

## CABINET

25 FEBRUARY 2022

### JOINT REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

#### A.7 BACK TO BUSINESS AND CORPORATE INVESTMENT PLAN

(Report prepared by Lee Heley and Richard Barrett)

#### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

##### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Cabinet on the success of the Back to Business Programme and seek agreement to move to a Corporate Investment Plan to support accelerated delivery.

##### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has co-ordinated some of its investment over the last two years through the Back to Business Plan in response to the Covid 19 Pandemic. In line with the Capital Strategy, other investments and cost pressures have been managed via the financial strategy and in-year financial performance reports. This approach has been supported by earmarking reserves and budgets with the aim of managing such costs separately to the annual budget cycle. As a result the Council protects the underlying base revenue budget as far as possible.

In response to previous peer reviews and the annual governance statement action plan (including points raised by the Council's External Auditor), the opportunity has been taken to review the corporate framework against which projects and investments are prioritised. This is timely given the limited funding available to the Council outside of the money required to operate its key front line services and other day to day operations.

Back to Business galvanised the Council to counter the impacts of the pandemic, successfully delivering projects against the themes of 'Strive', 'Thrive' and 'Live'. It enabled the Council to respond to the economic challenges Tendring has faced, for example providing businesses with advice and supporting the development of Freeport East. The Council also attracted tourists to the Coast and engaged local residents during the Pandemic, including the Octopus Ahoy! sculpture trail, Clacton 150 Anniversary flights and the Clacton 150 Heritage Trail from Jaywick Sands to Holland Haven. Back to Business also supported wellbeing, with over twenty wellbeing hubs set up in Tendring and Colchester schools.

The new approach therefore allows the Council to merge the Back to Business Plan into a new Corporate Investment Plan along with the other proposals for schemes and projects that flow from initiatives and strategies, to compete for the Council's scarce resources. It also enables a reinvigorated approach to reviewing existing 'cash backed' schemes and projects where they can be considered against other emerging issues to ensure the Council's money is being put to effective use in the short, medium and long term.

From now on, the Corporate Investment Plan will bring together a fuller pipeline of

opportunities to be funded, which enables the various competing priorities to be considered in a consistent way.

The new Corporate Investment Plan will include the following key elements:

**A decision making process**, including a **Corporate Investment Board** to agree the project Pipeline, and which projects to recommend for progression towards a formal decision to allocate resources to deliver.

**Criteria / Priority Drivers** to help decision makers to prioritise and choose between competing proposals, including a project's impact on the Council's priorities, its financial implications, statutory obligations and risk mitigation.

**A Pipeline** of projects showing: projects in delivery moving to completion; approved projects with published decisions against them; and a long list of proposals yet to be decided on whether to progress. The pipeline of proposals will be refreshed as new opportunities emerge, new challenges need to be resolved, and priorities change.

Annex 3 offers a proposed first iteration of pipeline projects, which includes the projects raised at Full Council on 15 February 2022. Annex 3 is not exhaustive. Additional projects will start to be added to this plan as part of the first Corporate Investment Board in March 2022, with future boards adding / reconsidering projects within the pipeline where necessary.

**Funding to allocate or reallocate** to a Corporate Investment Fund to enable the Council to put resources to the recommended projects from the Pipeline. This approach to budgeting makes transparent funding that is set against projects that are in delivery, and Corporate Investment Plan funding that remains available to be allocated through the process to future projects.

It is recognised that this new approach will develop in the months ahead, in particular as the Pipeline of project proposals matures, and the first Corporate Investment Board starts to consider projects to add to and progress from the Pipeline.

It is also worth highlighting that as part of developing the plan, a number of existing budgets will be reviewed with the aim of identifying those that can potentially be repurposed to support projects within the Corporate Investment Plan. This work is currently on-going and will be considered for inclusion within the available funding that can support the plan going forward.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- a. Notes the work completed under the Back to Business programme;**
- b. Agrees to implement a Corporate Investment Plan approach along with establishing the associated Corporate Investment Board as set out in this report; and**
- c. Subject to b) above, requests Portfolio Holders to explore with Officers further items for consideration by the proposed first meeting of the Corporate Investment Board in March.**

## REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Corporate Investment Plan makes the process of funding Council projects transparent and so helps decision makers to choose between the options for investment open to them. The recommendations respond to previous peer reviews and the annual governance statement action plan to develop a strong approach to allocate the limited funding available to the Council, outside of the money required to run its key front line services and other day to day operations.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

**Option A** is to keep to the status quo, and to allocate resources to new projects and programmes one by one as they emerge. However, this approach does not provide decision makers with the wider challenges facing the Council making it harder to ensure the best use of scarce resources than if all investment opportunities are brought together for consideration in a consistent and considered way.

However, this option would still be applicable to externally funded schemes where the funder sets out specific parameters for how the money can be used. This restricted use could still overlap with projects included within the Corporate Investment Plan, which could be considered at the appropriate time. Where there is more flexibility to how the funding can be used, the intention is that this would be considered via the Corporate Investment Plan.

This approach has the benefit of being responsive and flexible, for example to respond if new funding becomes available requiring Council matched investment, or if risks emerge that the Council decides to allocate funding to respond to.

**Option B** is to develop a Corporate Investment Plan once a year that sets out against our corporate priorities the additional spend on non-recurring expenditure outside our base budgets. This approach has the benefit of clarity of what additional spend the Council will make during a year, and could be aligned to the wider service budget setting process.

