policy in all areas of child protection and provides adequate training to its staff and adopters to ensure that children are safeguarded and protected at all times.



Adoption Panel

Southend Adoption Panel is compliant with The Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 (amend 2011 & 2013) and relevant guidance. Terms of reference for this panel and panel membership are available within the Southend Adoption Agency Policies.

The panel consists of people with a wide range of experience and diverse backgrounds and operates at sufficient frequency to avoid delay in considering children for adoption, approval of adopters and matching.

The Adoption panel is set up in accordance with government regulations. The panel is there to make recommendations to the agency on three main issues -

- Whether to approve people as suitable adopters
- Whether to dual approve for Early Permanence
- Whether a match for a child with a particular adopter is right for them

They also comment on -

Adoption Support Plans

- Contact arrangements
- Issues of concern, which they feel the Agency needs to put right
- Quality assurance matters

The Agency Decision Maker will then consider the panel's recommendations before making a decision. Whether a child should be placed for adoption is now the decision of the Decision Maker and is no longer presented to the full adoption panel apart from where a child is relinquished.

Panel Arrangements

Southend has one Adoption Panel which usually meets monthly. The panel has been reconstituted under the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 – amended 2011 & 2013. There is now a central list of panel members who perform the functions of the adoption panel.

The panel ensures an independent chairperson. Southend appointed Panel Chair (Neil Woodbridge) in April 2020, and we have an independent Vice-Chair who will stand in as required.

The main decision maker is John O'Loughlin, Director of Children's Services in the Department for People. He has overall responsibility for services for looked after children and is Decision Maker in cases presented for Preferred Option. There is a deputy Decision Maker, Allison Francis the LADO for Southend.

Involving people in Agency Decisions

Applicants to be approved as adopters are always invited to attend the panel where their approval is being considered and subsequently when they are matched with a child.

The panel always gives reasons for their recommendations. These reasons are recorded in the panel minutes. When applicants attend panel they are informed of the recommendation immediately in most cases, otherwise within 24 hours. Decisions are made within 7 days of the Decision Maker receiving the relevant minutes.

Individual decisions are made about when and how to tell children about agency decisions that adoption is right for them. The child's age, maturity and understanding and what they are likely to understand is taken into account.

If the decision maker is minded not to approve an adoptive applicant or not to continue with their assessment, he will write to them setting out the reasons and giving them the chance within 40 days to ask for the decision to be reviewed by the Independent Review Mechanism.

Placements with other Adoption Agencies

When children's needs cannot be met locally, they will be placed with adopters approved by other adoption agencies. Similarly, adopters approved by Southend who do not match the needs of the local children are assisted to have a child placed with them from elsewhere.

A Summary of the Complaints Procedure Established in Accordance with Section 26(3) of the Children Act 1989(A) and the Complaints Procedure Directions 1990 (B)

Complaints about adoption fall into two categories as follows:

1. Where the complaint is related to the service received, this is dealt with in accordance with Section 26 of the Children Act 1989, and the procedures on complaints for the Southend Borough Council's Department for People.

A service user or somebody acting on their behalf can make a complaint by contacting:

Customer Services Manager Department for People PO Box 6, Civic Centre Victoria Avenue Southend – on – Sea Essex SS2 6ER

2. Where the complaint relates to the fact that the Agency Decision Maker decides not to approve the applicant, then the applicant will have the opportunity to have their case reviewed by the adoption service, or be referred to the Independent Review Mechanism.

The Independent Reviewing Mechanism is organised by the British Associate of Adoption and Fostering. The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) is a review process, conducted by a panel, which prospective adopters can use when they have been informed that the Adoption Agency does not consider them suitable and does not propose to approve them as adoptive parents (or has withdrawn the approval).

More information on the IRM can be obtained from:

Contract Manager,
Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)
Unit 4,
Pavilion Business Park,
Royds Hall Road,
Wortley,
LEEDS
LS12 6AJ

Telephone: 0845 450 3956

Fax: 0845 450 3957

Email: irm@baaf.org.uk



Contact Addresses and Telephone Numbers

The Southend – on – Sea Borough Council Adoption Agency is registered with:

OFSTED

Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester

M1 2WD 08456 404045

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Southend Adoption and Fostering, Floor 7, Civic Offices, Victoria Avenue, Southend on Sea, Essex 01702 212004

Facebook.com/SouthendAdoptionAgency

- <u>▼Twitter@southendbc</u>
- Flickr.com/southendbc
- Instagram.com/southendbc

The System for Reviewing the Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed annually and presented to Southend Borough Council's Cabinet for approval.

For a copy of this document in any other format / language, or to order more copies, please call 01702 212004



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of the Executive Director, Children & Public Health

to Cabinet on 14 January 2021

Report prepared by:
Catherine Braun – Head of Service Access and Inclusion &
Chrissy Papas – School Place Planning & Admission Compliance
Manager

Agenda Item No.

School Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools

Pupil scrutiny committee Executive Councillor: Councillor Anne Jones

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of the consultation on the Admission Arrangements for the community schools in the borough and
- 1.2 To determine the oversubscription criteria (including explanatory notes) and Admission Limit within Admission Arrangements for Community Schools for the academic year 2022/23
- 1.3 To note that the Determined Coordinated Admission Scheme for the academic year 2021/22 was published on 31st December 2019 (Appendix 3).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To determine the oversubscription criteria (including explanatory notes) and Published Admission Number (PAN) within Admission Arrangements for Community Schools as set out in Appendix 1
- 2.2 To note that the Determined Coordinated Admission Scheme for the academic year 2021/22 was published on 31st December 2019 (Appendix 3).

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has the responsibilities to determine in relation to school admissions:
 - a) the Admission Arrangements for Community Schools (admission numbers, admission criteria and catchment areas);
 - b) set up a coordinated admission scheme for delivering admissions to the main rounds.

Report Title Page 1 of 8 Report Number

- The local authority (as the admission authority for all community schools) must consult on the admission arrangements for community schools, if it proposes to make any changes to the existing arrangements or, at least every seven years, even if there are no changes.
- 3.3 Own Admission Authorities, (academy, foundation and voluntary aided schools) have the responsibility to consult on and determine their own admission arrangements including catchment areas.
- 3.4 The Admissions Code 2014 determines that the official window for formal consultation on proposed arrangements for admissions (including catchment areas) is between 1 October and 31 January and the consultation must last for a minimum of 6 weeks.
- 3.5 Admission arrangements for Community Schools in Southend must be determined by 28th February 2018 and included in a composite prospectus for all schools by 15th March 2018. These are statutory deadlines and must be adhered to by all admission authorities.
- 3.6 The current admission arrangements for Community Schools (including catchment areas) were last consulted on and approved by the Council for the admissions in the academic year 2019/20.
- 3.7 The local authority (as the admission authority for community schools) must consult the governing body of each community school where it proposes either to increase or keep the same published admission number (PAN).
- 3.8 The Council must balance the duty to ensure sufficient school places alongside its duty to make efficient use of resources. The DfE recommends Councils have a surplus of around 5% within each planning cluster. Where surplus becomes too low or too high consideration is needed to either increase or reduce the number of available places in the town. This results in changes to some school PANs. The proposal is to keep the same PAN for all schools except Chalkwell Hall Infant School, where a reduction in PAN from 120 to 90 for the year 2022 reception is proposed.
- There are currently no proposed changes to the Admission Limits from 2022/23 for the remaining community schools. The governing body of each of the community schools was consulted on their proposed PAN and proposed arrangements and all agreed.
- 3.10 The proposed admission limits for all community primary schools for September 2022/23 are shown on **Page 2** of the Admission Arrangements for Community Schools at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.11 Reducing admission limits across the borough has been an ongoing project Temple Sutton and Bournemouth Park Primary schools are also consulting to reduce by one form of entry for 2022. Discussions continue with other schools in the town. Due to the lowering birth numbers, the need for less primary school places will continue for at least the next 3 years. Numbers will be monitored on an annual basis and changes proposed. Consultations will take place if this is the case.

Report Title Page 2 of 8 Report Number

3.12 Other reductions in admission limits for the admission years 2020 to 2022 are provided for information below:

2020: Greenways primary School: Lowered PAN from 150 to 120

reception

Darlinghurst Academy: Lowered PAN from 120 to 90 for all year

groups

2021: Hamstel Infant School: lowered PAN from 150 to 120 reception

St Mary's, Prittlewell, CofE Primary School from 120 to 90 for years

R-6 but year 3 is 120

Darlinghurst Academy: Lowered PAN from 90 to 60 for reception

2022: Consultation for Chalkwell Hall Infant School to lower from 120 to 90

Consultation for Temple Sutton Primary School to lower PAN from

120 to 90

Consultation for Bournemouth Park Primary to lower PAN from 90

to 60

- 3.13 The consultation also included a change for Heycroft Primary School. Currently pupils of staff are given priority above pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling at the school. It was agreed to provide priority of pupils who live outside the catchment area with a sibling attending the school above pupils of staff. The criteria therefore have been amended to reflect this proposal.
- 3.14 The criteria of 'pupils of staff' was introduced for the 2019 round of admissions. In the years 2019 and 2020 two children have been admitted under these criteria. Changing the order of the criteria will have no impact on children applying with a sibling at the school or the children in the catchment area. In the years 2019 and 2020 every child that applied for the school and did not gain a higher offer, was offered a place at the school.
- 3.15 All Southend schools were consulted on the proposed admission scheme. The consultation identified that schools agreed and as such no changes to the content of the scheme as shared with Cabinet in September 2020 was made. The Scheme (**Appendix 3**) was formally ratified and determined by the Executive Director for Children and Public Health in December 2020 for publication as required by law, 1 January 2021.
- 3.16 Cabinet is asked to note that the previously agreed scheme has now been determined and published.

4. Formal Consultation of Primary Community School Admission Arrangements 2022/23

- 4.1 The consultation during the statutory timeframe was run by Southend Borough Council, from 2 November to the 11 December 2020. A full evaluation of the formal consultation including the reasons for and against change can be found in **Appendix 1** identified under each individual school.
- 4.2 The consultation was run via the 'Your Say Southend' portal and in total there were 9,481 site visits to the site, with 1,365 site registrations and 1,316 activated participants in the last 30 days. In total 20 surveys were submitted.

Report Title Page 3 of 8 Report Number

- Only four emails were sent, two general emails and two emails from parents seeking further information.
- 4.3 Below is a summary for each school, with a full breakdown provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.3.1 **Barons Court Primary and Nursery School** Three parents of the school completed the survey and all three agreed with the proposals, and found them reasonable, clear, and fair.
- 4.3.2 **Chalkwell Hall Infant School** Out of 26 people that responded to the consultation for Chalkwell Hall Infants:
 - 18 were parents of a child at a school; 12 of these were parents of the school and 8 were parents of Chalkwell Hall Junior School
 - 15 were parents of a preschool aged child, 7 of 2 year old, 7 of 3 year old and 2 of another age
 - 1 was a governor of the school
 - 2 were members of staff (one teaching and one support staff)
 - 1 responded on behalf of a local authority, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
 - and 1 response out of interest for the school
 - 11 Respondents agreed with the proposed admission limit;
 - 15 Respondents did not agree with the proposed admission limit
 - 11 respondents agreed that the proposals are fair, clear and reasonable
 - 15 respondents did not agree and of those, 1 found them unclear; 6 felt they are unfair, 7 found them unreasonable and 4 had other reasons (some selected more than one option).
- 4.3.3 **Chalkwell Hall Junior School** Out of 18 people that accessed the consultation for Chalkwell Hall Juniors, 8 completed responses, of these:
 - 5 were parents of a child at a school; 2 at Chalkwell Hall Infant and at the Junior School, and 3 parents at Chalkwell Hall Junior school
 - 3 were parents of a preschool aged child, 1 of a 2 year old child, and 2 of a 3 year old
 - and 3 responses out of interest for the school
 - 5 Respondents agreed with the proposed admission limit
 - 3 Respondents did not agree with the proposed admission limit
 - 5 respondents agreed that the proposals are fair, clear and reasonable
 - 3 respondents did not agree and of those, all 3 had 'other' reasons for not agreeing
- 4.3.4 **Earls Hall Primary School** Out of 2 visitors, both where parents of the school and completed the survey. Both found the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Earls Hall from the consultation.
- 4.3.5 **Edwards Hall Primary School** Out of 7 visitors there were no responses to the consultation for Edwards Hall. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Edwards Hall from the consultation.

Report Title Page 4 of 8 Report Number

- 4.3.6 **Fairways Primary School** Out of 10 visitors for the schools page, one parent of the school, who also is a parent of preschool aged child (2 year old) completed the survey and agreed with the admission limit and that the proposed admission arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Fairways from the consultation.
- 4.3.7 **Heycroft Primary School** Out of 6 visitors, 3 parents of the school, 2 parents of a preschool aged child (3 year old) and one a member of 'other' staff at the school completed the survey. Both found the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Heycroft from the consultation.
- 4.3.8 **Leigh North Street Primary School** There was one parent of the school and completed the survey. Who agreed with the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Leigh North Street from the consultation.
- 4.3.9 **West Leigh Infant School** There was one parent of a preschool aged child (2 year old) completed the survey. Who agreed with the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Leigh North Street from the consultation.
- 4.3.10 The proposals for Barons Court Primary, Earls Hall Primary, Edwards Hall Primary, Fairways Primary, Heycroft Primary, Leigh North Street Primary and West Leigh Infant School received no objections and therefore it is recommended they are agreed.
- 4.3.11 The proposals for Chalkwell Hall Infant School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School were the only proposals that some respondents did not agree were fair, clear and/or reasonable. For this reason responses are evaluated in summary, as provided in Appendix 1 as well as a full uncut version of the responses provided in Annex 1 B&C.
- 4.3.12 After considerable consideration to the matters raised, the small percentage of the school population feeling a need to respond to the consultation and the majority of those being dissatisfied living outside of the schools catchment area, it is recommended that the proposal to reduce PAN at Chalkwell Hall Infant school by 1FE are agreed, noting some respondents concerns.

5 Other Options: for Chalkwell Hall Infant School Consultation

- 5.1 The Council could decide not to reduce the Admission Limit for Chalkwell Hall Infant School. Taking this action would add undue pressure on a small number of local schools for 2022, where a significant surplus of places is forecast, creating financial and organisational challenges. The impact of doing nothing to adjust the growing surplus of places, increases the risk of school closure and further pupil displacement across the cluster and town as a consequence.
- 5.2 The Council could decide to lower PAN and change the criteria for Chalkwell Hall Infant School and group all siblings so that the criteria change to:
 - 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children

Report Title Page 5 of 8 Report Number

- 2. Pupils who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area
- 5.3 Although this would reduce the risks to 'out of catchment siblings', it would instead negatively impact catchment children. This was not proposed in the consultation as it is not seen as a suitable solution for this school. This model is only suitable where a school has a significant surplus of catchment places.
- 5.4 The Council could decide to reduce the admission limit to 105, which was the admission limit previously. This would place the school in a likely financial difficulty due to infant class size regulations. The school would be required to fund four classes, with a teacher for each group. Under the proposed lowering of 1FE, the school has time to reorganise staffing and resources to operate just three classes for each year group.

6 Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The council has a duty to balance maintaining sufficient places within the borough whilst ensuring surplus places do not exceed levels where schools would be unable to maintain financial viability. In line with the requirement from the Department of Education, a surplus of around 5% is maintained across the borough in both primary and secondary phases. The surplus is not required at each school but as a wider community. For Southend primary schools' surplus is calculated within cluster groups. There will continue to be sufficient places with above 5% surplus for all local children from each of the primary planning clusters if all proposed reductions are determined for 2022. (Consultations to lower PANs for other schools are all foundation and academy schools.)
- 6.2 Due to the decline in births in the Leigh Cluster, as well as other areas not covered in this report, there is a need to reduce the admission limits across the borough for 2022. Lower birth figures mean more school places than we need and more than the required surplus. Left without action would have a negative impact on some schools in the area, as a school with too many vacancies would be in danger of closing due to financial viability. It has been agreed locally to work together so that no school is inadvertently affected and closed, as places may be required in the future with planed housing developments across the town.
- 6.3 Planning indicates that an admission limit of 90 for Chalkwell Hall Infant School from 2022 onwards is not legally unreasonable. This is due to places being available for pupils within a reasonable distance where a school is oversubscribed. Chalkwell Hall Infant School is a popular school and therefore oversubscription is expected (as it is currently). However, due to the overall decline in birth's within the catchment area, it is not anticipated that catchment siblings, and catchment pupils will be displaced
- 6.4 The Determined Admission Arrangements 2022/23 must be available by 28 February 2021, and will be available for public scrutiny in the period of 15 March to 15 May 2021. Any objections can be raised with the Office of the schools adjudicator in that period.

Report Title Page 6 of 8 Report Number

7 Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

These arrangements will assist pupils within the Borough to access quality learning opportunities to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children. It fits well into the ambition of opportunity and prosperity, in that it supports sharing our prosperity amongst all of our people. It further supports the ambition in that our children are school and life ready and our workforce is skilled and job ready.

7.2 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications for the Council. The administration of school admission, and core revenue funding for the running of a School is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

7.3 Legal Implications

The determination of admission arrangements for community schools and the provision of a coordinated admissions scheme is a statutory requirement.

7.4 People Implications

The proposed changes to one schools PAN have been considered in line with the pupil product for the schools catchment area. Based upon historical admission trends and numbers of births that have declined in the area, the changes are not expected to impact catchment residents negatively.

7.5 Property Implications None

7.6 Consultation

The local authority (as the admission authority for community schools) must consult the governing body of each community school where it proposes either to increase or keep the same published admission number (PAN). The recommendation is to keep the same PAN for all schools except Chalkwell Hall Infant School, for which a reduction in PAN from 120 to 90 for the year 2022 is proposed. Consultation was in line with the requirements within the Admission Code and ran between 2 November and 11 December 2020.

