



We are Colchester



Colchester  
City Council

# We Are Colchester Board Meeting

9 May 2024

## Decisions & Actions

**Board Present:**

Simon Blaxill (Chair), Pam Donnelly - CCC, Alison Andreas – Colchester Institute, Alison Jennings – Homes England, Cllr David King - CCC, Lucy Johnson – University of Essex, Tracy Rudling – Community360, Simon Mead – COLBEA, Will Quince MP.

**Board Apologies:**

Laura Eardley - Hiscox, Steve Evison - ECC, Helen Russell - SELEP, Shona Johnstone – Homes England, Mark Jarman-Howe - North-East Essex Alliance, Cllr Lee Scott – ECC.

**Others Attending:**

Matt Sterling – CCC, Rory Doyle – CCC, Michelle Tarbun – CCC, Savannah Rate – ECC, Andrew Small – CCC, Richard Kendrew – CCC, Simon Hall - North Essex Heritage, Zoe Skelding – Purcell, Matthew Brown – CCC, Louise Denyer – ECC, Amie Hall – ECC, Clare Ratcliffe – CCC, Simon Thorp – CCC

Apologies were received from Lindsay Barker – CCC Programme Sponsor.

1. **Apologies, Declarations of Interest**

- a. **Apologies** were noted from Laura Eardley - Hiscox, Steve Evison - ECC, Helen Russell - SELEP, Shona Johnstone – Homes England, Mark Jarman-Howe - North-East Essex Alliance and Cllr Lee Scott – ECC.
- b. There were no **declarations of interest**.

## 2. Progress Report & Engagement Update

- a. Board **noted** a Programme Update and appendices providing updates on Essex Pedal Power and Essex County Hospital, circulated in advance. The Programme Update also included a link to a detailed annual update provided to Colchester City Council's Scrutiny Panel, detailing project level commentaries on cost risks and contingencies. Such details of cost risks and contingencies will be provided in Programme Updates on an ongoing basis as agreed.
- b. Board **noted** an update on progress highlights, headlines, risk management and a life of programme overview of delivery plans and milestones for all projects. Spend remains behind budget due to delayed drawdown of budget for some projects.
- c. Board **noted** an update on engagement activity.

### 3. Risk Management – Heart of Greenstead

Heart of Greenstead project is made up of three elements – Tamarisk Way, Essex Pedal Power and Liveable Neighbourhood.

Board **noted** the current RAG status for the Tamarisk Way element of the project: Delivery - Amber, Time – Amber, Cost – Red. A detailed update on Delivery, Time and Cost risk levels and actions being taken was provided. A high-level timeline for the delivery of the multi-use community hub was also shared (May 2024-April 2027, with the key Town Deal milestone for committed spend of this funding stream by March 2026).

Board also **noted** that initial design options developed by the architect when costed by the Quantity Surveyor have come in significantly over budget. Subsequently the architect developed a number of further options. These subsequent options fell short of delivering all the key project requirements. Consequently, further or alternative funding needs to be identified to meet all the key requirements as a future phase. Work is taking place to support Greenstead Community Association with capacity building, skills development and business planning. Alternative methods of delivery through a developer-contractor partnership are being explored (soft market testing phase underway) and the appointment of a specialist consultant to oversee cost modelling and need analysis are underway.

Board **noted** that Essex Pedal Power and Liveable Neighbourhood elements of the project are Delivery RAG Status – Green.

#### 4. Risk Management – other projects

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

- a. St Nicholas Square. On site works started in February 2024 and are progressing as planned. Working with ECC to finalise the permission to start work on the eastern side at end of May. Completion expected September 2024.
- b. Jumbo. Having reached the RIBA 2 stage of their design work, North Essex Heritage are now seeking to mitigate a projected cost increase which has emerged by value engineering, negotiating with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and increasing fundraising. Stage 2 NLHF bid scheduled for July/August 2024. A new website has also been launched.
- c. Holy Trinity Church. Following the award of NLHF Round 1 funding, preparation of full NLHF Round 2 bid is now underway. Specialists are being appointed to help prepare the Round 2 bid using funding from the Round 1 award.
- d. Programme-wide costs. The full most recent DLUHC monitoring return was shared in advance of last Board meeting, which includes the Risk Register and a detailed breakdown of risks and mitigations to project level. Colchester City Council Scrutiny Panel received an annual update on the Town Deal Programme on 12 March 2024. We Are Colchester's Board Chair attended.

## 5. Project spotlight – Jumbo Water Tower

The Board **noted** a presentation from North Essex Heritage and Purcell outlining progress and planned activities for Jumbo Water Tower. Floor plans for ground, first, service, engineer's, tank, mezzanine, cupola and roof were shared.

North, East, South and West elevation drawings were also presented.

Details of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) were summarised, encompassing RIBA Stage 2 The Maintenance and Management Plan (MMP) was also discussed. The Tank study was outlined, alongside the Activity statement, Funding strategy, Business planning and viability.

The current focus and next steps for the project were also provided. Next steps include submission of Pre-App (May 2024), agreeing budget, value engineering/scope reduction, fundraising, ongoing consultation (Historic England, Colchester City Council, Colchester Civic Society, The Victorian Society), RIBA Stage 3, meetings with potential operators and a planning Submission in August 2024.

A delivery phase programme and milestones was shared, which includes an intended stage 2 NLHF submission in mid-August 2024 and opening in May 2027.

Board noted significant and detailed progress alongside cost challenges being managed and **thanked** North Essex Heritage and Purcell for the presentation.

## 6. Levelling Up Programme

- a. The Board **noted** an update summarising progress across the 4 work streams - Essex County Council St Botolph's Highway Scheme, Vineyard Street Mixed Use Scheme, Workspaces and Shopfronts and London Continental Railways Britannia Way Mixed Use Scheme.
- b. Essex County Council St Botolph's Scheme: design work progressing. DHLUC approval for time scale beyond LUF timing awaited. London Continental Railways Britannia Way: now in contract and appointing specialists for design work. Kerbless Streets: DLUHC approval of scope adjustment to enable completion granted and now waiting for ECC design proposal. Workspaces and Shopfronts: Second round of applications opened.



## 7. Decisions and points noted

- a. Heart of Greenstead – multi-use community hub next steps and RAG status. Board **noted** that several design options were currently under investigation aimed at ensuring a viable scheme could be delivered on time and budget. Board were unable to endorse a preferred design option as this has yet to be determined. It was **agreed** that a preferred viable option would be brought to Board no later than August 2024 for review. Board **agreed** that the overall RAG status for Heart of Greenstead project should therefore be reported as Amber for the purposes of DLUHC monitoring return in May 2024.
- b. Board also **noted** a programme progress and engagement update (including project level cost risks and contingencies shared in advance) and programme-wide risk management.
- c. Board **noted** a Levelling Up Programme update.
- d. Board **noted** a Jumbo Water Tower project spotlight.
- e. Board **noted** that a draft DLUHC monitoring return was in preparation for the period October 2023-March 2024 and would be circulated for review and comment before submission.

## **8. Next meeting - 22 August 2024**

Future meetings:

28 November 2024

27 February 2025

22 May 2025