However, this approach potentially requires the development of all additional project work at one point in the year, which will limit the number of projects to the Council's capacity to carry out the detailed planning required to make an informed decision at one point. Or alternatively it will mean funding is allocated ahead of detailed planning, so that potentially funding is held for a project for a long period before the organisation has the capacity to develop the underlying work to take the project forward. An annual approach also makes it difficult for the Council to respond to new opportunities through the year, or deal with issues that emerge rapidly.

**Option C** – Recommended Option as set out in this report: a Pipeline of projects with a) projects in delivery, b) projects in development with funding agreed, c) project proposals for consideration; a Corporate Investment Board meeting through the year to agree the project Pipeline and recommend projects for investment; a set of criteria to aid decision making; and a potential pooled Corporate Investment Fund to allocate funding from to new projects.

Where the scheme or project relates to potentially on-going activity, the Plan would provide the flexibility to fund it upfront to enable further more timely consideration to be undertaken as part of the longer term plan, which is updated quarterly.

A 'live' Corporate Investment Plan also aims to capture on a more up to date basis schemes and projects that have the potential for being funded externally. A further aim of the plan is to provide a ready-made, well thought through list that can be used to make a coherent case to our partners and potential funders.

It is also worth highlighting that the Corporate Investment Plan approach will also be supported by the Accelerated Delivery 'fund' that was established last year to ensure the right capacity across the Council.

## **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

The Corporate Investment Plan is designed to more strongly align the Council's investments to its priorities. As set out in Annex 2, the Council's priorities are Delivering High Quality Services; Community Leadership Through Partnerships; Building Sustainable Communities for the Future; Strong Finances and Governance; and a Growing and Inclusive Economy.

The Pipeline will align projects against the corporate priorities, enabling decision makers to see which investments will best deliver each priority. Delivering the corporate priorities is one of the key criteria for making a recommendation on which projects to progress. This alignment will strengthen the delivery of the Council's objectives, rather than just grouping investments by Council service.

### **OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Corporate Investment Plan is a response to comments from the external Auditor who has pointed to the opportunity for the Council to further develop the way it allocates resources to activity outside the day to day running of services.

The Resource And Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has highlighted when scrutinising the Budget the importance of accelerating delivery of the Council's projects, and ensuring that funding allocated to activity is translated to visible change on the ground.

Cabinet members are supportive of the Corporate Investment Plan proposals, recognising that it will serve to become an effective way of ensuring that funding is put to the most important priorities of the Council, learning from the good practice seen in the Back to Business agenda.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)**

<b>Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If Yes, indicate by which criteria it is a Key Decision</b>	<b>X Significant effect on two or more wards</b> <b>X Involves £100,000 expenditure/income</b> <b>X Is otherwise significant for the service budget</b>
		<b>And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of</b>	<b>11 January 2022</b>

		forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)	
--	--	---	--

X **The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

The Monitoring Officer is aware and supportive of the proposals set out in this report for a Corporate Investment Plan.

The Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 highlighted the need to develop an investment plan during 2020/21 which will be directly linked to the Council's budget and evolving financial position and supported by the reprioritisation of budgets / existing funding and / or as part of the long term forecast. It was not possible for this to be developed during 2020/21 and was carried over to 2021/22 and has been referenced at Cabinet and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the last few months.

**FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

**Finance**

The Back to Business Plan allocated indicative budgets to activity which were subsequently drawn down to service budgets through separate decisions to enable project implementation. In total £862,000 was allocated to the Back to Business Plan, and it is proposed to include any outstanding items within the Corporate Investment Plan. Any unspent money from this initial allocation would therefore also move across to support the development of the Corporate Investment Plan.

The Back to Business programme has demonstrated the benefits of bringing together the delivery of activity into one place, so that the breadth of the Council's activity is visible. The Corporate Investment Plan will continue that approach, and bring in more funds so that a more comprehensive pipeline of projects can be developed over time.

Project proposals will be included in the Pipeline and then the Corporate Investment Board will recommend investment against them, with the Corporate Investment Fund enabling the Council to put money to new projects.

As discussed earlier, this report sets out the first iteration of the Corporate Investment Plan with a number of initial items included within **Appendix 3**. However the plan will evolve over time, which will see further items added. It is also worth highlighting that as part of developing the plan, a number of existing budgets will be reviewed with the aim of identifying those can potentially be repurposed to support projects within the Corporate Investment Plan. This work is currently on-going and will be considered for inclusion in the funding that can support the plan going forward.

**Resource implications**

The development of the Corporate Investment Plan will require additional time from officers to manage the Pipeline of projects, attend the Corporate Investment Board, and importantly to develop the documentation to enable decisions makers to prioritise the project pipeline and recommend which projects should be supported. However, the officer time spent in this way will enable better management of investment, and greater clarity over which projects are in development and where funding is reserved for investment in future projects in the Corporate Investment Fund.

The capacity within the organisation to deliver projects will remain broadly the same given the same staff base. The approach is not designed to convert all potential funding into immediate project delivery. Rather it increases the transparency of which projects are in delivery, and which remain in the Pipeline ready for future delivery in the months and years ahead as current projects are completed and staff capacity is released to take on new work.

**X The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:**

The S151 Officers has contributed to and supports this report and endorses the Corporate Investment Plan as set out. The management of the Corporate Investment Plan will develop in the coming months and the role of S151 Officer will be important as part of the Corporate Investment Board to support decision makers in recommending projects and programmes

#### **USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY**

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	The Corporate Investment approach will strengthen the way the Council manages its new investment in projects and programmes to enable it to focus on priorities.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	The Corporate Investment Plan will strengthen governance, by giving decision makers greater visibility of the range of options for investment at the point investments are made.
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	The approach will strengthen the links the Council makes between its investments and priorities, so the money we spend is focused on the performance against key priorities.