7.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

A coordinated admissions scheme and clear oversubscription criteria are necessary to ensure fair access to school places. Admission Arrangements for Community Schools and the Coordinated Admission Scheme for Southend Schools have been written in line with mandatory requirements set by the Admissions Code 2014. The code determines that authorities must ensure that the practices and criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective and that parents should be able to easily understand how places are allocated.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the arrangements and scheme are reviewed annually against an expanded list of protected characteristics as identified within the Admission Code: disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Report Title Page 7 of 8 Report Number

The proposed Scheme, arrangements and decisions made through their administration are clear that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, against a parent who is applying for a school place or offered admission as a pupil.

There are limited exceptions to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief and sex. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character are exempt from some aspects of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and this means they can make a decision about whether or not to admit a child as a pupil on the basis of religion or belief. Single-sex schools are lawfully permitted to discriminate on the grounds of sex in their admission arrangements.

7.8 Risk Assessment

The need to reduce PANs in the Borough is based upon an assessment of forecast need inclusive of surplus places. The risks to a small number of schools becoming financially unviable to continue in the long run is great if nothing is done to reduce excessive surplus places. Discussions with other cluster schools to gain agreement to consult on lowering PANs, has also been undertaken and Trust and Governing Bodies are considering consulting in the Autumn as well.

If the Council does not agree a scheme, one will be imposed by the DfE, and the Council's reputation will suffer.

- 7.9 Value for Money No direct implications.
- 7.10 Community Safety Implications None envisaged.
- 7.11 Environmental Impact None envisaged

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 School Admissions Code 2014
- 8.2 School Admission Appeals Code 2012

Appendices

- 8.3 Appendix 1 Report on the Consultation for the proposed Admission Arrangements for community schools for September 2022; including Annex 1 A-H.
- 8.4 Appendix 2 Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools for September 2022 including Published Admission Numbers on Page 2.
- 8.5 Appendix 3 Determined Coordinated Admissions Scheme 2022

Report Title Page 8 of 8 Report Number

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Evaluation of the Response to the Council's Public Consultation on the Community Primary School Admission Arrangements for 2022/23

January 2021

Report written by: Catherine Braun, Group Manager Access and Inclusion Chrissy Papas, School Place Planning & Admission Compliance Manager

1. Background

- 1.1. The council, as the admission authority, has the duty to consult on and determine the admission arrangements each year for all community schools. The Council is not the admission authority for all other types of school (voluntary aided, foundation, academy, free schools). This report contains the analysis from the formal consultation held between 2 November to the 11 December 2020 as required by the Admission Code 2014.
- 1.2. The report refers to the following schools and the proposed changes from the consultation to admission arrangements including catchment areas, criteria for oversubscription and proposed admission limit (PAN).

Community schools	Changes to admission arrangements	Proposed admission limit
Barons Court Primary School and Nursery	No	35⁺
Chalkwell Hall Infant School	Yes	90**
Chalkwell Hall Junior School	No	120 ⁺
Earls Hall Primary School	No	90+
Edwards Hall Primary School	No	60 ⁺
Fairways Primary School	No	60+
Heycroft Primary School	Yes**	60⁺
Leigh North Street Primary School	No	90+
West Leigh Infant School	No	120 ⁺

⁺ Published admission limit for each year group for admission in 2021

- 1.3. The Admissions Code 2014 determines that admission authorities must consult the public if it proposes to decrease the PAN for a school. Admission authorities do not need to consult if they are increasing PAN.
- 1.4. Discussions were had earlier in the year with school leaders regarding the need to reduce the PAN's of some primary schools in the borough over the coming four years due to the significant decline in births. This decline has created a growing surplus in the town which if left without action, would have a considerably negative impact on some schools in the area.
- 1.5. Although there is a mix of LA and academy maintained schools in the Borough, the Council retains the responsibility for ensuring the sufficiency of school places, which includes the number of surplus places. This information is reported annually to the Department of Education (DfE).
- 1.6. Chalkwell Hall Infant School, within the Leigh Cluster was identified for further discussion and consultation to reduce the schools PAN by one form of entry (FE) from September 2022. This was taking into consideration one other school in the cluster already reducing PAN from 4 forms of entry (FE) to 2FE; Chalkwell's direct catchment area has seen a 22% reduction in births; was a school that had expanded during the time of increased need; and is situated on a very small site.

⁺⁺ Proposed admission limit for the reception year for Chalkwell Hall Infant School from 2022

^{**} Re-order of some criteria

- 1.7. The Governing Body for Chalkwell Hall Infant School and the Head Teacher have confirmed they agree to lower the PAN for the school from 120 to 90 from 2022 onwards. This is with the understanding that if the LA is short of places the school will be consulted to admit further pupils.
- 1.8. The Headteacher and Governing Body Chair for Chalkwell Hall Junior School has also been informed that similar consultations will commence with the junior school reducing PAN by 1FE as the reduced numbers move through to year 3 in 2025.
- 1.9. There are currently no proposed changes to the Admission Limits from 2022/23 for the remaining community schools. However, Governing Bodies of community schools were consulted and given the option to comment on the proposal of no change, no objections or changes were requested. The admission limits for all community primary schools for September 2022/23 are shown on Page 2 of the Admission Arrangements for Community Schools at Appendix 2.

2. Overall data on visitors, responses, and document downloads

2.1. The consultation was run via the 'Your Say Southend' portal and in total there were 2,329 views of this consultation, 49 registrations, 238 downloads of the documentation, 348 informed participants and over 9,000 overall active participants on the portal. In total 42 surveys were submitted. Only four emails were sent, two general emails and two emails from parents seeking further information. A summary of visitors to particular pages and responses received for each school are provided in the tables below:

Ta ble	School Name	Visitors	Downloads
1 –	Barons Court Primary School and Nursery 2022	17	20
nu	Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022	61	65
mb	Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022	10	15
ers	Earls Hall Primary School 2022	13	13
acc	Edwards Hall Primary School 2022	3	3
ess	Fairways Primary School 2022	9	23
ing	Heycroft Primary School 2022	38	40
ov	Leigh North Street Primary School 2022	11	11
era	West Leigh Infant School 2022	24	25
<i>II</i>	Consultation Document	4	5
inf	Map of Infant, Junior and Primary School Catchment areas	9	12
or	Key Dates	2	2
ma			

tion on the consultation portal for each school by numbers of visitors that viewed and/or downloaded documents

Survey Name	Visitors	Responses
Barons Court Primary School and Nursery 2022	35	4
Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022	62	26
Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022	18	8
Earls Hall Primary School 2022	14	2
Edwards Hall Primary School 2022	7	0
Fairways Primary School 2022	10	1
Heycroft Primary School 2022	21	6
Leigh North Street Primary School 2022	11	1
West Leigh Infant School 2022	14	1
Consultation Document	51	n/a

Table 2 – numbers accessing the consultation portal for each school by numbers of visitors that viewed the school survey and provided a response

3. Raising awareness of the Consultation

- 3.1 The consultation was promoted through a range of media and communication, such as Southend Borough Council website; All local Councillors and MPs; Press release and advertisement to the local newspaper The Echo; Wide coverage of articles within local newspapers; Twitter and Facebook; Emails were sent to the schools in the borough and in the relevant area, for distribution via their parent email networks, emails were forwarded to other local authorities, early years settings and independent schools.
- 3.2 Furthermore, the Your Say Southend consultation portal, recorded traffic from other sources:

Traffic-Channel	Source	Aware-Visits	Informed-Visits
Direct	-	972	360
Referrals	android-app	25	13
Referrals	gateway.zscloud.net	1	1
Referrals	seattle	1	1
	www.leigh-on-		
Referrals	sea.com	2	1
Referrals	www.leightimes.co.uk	1	0
Search Engine	bing	5	3
Search Engine	google	18	7
Email	ehq	1	0
Email	outlook	1	0
Social	facebook	31	10
.GOV sites	gov	4	1

4. Interested parties in the consultation for each school

Survey Name	Visitors	Responses	Parent of a Child/ Children at a Southend School	Parent of a Preschool aged child	School Governor of a child at a Southend school	Member of staff of a child at a Southend school	Responding on behalf of a local authority	If none apply, what is your interest in the schools admission details?
Barons Court Primary School and Nursery 2022	35	4	3	0	0	1	0	0
Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022	62	26	18	15	1	2	1	1
Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022	18	8	5	3	0	0	0	3
Earls Hall Primary School 2022	14	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Edwards Hall Primary School 2022	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fairways Primary School 2022	10	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Heycroft Primary School 2022	21	6	6	2	0	1	0	0
Leigh North Street Primary School 2022	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
West Leigh Infant School 2022	14	1	0	1	0	0	0	0

5. Overview of responses to the proposals

Survey Name	Respons es	I agree with the proposed admissio n limit	I disagree with the proposed admissio n limit	I agree the proposal is Fair/ Clear/ reasonabl e	I feel that the proposal Not fair / clear / reasonabl e*
Barons Court Primary School and Nursery 2022	4	3	1	3	0
Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022	26	11	15	11	15
Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022	8	5	3	5	3
Earls Hall Primary School 2022	2	2	0	2	0
Edwards Hall Primary School 2022	0	0	0	0	0
Fairways Primary School 2022	1	1	0	1	0
Heycroft Primary School 2022	6	6	0	6	0
Leigh North Street Primary School 2022	1	1	0	1	0
West Leigh Infant School 2022	1	1	0	1	0

Full reports provided in Annex1 (at the end of this evaluation)

- 5.1 The main themes from the consultation, for each individual school are:
- 5.1.1 **Barons Court Primary and Nursery School** Four parents of the school completed the survey and all four found the proposed admission arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. Three responses agreed with the proposed admission limit for the school and one made a comment in regards to other schools reducing the admission limit. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Barons Court from these responses.
- 5.1.2 **Chalkwell Hall Infant School** Out of the 26 people that responded to the survey for Chalkwell Hall Infants:
 - 18 were parents of a child at a school; 12 of these were parents of Chalkwell Hall Infant School and 8 were parents of Chalkwell Hall Junior School;
 - 15 were parents of a preschool aged child, 7 of a 2 year old, 7 of a 3 year old and 2 of another age; 1 was a governor of the school;
 - 2 were members of staff (one teaching and one support staff);
 - 1 responded on behalf of a local authority, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council; and 1 response out of interest for the school
 - 11 Respondents agreed with the proposed admission limit;
 - 15 Respondents did not agree with the proposed admission limit
 - 11 respondents agreed that the proposals are fair, clear and reasonable
 - 15 respondents did not agree and of those, 1 found them unclear; 6 felt they were unfair, 7 found them unreasonable and 4 had other reasons (some selected more than one option).

Further breakdown of considerations for Chalkwell Hall Infant from the consultation are identified in section 6 of this evaluation. The full system report is provided in annex 1B.

5.1.3 **Chalkwell Hall Junior School** Out of the 8 people that completed the survey for Chalkwell Hall Juniors:

5 were parents of a child in a school; 2 at Chalkwell Hall Infant and at the Junior School and 3 parents at Chalkwell Hall Junior school;

- 3 were parents of preschool aged child, 1 of a 2 year old child and 2 of a 3 year old;
- 3 responses out of interest for the school
- 5 Respondents agreed with the proposed admission limit;
- 3 Respondents did not agree with the proposed admission limit
- 5 respondents agreed that the proposals are fair, clear and reasonable
- 3 respondents did not agree and of those, all 3 had 'other' reasons for not agreeing

Further breakdown of considerations for Chalkwell Hall Infant from the consultation are identified in section 7 of this evaluation. The full system report is provided in annex 1 C.

- 5.1.4 **Earls Hall Primary School** Out of 2 visitors, both were parents of the school and completed the survey. Both found the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Earls Hall from the consultation.
- 5.1.5 **Edwards Hall Primary School** Out of 7 visitors there were no responses to the consultation for Edwards Hall.

No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Edwards Hall from the consultation.

- 5.1.6 **Fairways Primary School** Out of 10 visitors for the schools page, one parent of the school, who also is a parent of preschool aged child (2 year old) completed the survey and agreed with the admission limit and that the proposed admission arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Fairways from the consultation.
- 5.1.7 Heycroft Primary School Out of 6 visitors, 3 parents of the school, 2 parents of a preschool aged child (3 year old) and one a member of 'other' staff at the school completed the survey. Both found the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair.
 No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Heycroft from the consultation.
- 5.1.8 **Leigh North Street Primary school** There was one parent of the school and completed the survey. Who agreed with the proposed admission limit and found the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Leigh North Street from the consultation.
- 5.1.9 **West Leigh Infant School** There was one parent of a preschool aged child (2 year old) completed the survey. Who agreed with the proposed admission limit and the arrangements reasonable, clear, and fair. No matters arose for the admission arrangements for Leigh North Street from the consultation.
 - 6. Evaluation of responses for Chalkwell Hall Schools 2022
- 6.1 The proposals for Chalkwell Hall Infant School and Chalkwell Hall Junior School were the two proposals that some respondents did not agree the proposals were fair, clear and/or reasonable. For this reason responses are evaluated below as well as a full copy of the responses provided in Annex 1 B&C.

6.2 Overview of the two schools:

6.2.1 Chalkwell Hall Infant School:

School places	360
Number on Roll (ASC Jan 20)	360
School Net Capacity (DfE management & finance guidance 2002) Feb 2020, full workplaces	Min 333 - Max 370
Number of respondents to consultation	26
Number that agreed with the proposals	11

Number that did not agree with the proposals	15

6.2.2 Chalkwell Hall Junior School:

School places	480
Number on Roll (ASC Jan 20)	480
School Net Capacity (DfE management & finance guidance 2002) Feb 2020, full workplaces	Min 453 - Max 504
Number of respondents to consultation	26
Number that agreed with the proposals	5
Number that did not agree with the proposals	3

6.3 Characteristics of the Schools

- 6.3.1 Both Chalkwell Hall schools increased their Admission Limits from September 2017/18 from 108 to 120 across all year groups. The school underwent some reorganisation of learning spaces and as a consequence the Net Capacity, determined from the sustainability assessment is now 360 for the Infant School and 480 for the Junior School. Chalkwell Hall Infant is situated on the same site as the junior school.
- 6.3.2 This directly impacted some schools in the Leigh Cluster as most children filling these additional places moved from other schools within the cluster.
- 6.3.3 The north of Chalkwell's current catchment area has a much higher percentage of children eligible for pupil premium than the rest of its catchment. This area lies adjacent to Darlinghurst's catchment. Some of the catchment area population historically accesses provision at the nearest faith based school, Our Lady of Lourdes's Catholic Primary School, and some at the nearest two independent primary schools, namely St Michael's School (198 Hadleigh Road, Leigh on Sea SS9 2LP) and Saint Pierre School (16 Leigh road, Leigh on Sea, SS9 1LE). Our Lady of Lourdes's admits up to 60 pupils, predominantly from within the Leigh cluster. According to the January 2020 schools census 17% of Our Lady's school population lived within Chalkwell Hall's catchment area.
- 6.3.4 The consultation was focused on a proposal for a lower in the limit for Chalkwell Hall Infant reception from 2022. Births have lowered across Southend for some years, which has caused the local authority to have conversations with a number of schools in the borough to lower PAN. In Chalkwell's place planning area (cluster of schools) one school has already lowered their PAN from 120 to 60 to counteract this excessive surplus, however further decline in birth numbers from 2017/18 (starting reception in 2022) has resulted in this consultation.
- 6.3.5 As an example, Chalkwell Hall's catchment have seen an average 26% reduction in births reported over the last three years. With 2019/20 being the highest reduction at 35.37%. a reduction in PAN is therefore deemed necessary for at least 3 years from 2022-2024.
- 6.3.6 As required by the statutory process we review the data, admission limits and admission arrangements annually and should a reverse in this pattern of reduced births occur, further discussions will take place with all schools where there is capacity to increase.

6.4 Oversubscription Criteria used in the Formal consultation

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children

- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area

(for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes in full arrangements provided in Appendix 2)

6.5 Survey responses for the Chalkwell Hall Infant school

6.5.1 The statutory regulations for admissions, The School Admissions Code 2014, require that admission arrangements are fair, clear and reasonable. Respondents were asked if they felt the proposals were fair, clear and reasonable. Eight respondents on the online portal, did not agree that the proposals were fair, clear and reasonable and provided the following reasons summarised into key themes:

6.6 Main key themes for not agreeing to the proposal for Chalkwell Hall Infant School

- Children living close to the school or in catchment may be at risk of not gaining a place (2);
- Out of Catchment siblings may be at risk of not gaining a place (4); and
- Out of Catchment children may be at risk of not gaining a place (2).

6.7 Main key themes for not agreeing to the proposals for Chalkwell Hall Junior School

- 6.7.1 Although no changes were proposed for the admission arrangements for Chalkwell Hall Junior School for 2022, it is recognised that the Council will have to consult in due course to reduce the admission limit to 90. The year 3 admission limit is the same as the year 2 limit for the preceding year.
- 6.7.2 Key themes from the survey, on reasons for disagreeing with proposals for Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022, (no changes were proposed for 2022 for the school):
 - Sibling concern (parent of 2 year old child).
 - Should be in line with the proposed change to Infant School admission limit of 90 (parent of 3 year old child)
 - Financial impact (staff Member)

7. Finalisation of consultation

7.1 Review of impact for Chalkwell Hall Infant School three main key themes:

7.1.1 Children living close to the school or in catchment may be at risk of not gaining a place

Birth data for the Leigh cluster highlights the drop in births across the cluster and a surplus of 24.8%, reducing the admission limit for Chalkwell Infant School will support the leigh cluster:

			Birth Data					
	Birth year	2020/1 9	2019/1 8	2017/1 8	2016/1 7	2015/1 6	2014/1 5	2013/1 4
	Admission year	2024	2023	2022	2020	2019	2018	2017
	Blenheim (90)	62	58	54	70	71	91	63
	Chalkwell Hall (120)	98	126	121	158	131	155	157
<u> </u>	Darlinghurst (60)	73	73	75	86	60	59	56
School	Fairways (60)	44	37	37	39	60	57	66
0)	Leigh (90)	67	76	72	72	87	105	100
	Our Lady of Lourdes (60)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	West Leigh (120)	102	85	92	106	124	127	118

LEIGH GROUP TOTAL	446	455	451	531	533	594	560
Number of places (2022)	600	600	600	Curr	ent Surplu	s for 2022 -	- 25%

- 7.1.2 It is anticipated based upon recent admission patterns and known reductions in births that the school will continue to be able to accommodate catchment siblings and children from the catchment area. Should this not be possible there are schools within a reasonable distance that can support parents seeking admission elsewhere.
- 7.1.3 Darlinghurst Academy, reduced their admission limit from 120 to 60 over the past few years in response to the declining birth data.
- 7.1.4 Reductions to schools of 2 forms of entry (60) are not recommended by the Department for Education due to financial viability. Therefore Darlinghurst, Fairways and Our Lady of Lourdes would not be considered to further reduce. Reducing the limit at Leigh North Street and West Leigh Infant School is not considered at this stage mainly due to the impact for children living close to the borough boundary and any impact may displace pupils further into the area.
- 7.1.5 The birth data for 2022 has dropped by 37 children, and forecast data show a very similar figure for 2023 and a further drop for 2024. The decline in births is across the Leigh Cluster and therefore further reviews of admission limits for all schools in the leigh cluster will continue to be considered on an annual basis.

