

**KEY OBJECTIVES 2010/11 – PROGRESS REPORT (6 DECEMBER 2010)**

<b>Key Objective</b>	<b>Action(s)</b>	<b>Target(s)/How Measured</b>	<b>Progress (30 September 2010)</b>
(1) To maintain the Council's sound financial position;	(a) To increase the Council Tax for 2011/12 by no more than 2.5%;	The level of the Council Tax increase for 2011/12;	<p>Band 'D' Council Tax was increased by 1.5% for 2010/11, following increases of 2.5% in the preceding two years.</p> <p>The Government has made it clear that it expects Council Tax levels to be frozen for 2011/12 and 2012/13, although beyond this period it is assumed that future increases will not exceed 2.5%. The Department for Communities and Local Government has announced that a new grant scheme will be available for all billing and major precepting authorities that freeze or reduce Council Tax for 2011/12, who will receive additional funding next year equivalent to the raising of the 2010/11 Council Tax by 2.5%.</p> <p>The latest version of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is based on no increase in Council Tax in either 2011/12 or 2012/13.</p>
	(b) To ensure that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy delivers a balanced budget in its final year;	The success of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in delivering a balanced budget for 2013/14;	This latest version of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy does not deliver a balanced budget in its final year, but this will be re-visited before the budget for 2011/12 is set in February 2011.
	(c) To ensure that the General Fund Reserve Balance falls to no lower	The predicted level of the General Fund Reserve Balance for 2013/14;	The predicted level of the General Fund Reserve Balance is still

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	than 25% of Net Budget Requirement;		planned to exceed 25% of the Net Budget Requirement at the end of 2013/14.
	(d) To continue to achieve high levels of revenue collection, as measured by Local Performance Indicators 14 and 15;	<p>The achievement of target performance for Local Performance Indicator 14 (Council Tax) and Local Performance Indicator 15 (National Non-Domestic Rates) for 2010/11 by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to collect 97.8% of the Council Tax due for 2010/11;</li> <li>• to collect 98% of the National Non-Domestic Rates due for 2010/11;</li> </ul>	<p>Collection rates so far in 2010/11 are on target to achieve year-end targets. Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>LPI 14 – 52.43% LPI 15 – 57%</p> <p>Although 0.04% down on the same period in 2009/10, Council Tax collection is running broadly at the same level as last year. The target for 2010/11(97.8%) requires a 0.3% improvement on last year, and collection and recovery procedures are in place to collect outstanding debts.</p> <p>National Non-Domestic Rate collection is 0.11% down on the same period in 2009/10. There have been several new backdated assessments which have recently entered the valuation list and are yet to be collected. The target for 2010/11(98%) requires a 0.44% increase in performance on last year, and billing and recovery procedures are in place to collect outstanding debts.</p>

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<p>(2) To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources;</p>	<p>(a) To achieve an overall score of 3 (Performing Well) in the CAA Organisational Assessment for 2009/10 (to be undertaken in 2010/11);</p>	<p>The achievement of an overall score of 3 (Performing Well) for the CAA Organisational Assessment for 2009/10;</p>	<p>The coalition Government announced the cessation of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process in June 2010, and all work on the assessment for 2009/10 ceased at that time. As a result, the joint inspectorates did not update the assessments published for 2008/09, or issue scores for the Use Of Resources and Managing Performance CAA themes for 2009/10. The coalition Government has yet to announce proposals for any replacement performance management framework for local authorities.</p>
	<p>(b) To achieve overall improvement in respect of the Council's Key Performance Indicators for each of the four years from 2010/11 to 2013/14;</p>	<p>The achievement of a percentage improvement rate of 70% in respect of the Council's Key Performance Indicators for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;</p>	<p>At the end of the second quarter of the year, 21 (72.41%) of the Council's quarterly monitored KPIs had achieved the performance target for 2010/11. Current performance against each of the KPIs will be reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 9 December 2010.</p> <p>Performance against National Indicator 195 is measured over three four-month periods (April-July, August-November and December-March) during the year, and results for the second period were not available at the time of the preparation of this report. It should also be noted that additional KPIs are subject to year-end reporting only, as little change is likely over</p>

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			<p>each three month quarterly period. The results of these additional</p> <p>A number of the Council's 31 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for 2010/11 are drawn from the National Indicator Set, which has been abolished by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with effect from April 2011. Management Board has considered the Council's future performance monitoring arrangements, and it is intended to continue to monitor and report performance against each of the KPIs for the remainder of the year, particularly given the use of certain indicators to measure performance against these Key Objectives.</p> <p>A report will be made to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 9 December 2010, identifying National Indicators that could be deleted from the KPI set for 2011/12 on the grounds that data collection is resource intensive or over burdensome, or where issues of limited value and validity have arisen in respect of data previously collected. This review will highlight ongoing and future activities in the areas where KPIs may be deleted, in order to ensure that the Council maintains appropriate focus on key areas in the absence of corporate</p>