#### **MILESTONES AND DELIVERY**

February 2022 - Corporate Investment Plan proposals set out at Cabinet.

March 2022 – First Meeting of the Corporate Investment Board and development of the Pipeline and recommendation on project investments.

By end May 2022 - Second Meeting of the Corporate Investment Board.

By end July 2022 - Third Meeting of the Corporate Investment Board.

September 2022 – Update to Cabinet on implementation of the Corporate Investment Plan.

#### **ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION**

There is a resource risk – that the additional time required to manage the process of developing the Pipeline, developing project initiation documents for work which may not then be funded reduces the time available to the organisation to deliver projects. However, even if slightly fewer projects were to be delivered overall, it is better to invest the time at the start of new work to ensure that that it is well planned to enable stronger decision making on which projects to progress, and then more effective delivery once a decision is taken to proceed. In addition, a decision not to progress a project on the basis of sound information does not invalidate developing the information for decision makers. It is also likely that stronger upfront planning and management of the project Pipeline will highlight where additional resources are required within individual projects, and where additional corporate resources are required. These resource requirements will then be factored into project investment plans.

There is a risk that the process becomes cumbersome, and the Council finds it harder to respond flexibly to emerging opportunities and risks. The Council should monitor the implement of the Corporate Investment Plan, and adjust it as necessary to ensure that the benefits of a more structured approach also enable quick decision making when that is required.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council will review the equality implications of individual investments in projects in the usual way. The Corporate Investment Plan process enables greater scrutiny of individual projects through the Corporate Investment Board in addition to the formal decision making process, giving greater opportunity to scrutinise equality implications.

#### **SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS**

New projects often require procurement exercises for goods and services. This means projects funded through the Corporate Investment Plan will often have the opportunity to deliver social value, for example providing apprenticeships to local residents or helping them to find work, alongside delivering core project aims.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030**

The Corporate Investment plan enables decision makers to see a wider range of projects across the Pipeline for investment than are currently visible, including those related to supporting the Council's journey to become net zero within the decade. The Corporate Investment Plan enables stronger join up across projects, for example the need for asset improvement and the requirements of thermal efficiency in a fabric first approach to reducing carbon emissions, supporting a join up between the Council's net zero plan and other matters.

#### **OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS**

**Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.**

##### **Crime and Disorder**

No significant implications. Projects which reduce crime and disorder would be funded through the Corporate Investment Plan, alongside those which deliver other Council objectives.

##### **Health Inequalities**

No significant implications. Projects which reduce

	health inequalities would be funded through the Corporate Investment Plan, alongside those which deliver other Council objectives.
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	All Wards

## PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### BACKGROUND

The Council has co-ordinated some of its investment over the last two years through the Back to Business Plan in response to the Covid 19 Pandemic. In line with the Capital Strategy, other investments and cost pressures have been managed via the financial strategy and in-year financial performance report. This approach has been supported by earmarking reserves and budgets with the aim of managing such costs separately to the annual budget cycle that in turn protects the underlying base revenue budget as far as possible.

In response to previous peer reviews and the annual governance statement action plan (including points raised by the Council's External Auditor), the opportunity has been taken to review the corporate framework against which projects and investments are prioritised. This is timely given the limited funding available to the Council outside of the money required to operate its key front line services and other day to day operations.

This framework also cuts across various aspects of demonstrating the effective use of resources, a key strand of work that the External Auditor reviews each year.

The above approach also aims to provide a clear and consistent path from the Council's priorities and high level action plans set out in Council Strategies (such as the Tourism Strategy, Heritage Strategy, and Economic Strategy) to the funding of individual schemes and projects that underpin them. In economic language, it aims to provide a basis against which the use of the Council's scarce resources - including people, IT, assets as well as money - can be considered.

The approach therefore allows the Council to merge the Back to Business Plan into a new Corporate Investment Plan along with the other proposals for schemes and projects that flow from initiatives and strategies and compete for the Council's scarce resources. It also enables a reinvigorated approach to reviewing existing 'cash backed' schemes and projects where they can be considered against other emerging issues and items to ensure that the Council's money is being put to effective use in the short, medium and long term. It is timely to take a new approach now given the shift from reacting and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated changing controls on economic and Council activity, to a more stable outlook to deliver the Council's priorities.

A Corporate Investment Plan approach will also help support the focus of the accelerated delivery budget and other in-house resources to ensure the Council has the right level of capacity at the right time in the right places.

### **Back to Business Plan**

Lockdowns since 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have had an exceptional effect on life in Tendring and across the country that has impacted every area of life: from

work, to the education of children, the ability to enjoy and participate in the benefits of the District such as the coast and town centres, and also the long term health of residents.

Given the breadth of the challenges Tendring District faced during the pandemic, the Council responded with a broad action plan. On 13 November 2020 Cabinet endorsed the Council's Back to Business plan set out the Council's support for the District's recovery from Covid-19, allocating £862,000 to delivery. Back to Business was broadly scoped to include improvements to quality of life, support for residents, as well as businesses and the local economy. The plan also focused on the Council and its services adapting to the challenges of the pandemic. In February 2021 Cabinet endorsed a detailed action plan set out under three themes:

- **Strive:** support for our businesses
- **Thrive:** support for our residents
- **Live:** pride in our District

The Back to Business approach galvanised the Council to counter the impacts of the pandemic. The Council has responded to the economic challenges, for example contracting with specialist provider Colbea up to 2024 to run services to support businesses in Tendring. Between April 2021 and December 2021, Colbea advised 91 local firms, including on business planning and future strategy. Three quarters of those supported have been sole traders. Looking to the long term, we have worked closely with the Port and public sector partners on the submission of the successful Freeport East bid and the Outline Business Case, which has been approved. The Freeport's tax sites are now designated in law. We will continue to work with Freeport East on the final business case ahead of submission in April 2022.

