



We are Colchester



Colchester
City Council

We Are Colchester Board Meeting

28 November 2024

Decisions & Actions

Board Present:

Simon Blaxill - Chair, Cllr David King – Colchester City Council, Mark Jarman-Howe - St Helena, Simon Mead - Colbea, Cllr Lee Scott – Essex County Council, Cristina Huddleston – Community360.

Board Apologies:

Pam Donnelly – CCC, Pam Cox MP, Alison Andrea – Colchester Institute, Alison Jennings – Homes England, Laura Eardley – Hiscox, Lucy Johnson – University of Essex, Andy Burgess – ECC.

Others Attending:

Clare Ratcliffe – CCC, Matt Sterling – CCC, Matthew Brown – CCC, Michelle Tarbun – CCC, Rory Doyle – CCC, Ellen Clark-Romain – ECC, Glenn Crickmore – ECC, Jason Lowe – North Essex Heritage, Irene Kettle – North Essex Heritage, Richard Kendrew – CCC, Amie Hall – ECC, Alisha Flaherty – ECC, Simon Thorp – CCC.

Other Apologies:

Lindsay Barker – CCC.

1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest

- a. Apologies** were noted from Pam Donnelly, Pam Cox MP, Alison Andrea, Alison Jennings, Laura Eardley, Lucy Johnson and Andy Burgess.
- b.** There were no **declarations of interest**.

2. Project Spotlight – Heart of Greenstead Hub and Liveable Neighbourhood

- a. Board **noted** a detailed update on the delivery timeline with costs, risk management and details of any additional secured Integrated Care Board funding. The programme for the scheme has also been shared with Heart of Greenstead board members.
- b. The Integrated Care Board (Health) additional funding business case is progressing, with an approval decision expected in December 2024. If approved, the additional ICB funding will be an enabler of improved health provision and a larger Hub. Commencement of works on the GP provision at St Edmund House is expected to start in January 2025 if funding is approved.
- c. Work on the financial modelling, site due diligence (Structural and Legal surveys), stakeholder engagement and future system knitting and governance are continuing.
- d. A rent and lease structure review is also ongoing with Colchester City Council and Essex County Council Estates Teams.
- e. Board **noted** that all Town Deal funding is expected to be committed in 2025.
- f. Board **noted** that the overall RAG status for this project continues to be Amber.
- g. Board **directed** that costs be closely managed and updates provided accordingly at future meetings.
- h. Liveable Neighbourhood - A timeline update was **noted** for delivery of the School Street pilot, with an update on building connections between Colchester Institute and Essex Pedal Power to be provided at a later date. On site works to deliver the School Street works are scheduled to take place in February 2025 (half term).

3. Progress and Risk Management – other projects

The Board also **noted** the following updates:

- a. **Holy Trinity Church.** Board **noted** a detailed delivery timeline and update on risk management to be provided on the Heritage Fund bid and tenancy arrangements. The Heritage Fund application is expected to be submitted in May 2025 with completion of all works and re-opening of the building expected by late 2026/early 2027. No questions were raised.
- b. **Holy Trinity Square.** Board **noted** a detailed delivery timeline including planned contractor appointment prior to commencement of works in late 2025 and update on risk management. No questions were raised.
- c. **Transformed Youth Facilities.** Board **noted** a detailed update, including the re-tendering of Townhouse Youth Centre works with contractor appointment by late 2024, on site March 2025 and completion of works by May/June 2025. Engagement with young people continues and acoustic panelling in the Sports Hall is now expected to be delivered within budget. Works at Stanway and Highwoods Youth Centres have been completed. A question was raised by Cllr King regarding usage levels at Highwoods being affected by user groups moving to alternative premises which will be followed up with Cllr King by Essex Youth Service.
- d. **St Nicholas Square.** Board **noted** an update on progress and lessons learned to date. The Christmas break is currently underway with work resuming in January 2025 an completion in March 2025. No questions were raised.

e. Jumbo and Balkerne Gate phase 2. Board noted progress regarding planning application and mitigation of the peregrine falcon nesting issue. It also noted that Heritage Fund were scheduled to meet on 10 December 2024 with confirmation of any award expected within a couple of days of that. No questions were raised.

f. Walking and Cycling Route. Board noted a detailed update on the timeline, risks and mitigations for the project. Re-procurement of route sections 1-3 (East Hill) is in progress, with on site works planned to commence by June 2025 and quality to be maintained. Route sections 4-7 (off road through the Moors) are subject to Safer Streets funding or value engineering, with highway adoption continuing by ECC to enable permitted development without a planning application needed. Route section 8 (Colne Causeway) has been completed. A question was raised regarding confidence in and political support for the revised design. It was confirmed that there was confidence in the revised design and that potentially there may not be a need for a new traffic regulation order (TRO). However, costs are subject to the outcome of re-tendering and this may lead to value engineering of other route sections.

g. 5G. Board noted an updated timeline. On site infrastructure works started in September 2024, with estimated completion April 2025 for the build phase. Completion date for the AR/VR visitor experience phase will follow. No questions were raised.

h. Digital Forum. Board noted an update on delivery timeline and concession arrangements. A concession agreement has been reached with Colbea, who will act as managing operator with Colchester City Council owning the building. Colbea have committed £25k capital in support of fit out of the Digital Forum. Completion and fit-out of building and onboarding of tenants Jan-May 2025. Opening and launch May/June 2025. No questions were raised.

4. Progress Report & Engagement Update

- a. Board **noted** a programme report including programme-wide progress and planned activities, key risks including cost mitigations and contingencies, government 2024-25 Half-Year Monitoring Return submission and current project timelines, milestones and risk management and communications and engagement activity. No questions were raised.

5. Levelling Up Programme

- a. Board noted an update on Colchester's Levelling Up programme. Good progress with design work for **St Botolph's Circus** scheme has been made, with building scheduled to take place between January 2026 and March 2027.
- b. Design work is underway for **St Botolph's Quarter** work including a link to railway station, public realm, enhancements at Priory Gardens and a new route through the City Wall. Build time is October 2025 to October 2026.
- c. **Kerbless Streets** are judged by Team Colchester Regeneration Board to be unaffordable to deliver and permission is being sought from government to reallocate monies to other St Botolph's schemes.
- d. No questions arose regarding this update.

6. Decisions and points noted

- a. Heart of Greenstead. Board **agreed** that it supported the detailed design, delivery timeline, key project milestones and costs for the project. Board also **directed** that updates on progress and costs be presented at future meetings.
- b. Board **noted** programme-wide progress and planned activities.
- c. Board **noted** key risks including cost mitigations and contingencies.
- d. Board **noted** the government 2024-25 Half-Year Monitoring Return submitted.
- e. Board **noted** current project timelines, milestones and risk management.

7. Next meeting – 27 February 2025

Future meetings:

22 May 2025

21 August 2025

26 November 2025

25 February 2026

Meetings will be held on Microsoft Teams unless otherwise agreed.