7.2 Out of Catchment siblings may be at risk of not gaining a place

- 7.2.1 This is a difficultly faced by some parents at a number of schools across the borough, when they choose to apply for a school out of catchment or move out of catchment after gaining a place. Siblings for children living in the catchment area for all schools are always offered a place as they are high on the priority for schools. Schools and the Council advise all parents that there is no guarantee of a place at any school. Parents living outside of a catchment area who gain a place for their child will always be at a higher risk for not gaining the same preference for siblings. The same applies for those parents who move out of a catchment area. The Admission Team is able to advise parents of availability of places for older siblings where parents wish children to attend the same school. Where parents find they do not wish to move schools for older siblings, some parents make arrangements at the different schools for the different pick up and drop of times, using before and after school clubs where they are available.
- 7.2.2 The challenge for the Council is to ensure that we do not over resource some schools and under resource others. There is no requirement on the Council to ensure a guarantee of places at any school, however the Council should aim to provide a place within a reasonable walking distance to a child's home. With making the reduction of one form of entry, there is still adequate surplus within the cluster to meet the demand for places, plus still ensure a surplus for those moving into the area.

7.3 Out of Catchment children may be at risk of not gaining a place

7.3.1 The admission arrangements for schools in the borough offer priority to children in a published catchment area. Children living outside the catchment area for the school can apply, and will be ranked under the appropriate criteria. This proposal does not affect parents applying. We consider areas in clusters/groupings to ensure enough places for pupils across the borough within a reasonable distance from their home address. There is no guarantee with any school, that out of catchment applicants will be successful in gaining admission, with a number of schools in the Leigh cluster alone only occasionally admitting very small numbers of out of catchment children.

7.4 Survey responses for the Chalkwell Hall Junior school

7.4.1 sibling concern

Refer to 7.1.2

7.4.2 Should be in line with the proposed change to the Infant School admission limit

Although no changes were proposed for the admission arrangements for Chalkwell Hall Junior School for 2022, it is recognised that the Council will need to consult in due course to reduce the

admission limit to 90 for the Junior school for year 3 admission year 2025 to ensure the admission limit is the same as the year 2 limit for the preceding year.

7.4.3 Financial Impact

The proposal is for the reception intake 2022 (which would have an impact on year 3 in due course at the Juniors). Chalkwell Hall schools would have sufficient time for budget planning, staff organisation and managing resources to plan and cater for the lower intake. Costs are planned to the number of admissions and therefore impact would be in proportion to demand. In direct contrast, the proposals are to support the financial viability of all local schools within the cluster and allow for planned admission numbers. Without taking action now, other schools will be significantly affected threatening their viability to continue

7

7.5 Overview of the Chalkwell Hall School proposals	
For	Against
Schools increased PAN from 108 to 120 (12	Risk of further family migration moving into
places)	the area to gain a place.
In the period of high birth years all catchment	Out of catchment pupils not gaining
siblings and catchment pupils gained admission.	admission.
During low birth years this is expected to	Out of catchment siblings not gaining a
continue.	admission.
Continuing history of some catchment parents	Risk of change in parental preference - Our
applying for the local Faith school Our Lady of	Lady of Lourdes has an Ofsted rating of
Lourdes.	Requires Improvement
Continuing history of some catchment parents	Risk of change in parental preference - Saint
applying for independent schools, Saint Pierre	Pierre has an Ofsted rating of Requires
being located within the catchment area	Improvement
Strain on the small site would gradually improve.	Financial budget adjustments to forward
Opportunities for the school to use indoor and	plan a reduction in one cohort for 2022 and
outdoor space more creatively and allow for	forward planning to 2023 and 2024
additional learning areas for SEND and high	
achievers.	
School population across the two schools is 840	School population across the two schools
pupils. The consultation received 26 responses	840 pupils and the consultation received 26
(overlap between the two schools) which	responses (overlap between the two
equates to 3.1% of the school population.	schools)
11 respondents agreeing with the proposals	15 respondents disagreeing with the
(1.3% of the school population)	proposals (1.7% of the school population)

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The council has a duty to balance maintaining sufficient places within the borough whilst ensuring surplus places do not exceed levels where schools would be unable to maintain financial viability. In line with the requirement from the Department of Education, a surplus of around 5% is maintained across borough in both primary and secondary phases. The surplus is not required at each school but as a wider community. For Southend primary schools' surplus is calculated within cluster groups. There will continue to be sufficient places with above 5% surplus for all local children from each of the primary planning clusters if all proposed reductions are determined for 2022. (Consultations to lower PANs for other schools are all foundation and academy schools.)
- 8.2 Due to the decline in births in the Leigh Cluster, as well as other areas not covered in this report, there is a need to reduce the admission limits across the borough for 2022. Lower birth figures mean more school places than we need and more than the required surplus. Left without action would have a negative impact on some schools in the area, as a school with too many vacancies would be in danger of closing due to financial viability. It has been agreed locally to work together so that no school is inadvertently closed, as places may be required in the future with planed housing developments across the town.
- Planning indicates that an admission limit of 90 for Chalkwell Hall Infant School from 2022 onwards 8.3 is not legally unreasonable. This is due to places being available for pupils within a reasonable distance where a school is oversubscribed. Chalkwell Hall Infant School is a popular school and

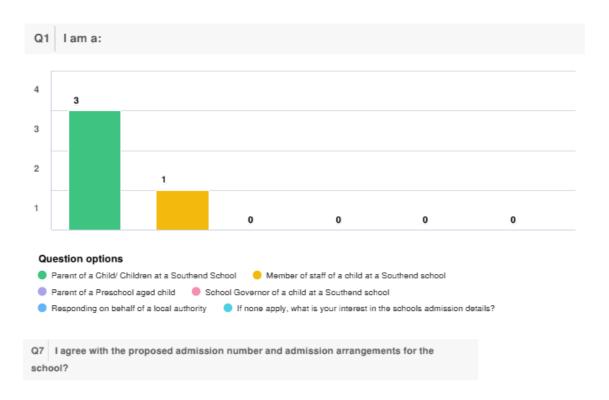
therefore oversubscription is expected (as it is currently). However, due to the overall decline in birth's within the catchment area, it is not anticipated that catchment siblings, and catchment pupils will be displaced.

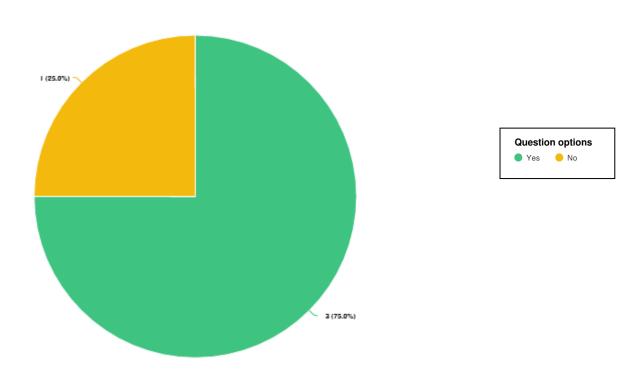
- 8.4 The Local Authority reviews admission limits annually, as required by the legislation and it is anticipated that annual consultations will be held due to the impact of continuing lower birth data. There is an anticipation that at some point the figures will increase once again however this is not anticipated for the admission years of 2022, 2023 and 2024 based upon current birth data.
- 8.5 It is recommended, that the admission arrangements for all community schools, as proposed are accepted and determined for 2022 onwards. The Admission arrangements 2022 are provided in **Appendix2.**

- 9. Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.
 - A Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Barons Court Primary 2022, pages 12-13
 - B Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022, pages 14-19
 - C Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022, pages 20-21
 - D Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Earls Hall Primary 2022, pages 22-24
 - E Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Fairways Primary, pages 25-26
 - F Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Heycroft Primary, pages 27-28
 - G Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Leigh North Street Primary, pages 29-30
 - H: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for West Leigh Infant School, pages 31-32

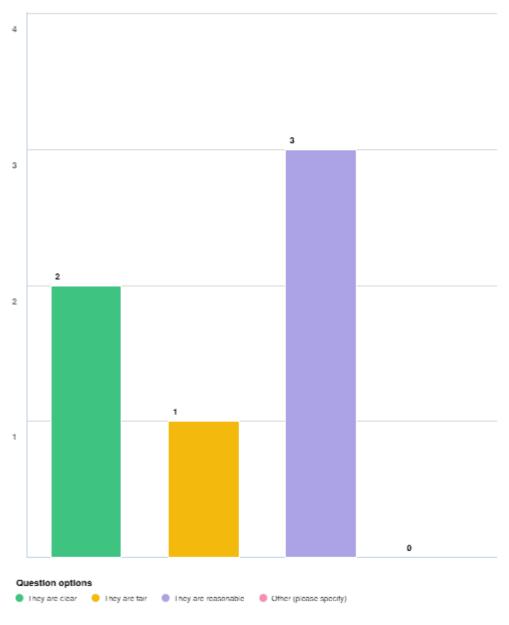
Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

A. Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Barons Court Primary 2022





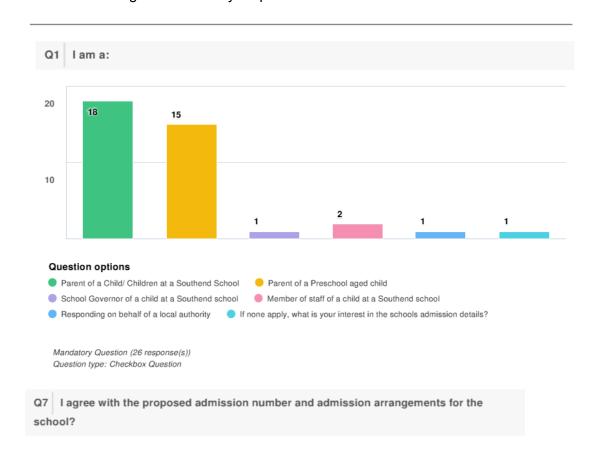
Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:

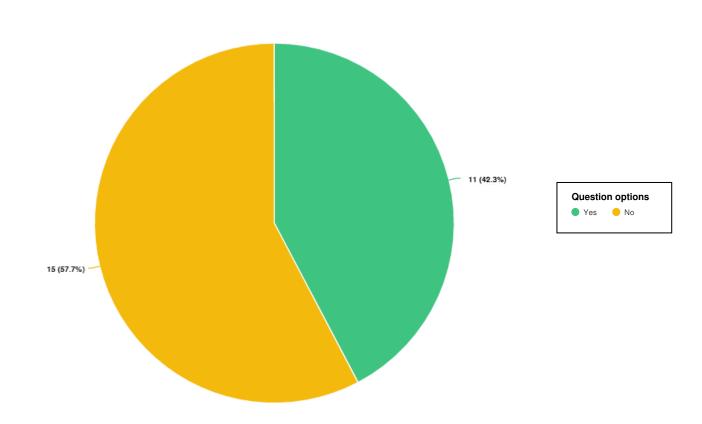


Optional question (3 response(s), 1 skipped) Question type: Checkbox Question

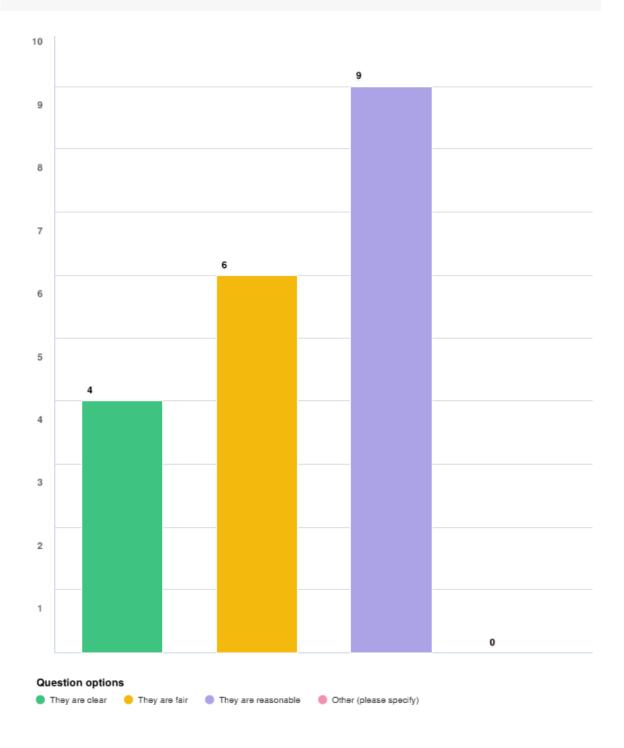
Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

B. Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Chalkwell Hall Infant School 2022

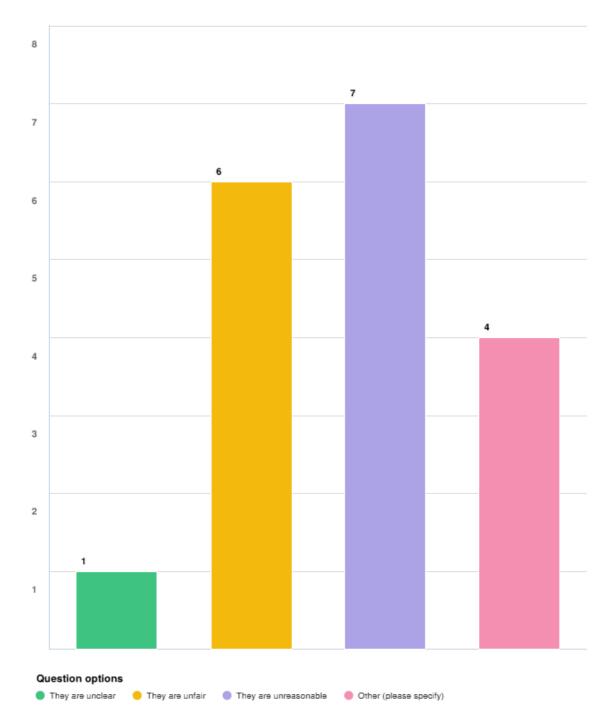




Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



Q9 I disagree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



Respondent quotes below:

Survey Question: How can we make these clearer?

There are no clear statistics in relation to the reduction in birth rates specifically around the Chalkwell Hall catchment and surrounding areas over the last two years, as well as the impact of people moving in and out of the area. Why reduce this when there is potential for the following year to have an increase in birthrates? With other schools in the area being oversubscribed, and some having already reduced their admissions numbers significantly (some twice in the last two years!) is there a potential that the number of school places are not sufficient? In 2016 the PAN was 108, so where is the evidence to show the need to drop so significantly to 90 PAN?

Also, if it is so strongly felt that there is a need to reduce the intake at a reception level, why is this not stipulated that this will be continued throughout the rest of the infant school ie reduce Year 1 and Year 2 intake for 2023?

Survey Question: What aspect did you find unfair?

Less children will get into the school that live close

We have a son already attending Chalkwell Hall and are moving house to an area slightly outside of catchment on the basis that we were confident that our daughter, who we are hoping will also attend Chalkwell in 2022, would be admitted as part of the 120 pupil intake. Decreasing this intake to 90 pupils significantly lowers our daughter's chances of attending the same school as her older brother, which we feel will have a strong, negative effect on both of their experiences at school.

Going on last year's admission numbers, with the proposed reduced admissions (a whole class!!) there would potentially be no out of catchment places available. As parents who have viewed Chalkwell as the preferred school choice for their son this is a huge concern. For us, despite living 5 steps (literally!) out of catchment Chalkwell is closer to us than our catchment school alongside having a better reputation and outcomes.

For the last two years there have been a low number of children accepted 'out of catchment' at Chalkwell Hall Infant School (8 in 2019 and 15 in 2020). In 2019 our eldest child was accepted as a child 'out of catchment'. In reducing the admissions numbers we feel that this will hugely decrease the chance of our second born being accepted as a 'out of catchment Sibling' resulting in a strong possibility of her have to attend an alternative school. One which is not our preferred option (reasons why we find this unfair are stipulated in section 8). Using admission data from 2021; if the admissions number had been reduced in 2020 there would have been 1 child accepted as an 'out of catchment sibling'. In reality a further 14 children were able to join their siblings in the same school. It is unclear whether the 'in catchment' criteria is also being reviewed to ensure that the admissions numbers have been reviewed fairly across ALL criterias.

When you have an older sibling at the school & you have every confidence in that school & love all the teachers/head teacher & then to find out that your 2nd child may not be able to attend that school because we moved house & are now out of catchment, it's devastating! Of course we want our children to attend the same school. The older sibling can be there for the younger one if they are upset & help guide them through the years. And also it's impossible to be in 2 places at once so how can I take both children to 2 different schools at the same time? It's physically not possible! We are so saddened to hear that this could be a possibility. We love chalkwell hall infants & to think of our youngest not being able to attend is honestly heart breaking!