The Council has also provided active engagement for residents during the pandemic and attracted tourists to the coast. The Octopus Ahoy! sculptures trail ran for 10 weeks in the summer of 2021, with an App to download and 30 octopus sculptures to locate, with participants earning prizes for scanning each one. The sculptures displayed art by local artists, and also engaged local primary schools, with smaller octopus sculptures in a school trail. Despite the pandemic the Clacton 150 Anniversary flights took place in August 2021 with as many as 75,000 onlookers spread along Clacton's coastline. The Council also installed Clacton Heritage Trail from Jaywick Sands to Holland Haven and incorporating Clacton town centre, to tell the story of Clacton and celebrate Clacton's 150th Birthday. The trail covers more than five miles of coastline and engages with local schools, elder care settings and the wider community. It includes interactive technology to bring Clacton's history to life.

Back to Business also supported wellbeing, with over twenty wellbeing hubs set up in Tendring and Colchester schools based on a model designed in the Great Bentley school in Tendring. The Great Bentley pilot hub is an after-school facility, where children with mild to moderate mental health issues are supported in group activity around themes of play, art, construction, and science, gaining a "rucksack of skills" to help them understand themselves and learn skills to take them forward into secondary school and beyond.

The full list of actions and progress is included at **Annex 1**.

### **Corporate Investment Plan**

As highlighted above, the key aim of the Corporate Investment Plan is to establish a corporate framework to prioritise how, when and where the Council spends / deploys its available resources. The Corporate Investment Plan will strengthen the Council's capacity

to focus on delivery, and will enable the Council to make balanced judgements on investment against the corporate priorities.

It is important to highlight that it aims to complement rather than replace the key investment criteria set out in the Council's Capital Strategy.

Although there is clearly some overlap to the Capital Strategy, the key investment criteria included within the Strategy focus on key financial criteria, as would be expected through the adoption of the prudential code. These include items such as the return on investment, whole life costing, key risks and opportunity costs, payback periods along with more general financial issues such as insurance, VAT and cash flow implications if applicable.

The Capital Strategy therefore only reflects the framework for the use of capital resources, which only form one element of decision making on how the Council spends its money. For example, there are significant operational and revenue issues and ambitions that also compete for funding.

All organisations have finite funding and staff capacity, and need to choose where best to spend and invest their limited resources to achieve the goals they have set. The Corporate Investment Plan will bring together a fuller pipeline of opportunities to be funded, which enables the various competing priorities to be considered in a consistent way. When items are viewed in isolation, each often presents a good argument as to why it should be funded, but it is only when placed side by side with other competing items that a clearer picture emerges when allocating funding. The aim is to give maximum visibility to decision makers on the options for investment, so that prioritisation can be made knowing the alternative calls on Council's resources.

In comparison with the criteria included within the Capital Strategy mentioned above, the criteria proposed to be included within the Corporate Investment Plan include key priority 'drivers' such as financial viability / sustainability, non-financial consequences such as reputation / health and safety, the outcome from external assessment / regulatory reviews along with being outcome driven.

## **Pipeline**

The Corporate Investment Plan will create a pipeline of projects. At the top of the pipeline will be the projects or investments that are supported and the Council has taken a formal decision to endorse, with resources backing them and progress underway. The Pipeline of projects will also include projects that have a decision to proceed, and will move into the delivery phase. Finally, options and proposals for future projects will be included. Project initiation documents may be developed to support the decision making of the Corporate Investment Board on whether to progress projects. In this way, the potential options for investment are clearly set out within the Pipeline, and those projects with endorsement and resources are also clear, demonstrating which projects should progress.

See **Annex 3** for the first iteration of projects from across the Council that forms the start of a much more extensive project Pipeline. The Corporate Investment Plan will list the relevant projects and new activities which the Council has proposed, for example through its Corporate Plan and approved strategies.

## **Framework for decisions**

The Council has a strategic framework guiding its activities set out in the Corporate Plan themes, priorities, and annual highlight actions, with quarterly milestones. The Corporate

Plan 2020-24 themes and priorities are set out in **Annex 2**. However, there are further criteria required to support decision making because the number of project which could achieve the corporate priorities is greater than available resources. The Council needs to choose between projects which will all achieve its corporate priorities. Broadly speaking these considerations reflect whether the Council is required to carry out the work, whether there are financial benefits to the work, and how much the work helps the Council achieve its objectives. It is proposed that consideration is given to questions such as:

Objectives	Which project is likely to have the greatest impact (per pound) on our strategic objectives?
	Is there a formal benefit cost ratio to determine value for money?
Requirement	Are there health and safety concerns?
	Does the project reduce risks for operational services?
Statutory	Do we have a statutory obligation to deliver this project?
	Does the project support a statutory obligation?
Finance	For the Council's investment, how much external funding or future income does the project bring in?
	Over what period would future income repay the cost of investment?

Some investments through this approach may bring a return or a saving to the Council, for example investments in buildings which reduce their future running costs. However, by 'investment' the Council means spending its funds to achieve its priorities, rather than requiring a commercial return.

