

PROPOSED REVENUE INVESTMENT AND REPRIORITISATION FOR 2020/21**1. Summary of Proposed Investment**

Theme	Proposed Investment (£)
Pride and Joy	200,000
Safe and Well	5,810,000
Opportunity and Prosperity	(75,000)
Connected and Smart	1,200,000
Enabling	(1,780,000)
Total *	5,355,000

* £575,000 will be funded by the prioritised iBCF Allocation for 2020/21 and £35,000 will be funded from Public Health Grant.

2. Proposed Investment by Theme

Theme		Total (£)	Proposed Initiatives
	PJ1	200,000	Tree & Shrub Planting/Maintenance As a result of works identified under the inspection programme there is a need to enhance the resources required for the maintenance of our current tree and shrub provision. New strategic planting of 1,000 trees and 2,500 shrubs across the Borough will also require further maintenance costs, as agreed at Cabinet in September 2019. This investment will support and enhance our green infrastructure.
Pride and Joy	Total	200,000	
	SW1	2,375,000	External Care Provision In order to meet the needs of vulnerable children the Council is currently having to place more reliance on external care provision. Due to current market conditions the costs of this provision is continually increasing. The current number of ongoing external care placements as at November 2019 is 87 (at a current average cost per child of £2,150 per week across both residential and external foster care) compared to 54 children at the end of March 2019. This investment recognises that this request does not cover the whole budget pressure currently faced in this area. The long term strategy remains, to place children in care, within the Council's own local in house foster provision or a local children's care home whenever possible.
	SW2	400,000	In house foster carers Children thrive best in our local in-house foster care provision. Increasing capacity will place less reliance on more costly private external care provision. This investment request is to support a full years funding for 16 additional in-house foster carers. At an average of £25,000 per annum per placement in-house compared to a £50,000 average per annum external foster care placement.

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	SW3	210,000	<p>Newly Qualified Social Workers We have been very effective in recruiting Newly Qualified Social Workers in order to keep Children's Social Care caseloads at reasonable levels. This reduces reliance on the use of agency staff and associated recruitment fees. This investment request, is therefore seeking to increase the Newly Qualified Social Care workforce academy to 10 fully funded posts (currently 5 in 2019/20). This will contribute towards developing a permanent and sustainable workforce.</p>
	SW4	115,000	<p>Field work services Due to the increase in caseloads Children's Social Care teams within field work services are consistently fully staffed whether through permanently employed staff or via agency cover. It is making it impossible for the current budgeted vacancy factor to be achieved and this investment request seeks to remove it, recognising that the Council supports a fully funded Children Social Care workforce establishment at all times.</p>
	SW5	100,000	<p>Vulnerable Children Children's Social Care teams are also experiencing an increase in the need to support vulnerable families who require temporary accommodation support. These families are assessed in accordance with national and council policy, that if asylum seeking families have no access to central government funds, any child protection issues still remain the responsibility of the local authorities where that family is seeking accommodation. This investment request is therefore seeking an increase in the budget to support these families.</p>
	SW6	200,000	<p>Children's Social Care legal costs The current staffing resource in the Legal team is insufficient to keep pace with the escalating number of childcare cases. This means that it has been necessary to commission additional external legal support to manage the increasing demand.</p>
	SW7	1,095,000	<p>Living Wage for Adult Service Providers This request is for additional investment to cover the forthcoming increase of the national living wage in April 2020. The increase in wage costs for care providers will have an impact on the amount we pay for care.</p>
	SW8	350,000	<p>Children to Adults transition This funding is for the transition costs of supporting individuals with a learning disability who will reach the age of 18 and meet the eligibility criteria for adult social care interventions. The support will consider the person's skills and ambitions, and contribute to positive outcomes in their future lives.</p>

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	SW9	480,000	<p>Older People demographics This will help us to meet the care needs of our growing older population. It will fund our Southend residents who either remain in their own homes with a domiciliary care package or direct payment. Those with more complex needs and who cannot be cared for in their own homes will be placed in suitable residential care.</p>
	SW10	250,000	<p>Equipment Services Most people want to remain in their home rather than move to a different setting. Some specific equipment is required to support those people with more complex needs to continue to remain in their own homes. This has created a pressure on the Equipment Service budget. Allowing people to be cared for in their own homes wherever possible reduces their social isolation and increases their quality of life. The equipment provided includes zimmer frames, commodes, reclining chairs and beds. This approach also aligns with Care Act requirements, to ensure consideration of an individual's wellbeing and prevent, reduce or delay the need for more costly interventions.</p>
	SW11	120,000	<p>Green City Aspirations To help realise our green city ambitions, specialist planning expertise is required, particularly around air quality requirements. It is a legal requirement for the Council to have an Air Quality Action Plan and this strengthens the links to both Public Health and Highways to ensure that preventative measures are in place to improve our local air quality. This proposal will provide the investment needed for the permanent continuation of an Air Quality Specialist and Planning Support Officer. These roles will enable reviews of all planning applications for health considerations to assess any potential issues ranging from noise complaints to contaminated land. This work will also reduce the probability of future enforcement.</p>
	SW12	25,000	<p>Public Health Act Funeral Arrangements There were 59 Public Health Act funerals in 2018/19 at an average cost of £1,000. All Public Health Act funerals from April 2019 are the responsibility of the Council, this request will bring the budget up to a more realistic level to undertake this statutory duty.</p>
	SW13	155,000	<p>Liquid Logic Support Team To support the development and administration of the new system but also to maximise the potential benefits of the new capabilities and secure greater value for money. Improving the functionality of the system will lead to the release of further efficiencies from improved productivity and better outcomes for clients from within both Adults and Children's Services.</p>