You are reducing the capacity but a whole class (30 children) this means it is harder to get in if you are in catchment but it's your first child to go to school, as I have seen this is number 4 on your admissions list. If you are reducing it by 30 Children it means more children in catchment won't get into this school.

I have not found any further information on why the schools feels necessary to drop the admission number. Catchment is currently number 4 on the criteria requirements for getting Into the school. It concerns me that children within the catchment area may not get a place at there first choice of school due to numbers decreasing.

North Street is the school that Requires Improvement. Any cuts should be directed there.

Survey Question: What aspect did you find unreasonable?

Having children in different schools means that one will always be significantly late every day.

My son attends the infant school and my daughter will be starting infant school in the 2022/2023 academic year. It is our wish that she also attend Chalkwell school, as not only will she join her brother, but many friends from her pre-school and our area. We may be moving slightly out of catchment and where we have always remained confident she will get into Chalkwell based on the sibling link, these changes make this much less likely. I appreciate some children out of catchment attend but the whole reason the choice of school was brought in, was to give parents the chance to choose their school. If the intake is reduced significantly it means our daughter is not likely to get in if we are slightly out of catchment. This would cause havoc with our school run, she would lose the friends she has made along the way, and it would not be a seamless education experience for our family.

No other school in the last few years (documented in the proposal suggestions) in the close vicinity have reduced their numbers for intake. Therefore, this will impact on whether other schools will actually have spaces available if their intake is staying the same. This potentially leaves children without a placement for the start of their eduaction. If you lower intake by a class, the assumption is that this will mean less staff in the school - How will this impact on safeguarding measures?

Sixty children in one base is too many (120 over two bases, one base has a very little space for that amount of children). I think the Local Authority should take into account the size of the outdoor space for 120 children, what space is available during wet play, etc. There are many factors in the day to day of a class room with so many children.

We find it highly unreasonable that the possibility that our second born child will not have the same chance of attending our preferred school that her Brother had only 3 years previous. Whilst we understand that we are out of catchment; with the proposed changes in place the chances of ANY 'out of catchment' child being accepted in Chalkwell as their preferred school are basically eliminated. With the current proposal our child would need to attend an alternative school to her sibling, which should not happen! It would be highly inconvenient with two working parents and family that are not local to support. How are we to ensure that both children attend school on time, and that parents can attend school events which potentially may clash. With the lack of facts in relation to the birth rates; How do we know that these efforts would not be wasted if there is a significant birthrate increase for and 2023 and beyond?

We are strongly of the view that the admission should remain at 120 for the 2022 intake. Announcing this huge change in a time where the nation is struggling financially is shocking. We, like many, moved to the area and bought a house on the basis that the Chalkwell infant school is nearby, with a hope our child would be able to attend in 2022. This news really does not give us much time as local homeowners/parents to reconsider our housing arrangements based on catchment area. This gives a lot of pressure on parents if they need to move catchment, particularly at a time where many incomes are dented due to Covid! Our income as a family has been severely affected and a house move is not a realistic option now, nor before 2022. Giving such short, shocking notice at a vulnerable time for the average people is unfair and extremely unreasonable. Could this not be postponed until families are recovered from the pandemic, things are back to normal financially, and families have finances/option to move house again should they need to? If we cannot go to Chalkwell we at least want to option of all being financially recovered enough to explore other catchment options. Everyone has been through enough, without this on our shoulders now too. Seeing the news of the potential intake reduction has really saddened us as parents. Please do the right thing and POSTPONE until things are back to normal.

This will lead to bigger class sizes in the infants which will impact the quality of teaching and learning. This in turn will cause period of unsettlement in year 3 when 30 children from the

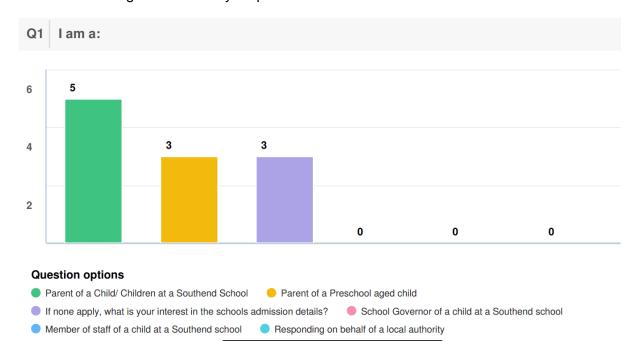
community join the school. With enough unsettlement at the moment this is a added layer of stress that no one needs.

30 places is a large reduction and will inevitably displace some children.

Because reducing numbers will effect the Junior school

Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

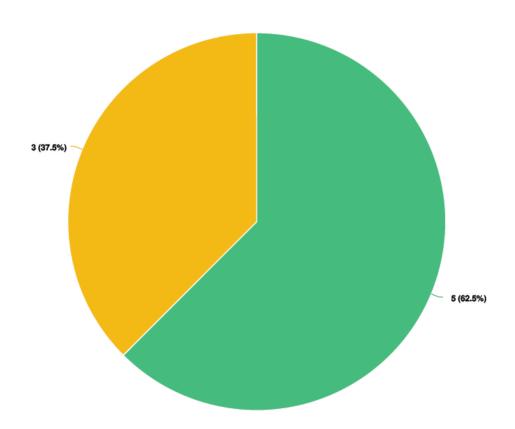
C. Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022



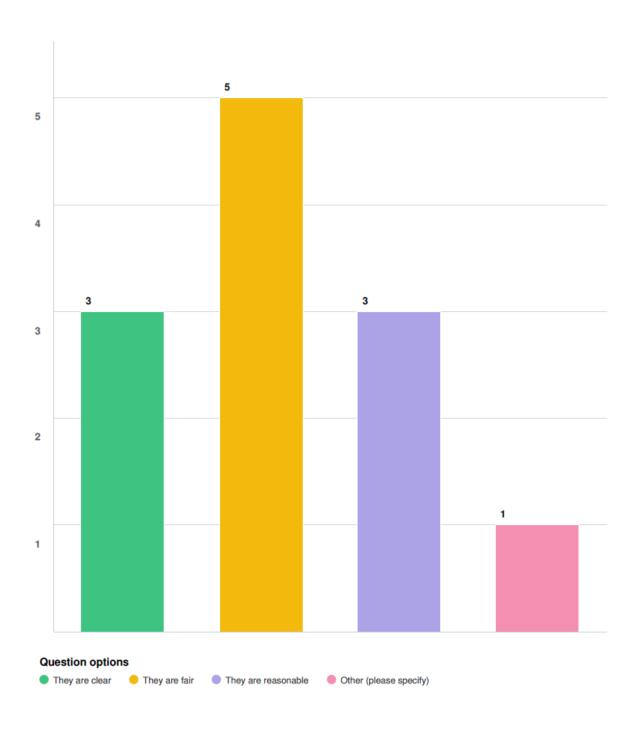
Question options

Yes No

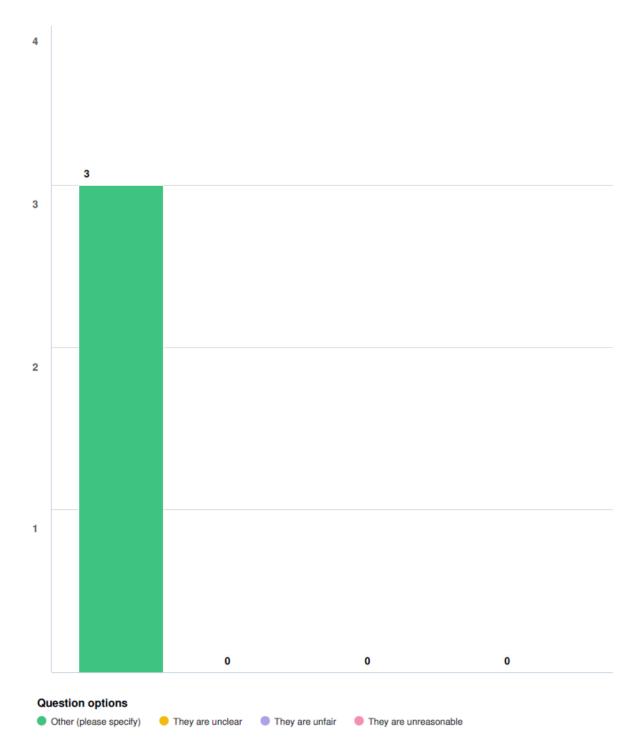
Q7 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school?



Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



Q9 I disagree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:

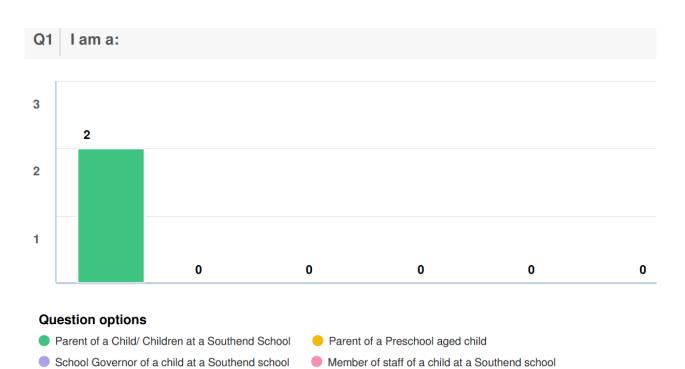


Quotes from the survey, on reason for disagreeing with proposal for Chalkwell Hall Junior School 2022. No changes were proposed for 2022 for the school:

- 10. Other (please specify),I won't be able to get by eldest to school in Chalkwell and then my youngest to a different school. One of them will always be significantly late every day (parent of 2 year old child).
- 11. Other (please specify), Should be in line with the proposed change to Infant School admission limit of 90. If the schools amalgamate surely admission numbers would follow?? (parent of 3 year old child)
- 12. Other (please specify), Huge financial impact (staff Member)

Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

D: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Earls Hall Primary School 2022

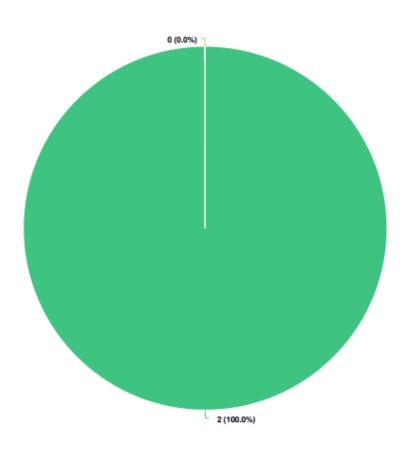


If none apply, what is your interest in the schools admission details?

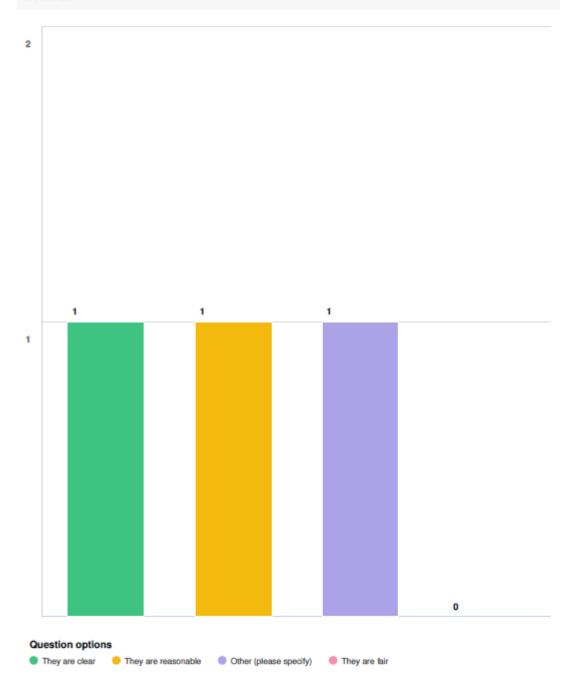
Q7 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school?

Responding on behalf of a local authority



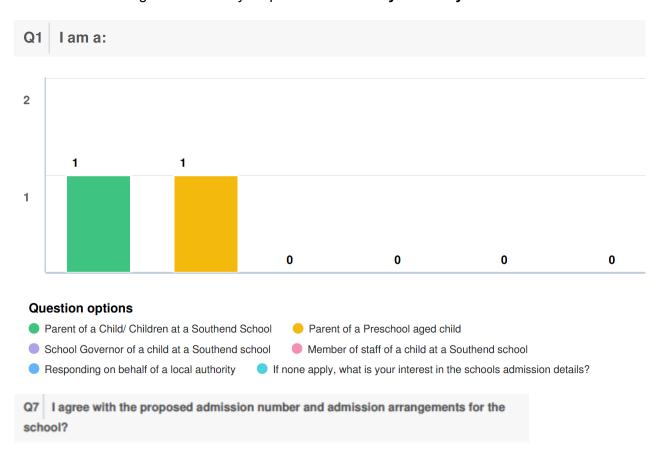


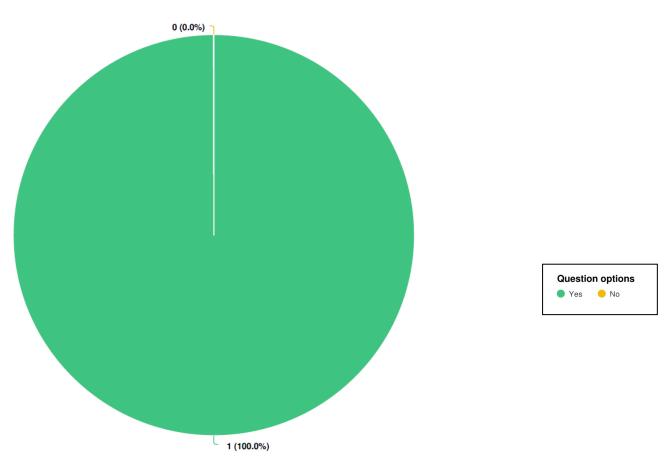
Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



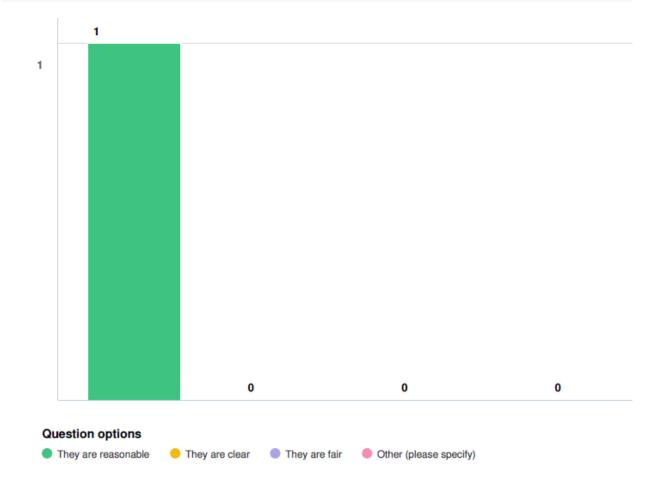
Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

E: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Fairways Primary School 2022



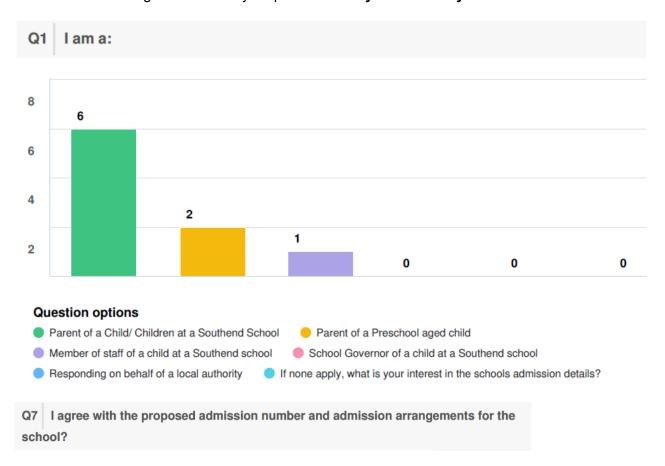


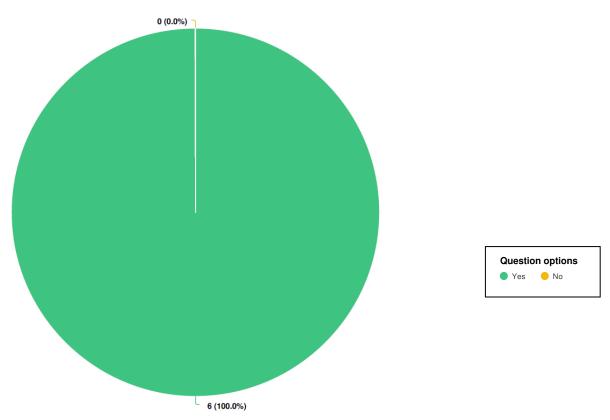
Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



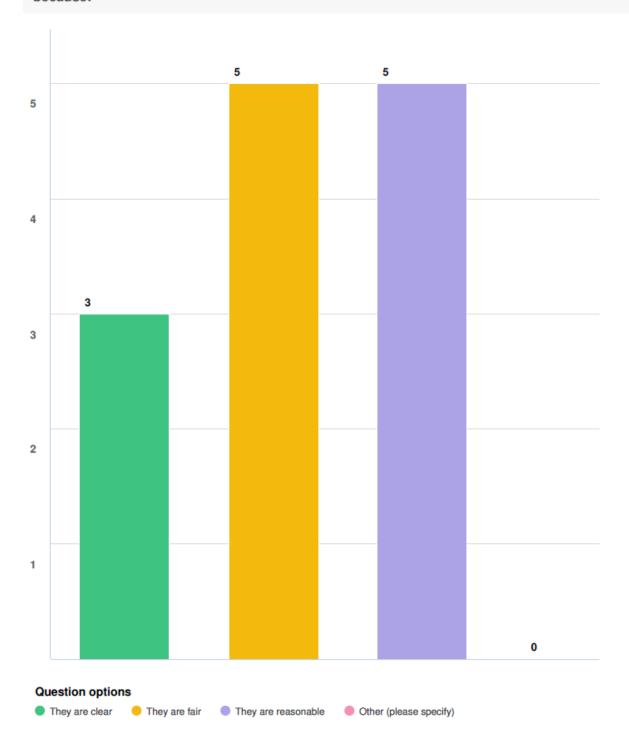
Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