### **Corporate Investment Board**

There needs to be a forum for decision makers to consider a range of options for projects to progress, and to make choices. Ultimately decisions on new investment will be made through the Council's constitutionally agreed procedures, including Officer decisions, Portfolio Holder decisions, Cabinet and full Council.

However, ahead of formal decision making, the Corporate Investment Board will prioritise the projects for potential funding applying consistent criteria, set out above in this report. The Board creates the space for an overview of potential investments and to advise decision makers.

It is proposed that the Corporate Investment Board would be chaired by the Leader of the Council and will include the Portfolio Holder Finance and Governance, as well as the Chief Executive and the Section 151 Officer. The relevant Portfolio Holders submitting projects for support to the Corporate Investment Board will also attend to propose the projects seeking investment. Projects over £30,000 will require Project Initiation Document to be submitted.

It is worth repeating the above point that the Corporate Investment Plan does not impact on the current decision making framework within the Council, with the same level of transparency via Officer, Portfolio Holder and Cabinet decisions and the associated scrutiny and call in processes.

It is proposed that the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are consulted on the development of the plan throughout the year.

### **Corporate Investment Fund**

Funding is required in order to bring forward new projects and to continue to respond to emerging risks and to take new opportunities. As such, there is an opportunity to reallocate funding from areas where delivery may no longer be expected or have been superseded into a Corporate Investment Fund or Reserve. Then as projects are brought forward from the Pipeline for recommendation to progress at the Corporate Investment Board, it will be possible to draw on from this Corporate Reserve. Within the context of the above, a number of existing budgets will be reviewed with the aim of identifying those can potentially be repurposed to support projects within the Corporate Investment Plan. This work is currently on-going and will be considered for inclusion in the funding that can support the plan going forward.

The Corporate Investment Board will monitor the allocation of the Corporate Investment Fund to projects, to support a reasonable and strategic balance of investment across the Council's priorities over time.

### **Forward planning**

Some projects allocated funding requires immediate delivery. However, some projects will take longer to plan and move from proposal to implementation. In order to match organisational capacity to delivery some projects will not be able to start until others have completed. As such the spend profile of endorsed projects should be included over the future years when they will be delivered, and it is not expected that every approved project will deliver in the current or subsequent financial year.

### **On-going development of the approach**

The approach is designed to evolve over time, as new proposals for investment are developed, and existing budgets are reprioritised. The process will give decision makers the opportunity update past decisions in the light of new opportunities. Officers will work with members to develop the corporate investment plan in the coming months.

### **PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS**

**Back to Business Cabinet Report November 2020**  
**Back to Business Cabinet Report February 2021**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

None.

### **APPENDICES**

**Annex 1: Back to Business Plan Update**  
**Annex 2: Corporate Plan Themes and Priorities**  
**Annex 3: Corporate Investment Plan Proposals**

### **REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

<b>Name</b>	Lee Heley Richard Barrett
<b>Job Title</b>	Corporate Director Project Delivery Assistant Director Finance and IT
<b>Email/Telephone</b>	<a href="mailto:lheley@tendringdc.gov.uk">lheley@tendringdc.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk">rbarrett@tendringdc.gov.uk</a>



## Annex 1: Back to Business Update

Action	Budget	Timescales	Progress
Offer engagement, support and <b>outreach services to businesses</b> for a period of three years.	£100,000 (Economic Growth Budgets)	April 2021 to Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist provider Colbea contracted to 2024 and running services to support businesses in Tendring.</li> <li>• Since the start of the contract in April 2021 up to the end of December 2021, 91 local firms supported.</li> <li>• 54 businesses have been supported in providing a business plan and 23 a future strategy.</li> <li>• 26% of businesses are from the creative and cultural sector.</li> <li>• 60% of businesses are pre-start and new businesses supporting signs of recovery from the pandemic.</li> <li>• 76% of businesses are sole traders.</li> </ul>
Provide <b>e-commerce packages</b> for up to 20 Tendring businesses to provide an online ordering and payment service for their customers.	£50,000	May-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital support offered by SELEP and Colbea to Tendring firms.</li> </ul>
Deliver the new covered market and Workspace scheme in Jaywick Sands.	£2m (separate budget)	Completion by February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding secured from SELEP for the project.</li> <li>• Building and grounds designed by HAT projects.</li> <li>• Tenders received well above budget. TDC has invested further funding.</li> <li>• Essex County Council approached for additional funding.</li> <li>• If funding received, estimated start on site March 2022 and completion November 2022.</li> </ul>
Review governance arrangements for <b>procurement to maximise benefit to Tendring</b> , e.g. employee local people, apprenticeships, and using Tendring district supply chains where possible.	£0	April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurements for Starlings and Jaywick WorkSpace trialed criteria for social value to Tendring.</li> <li>• Local Government Association contracted consultants reviewing procurement data to test areas for new local spend.</li> <li>• New procurement arrangement developed with Essex</li> </ul>