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	SW14	35,000	<p>Complex Needs Provision</p> <p>This would provide circa 32 hours extra per week – which would enhance the current operating model at the facility, minimise complaints from neighbours and ensure the safety of staff members who are dealing with some very challenging clients. Currently funded by Public Health grant. Acquiring an additional suitable property is also being pursued via the capital investment programme to expand and extend local provision. Funding for running this new facility will initially come from the use of ‘one-off’ investment from reserves while potential other opportunities are explored.</p>
	SW15	(£100,000)	<p>Southend Care</p> <p>Saving on the existing block contract through the Company’s efficient service delivery model as former Council staff who TUPE’d over to the Care Company are replaced through natural turnover by staff appointed on Southend Care’s own terms and conditions. This saving has previously been declared as part of the contribution towards the financing costs of the Priory New build facility.</p>
Safe and Well	Total	5,810,000	
	OP1	100,000	<p>Library Review</p> <p>It was identified from the libraries peer review that there was a need to provide investment to address a number of items. Additional staffing costs at peak times to keep libraries open, a revision in the level of income targets and a recognition of an increase in cleaning costs. This change will adjust the budget accordingly to an appropriate level.</p>
	OP2	(75,000)	<p>Income Generation – Registration Service</p> <p>The statutory fee for birth, death and marriage certificates has increased from £4 to £11. The number of certificates issued will be closely monitored to assess the reasonableness of this increased income target but this change will result in additional income.</p>
	OP3	(100,000)	<p>Asset Management Income</p> <p>Additional rent and lease income will be achieved due to the planned annual reviews for a range of tenants in Council owned properties and assets. There will also be additional rent from Friars Nursery and new properties at Brunel Road.</p>
Opportunity and Prosperity	Total	(75,000)	
	CS1	500,000	<p>Potholes</p> <p>This investment will fund appropriate reactive works to be undertaken alongside planned capital maintenance works which over time will improve the overall quality of the highway and footway for all road and footpath users.</p>
	CS2	50,000	<p>Town Centre Parking</p> <p>This will enable the current reinstatement of one hour car parking in the following Town Centre car parks to continue; Alexandra Street, Clarence Road, Essex Street, University Square and Warrior Square.</p>

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	CS3	50,000	<p>Signal Maintenance</p> <p>An increase in the use of Variable Message Signage has resulted in an increased maintenance requirement for these useful assets. There has also been an increase in the damage caused to traffic signals and junction boxes which have to be repaired. If there is sufficient evidence then these costs can be reclaimed through insurance companies.</p>
	CS4	500,000	<p>Streetworks Income</p> <p>Positively there has been a significant decrease in the number of instances of extended closures of the highway and substandard reinstatement works. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of income that can reasonably be expected in the future from issuing penalty notices to utility companies.</p>
	CS5	100,000	<p>Rechargeable Works</p> <p>When necessary works are undertaken as a result of damage caused to street furniture, with appropriate evidence these costs can be recharged to the liable party. The income target in this area has historically been overstated and this adjustment will ensure that the income budget is set at a more realistic level.</p>
Connected and Smart	Total	1,200,000	
	E1	200,000	<p>ICT Transformation</p> <p>Additional investment required to support the development of a new modern staffing structure designed to enable transformation and delivery. Principles of the new structure are based upon ICT being outcome aligned, business enabling with a clear strategy and technical architecture to develop best in class skills and capabilities.</p>
	E2	100,000	<p>Workforce Development</p> <p>Delivery of innovative solutions to roll out self-serve management capabilities and Learning & Development processes. This will allow for a continuing focus on the training and development of all staff across the organisation.</p>
	E3	(800,000)	<p>Waste Disposal</p> <p>There continues to be a benefit due to the Basildon Mechanical and Biological Treatment (MBT) plant remaining in a commissioning phase which charges a lower gate fee to accept residual waste and a further benefit due to the extension to the waste Joint Working Agreement with Essex CC which provides a share of the Waste Infrastructure Grant. This budget can therefore be temporarily adjusted to reflect the current situation until the outcome of the waste collection / disposal contract. The Medium Term Financial Forecast will be updated accordingly to reflect our future waste disposal liabilities if costs are expected to increase in the future.</p>

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	E4	(750,000)	Release of Pension Fund Provision The Council had prudently set aside this amount in its MTFS following the Pension Fund Valuation in 2016. The triennial review for 2019 has just been undertaken and the valuation of Southend's share of assets and liabilities has improved, from a funding level in 2016 of 91.4% to a funding level in 2019 of 103.5%. Pension Fund calculations by the independent actuaries are notoriously complex and can be volatile due to the many contributing factors. The situation will be carefully monitored and another formal review will be undertaken by the Essex Pension Fund in 2022. This provision can now be released and a further assessment will be made in good time for financial planning for 2023/24.
	E5	(250,000)	Productivity and Efficiency Gains All services are expected to continually improve their efficiency and productivity so each budget area will need to make a proportionate contribution towards this improvement target to ensure budgets are reduced accordingly.
	E6	120,000	Facilities Management As a result of additional cleaning work undertaken as part of our corporate social responsibility, and additional security requirements in the civic centre, there is a need to increase this budget to the required level.
	E7	(400,000)	Investment Income This level of increased returns is anticipated from our overall portfolio of short, medium and long term investments.
Enabling	Total	(1,780,000)	
		5,355,000	TOTAL INVESTMENTS AND REPRIORITISATIONS