F: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Heycroft Primary School 2022



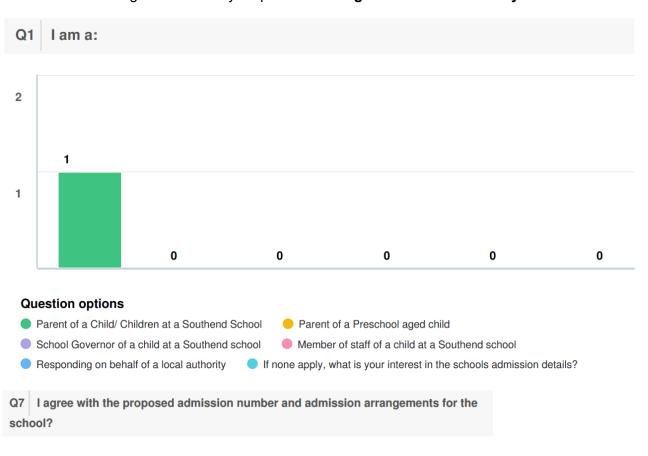


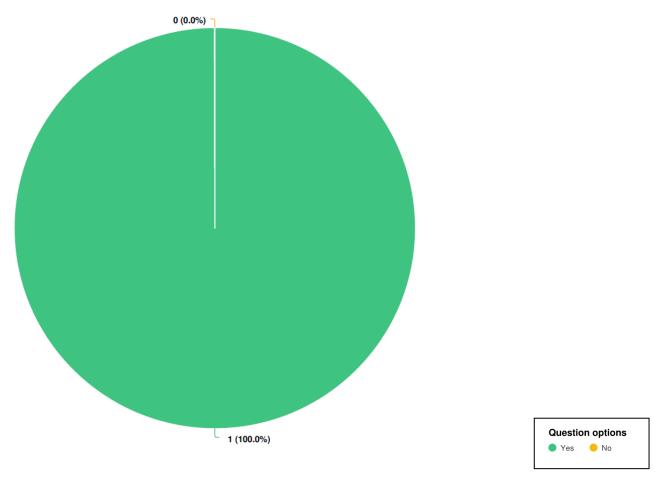
Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:



Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

G: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for Leigh North Street Primary School 2022

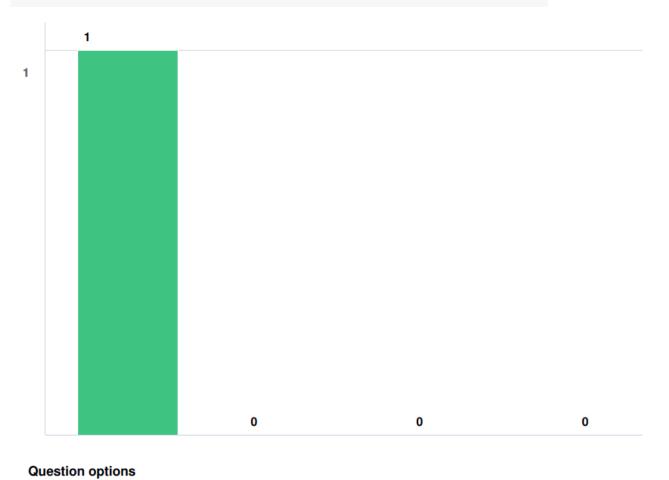




Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:

They are clear

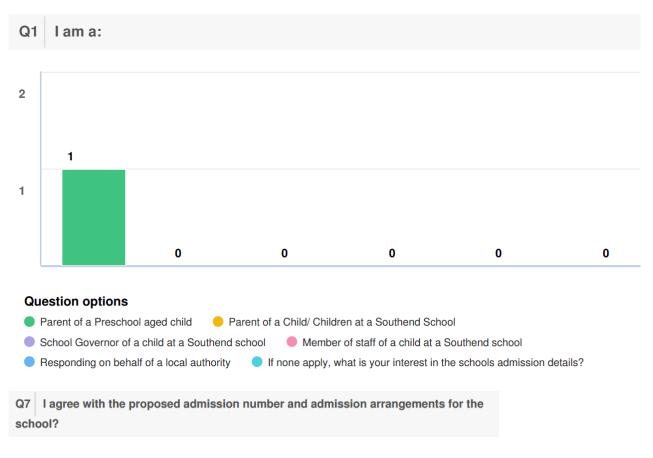
They are fair

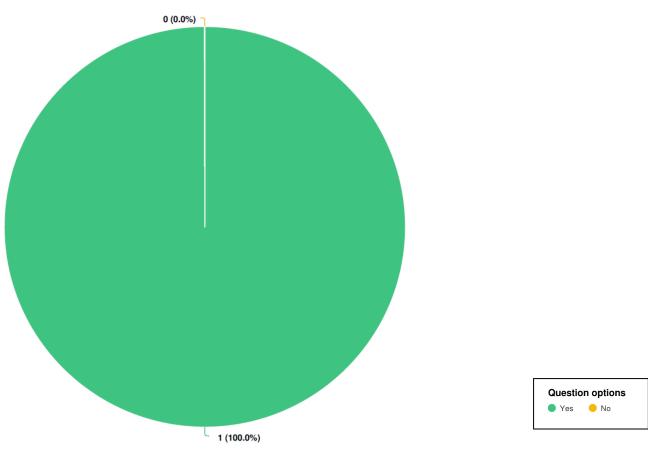


They are reasonable
Other (please specify)

Annex 1: Your Say Southend Survey Response Forms: Consultation on the Admission to Community Schools in Southend for the 2022/23 school year.

H: Admission Arrangements Survey responses for West Leigh Infant School 2022

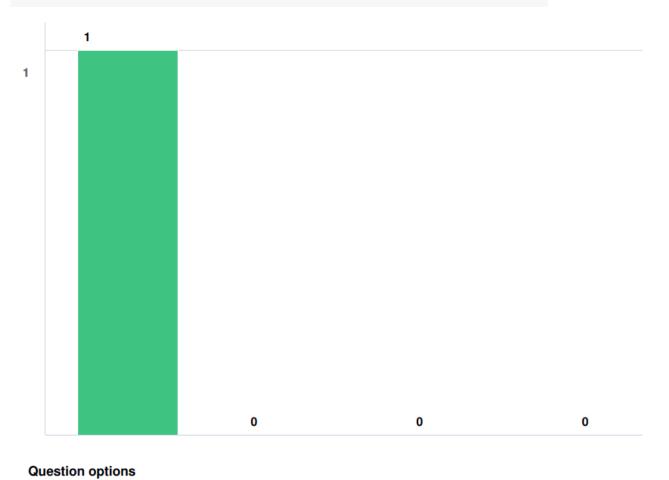




Q8 I agree with the proposed admission number and admission arrangements for the school because:

They are clear

They are fair



They are reasonable
Other (please specify)





Determined Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools for 2022/23

CONTENTS

1.	initioduction 4			
2.	Comm	nunity Schools Published Admissions Number 2022/23	4	
3	Overs	ubscription criteria for community schools	4	
		Barons Court Primary School & Nursery		
	Chalkwell Hall Infant School			
	Chalkwell Hall Junior School			
	Earls Hall Primary School			
		Edwards Hall Primary School		
		Fairways Primary School		
		Heycroft Primary School		
		Leigh North Street Primary School		
		West Leigh Infant School		
4.	Explar	Explanatory notes, including maps, apply to all community schools in		
	South	Southend-on-Sea		
	4.1	Pupils in public care and children that were previously in public care		
	4.2	Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans		
	4.3	Pupils eligible for pupil premium (West Leigh Infant and		
		West Leigh Junior Schools)		
	4.4	Pupils of staff of the school		
	4.5	Distance		
	4.5.1	Tie-Break		
	4.6	Distance where parents have separated		
	4.7	Infant to partner Junior admissions		
	4.8	Siblings		
	4.9	Waiting lists		
	4.10	Over and Under age applications		
	4.11	Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school		
	4.13	In-year admissions		
	4.14	Home Address		
5.	Catch	ment Map	13	

1. Introduction

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is the admission authority for all community schools in the borough. This document sets out the formal policies for all borough community schools. The arrangements below, including the explanatory notes, are in line with government legislation and guidance (School Admissions Code and School Admissions Appeals Code) and designed to ensure there is a fair, clear and reasonable admissions procedure for all applicants, and to help guide parents through the application process.

These arrangements apply to all admissions, including in-year admissions for the admission year 2022.

2. Community Schools Published Admissions Number 2022/23

Community Primary Schools	Proposed admission limit for 2022/23
Barons Court Primary School & Nursery	35
Chalkwell Hall Infant School	90
Chalkwell Hall Junior School	120
Earls Hall Primary School	90
Edwards Hall Primary School	60
Fairways Primary School	60
Heycroft Primary School	60
Leigh North Street Primary School	90
West Leigh Infant School	120

3. Oversubscription criteria for community schools

Criteria are set for each individual school below and apply to all year groups for the year 2022. Explanatory notes, below, apply to all community school arrangements. The published admission limit for community schools is provided above.

If at the closing date for applications, there are not enough places for all those who have expressed a wish to have their child admitted to a community school; places will be allocated using the admission criteria as below. This will not apply to children with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care plans as the plan/statement names the school and therefore the child must be admitted to the named school. The admission criteria are listed below by school with explanatory notes following:

Barons Court Primary School & Nursery

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 4. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 5. Pupils of staff at the school
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Chalkwell Hall Infant School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area

(for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Chalkwell Hall Junior School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils attending year 2 at Chalkwell Hall Infant School
- 3. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Infant School
- 4. Pupils of staff at the school
- 5. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or Chalkwell Hall Junior School
- 7. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Earls Hall Primary School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Edwards Hall Primary School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 4. Pupils of staff at the school
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Fairways Primary School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 4. Pupils of staff at the school
- Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Heycroft Primary School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area and have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 4. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 5. Pupils of staff at the school
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

Leigh North Street Primary School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school
- 6. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

West Leigh Infant School

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children
- 2. Pupils who live in the catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or West Leigh Junior School
- 3. Pupils of staff at the school
- 4. Pupils eligible for pupil premium who live in the catchment area
- 5. Pupils who live in the catchment area
- 6. Pupils who live outside that catchment area who have a sibling attending the school or attending West Leigh Junior School
- 7. Pupils who live outside the catchment area (for all criteria, catchment area map and additional information please see explanatory notes and maps below)

4. Explanatory notes, including maps, apply to all community schools in Southend-on-Sea

Parents must make a separate application for transfer from nursery to primary school and from infant to junior school. Parents must complete a Southend-on-Sea Common Application Form (CAF) for applications to year reception and year 3 between 14th September and 15th January.

4.1 Pupils in public care and children that were previously in public care

Any reference to looked after children refers to children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to the school'. Any reference to previously looked after children means children who were adopted (or subject to residence or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after. Looked after and previously looked after children are given the highest priority for each relevant age group and in all ranking.

The admission into school for children previously in care but outside of England will be ranked in the same category as LAC/PLAC for all schools. (ref to letter dated 4th Dec 2017, Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP). Letter on SBC website

4.2 Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEND) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school must be admitted. Children with a statement or a plan will follow a different process for admission. Further information can be found on

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Local Offer

4.3 Pupils eligible for pupil premium – Early years pupil premium (West Leigh Infant School)

Nurseries and schools are given a pupil premium/early years pupil premium for children who have qualified for free school meals at any point in the past six years. Parents will need to tick on the application form and/or supplementary information form or notify the Local Authority in writing if they are

eligible or registered for pupil premium. Any disclosure for pupil premium will be used only to rank applications against the admission criteria and will not be held for any other purpose.

Parents can check their eligibility by filling out the <u>LA online form</u>

Parents that are in receipt of one of the following may be eligible for pupil premium:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (if they not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income under £16.190)
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' the payment someone may get for another 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit

4.4 Pupils of staff of the school

Children will be ranked in this admission criteria if they are children of staff at the school in either or both of the following circumstances: -

- where the member of teaching staff (including, staff that are at the school in positions, such as: Senior Leadership Team/level, Head of Year Group, Head of Department, Office Manager or SENCo) that has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable specialist skill shortage.

4.5 Distance

In the case of over subscription in any one category "straight line" distance will be used to measure the distance between the pupil's home and the nearest pupil entrance to the school. Distances will be measured using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system. The pupils living closest will be given priority. If the pupil's home is a flat the distance will be measured to the main external entrance to the building.

4.5.1 Tie-Break

To be used to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated: If the same distance is shared by more than one pupil, and only one place is available, the place will be awarded on the basis of a computerised random allocation process (supervised by someone independent of the Council / governing body). In the case where the last child offered is a twin or sibling of a multiple birth sibling both/all children will be offered and the sibling will be an 'excepted pupil'.

4.6 Distance where parents have separated

The distance is measured the same for all applications. Only one application can be received. The LA should not have the details of both parents or know of the marital status of the parents. If more than one application is received from parents, applications will be placed on hold until such time that:

- an application is made that both parents agree to; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents; or
- a court order is obtained confirming which parent's application takes precedence'.

Details on address checks and which address is relevant are also provided in the admission booklet. In all cases the child's normal place of residence is applicable for the purposes of the application.

4.7 Infant to partner Junior admissions

Parents must apply in the main round to transfer from an infant school to the junior school. Parents must use the Council common application form (CAF) and submit the application between 14th September to 15th January. The Council offers a full coordinated process for admission to year 3.

4.8 Siblings

Siblings are considered to be a brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, step-brother or step-sister, adopted brother or sister, living at the same address, who attends the school at the time of application with a reasonable expectation that he or she will still be attending at the time of the proposed admission.

In the exceptional situation where one twin or one or two triplets are refused a place, in order to keep family members together and in line with the School Admissions Code 2014, the additional pupil(s) will be admitted even if this results in the admission limit for the year group being exceeded.

4.9 Waiting lists

Children's names will automatically be on the waiting list for schools that are higher on the rank list and for which they do not receive an offer (for years Reception and year 3).

Parents can appeal against the refusal for schools for which they did not receive an offer. Appeals must be lodged within 20 school days of the date of the letter. Parents can access the information on appeals and submit an appeal online on the council's web site www.southend.gov.uk/admissions or email admissions@southend.gov.uk to request an appeal application form. All appeals are considered by an Independent Appeals Panel.

Waiting lists for all year groups for community schools are closed at the end of each school year.

4.10 Over and Under Age Applications

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group—to reception rather than year 1.

Applications for over or under age applications in-year are handled in line with the School Admissions Code 2014, 2.17 (a & b).

Such requests for Schools in Southend-on-Sea are directly to the school and the school advises the LA of their decision. Requests for year 6 must have been submitted by the parent and considered by the admission authority before the closing date for applications to year 7, i.e. 31st October of any given year. Admission authorities must make decisions based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision. (2.17a School Admissions Code 2014)

In circumstances where a child transfers from another school already 'outside of normal age group', community schools and the LA will support any over or under age application where the above has been met and the LA is satisfied that the child should continue to be educated out of normal age group.

Parent can not apply for admission to a different year group on account the year group has a vacancy and the normal age group does not have a vacancy

4.11 Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school.

Most children start school on a full time basis, however parents can request that their child attends part time until reaching compulsory school age (the term after their 5th birthday). Once parents receive an offer and accept a place for their child during the normal admission round, they can ask to defer the admission until later in the same academic year. Schools must accommodate these requests where it appears to be in the best interest of the child. Parents wishing their child to attend part time must discuss this with the headteacher of their allocated school. The approved deferment means that the place is held open and is not offered to another child and the parents must take up the place full time by the start of the Summer Term in April. Part-time agreements should include core teaching.

In the case of children born prematurely or the late summer months parents may request admission outside the normal age group so that their child starts school the September after their 5th birthday. Such requests for Schools in Southend-on-Sea are directly to the school and the school advises the parent of their decision. Parents must notify the LA and provide any letters relating to this matter.

Parents submitting a request for admission outside the normal age group must also complete the Single application Form during the main admission round, 14th September – 15th January for the 'usual age group for their child'.

4.12 In-year admissions

As permitted by law parents can make an application at any time to any school outside the normal admissions. Parents can submit applications for community schools to the Admissions Team at the Council. Where places are available at preferred schools places will be offered. Where there are no places applicants will be refused and can join the waiting list for the schools. Waiting lists are ranked according to the admission criteria for schools. In some cases where a child is already on a school roll locally the place may be offered for the start of the next term.

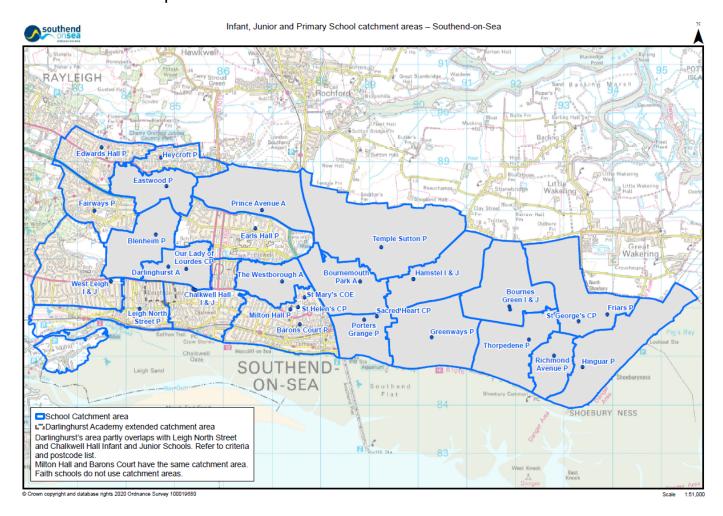
The admission arrangements will apply to applications for said schools made outside the normal rounds to admissions (referred to as in-year admissions). Parents can apply at any time for the current school year directly to the Admissions Team at Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. Parents can apply for the next school year anytime in the summer term, i.e. after Easter of any given year. Applications in the current school year are processed within a maximum of 10 school days, applications for the next school year are processed in the late summer months and outcomes are communicated in the early Autumn term at the latest. Pupils that are refused a place at a school that is higher than the offered place, are therefore added to the waiting list and remain on the waiting list until 30 June of any given year. Waiting lists close on 30 June of any given year and new waiting lists are created for the next academic year (from the applications for the next school year). Waiting lists from previous years are not rolled over to the next. Parents wishing to continue on a waiting list for a following year are required to make a fresh application.