			County Council.
Expedite the existing ' <b>Starlings</b> ' project for a new car park / events space in Dovercourt town centre.	£1.5m (separate budget)	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpark and events spaces designed.</li> <li>• Planning permission sought and granted for project.</li> <li>• Tender and procurement completed.</li> <li>• Additional funding agreed by Cabinet and contract due to be let.</li> <li>• Estimated start on site March 2022 and completion July 2022.</li> </ul>
Work with partners, including Hutchinson Ports to present a compelling case for developing Harwich International as one of the Government's nominated <b>Freeports</b> , following EU Exit.	Funded through separate budget	Submission by 5 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bid submitted to and approved by Government.</li> <li>• Outline Business Case submitted and approved by Government.</li> <li>• Freeport East Tax sites designated by Government and enshrined in law.</li> <li>• Final Business Case due for submission April 2022.</li> </ul>
Work with partners to deliver an <b>art sculpture trail for Tendring</b> , to encourage active travel and drive footfall to local businesses.	£100,000	Jul-Sep 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sculpture trail 'Octopus Ahoy!' with 30 large 4 foot x 4 foot sculptures across the district.</li> <li>• 10,000+ downloads of the Octopus Ahoy app.</li> <li>• 103,000 scans of the sculpture QR codes.</li> <li>• Over 22 million steps achieved on the sculpture trail.</li> <li>• Sculptures auctioned for charity.</li> </ul>
<b>Provide redundant Council IT equipment to disadvantaged young people.</b>	£7,000	Apr 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In April 2021 the Council donated 272 council devices (54 tablets, 43 laptops and 175 towers) to the successful scheme led by Essex County Council to support children study, at nil cost to TDC.</li> </ul>

<p>Explore options to allocate additional funding towards local organisations providing <b>mental health services to young people</b></p>	<p>£30,000</p>	<p>Apr 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions in progress with Teen Talk and proposals for grants developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Extend current support to young people and families to additional areas of district.</li> <li>○ Engage with secondary schools to provide early intervention work.</li> <li>○ Support for identified young people moving from children's to adult mental health services.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Submit a funding bid to <b>DWP</b> to meet the cost of two full time posts for 12 months to deliver <b>targeted support to residents</b> to move them into employment, work experience or training.</p>	<p>£0</p>	<p>Jun 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bid submitted twice to DWP.</li> <li>• The bid was unsuccessful as it was not possible for TDC to meet DWP's significant monitoring requirements.</li> </ul>
<p>Investigate <b>relaxing the savings target</b> included in the Long Term Forecast for 2021/22 to ensure there is no potential adverse impact on the delivery of services to residents during the pandemic.</p>	<p>£0</p>	<p>Apr 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Savings target for 2021/22 removed from the financial forecast.</li> <li>• Council still built £239,000 of savings into the overall detailed budget for 2021/22, with a further £223,000 identified in 2022/23 as part of the first steps in developing a zero based approach.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners to apply for funding for the work of <b>the Digital Access Team</b> (who operate across Colchester) to provide Tendring residents with the knowledge to go online with confidence, given the rise of on-line life during the pandemic.</p>	<p>£0 Separate budget</p>	<p>Mar 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding from Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and health partners for the year 2021/22.</li> <li>• Team has targeted their support to people facing health inequalities or who are socially isolated.</li> <li>• Shortlisted for UK IT Industry Awards in the Project Excellence category.</li> <li>• The Team is continuing through 2022/23 with most funding awarded through the CCG and Colchester Borough Council. TDC may need to contribute next financial year.</li> </ul>

Add value to the Council's <b>Career Track Programme</b> to improve the quality of apprenticeship schemes for young people.	£30,000	Jun 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten employers to receive a £2,000 wage incentive. Two employers have been identified, and a third is currently advertising an apprenticeship role</li> <li>• For the purposes of training and upskilling, OneFile (an online app portal and eportfolio system) has been purchased, and training is underway ready to go live in March 2022.</li> <li>• One laptop and ipad purchased to provide resource for apprentices in small settings e.g. one to one assessments.</li> </ul>
Roll out the <b>Primary School Wellbeing Hubs</b> across 16 schools to support the health of the District.	£5,000	Sep 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing Hubs launched as planned in summer term 2021</li> <li>• Twenty two Hubs now operating across Tendring and Colchester.</li> </ul>
<b>Tendring Education Strategic Board.</b> The Strategic Board currently has four task and finish groups working across a number of education themes.	£0	To be determined by national guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board has four key priorities, task and finish groups established and work in progress.</li> <li>• The Board agreed an additional priority in June 2021 for early years speech, language and communication as part of the Department for Education's Opportunity Area, including twinning arrangement with Ipswich and Norwich.</li> </ul>
Introduce a <b>Memorandum of Understanding with Universities</b> , to improve education opportunities for Tendring residents.	£0	Sep 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorandum of Understandings in place with Essex University and Anglia Ruskin University</li> </ul>
Work with partners to publish an action plan on the <b>wider determinants of health</b> across Tendring and inform future decision making. This project will look at health inequalities and innovative employment opportunities across the District.	£5,000 (further DWP funding)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Alliance Board and Committee have approved proposed spending of £400 000 for health inequalities which the Clinical Commissioning Group and East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation Trust provided to the Council.</li> <li>• Proposed spending plans shared at a Council All Members Briefing.</li> </ul>