4.13 Home Address

For all applications, the address used will be the child's habitual normal place of residence as at the closing date for applications, i.e., 15th January (reception and year 3). Changes to address will be updated after all on time applications have been processed.

The relevant Coordinated Admissions Scheme and Primary Admission booklets should be read in conjunction to the Determined Admission Arrangements for all schools in the Borough of Southend-on-Sea. The Primary Admission booklet contains further details, provides more information and is written to support parents through the rounds.

5. Catchment Map



For office use – statutory process: The School Admissions Code 2014		
Key Dates	Task	
15 September 2020	Cabinet draft consultation proposals,	
19Sept – 31October 2020	PAN consultation with Governing Bodies for community	
	schools	
2 Nov – 11 Dec 2020	Public Consultation	
14 January 2021	Final Determined Admission Arrangements by Cabinet	
	(post PAN consultation)	
15 March 2021	Publication of Composite Prospectus of Determined	
	Arrangements	
16 March – 15 May 2021	Window for Objections to the School Adjudicator.	
12 September 2021	Final arrangements for 2022 are published in the Primary	
	booklet	







Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme 2022/23

Publication Due: 1 January 2021

Approval Route	Key Dates
Cabinet:	September 2020
Consultation with schools:	1 October 2020 -11 November 2020
Minor admin corrections	1 December 2020
Approved by Executive Directors	December 2020
delegated authority:	
Published: Council Web site	20 December 2020 (or before 1 Jan 2021)

1Table _Office Use table with key dates for the process

1. Introduction

The <u>School Admissions Code 2014</u> requires a single arrangement for co-ordinating all applications to state schools from parents in their area. In the Borough of Southend-on-Sea, the scheme applies to admissions into reception, year 3 and year 7. This document must be published by 1 January of each year.

2. Aims and scope of the scheme

- 2.1 To assist the offer of one school place to each pupil.
- 2.1 To simplify the admission process for parents.
- 2.2 To co-ordinate with other local authorities.

3. Key Aspects of the Scheme

- 3.1 The Council processes applications for all schools in the area.
- 3.2 The Council will send offers of places to Southend residents even if the school is in another local authority.
- 3.3 Only the Council will know the ranking of the parental preferences. Parental preferences may be shared with Admission Authorities for the purposes of admission appeals. This will be after offer day.
- 3.4 The Council will provide each school with a breakdown of preferences for their own school as on offer day.
- 3.5 In all cases admission authority schools are responsible for applying the admission criteria. Schools are responsible for appeals unless they agree with the Council otherwise.
- 3.6 Admission authorities must confirm by 1 February of each year if they wish for the Council to run appeals.

4. General details of the scheme

- 4.1 Primary and secondary admissions up to the offer date.
- 4.1.1 Parents will complete a Common Application Form on which they will be able to put forward
 - 3 primary schools in order of priority; or
 - 5 secondary schools in order of priority
- 4.1.2 Parents will be advised to apply on-line for a school place at <u>Southend Admissions</u> but will be able to complete a paper form if they wish.
- 4.1.3 All application forms must be sent to the Council.
- 4.1.4 Lists of pupils that have not applied will be made available. School or early years providers that do not share data with the Council will need to provide the admissions team with a list of pupils. The team can then check on who has not yet applied.

- 4.1.5 Parents can add schools in another local authority on their application form. The offer of a place at a school in another local authority will be made by the Council. Similarly, other local authorities will offer places to their residents on behalf of Southend schools.
- 4.1.6 The Council considers all preferences against the admissions criteria for each school.
- 4.1.7 Supplementary Information Forms must be sent back to the school. These forms are not application forms and parents must complete the application form.
- 4.1.8 The Primary and Secondary Booklets are available electronically and can be provided in print on request from parents.
- 4.1.9 There is a national closing date for application forms. The deadline for receipt of any Supplementary Information Forms is set by individual schools and the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex. Supplementary Information Forms submitted after the closing date may not be used until after national offer day.
- 4.1.10 Parents must ensure these additional forms are provided in good time to the school or the consortium.
- 4.1.11 Initial lists will be shared with voluntary aided schools. These can be used to check application forms against Supplementary Information Forms submitted.
- 4.1.12 On-line applications will be imported to the admissions database. The Council will input into the admissions database all information shown on any paper application forms, including any reasons for the application, and will provide details to all schools.
- 4.1.13 The Council will share files with other local authorities as required.
- 4.1.14 Schools and the Consortium, are required to rank in order of the schools' criteria all pupils who have applied to their school. Ranked lists must be returned to the Council by the agreed date. Applications that do not have a Supplementary Information Form must still be ranked.
- 4.1.15 Pupils with plans will be accommodated if the named school is in the final Education, Health and Care Plan by 8 February for Secondary and 18 March for Primary (or next working day) of any given year.
- 4.1.16 Certain pupils may need to be admitted over number and the Council will manage the school back to the admission limit until the last week of August. The Council will match the parental preferences against the rank order lists returned by Southend schools.
- 4.1.17 Ranked lists for own admission authority schools remain the responsibility of the admission authority.
- 4.1.18 The scheme works with the order in which parents select preferences. The order of preferences should reflect the order parents wish to be offered a place. If for example parents are unsuccessful in gaining a place for the first preference school, they are not disadvantaged in obtaining their second preference or their third preference etc. The process will continue until all preferences are used.
- 4.1.19 It is a parental responsibility to inform the Council of a sibling at the school and any change of circumstance during the round, such as change of address (1 Sept to 22 Aug).

- 4.1.20 The Council will provide any other local authorities with details of any pupils resident in their area who can be offered places at schools in the Borough (and vice versa).
- 4.1.21 Where possible the Council will share allocation lists to schools and the Consortium as appropriate before offer day. This will be dependent on the process being complete before offer day. Schools will be notified if it is not possible to send the lists to them. When lists can be sent, schools will be reminded of section 2.10 of The School Admissions Code 2014. School must not contact parents about the outcome of the applications until after these offers have been received.
- 4.1.22 The Council will send an offer of a single place to pupils applying for a school places on the offer day.
- 4.1.23 Parents who completed an online application will be advised of the outcome of their application by email on offer day, unless they indicate on the application form that they would prefer a response by letter.
- 4.1.24 Parents who completed a paper application form will be advised of the outcome of their application by 1st class post on offer day.
- 4.1.25 Offers are automatically recorded as 'accepted'.
- 4.1.26 Refusals must be received in writing from the applicant to the Council, refusals sent to the schools cannot be actioned by the Council until confirmation is received by the parent or the home LA if an out of area pupil.
- 4.1.27 the Council will not log a refusal unless the parents can provide details of the educational arrangements, they are putting in place for their child.
- 4.1.28 Schools must refer children that do not take up places, and that have not responded to further tracing, in early September as children missing education.
- 4.1.29 The Council will not accept refusal of places without information. The Council will refer pupils as appropriate, to the elective home education team where parents have confirmed they will be electively home educating. This will only be where the parent has confirmed this in writing.
- 4.1.26 Where no offer is possible the Council will offer a place at a school in the Borough nearest to the home address with vacancies at that time. Such offers will not be made to selective or faith schools (unless arranged with the school/s).
- 4.1.26 Offer letters for the main round to years R, 3 and 7 will remind parents not to call schools on offer day and to call the Council.
- 4.1.27 Only the Council will inform parents of offers and waiting list positions to parents until the last week in August. As lists are updated schools might not have accurate information.
- 4.1.28 Schools that send welcome letters/packs will only do so four weeks after offer day to provide parents with the opportunity to consider offer and allow for any post offer day activity at the Council.
- 4.1.29 Any places will be reallocated if parents advise the Council that they no longer require a place. The Council will ensure child is tracked and monitor parents that choose to home educate.

- 4.2 Summer Born Children
- 4.2.1 In the case of children born prematurely or late summer months parents may ask for admission to reception a year later. The child would be aged 5.
- 4.2.2 The decision to admit outside of a child's normal age group is made based on the circumstances of each case. Parents must submit requests directly to schools and schools must decide.
- 4.2.3 Parents submitting a request for admission outside the normal age group must also complete the Common Application Form. Parents can decide which admission year they wish to apply for once they have an outcome from schools. Admission cannot be delayed further than the term after the child turns 5. Parents that apply a year later will need to use a paper application form.

4.3 Co-ordination of pupil admissions to Year 3 of Southend junior schools 2022/23

- 4.3.1 Applications will not be necessary for children moving from Year 2 to Year 3 in their existing primary school. However, parents of children in Year 2 of an infant school must apply for transfer to year3.
- 4.3.2 The closing date for completing a common application form for a Year 3 place is 15 January 2022
- 4.3.3 The Council will write to all year 2 parents advising 4.3.1.
- 4.3.4 The Council will work with infant schools in the area to assist the transfer of pupils to the Junior school.
- 4.35 the Council will provide an initial list of application received via common applications forms to all junior schools by 26 January 2022
- 4.3.6 the Council will provide a list of all applications received via common application forms to all junior schools by 9 February 2022
- 4.3.7 Schools must rank applications according to their admission criteria and return the ranked list to the Council on the agreed dates. 26 February 2022.
- 4.3.8 Ranking must only be based on the highest qualifying admission criterion, and not all criteria as this skews the ranking.
- 4.3.9 For all applications received by the closing date, from parents of Year 2 children (including children attending year 2 in an infant school), the Council will inform parents of the outcome of that application on 16 April.
- 4.3.10 There is full co-ordination for admission to year 3 as a normal admission round. This is because we have infant and junior schools in the borough and additional places at Bournes Green Junior School and West Leigh Junior School.
- 4.3.10 Applications submitted for children that are in the primary school that wish to remain in the same school will be withdrawn and parents will be advised that no application is required.
- 4.4 Co-ordinated arrangements between the offer date and start of autumn term.

- 4.4.1 The council will continue to coordinate admissions until the last week in August of each year.
- 4.4.2. Late and new preferences/applications will be slotted into the waiting lists by the Council in line with school admission arrangements. This will include using new address details were relevant and reranking applications to appropriate positions.
- 4.4.2 Where parents have refused the offer of the place then the vacant place will be offered in strict order of the waiting list until the place is accepted. This does not apply to Eastwood Academy, who advise on place to be offered due to their admission arrangements.
- 4.4.3 The offer of school places as they become available will continue to be made by the Council.
- 4.4.4 Once the final list is sent to schools on 22 August the coordination procedures for reception year, year 3 and year 7 will close. The Council will continue to administer waiting lists and in-year admissions for all Community and identified Own Admission Authority schools as agreed. Admission Authorities wishing to manage their own waiting lists will do so from 22 August onwards. Waiting lists must be held at least until the end of the first term (December 2022).

4.5 Year 7 - Under and over age applicants

- 4.5.1 Parents must direct their request for under or over age matters directly to the school.
- 4.5.3 Any decisions made must be well documented and meet the requirements of the <u>School Admission Code</u> in that they are in the 'best interest of the child'.

Once a child, has started the year and completed at least one term as an out of normal age group, they cannot apply for a second opportunity to year7. Admission mid-year to move from year 7 back to year 6 is not usually in the best interest of a child.

- 4.5.4 Schools must keep a record of the decision to admit out of normal age group and be able to provide reasons for decision to the Council.
- 4.6 Applications from children whose parents are living abroad
- 4.6.1 Parents who are living abroad and who wish their child to apply for a Southend school have no home authority. They can apply through what is a proxy home authority (i.e., the Council area in which they intend to buy a house or settle the child with relatives). However, although they may apply in this way, no place will be offered until they can provide clear evidence of residency.
- 4.7 New applications, late applications, changes of preferences and additional applications

4.7.1 New applications:

Applications from parents moving into the area, who in the view of the Council could not have made an application by the closing date, will be slotted into the system when received. These applications might only be processed after all on time offers are made. These will be regarded as new applications and will only apply for parents that could not have applied on time such as moving into the country. Exceptional circumstances will be considered at the discretion of the Council.

4.7.2 Change of address

Addresses for schools in Southend-on-Sea are as per the child's normal place of residence on 30 November, for Secondary Admissions. And for Infant, Junior and Primary Admissions as at the closing date, 15January. Any change of addresses that could not have reasonably been made by these dates would be at the discretion of the Council. Any addresses after these dates are updated after offer day for

the transfer group (i.e., 1 March or 16 April) and the applications re-ranked accordingly. Parents that could not have applied by the deadlines for the main rounds will be considered under 4.7.1.

4.7.3 Late applications

Applications received after the closing date, will be regarded as late. They will not be considered until all "on time" applications have been considered. The Council will be the final arbiter, under the coordinated scheme, as to whether an application is late or not.

4.7.4 Changes in preference

Changes in the order of preferences already expressed will not be accepted after the closing dates unless, the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional and the changes can be accommodated. Change of preference for schools under another local authority will be consulted on with the appropriate local authority. Changes received after the closing date will be considered after the appropriate national offer date.

4.7.5 Additional preferences

Any additional preferences received after the closing dates will be considered after the offer date.

- 4.7.6 Checks will be made with other departments in the Council and, where it is suspected that the family live outside Southend, contact will be made with the relevant Council. Where there is reasonable doubt as to the validity of a home address, the Council reserves the right to take additional checking.
- 4.7.7 Changes of address between offer day and the last week of August will be checked by the Council. Parents will need to provide proof of the home address in the form of; a house purchase; exchange of contracts, or a long-term letting agreement. In all situations, the Council must be satisfied that it is the child's normal/habitual place of residence.
- 4.7.8 Places can be withdrawn up to the end of December / or first term in the situation where an offer is made in error or the application has been found to be fraudulent. Admission Authorities must inform the Council of any places withdrawn for the coordinated round up to December of each year and vice versa.
- 4.7.9 Schools must inform the Council of address, sibling, or any other differences in ranking lists.
- 4.7.10 Unsubmitted forms will not be processed.

4.8 Supplementary Information Forms

4.8.1 In order that they may seek further information to apply their admission criteria, the following schools require parents to complete a Supplementary Information form.

Primary School	Details
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary	For all applications
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary	For all applications
St George's Catholic Primary	For all applications
St Helen's Catholic Primary	For all applications
St Mary's, Prittlewell, C of E Primary	For all applications

Secondary School	Details
St Bernard's High School	For all applications
St Thomas More High School	For all applications

Shoeburyness High School	For year 7 applications for selective places
Southend High School for Boys	For all applications for selective places
Southend High School for Girls	For all applications for selective places
The Eastwood School	For year 7 applications for Sport / Performing Arts places
Westcliff High School for Boys	For all applications for selective places
Westcliff High School for Girls	For all applications for selective places

4.9 Waiting lists

- 4.9.1 On offer day the Council will have a waiting list for each Southend school. In most cases the Council will be able to rank pupils that apply late, for example using distance. Depending on the admission criteria a new application would be added into the waiting list.
- 4.9.2 The Council will maintain the waiting list as ranked by schools. Where any new pupil, such as a late application, is added to the waiting list the Council should be advised within 10 working days of where such pupils fit in relation to other pupils on the waiting list.
- 4.9.3 Where a vacancy does arise the place will be offered by the Council to the pupil at top of the waiting list.
- 4.9.4 A parent of a child at the top of the waiting list offered a place must confirm, within 10 working days, whether they wish to accept the place. During the 10 days the child would hold two offers.
- 4.9.5 The Council will keep waiting lists for all community schools in the Borough for the full school year. Waiting lists will be maintained strictly in accordance with the admission criteria of the school concerned.
- 4.9.6 The Council will remove pupils from the waiting list who are offered and accept a place at a school that is a higher preference.
- 4.9.7 The Council will rank pupils with address changes, late and new applications after all on time offers are made or on the waiting list as appropriate.
- 4.9.8 All admission authorities must specify, in their arrangements, the period a child remains on a waiting list for each school year.

4.10 Appeals

- 4.10.1 Parents have the right of appeal against a refusal.
- 4.10.2 Own admission authorities must inform the Council no later than 1 October before a main round if it requires the Council to present their appeals. The Council might not be able to support schools with appeals without agreement. The Council does not present appeals for in year processes where it is not the administrator
- 4.10.6 Schools will send lists of submitted appeals to the Council. The Council will record the appeal against the admission record and provide the school with all relevant documentation.
- 4.10.7 School must inform the Council within 5 school days of the outcome of any appeal.

- 4.10.8 Having received notification from the school, parents will have 5 school days to confirm in writing to the Council which place they wish to accept following the outcome of any appeals. Once a place is released that place will be reallocated.
- 4.10.9 Admission authorities must comply with the <u>School Admissions Appeals Code 2012</u> and must record all appeals and provide the data to the Council after all appeals are heard.

5. Annual Review of the Scheme

- 5.1 Each year all local authorities must formulate and publish on their website a scheme by 1 January in the relevant determination year to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their area.
- 5.2 Local Authorities must consult admission authorities for schools affected by the scheme and other Local Authorities every 7 years as a minimum.
- 5.3 A local authority must inform the Secretary of State whether they have agreed a scheme by 15 April. If this is not achieved the Secretary of State may impose a scheme.