Identify opportunities to establish ' <b>quiet spaces</b> ' for children / young adults to <b>study</b> remotely if they cannot easily do so from home.	Costs to be determined through the study	Study completed Jun 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools returned to in-school teaching.</li> </ul>
Undertake a corporate <b>review of the Council's operational assets</b> to prioritise spending from an associated reserve over the next few years.	£0	Dec 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A programme of detailed efficiency surveys is complete.</li> <li>Circa £1m of recommended works identified to improve Council assets, reduce carbon emissions and increase efficiency.</li> <li>Projects under evaluation by the Facilities Managers to decide which are practical to move forward.</li> </ul>
<b>Develop an investment plan</b> during 2021/22 which will be directly linked to the Council's budget and evolving financial position. To be supported by the reprioritisation of budgets / existing funding and/or as part of the long term forecast	£0	Apr 2020/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate investment plan included within this report.</li> </ul>
Work with local organisations to identify where an <b>asset transfer</b> could maximise the benefit to the district and local outcomes.	£0	Dec 2021 (scope)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A schedule of 25 properties identified</li> <li>Work on the disposal processes is under way.</li> </ul>
Work with the users to <b>refurbish Clacton Skate Park</b> .	£ 250,000	Sep 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A specification completed in consultation with users.</li> <li>Jupiter Play have completed a plan for the wider site.</li> <li>Implementation paused while the Clacton Leisure Centre refurbishment was on site (to Dec 2021).</li> <li>Timeline for completion now Summer 2022.</li> </ul>
Following the successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund deliver a project to celebrate the <b>150th anniversary of Clacton</b> , which falls in 2021. This will provide new heritage features on the seafront.	£250,000 Separate Budget	Apr 2021 to Mar 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new Clacton Heritage Trail installed</li> <li>Information boards on Clacton's history from Jaywick Sands, along the promenade and into the town centre, up to the railway station and back down to the named beaches.</li> <li>Twenty three bays named along the seafront</li> </ul>

<p>Work with the Football Foundation and Essex Football Association to secure match funding for <b>a new 3G pitch at Clacton Leisure Centre</b> to be complete in summer 2021 and explore further potential for pitches at Harwich/Dovercourt and Frinton/Walton</p>	<p>Separate budget</p>	<p>Sept 2021 Sept 2022 Sept 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match funding secured for a new '3G' pitch at Clacton Leisure Centre.</li> <li>• The Council is agreeing a Basic Asset Protection Agreement with Network Rail, prior to works on the pitch.</li> <li>• Harwich/Dovercourt: work underway with Sigma Trust and the Football Foundation to explore options for location</li> <li>• Frinton /Walton: location to be determined.</li> </ul>
<p>Continue to work to utilise <b>funds secured from the Local Delivery Pilots project, to improve activity in our communities.</b></p>	<p>Separate budget</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 30 small grants approved to fund projects to increase the physical activity of inactive people.</li> <li>• Total spend of circa £850,000 has levered in external funding totalling £3.1m to date</li> <li>• Larger projects include cycling infrastructure and access to equipment and maintenance through Essex Pedal Power, as well as contributions to CVST to build capacity, and Teen Talk to further enable their work with local young people.</li> </ul>
<p>Reintroduce a <b>comprehensive GP referral scheme</b> on a trial/fixed term basis, to tackle physical and mental health.</p>	<p>£30,000</p>	<p>Subject to national guidance. Anticipated Spring 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has agreed to re-introduce GP referrals</li> <li>• The scheme is being configured with the Council's Leisure Centre systems.</li> <li>• The scheme will be rolled out early 2022.</li> </ul>
<p>Implement a <b>'Celebrate Tendring' initiative in 2021</b> – to include the Illuminate Festival (Harwich) and Clacton's 150 year anniversary. Work with external organisers to facilitate a wider series of quality local events which (subject to national guidance) will take place throughout the 2021 season, 'bookended' by Harwich Illuminate and the Clacton Airshow.</p>	<p>Separate budget</p>	<p>Timescales determined by national guidance on mass participation events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clacton 150 Anniversary Flights successful in August 2021</li> <li>• Illuminate Festival cancelled in 2021 due to national restrictions.</li> <li>• The Women's Tour of Britain came to Tendring in October.</li> <li>• The project to install heritage boards, benches and audio posts was completed on schedule.</li> </ul>

<p>Work with national and international partners to reinvigorate plans for <b>Mayflower 400</b>, to welcome the postponed visitor tours from the US, Holland and UK in 2021. Extend the lease for <b>Christopher Jones house</b> until the end of 2021, to ensure visits to the attraction will be maintained throughout the year.</p>	£6,000	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Exhibition setting out the history of the Mayflower has been given a home in the Harwich Museum.</li> <li>• The lease on Christopher Jones house is due for extension, with tours of the house by appointment.</li> </ul>
<p>Bring forward proposals for <b>improvements to the District's seafront offer</b>. In Clacton/Holland on Sea; Harwich / Dovercourt Bay; Brightlingsea; Walton on the Naze; and Frinton on Sea.</p>	£100,000	June 2021 an onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with Ward members took place in 2021</li> <li>• Project leads identified and agreed with National Lottery Heritage to progress</li> <li>• Implementation planned during 2022</li> </ul>
<p>Provide <b>seed funding for local events organisers</b> to facilitate a high quality programme to support the Tendring tourism economy in its recovery.</p>	£35,000	Timescales determined by national guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has offered Event Grants since July 2021</li> <li>• The Council has granted £22,000 to 26 organisations.</li> </ul>
<p>Provide <b>free Leisure Centre vouchers</b> to all residents, to support activity levels.</p>		As soon as possible after national restrictions are lifted on Leisure Centres re-opening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The free activity vouchers scheme will be rolled out in March 2022 now that the Clacton Leisure Centre upgrades are complete.</li> </ul>