6. List of schools

The list of schools that are included in this agreement

Secondary Schools

School Name	Number
Belfairs Academy	5434
Cecil Jones Academy	4001
Chase High School	4000
Shoeburyness High School	4034
Southchurch High School	4002
Southend High School for Boys	5446
Southend High School for Girls	5428
St Bernard's High School	5465
St Thomas More High School	5447
The Eastwood Academy	5414
Westcliff High School for Boys	5401
Westcliff High School for Girls	5423

Table 2 Secondary School

Primary Schools

School Name	Number
Barons Court Primary School & Nursery	2124
Blenheim Primary School	2387
Bournemouth Park Academy	3822
Bournes Green Infant School	2128
Bournes Green Junior School	2123
Chalkwell Hall Infant School	2022
Chalkwell Hall Junior School	2019

Darlinghurst Academy	2127
Earls Hall Primary School	2023
Eastwood Primary School	3825
Edwards Hall Primary School	3826
Fairways Primary School	2407
Friars Primary School & Nursery	3824
Greenways Primary School	2104
Hamstel Infant School	2093
Hamstel Junior School (partner school)	2092
Heycroft Primary School	2126
Hinguar Community Primary School	2094
Leigh North Street Primary School	2096
Milton Hall Primary School and Nursery	5273
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School	2002
Porters Grange Primary School & Nursery	2001
Prince Avenue Academy	2000
Richmond Avenue Primary School	3823
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School & Nursery	3326
St George's Catholic Primary School	3329
St Helen's Catholic Primary School	3327
St Mary's Prittlewell Church of England Primary School	3325
Temple Sutton Primary School	2132
Thorpedene Primary School	5225
Westborough Academy	2004
West Leigh Infant School	2109
West Leigh Junior School (partner school)	2108

Table 3 Primary Schools

9. Key dates – Infant, Primary and Junior admissions September 2022

1st January 2021	Date for formulation of scheme
1 September to	Publish Admissions Information Advertisements, fliers, and letters to registered
11 September 2021	parents of early years children
14 September 2021	Admission round opens for applications
Early October 2021	Distribution of year 3 "letter/fliers" to year 2 pupils
Mid December 2021	Preliminary lists to faith schools for Supplementary Information Form follow up
14 September – 22	the Council admissions team verifying applications
January	
15 January 2022	Closing date for admission applications
22 January 2022	Follow up list to faith schools for Supplementary Information Form follow up
31 January 2022	Initial list of preferences sent to admissions authorities and other local
	authorities for ranking. Initial list is a pre-ranked list.
9 February 2022	Final list of preferences sent to admissions authorities
15 February 2022	SEN pupils will be accommodated if the named school is identified in the
	finalised Education, Health and Care Plan
26 February 2022	Closing date for schools to return ranked preferences
End February 2022	Closing date for on-time summer born requests
16 April 2022	Where possible, final offer lists and offer data will be sent to schools under
	embargo.
16 April 2022	National Offer Day.
30 April 2022	Closing date for responses to offers (refusals)
20 May 2022	Closing date for appeal forms (reference to the code 2.3 of School Admissions
	Appeals Code 2012 – must be submitted up to 20 days for one time appeals
	after offer day – date is in outcome letter to applicants)
16 July 2022	All on-time appeals completed
22 August 2022	The administration of waiting lists for years R and 3 and all in-year admissions
	handed over to academy, voluntary aided, and foundation schools.

Table 4 Key Dates - Infant, Primary and Junior Admissions September 2022

10. Key dates – Secondary admissions September 2022

1 week in July 2021	Publication of Secondary Admissions Information (booklet) Admissions information distribution to year 5 pupils. Open evenings at schools that admit pupils because of testing / auditions
1 July – 7 September 2021	Registration for testing / audition
1 September 2021 Week beginning 1 September 2021	Opening of on-line admissions facility for transfer to secondary school Distribution of reminder flier to year 6 pupils
XX September 2021*	11+ test (to be confirmed by the Consortium – dates will be available in the Admissions booklets)
XX September 2021*	Alternative test date (for religious, illness or exceptional circumstances) 11+ test (to be confirmed by the Consortium – dates will be available in the Admissions booklets)
5 October 2021	List of pupils not applied will be made available to current primary/junior schools to identify any barriers preventing on-time applications being submitted.
XX October 2021*	Testing results to be sent to parents by Consortium / schools (to be confirmed by the Consortium – dates will be available in the
w/c 19 October 2021	Admissions booklets) Follow up list of pupils not applied will be made available to current primary/junior schools to identify any barriers preventing on-time
w/c 19 October 2021	applications being submitted. Preliminary list to be sent to faith schools for Supplementary Information Form follow up
31 October 2021 w/c 9 November 2021	Closing date for admission applications Follow up list to be sent to faith schools for Supplementary Information Form follow up.
w/c 23 November 2021	List of preferences to be sent to schools and other authorities for ranking.
w/c 4 January 2022 15 February 2022	Closing date for schools to return ranked preferences SEN pupils will be accommodated if the named schools are identified in the finalised EHSP by 15 February
1 March 2022	Where possible, final offer lists and offer data will be sent to schools and Consortium under embargo.
1 March 2022 1 March 2022	National Offer day Year 6 destination lists sent to primary/junior schools under embargo.
15 March 2022	Closing date for parents to refuse offer in writing.
w/c 22 March	Updated lists sent to secondary school's post offer responses.
After 1 April	Secondary schools to send welcome letter/packs a month after offer
1 April 2022	day Closing date for appeal forms (reference to the code 2.3 of School Admissions Appeals Code 2012 – must be submitted up to 20 days for one time appeals after offer day – date is in outcome letter to
w/c 24 May 2022	applicants) Updated lists sent to secondary schools and primary/junior schools for year 6 transfer.

14 June 2022 All on-time appeals completed – refer to School Admissions Appeals

Code 2012 (reference to the code 2.3 of School Admissions Appeals Code 2012 – must be heard within 40 days for one time appeals after

1 April)

w/c 21 June 2022 Updated lists sent to secondary schools and primary/junior schools for

year 6 transfer.

22 August 2022 The administration of waiting lists handed over to academy, voluntary

aided, and foundation, free schools.

5 Key Dates - Secondary Admissions Sept 2022

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Education and Early Years Access & Inclusion Team



Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Children & Public Health)

to Cabinet on

14 January 2021

Report prepared by:
Cathy Braun, Head of Access & Inclusion and
Chrissy Papas, School Place Planning & Admission Compliance
Manager

Item No.

Agenda

Maintained School Term Dates 2022/23

People Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Ann Jones
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose the school term and holiday dates for the academic year 2022/23
- 2. Recommendations
- 2.1 That the school term and holiday dates for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved for community schools and as a guide to all schools in the borough.
- 3. Background
- 3.1 There is no national determination of school term dates. Historically the Council has set the term dates for community schools in Southend. In the main, academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools have chosen to adopt dates set by the Council, although there is no requirement to do so.
- 3.2 In view of the cross border movement with Essex County Council of both pupils and staff, the coordination with Essex has been an important principle. The proposed dates are in line with the Eastern Region term dates and have been agreed with Essex County Council.
- 3.3 School term dates are determined in accordance with legal requirements, identifying that there should be 190 pupil days and five non-pupil days allocated to staff development.
- 3.4 Schools have the autonomy to set the five allocated non-pupil days in accordance with the individual needs of the staff development for the school.
- 3.5 It is recommended that we proceed with the dates as set out in Appendix 1.

Report Title Page 1 of 3 Report Number

4. Other Options

4.1 To ensure consistency with neighbouring authorities, incorporate public holidays and provide the statutory number of days, alternatives are very limited.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposed term dates for 2022/23 are set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.1.1 A consultation was held with all schools in the borough between 9 November to 7 December 2020 and no objections were received. There is no requirement to consult with parents and carers.
- 5.1.2 The recommended term dates provide consistency with neighbouring authorities, whilst remaining compliant with legislation.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

The proposed term dates will assist pupils within the Borough to access quality learning opportunities to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children (opportunity and prosperity).

In addition, it contributes to Active and Involved, enabling children to participate in community and family activities together, at set times during the calendar year.

6.2 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications for the Council. The administration of the term dates, and core revenue funding for the running of a School is funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

6.3 Legal Implications

The determination of term dates for community schools is a statutory requirement.

6.4 People Implications

Coordination with Essex is important for pupils and staff.

6.5 Property Implications

None

6.6 Consultation

A consultation with all schools in the borough and union representatives for schools and teaching staff was undertaken in the period 9 November to 7 December 2020.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Report Title Page 2 of 3 Report Number

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the proposed term dates are clear that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, in that they are the same for all pupils in the borough

6.8 Risk Assessment

If the Council does not agree to the term dates as a guide for all schools, schools will very likely set a variety of dates, resulting in an uncoordinated and general unified process, and the Council's reputation will suffer.

6.9 Value for Money No direct implications.

6.10 Community Safety Implications None envisaged.

6.11 Environmental Impact None envisaged

7. Background Papers

- The Education Act 2002 section 32
- The Education Act 1996 section 551(1)

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Southend-on-sea Term dates 2022/23

Report Title Page 3 of 3 Report Number



Southend-on-Sea School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Maintained Schools 2022/23

												Αu	ıtum	n Te	erm												
September 2022 Octo						ber 2022			November 2022					December 2022													
M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
							31																				
												S	prin	g Te	rm												
January 2023					February 2023				March 2023						April 2023												
M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S
						1			1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31																										
												Su	mm	er Te	erm												
May 2023				June 2023					July 2023					August 2023													
M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S	S
1		3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
														31													

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated, or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Term dates for 2023/2024 are not yet proposed.

Autumn Term: 1 September 2022 – 20 December 2022 74 days

Half Term 24 October – 28 October

Spring Term: 5 January 2023 – 31 March 2023 57 days

Half Term 13 February - 17 February

Summer Term: 17 April 2023 – Friday 21 July 2023 64 days

Half Term 30 May – 2June, and May Bank Holiday, 29 May

195 days

Please note: The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies, who can set their own term dates. You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director Finance & Resources

To

Cabinet

on 14th January 2021

Report prepared by: Bridgette Cowley Revenues Group Manager

Agenda
Item No.

Debt Management - Position to 30th November 2020

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Cabinet Member : Councillor Gilbert

A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to apprise Cabinet of the following:
 - The current position of outstanding debt to the Council, as at 30th November 2020;
 - Debts that have been written off, or are recommended for write off, in the current financial year as at 30th November 2020;
 - Obtain approval for the write off of irrecoverable debts that are over £25,000.

2. Recommendation

That Cabinet:-

- 2.1 Notes the current outstanding debt position as at 30th November 2020 and the position of debts written off to 30th November 2020 as set out in **Appendices A & B**.
- 2.2 Notes that no write offs greater than £25,000 are requested, as shown in **Appendix B**.

3. Background

3.1 It was agreed by Cabinet on 19th March 2013 that the S151 Officer would submit regular reports to Cabinet on all aspects of the Council's outstanding debt, along with the required write off position. This is the second report for the financial year 2020/21.

Page 1 of 8

DEBT MANAGEMENT POSITION AS @ 30TH NOVEMBER 2020

Report Number:

3.2 Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is made up of a number of service areas responsible for the collection and administration of outstanding debt. The main areas are Accounts Receivable and Revenues which are linked to the billing and collection of the vast majority of debts that fall due to be paid to the Council for chargeable services, such as social care (see Section 4.5) and statutory levies such as Council tax and Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates).

There are also other areas of debt that are included in this report, namely recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments, Parking and Enforcement penalties and library fines. In addition, there are also debts for the Housing Revenue Account for rent arrears and service charges.

- 3.3 The process and legislative framework for the collection and write off of debt was detailed in the report to Cabinet on 17th September 2013. It is worth highlighting that the Council has a good success rate in collection of debt. The collection targets are agreed annually as part of the Councils service and financial planning process.
- 3.4 Debts are only considered for write off where all other courses of recovery available have been undertaken or explored and the debt is considered irrecoverable.

4. Councils Debt Types

4.1 Council Tax

£102m of Council Tax is due to be collected in 2020/21, with a collection target of 97.5%. As at the 30th November 2020 the Council has collected £70.3m (68.9%), this reflects a 1.1% decrease in the collection target profile, this is largely due to the cessation of recovery action for the majority of this year following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council continue to work towards the end of year collection profile.

Collection also continues for the outstanding arrears for that year and for previous years. The chart below shows the actual in year collection rate over the past 4 years, and the collection rate of each year's charge to date, including debts that have been written off.

	Council Tax Performance					
	As at 31st March of relevant year	As at 30th November 2020				
1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017	97.2%	99.5%				
1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018	97.5%	99.4%				
1st April 2018 - 31st March 2019	97.5%	98.9%				

1st April 2019 - 31st March		
2020	97.5%	98.3%

4.2 Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates)

£21.0m of Non-Domestic Rates is due to be collected in 2020/21, with a collection target of 98.3%. As at the 30th November 2020 the Council has collected £13.8m (65.8%), this reflects a 5.0% decrease in the collection target profile, this is largely due to the cessation of recovery action for the majority of the year following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council continue to work towards the end of year collection profile.

Collection is continuing for outstanding arrears for previous financial years. The chart below shows the actual in year collection rate over the past 4 years, and the collection rate of each year's charge to date, including debts that have been already written off.

	Non-Domestic Rates Performance					
	As at 31st March of relevant year	As at 30 th November 2020				
1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017	97.8%	99.9%				
1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018	98.0%	99.8%				
1st April 2018 - 31st March 2019	98.6%	99.6%				
1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020	98.3%	99.2%				

4.3 Housing Benefit Overpayment

This is any entitlement to a rent allowance or rent rebate that a person has received but is not entitled to. Most commonly this accumulates when there is a change to a person's circumstance and they fail to notify us in good time. The overpayment will be invoiced unless they are in receipt of Housing Benefit in which case their benefit entitlement is reduced to enable recovery of the overpayment. The vast majority of Housing Benefit overpayment is due to claimant error.

4.4 Libraries

Library debt is made up of overdue fines and replacing lost or non-returned books.

4.5 Adult Services

Adult Services make charges for the following services;

Contributions to residential accommodation

Page 3 of 8

- Charges for non-residential services i.e. Home Care, Community Support, Day Services and transport to services
- Charges to other local authorities
- Charges to National Health Service

Adult Social Care debt as at 30/11/2020 was £4,390,000

It should be noted that of the total amount outstanding;

£2.37m is debt deferred against property; £0.31m is under 30 days old.

4.6 Parking

The recovery of unpaid Penalty Charge Notices is undertaken by semi-judicial process under the current Traffic Management Act 2004.

From 1st August 2020 to 30th November 2020, a total of 20,065 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been issued identifying a projected income of £1,204,000. It should be noted that PCNs are issued at a higher rate and lower rate (£70.00 and £50.00 respectively) depending on the seriousness of the parking contravention. PCNs may be paid at a discounted rate of 50% of the charge if paid within 14 days of the date of issue.

This value is continuously being amended as payments are received and it should be recognised that payments made at the 50% discount amount will reduce the projected income level. Generally, 75% of paid PCN's are paid at the discounted payment.

The value of cancelled notices is £84,965.75 and cases written off where no keeper has been identified totals £2,965.00

4.7 Miscellaneous Income

This will include a range of services that the Council will charge for including such areas as rental income on commercial properties, recharges to other bodies for services we have provided, and recovering overpaid salaries from staff that have left.

It is important to note that collection can vary month by month depending on the value of invoices raised as a reasonable period needs to be allowed for payment to be made.

4.8 Housing

Under the management of South Essex Homes there are the arrears of outstanding debt of Rent and Service Charges. The cost of any write-offs for this category of debt is specifically charged to the Housing Revenue Account and not to Council Tax Payers.

Page 4 of 8

5. Write-Off Levels

Write off approval levels currently in place are shown in the tables below, which are in accordance with the Financial Procedure rules set out in the Constitution and the latest corporate debt recovery policy.

Debt Type: Council Tax/ Accounts Receivable/Adult Services/ Housing and Council Tax Benefit

Designation	Amount
Assistant Manager	under £5,000
Manager	Up to £10,000
Director	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

Debt Type: NNDR (Non Domestic Rates)

Designation	Amount
Assistant Manager	under £5,000
Manager	Up to £10,000
Director	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

Debt Type: Parking

Designation	Amount
Notice Processing Officer & Section	under £5,000
Leader	
Section Leader	Between £5,000 and £10,000
Group Manager	Between £10,000 and £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

Debt Type: Housing Rents and Service Charges

South Essex Homes, as managing agent, submit proposed write-offs to the Council, following which the following approval levels are exercised.

Designation	Amount
Head of Service	Under £25,000
Cabinet	£25,000 and above

6. Council Debt Position (as at 30/11/2020)

6.1 **Appendices A and B** show the current debt position within each service area, and the amount that has been written off in the current financial year 2020/21.

- 6.2 For Council Tax and Non Domestic rates there is a net collectable debt at the beginning of the year. Although this can change depending on changes to liability or property being removed or introduced to the lists, it is fairly consistent.
 - However other service areas may see greater fluctuations as new debts are created during the financial year.
- 6.3 The Council's debt position across all services at the 30/11/20 was £45.9million in comparison to the position at 30/11/19 of £50.4million. This shows a decrease of £4.5 million, circa 8.93% for the same period in the last financial year.
- 6.4 This reduction in the outstanding debt figure is mainly due to the extended retail relief awarded which provides businesses with a 100% discount on their business rates bill, a large number of businesses in the borough have received this with an estimated award of nearly £27million (60% of the existing base) with no business rates to pay for the 2020/21 financial year. The outstanding position regarding business rates for 2021/21 as at 30/11/20 is £7.2 million compared to £13.3 million in 2019 showing a reduction in business rates to collect of 45.9%.

The effects of the pandemic have brought about a reduction in Council Tax collection, whilst there does not appear to be much effect on the sum collected for Council Tax against last year, it should be noted we have seen both an increase in the numbers of council tax properties over the last year as well as an increase in charge in the 2020 financial year. Therefore the collection for the end of November position in comparison to last year's collection does not provide a neutral position as the Council is currently showing that it is around £1.70million in reduced collection than at the same point in the previous financial year.

6.5 There has been a 40.9% increase in the Miscellaneous Income arrears from £2.35 million in November 2019 to £3.31million in November 2020, this is mainly attributable to Commercial Rent Arrears.

7 Covid-19 Pandemic

An area of major concern for 2020/21 and the future is the local impact that Covid-19 will have in terms of income collection and the potential requirement for increases in bad and doubtful debts right across all our main income sources. The Council has quite rightly prioritised support for local- residents, tenants, and businesses throughout the pandemic with currently no recovery action taking place through the courts or with the enforcement agents. This situation will be reviewed along with our strategic and tactical response to the ever- changing local demands that have been caused by the pandemic.

8. Other Options

This is a report notifying members of the current position of the Council's debt and related write offs, and therefore there are no other options.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

All reasonable steps to recover the debt have been taken, and therefore where write off is recommended it is the only course of action that is left available.

If the Council wishes to pursue debts for bankruptcy proceeding, it will follow the agreed and published recovery policy that covers this.

10. Corporate Implications

10.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Efficient write off of bad and irrecoverable debts, where appropriate, is good financial practice and reduces the bad debt provision and financial impact in the Authority's accounts and helps towards financial self-sustainability of the organisation.

10.2 Financial Implications

Debts that are written off will have been provided for within the Councils bad debt provision and as such there should be no specific financial implications. However it is possible that unforeseen and unplanned additional write offs occur, which could lead to the value of debts written off in any year exceeding the bad debt provision.

Where this is likely to happen, this report will act as an early warning system and will enable additional control measures to be agreed and undertaken to either bring the situation back under control, or to make appropriate adjustments to the bad debt provision.

Relevant service areas are aware that they have to bear the cost of any debts that are written off within their budget.

10.3 Legal Implications

If there are debts to be written off that exceed the level at which officers have delegated powers to deal with the matter, authorisation is required from Cabinet.

10.4 **People Implications**

The people implications have been considered and there are none relevant to this report.

10.5 **Property Implications**

The property implications have been considered and there are none relevant to this report.

10.6 Consultation

Consultation is not required for write off of debt.

10.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Debt Collection is managed through a Corporate Debt Management Policy and is based on an approach of "Can't Pay Won't Pay". Each write-off is considered on an individual basis through a standard consistent approach.

10.8 Risk Assessment

There is a financial implication to the bad debt provision if write offs are not dealt with within the current financial year.

10.9 Value for Money

It is a matter of good financial practice and good debt management to regularly report on the value of debt outstanding, collected and written off.

10.10 Community Safety Implications

There are no Community Safety Implications.

10.11 Environmental Impact

There is no environmental impact.

10.12 Background Papers

Full details of recovery action against each recommended write-off are held within the services computer systems.

11. Appendices

Appendix A Summary of outstanding debt

Appendix B Summary of Write offs

Summary of Outstanding Debt

Outstanding Debt pre 1st April 2020 (arrears)

Debt pre 1/4/2020	Council Tax (a) £'000	Business Rates (a) £'000	Housing Benefit Overpayments (b) £'000	Adult Services £'000	Miscellaneous Income £'000	HRA (Care Line/Service Charges) £'000	Parking (c) £'000	Libraries (d) £'000	HRA Current Tenants (e) £'000	HRA Former Tenants (e) £'000
Net Collectable Debt	6,846	1,495	6,191	5,790	5,333	440	821		n/a	2
Amount Paid @ 30.11.2020	1,086	23	1,243	2,378	3,329	237	21	565	n/a	79
Number of Accounts	14,897	480	1,613	1,570	1,282	220	n/a	n/a	n/a	268
Total Outstanding	5,760	1,472	4,440	3,412	2,004	203	800	n/a	n/a	259

Current Year Debt (Debt raised in respect of 2020/21)

Debt post 1/4/2020	Council Tax (a) £'000	Business Rates (a) £'000	Housing Benefit Overpayments (b) £'000	Adult Services £'000	Miscellaneous Income £'000	HRA (Care Line/Service Charges) £'000	Parking (c) £'000	Libraries (d) £'000	HRA Current Tenants (e) £'000	HRA Former Tenants (e) £'000
Net Collectable Debt at 30.11.2020	102,069	21,014	835	9,052	23,042	855	229	0	21,940	108
Amount Paid @30.11.2020	70,361	13,819	1,243	7,453	19,729	578	5	0	21,927	18
Number of Accounts	72,894	1,314	791	1,499	925	1,032	n/a	0	1,642	137
Total Outstanding	31,708	7,195	785	1,599	3,313	277	224	0	749	90

NOTES

- (a) Council Tax and Business Rates includes adjustments for write offs, credits and outstanding court costs.
- (b) HB Overpayment is not attributable to a financial year in the same way that Council Tax or NDR are i.e. a yearly debit is not raised. It is also not feasible to state when a payment is made which age of debt it has been paid against. For these reasons the outstanding amounts in the report reflect the actual outstanding debt at the date requested, it does not reflect the outstanding debt against current year and previous year debts.
- (c) Parking total outstanding is net of PCNs cancelled and written off.
- (d) The figure of £564k relates to total payments received since January 2005 until 30/11/2020.
- (e) HRA tenancy debts (residential rent accounts) are rolling amounts, with no breaks in years or rollovers. Any cash received is applied to the oldest rent week outstanding. The figures shown are total arrears outstanding, and therefore include arrears still outstanding from prior years.

Summary of Write Off's

Debts written off in 2020/21 Period 1 April 2020 – 30th November 2020 relating to any year

Write Offs	Council Tax	Business Rates	Housing Benefit Overpayment	Adult Services	Miscellaneous Income	HRA (Care Line/Service Charges)	Parking	Libraries	HRA Tenants
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Under £5k	95,809.91	30,488.39	56,208	30,448	29,558	99	75,266.10	3,400	55,310.56
£5k-£25k	0	11,394.83	43,566	30,586	0	0	0	0	7,878.82
Over £25k	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	95,809.91	41,883.22	99,774	61,034	29,558	99	75,266.10	3,400	63,189.38

No Write off's greater than £25,000 are required for this period.

	Amount of	None.	Service Area
١ ا	write off		

This page is intentionally left blank

Street Prostitution in Southend-on-Sea

Street prostitution has existed in Southend-on-Sea, especially in the area around York Road and Ambleside Drive for many, many years. Various police operations have succeeded in moving the women selling sex from one road to another and various organisations have tried to support women selling sex but no intervention has had a significant impact on reducing the number of women selling sex or on the numbers of men buying sex.

Women who sell sex are at significant risk of psychological, emotional, physical and sexual harm. The psychological impacts of selling sex are immense and multiply the longer a woman remains in prostitution. Trauma responses make managing everyday life more difficult, so accessing services and agencies is more challenging which, in turn, leads to increased vulnerability and further exploitation. Being in prostitution becomes a cycle that is incredibly difficult to break.

There is also a significant impact on the local community with high levels of anti-social behaviour as a result of the women selling sex and the men in the area who are pimping the women or buying sex, including drug-dealing, hazardous litter and noise nuisance.

Southend-on-Sea needs a long term and coherent approach to street prostitution within the Borough that seeks to end the harms caused by those who purchase sex.

This Council resolves:

- to recognise street prostitution as adult sexual exploitation and a form of violence against
 women and girls, to acknowledge it as such in the Borough's violence and vulnerability
 strategy and to consider the specific needs of women who sell sex on the street in the
 strategy.
- to recognise the public health risks associated with street prostitution and ensure harm reduction measures are in place for women selling sex on the street, including provision of condoms and sexual health testing in a way that is truly accessible to women.
- to enable departments within the Council to work with local third sector organisations to develop exiting pathways that allow women who wish to stop selling sex to do so, including helping to facilitate a forum for services to fast-track women into trauma-informed support, promoting collaborative working and holding organisations to account for the support they offer.
- that, once exiting pathways are in place that are shown to be appropriate and working to
 enable women to exit street prostitution, the focus moves to ending street prostitution in
 the Borough and sending a clear message that this town will not tolerate perpetration of
 sexual harm.

Proposed by: Cllr Helen McDonald Seconded by: Cllr Dan Nelson



FOOD JUSTICE CHAMPION MOTION

Trussell Trust research shows that three million children are at risk of hunger during the school holidays. Here in Southend, we know that our foodbanks issue thousands of emergency food packages every year and 1 in 5 children live in poverty.

Foodbank use has dramatically increased, and the Independent Food Aid Network recorded a 59% increase in demand for emergency food support between February and March.

The government has also committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which have an international and domestic commitment to ending hunger by 2030.

This council believes:

No-one in Southend or the UK should go hungry, not least children. Food justice is about taking action on the causes of hunger such as affordability and availability of good nutritious food.

Local councils and communities played a key role during the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to do so and that should be recognised.

The council resolves to:

Appoint a food justice champion, who will lead on tackling food poverty locally and support / set up a food partnership to bring together partners to develop a good action plan to address the causes of food poverty.

Proposed by:

Cllr Daniel Cowan

Seconded by:

Cllr Matt Dent



Public Document Pack southend-on-sea Borough council

Meeting of Business, Culture & Tourism Working Party

Date: Wednesday, 16th December, 2020 Place: Virtual Meeting - MS Teams

Present: Councillor K Robinson (Chair)

Councillors S George (Vice-Chair), B Ayling, A Thompson, C Walker

and N Ward

In Attendance: R Harris, S Dolling, T Forster, M Murphy and N Spencer.

S Gwynne (Hemmingway Design).

Start/End Time: 6.00 - 8.05 pm

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Davidson and Jarvis (no substitutes).

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

3 Short Video - Culture Vision

The Working Party noted that a short video had been produced with interviews from local people on their views on the vision for the cultural future of Southendon-Sea. The link to the video is below:

www.southendculture.co.uk

Resolved:

That the video be noted.

4 Southend Pier Brand

The Working Party received a PowerPoint presentation from Sophie Gwynne setting out progress to date and the next steps in the development of the Southend Place branding. The aim was to define the core values that describe Southend-on-Sea and the aspirations and vision for the future.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers.

Resolved:

That the progress and next steps in the development of the Southend Place branding, be noted.

5 Pier Trains and Pier Development Update

The Working Party received and considered a brief update from Mark Murphy on the new Pier Trains and the development works scheduled for the Pier.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers.

Resolved:

That the update on the Pier Trains and development works at the Pier, be noted.

6 Notice of Motion: Twenty-One site conversion into Cycle Hub and Cafe

The Working Party considered a report of the Director of Culture and Tourism responding to the Notice of Motion referred by Cabinet held on 3rd November 2020 (submitted to Council on 10th September 2020), concerning the Twenty-One site conversion into Cycle Hub and Café.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers. In general the Working Party felt that in order to maximise the opportunities the Twenty-One site should be used as a multi-use facility to provide a year round offer as a cultural space for community groups and performers. Given the financial viability the Working Party agreed that the venue should not be limited to solely providing a base for cycle hire as well as bike repairs and sales due to financial viability and sustainability.

The Working Party also noted that there was the potential for a catering provider to provide a café at the site.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet be recommended that as part of the procurement process, the potential for the Twenty-One as a multi-use facility providing a year round cultural space for a range of activities be explored, including the potential to offer bike hire during the day but not to provide bike repairs and sales.

7 Notice of Motion - Southend Illuminations Festival of Light

The Working Party considered a report of the Director of Culture and Tourism responding to the Notice of Motion referred by Cabinet held on 3rd November 2020 (submitted to Council on 10th September 2020), concerning the resurrection of Southend Illuminations by creating a free to the modern public festival of light event.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers. In general the Working Party felt that a festival of light was a good idea and noted that discussions were taking place with the Business community. Officers also drew attention to a proposal to add an illuminations trail along Western Esplanade.

The Working Party suggested that as part of the ongoing development and discussions concerning illuminations the potential for digital illuminations and lighting, including the associated costs and sponsorship, should be explored.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet be recommended that the provision of illuminations across the Borough continue to be explored as part of the revised Destination Southend Tourism Strategy, including the potential for a public festival of light.

8 Notice of Motion - Covid-19 Local Recognition Scheme

The Working Party considered a report of the Director of Culture and Tourism responding to the Notice of Motion referred by Cabinet held on 3rd November 2020 (submitted to Council on 10th September 2020), concerning the creation of a local recognition scheme to honour our local community heroes who went above and beyond during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers. In general the Working Party felt that some form of local recognition scheme was a good idea and should be investigated further in collaboration with partners.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be recommended to acknowledge the recognition work that has already taken place and that officers explore further in collaboration with partners, the potential for a Covid-19 local recognition event for local people who went above and beyond during the Covid-19 pandemic.

9 Notice of Motion - EasyJet Hub Closure

The Working Party considered a report of the Director of Culture and Tourism responding to the Notice of Motion referred by Cabinet held on 3rd November 2020 (submitted to Council on 10th September 2020), concerning the closure of the EasyJet hub at Southend Airport requesting the Council to engage with EasyJet to explore the possibility of reversing the decision to close the hub.

The Working Party asked a number of questions which were responded to by officers. The Working Party noted that officers and the Leader of the Council had engaged with EasyJet to retain the hub at Southend Airport which had been unsuccessful. Officers highlighted that following the closure of the Hub a range of support packages had been put in place for affected EasyJet staff, including a redundancy task force.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be recommended to note the work by officers to engage with EasyJet to retain the hub at Southend Airport and the packages of support that the Council has put in place to help affected EasyJet staff.

Chair:

Public Document Pack southend-on-sea Borough council

Meeting of Senior Managers' Pay Panel

Date: Wednesday, 18th November, 2020 Place: Virtual Meeting - MS Teams

Present: Councillor R Woodley (Chair)

Councillors T Cox, M Davidson and C Mulroney

In Attendance: A Griffin and S Putt

Start/End Time: 6.00 - 6.20 pm

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gilbert.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

3 Senior Managers Pay Award 2020/21

The panel considered a report of the Head of HR and Payroll.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be recommended to agree the following:

A pay award of 2.75% is applied to the senior manager grades for 20/21 effective 1 April 2020.

Chair:			



Agenda Item No.

CABINET

Thursday, 14th January, 2021

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 46

The following action taken in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 46 is reported. In consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member(s):-

1. The Executive Director (Finance and Resources) authorised:

1.1 Costa and Airport Business Park

To progress with a commercial transaction to deliver a Costa Drive-Thru unit at the entrance to Airport Business Park using funds already allocated in the Capital Programme. Planning permission has been granted by Rochford District Council and the development will ensure that construction activity continues at the business park with the associated benefits to marketing, jobs creation and economic activity whilst providing a long-term commercial income to the Council, the details of which are set out in the Confidential Sheet.

2.1 <u>Final Position and Authority to Exchange Contracts – Victoria Centre</u> Acquisition

The acquisition of the Victoria Shopping Centre by the Council for £10m as a strategic property acquisition to provide the Council with a key foothold in the town centre and high street.

The acquisition has been financed using the Strategic and Regeneration Acquisitions budget. This Acquisitions budget was approved by the Council on 20 February 2020 as part of the overall Budget for 2020/21 and it was exactly this sought of purchase that was envisaged.

2. The Director of Regeneration and Growth authorised:

2.1 <u>SELEP Framework Agreement and Getting Building Fund (GBF) Service</u> Level Agreement

The signing and sealing of the Getting Building Fund Service Level Agreement to safeguard the external funding secured in the sum of £5.4m to support Southend projects.

2.2 Kickstart

Following the successful application to the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) for the Council to become a Kickstart employer and the the Council's commitment to creating 30 council work placements and enabling 50 work placements in businesses across South Essex through the Gateway application, the implementation of the following recommendations:

- The council enter into agreements with DWP for delivery of Kickstart placements that will help us realise 2050 ambitions;
- Relevant agreements are signed in line with the scheme of delegation when applications are approved by DWP;
- The Real Living Wage to is paid to Kickstart participants employed by the council and match funding is found to enable this.
- Management resource is allocated from within the existing Economic Development team at no additional cost to the council and additional administrative support is provided via Kickstart placements.

3. The Executive Director (Neighbourhoods & Environment) authorised:

3.1 School Streets – Experimental Traffic Regulation Order

Following the allocation of £309K to the Council from the DfT Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 funding stream, the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order introducing waiting restrictions for motorised vehicles as pilot "School Street" schemes at the following locations for the times indicated.

Greenways: From Monday to Friday between 8:15am – 9:15am and 2:30pm – 3:30pm, term-time only; and

North Street: From Monday to Friday between 8:30am – 9:30am and 2:30pm – 3:30pm, term-time only.

The restriction applies to school traffic (excluding school staff) and through traffic only. Residents of the School Street are exempt from the restriction and will be supplied with permit stickers for their cars free of charge from Southend Council. Any resident that requires access to their property for medical or social care staff during these times can also be issued with a permit. The experimental traffic regulation order will not only encourage active travel modes of transport and result in a safer, healthier and more pleasant environment for all but will also allow for adequate safe social distancing.

3.2 Free Parking in Council-Owned Car Parks

Free parking in all Council car parks (not in on-street parking bays) on the following Sundays: 6th, 13th and 20th December 2020 and on the following Thursdays after 4pm: 3rd,10th, 17th and 24th December 2020.

4. The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Housing and Growth) authorised:

4.1 <u>Future of Aviation Inquiry on the impact of Covid 19 on Aviation, Tourism</u> and the economy

The content and submission of a response to the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Future of Aviation Inquiry on the impact of Covid 19 on

Aviation, Tourism and the Economy before the required deadline of close of business on 24th November 2020.

4.2 <u>Independent Commission on Civil Aviation and Noise (ICCAN) survey on the future of aviation noise management</u>

The content and submission of the Council's response to the above mentioned online survey on 17th October 2020 prior to the consultation deadline on 18th December 2020, taking into account feedback from key members including the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, elected members of the Airport Consultative Committee, the Director of Planning, Strategic Planning Team and Regulatory Services.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