## **Annex 2: Corporate Plan Priorities**

- **Delivering High Quality Services**  
Modern, high quality buildings and facilities for customers and staff • 24 hour a day digital services – My Tendring • Minimise waste; Maximise recycling • Proactive Planning Service • Public spaces to be proud of • Effective regulation and enforcement • Carbon Neutral by 2030
- **Community Leadership Through Partnerships**  
Health and wellbeing - for effective services and improved public health • Education - for improved outcomes • Law and Order - for a safer community • Sport England and Active Essex- for physical activity and wellbeing • Joined-up public services for the benefit of our residents and businesses • Influence and lobby - for Tendring's future
- **Building Sustainable Communities for the Future**  
North Essex Garden Communities • Jaywick Sands - more and better housing; supporting the community • Vibrant Town Centres • Building and managing our own homes • Effective planning policies
- **Strong Finances and Governance**  
Balanced annual budget • 10 year financial plan • Effective and positive Governance • Strong and focused leadership • Use assets to support priorities
- **A Growing and Inclusive Economy**  
Develop and attract new businesses • Support existing businesses • More and better jobs • Promote Tendring's tourism , cultural and heritage offers • Maximise our coastal and seafront opportunities

### Annex 3: Corporate Investment Plan: Project Pipeline examples

Example of the Corporate Investment Plan Project Pipeline, including proposals from Full Council 15 February 2022. The full project pipeline will be agreed at the first meeting of the Corporate Investment Board in March 2022.

**Green: Projects in delivery. Amber: Funded projects in development. Grey: Project proposals under consideration**

Project	Start	End	Corporate Budget	Notes
<b>Projects in Delivery</b>				
<b>Starlings Project</b>	2019	2022	£1,867,383	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create a new events space / carpark including EV charging points, regenerating Dovercourt town centre.</li> <li>Project agreed and funded by Cabinet January 2022</li> </ul>
<b>Cremators</b>	2021	2022	£1.539m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To replace the Council's two cremators.</li> <li>Project agreed and funded by Cabinet</li> </ul>
<b>Jaywick Sands Market and Managed Workspace</b>	2020	2022	£430,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a covered market, community garden, and managed workspace in Jaywick Sands.</li> <li>£4.4m total project cost. Funded by ECC and SELEP.</li> <li>Awaiting approval of additional ECC contribution.</li> </ul>
<b>Jaywick Sands Place Plan</b>	2018	2023	£150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A spatial plan for Jaywick Sands that sets the framework for future development.</li> <li>HAT projects contracted to complete the Plan.</li> <li>£80,000 spent by 2020 and a further £70,000 allocated.</li> </ul>
<b>Projects in development</b>				
<b>Honeycroft redevelopment</b>	2020	Date	£4m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To build new council homes in Lawford.</li> <li>Funding is allocated within Housing Revenue Account borrowing, with options to explore external funding</li> </ul>

<b>Garden Community</b>	2020	2026	£1.3m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet agreed to set aside £1.3m to invest in future development in the Garden Community, outside the statutory plan making process. Council continues to work with partners to deliver this scheme.</li> </ul>
<b>Town Centre Levelling Up</b>	2020	2026	£2.295m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet agreed to set aside funding towards Town Centre improvements in Clacton.</li> <li>• Matched to Essex County Council's £5.87m funding and the potential for £20m from Levelling Up Fund.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposals under consideration</b>				
<b>Milton Road Carpark Demolition</b>	2022	2023	£140,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To demolish the Milton Road Carpark in Dovercourt once the Starlings Project is complete in preparation for future development.</li> </ul>
<b>Milton Road Development</b>	2023	2025	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop housing on the Milton Road site.</li> </ul>
<b>Jubilee Scholarships</b>	2022	2023	£200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support young people from Tendring to pursue technical, artistic or academic qualifications who might not otherwise be able to do so.</li> <li>• Proposed at Council 15/02/22.</li> <li>• Working Member Group to develop the proposal to be set up within 3 months</li> </ul>
<b>Capital support scheme</b>	2022	2023	£150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support capital projects across the District</li> <li>• Proposed at Council 15/02/22.</li> <li>• Member Group with Town, Parish / unparished councillors to develop the proposal, to be set up within 3 months</li> </ul>
<b>Member Small Grants Scheme</b>	2022	2023	£48,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members to award grants of £1,000 to support the Queens' Platinum Jubilee Celebrations within their wards.</li> <li>• Extension of existing member small grants scheme.</li> </ul>

<b>Member Small Grants Scheme</b>	2022	2023	£144,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members to award grants of £3,000 to Tendring organisations supporting residents with the cost of living.</li> <li>• Extension of existing member small grants scheme.</li> </ul>
<b>Transition of Joint Use Centres</b>	2022	2023	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the transition of the joint use centres to community use run by the Sigma Trust</li> </ul>
<b>Jaywick Housing Conditions Survey</b>	2022	2024	£500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has undertaken a house condition survey in Jaywick and work remains to identify the response.</li> </ul>
<b>Homelessness Early Intervention Officer</b>	2023	2026	£150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider the extension of the current fixed term contract of this role.</li> </ul>
<b>Seafront Enhancements</b>	2022	2024	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To consider opportunities in conjunction with seaside communities (including Town / Parish Council's)</li> <li>• To develop funding options e.g. expansion of beach hut provision.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Convenience Improvements</b>	2022	2023	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop options via the Public Convenience Strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Extend Pedal Power</b>	2022	2025	£400,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore options to extend the Jaywick cycling pedal power scheme within the District.</li> <li>• To seek external funding from the Local Delivery Pilot.</li> </ul>
<b>Disabled Bike Scheme</b>	2022	2025	£300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help disabled people to start cycling by running a specialist bike scheme.</li> <li>• To seek external funding from the Local Delivery Pilot.</li> </ul>