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	(c) To continue to improve performance on the processing times of all categories of planning applications, as measured by National Indicator 157;	<p>The achievement of target performance for National Indicator 157 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NI 157(a) (Major Applications) 81% within target time (thirteen weeks);</li> <li>• NI 157(b) (Minor Applications) 80% within target time (eight weeks);</li> <li>• NI 157(c) (Other Applications) 94% within target time (eight weeks);</li> </ul>	<p>assessment or centralised performance reporting arrangements.</p> <p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>NI 157(a) - 92.86% NI 157(b) - 83.33% NI 157(c) - 92.51%</p> <p>Second quarter performance against National Indicators 157(a) and (b) is currently on target for the year. Performance against NI157(a) is volatile due to the low number of application submissions and the complexity of major applications. Performance against NI157(c) is slightly under target for the second quarter, although the consideration of fewer of this type of application by the Area Plans Sub-Committees would generate an improvement in performance.</p>
	(d) To further improve the Housing Repairs Service, primarily through the appointment of a private housing repairs management contractor, and to increase performance on repairs response times as measured by Local Performance Indicators 7, 8 and 9	(i) The appointment of a private repairs management contractor by 1 January 2011;	Good progress has been made with the formulation of a bespoke specification by the Council's procurement consultant for this unique 'in-sourcing' contract. The process was due to be finalised by the Housing Repairs Advisory Group (comprising members and representatives) in November 2010 prior to tenders being invited, and it

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		<p>(ii) The achievement of target response and satisfaction levels for Local Performance Indicators 7, 8, 9 and 10 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LPI 7 (Emergency Repairs) 99% within target time (twenty-four hours);</li> <li>• LPI 8 (Urgent Repairs) 95% within target time (five working days);</li> <li>• LPI 9 (Routine Repairs) 95% within target time (six weeks);</li> <li>• LPI 10 (Repairs Satisfaction) 98%;</li> </ul>	<p>is anticipated that the contract will commence from 1 April 2011.</p> <p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>LPI 7 – 98% LPI 8 – 57% LPI 9 – 89% LPI 10 – 99%</p> <p>Despite staff shortages at managerial level due to the introduction of the new management structure for the Housing Repairs Service, and with the exception of LPI 8 (Urgent Repairs), repairs performance continues to improve compared to previous years. Although it appears that only 57% of urgent repairs were undertaken within five days, the average time to complete urgent repairs overall was five days.</p>
	<p>(e) To further improve street scene standards (litter, graffiti, detritus, fly-posting, fly-tipping) across the district, as measured by National Indicators 195 and 196;</p>	<p>The achievement of target performance for National Indicators 195 and 196 (Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness) for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NI 195(a) (Litter) 10%</li> <li>• NI 195(b) (Detritus) 13%</li> <li>• NI 195(c) (Graffiti) 0%</li> </ul>	<p>Performance against National Indicator 195 (a)-(d) is measured over three four-month periods (April-July, August-November and December-March) during the year. The first of these monitoring periods was reported at the end of the first quarter (see below), but results for the second period were not available at the time of the preparation of this report, and will therefore be reported to the Finance and Performance</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NI 195(d) (Fly-Posting) 0%</li> <li>• NI 196 (Fly-Tipping) Level 2</li> </ul>	<p>Management Scrutiny Panel in February 2011. Performance to the end of the first monitoring period of the year was as follows:</p> <p>NI 195(a) - 9% (above target)  NI 195(b) - 8% (above target)  NI 195(c) - 0%  NI 195(d) - 0%</p> <p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year for NI 196 is Level 3 (below target) .</p> <p>The likelihood of meeting the year-end targets for these indicators remains uncertain. During the first six months of the year there have been improvements in performance against the litter and detritus elements of National Indicator 195 but, as the result of a fundamental review of the way data is collected and presented, the target for National Indicator 196 will not be met for the year. However, the Council has had some recent successful prosecutions and the Director of Environment and Street Scene is confident that the base position is understood.</p>
	(f) To fully embed the Council's Workforce Planning and Development arrangements within its business planning processes;	The full incorporation of Workforce Planning and Development arrangements within Directorate Business Plans for 2010/11 by 31 May 2010, resulting in:	Workforce information was initially issued to all Service Directors and Assistant Directors in December 2009. This process will be repeated again with updated information, in November 2010.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased understanding of workforce planning within directorates through appropriate training; and</li> <li>• the early identification at a strategic level, of staffing/training needs to be reflected in the annual Learning and Development Plan;</li> </ul>	<p>The Learning and Development Manager has met with each Directorate/Service Management Team, to discuss workforce development requirements for the Business Planning process for 2011/12, and information and templates in respect of workforce development are provided within the annual business planning guidance. If a suitable trainer can be commissioned, workshops to increase the understanding of workforce planning will take place before the end of 2010/11.</p>
	(g) To complete the prioritisation of the customer care improvements identified by the Customer Services Transformation Panel, and to develop an implementation programme of works;	(i) The agreement of customer care priorities by 30 June 2010;	<p>Delay in the agreement of customer care priorities has been experienced pending the outcome of the feasibility study into improvements to the benefits reception area at the Civic Offices, as a result of criticism around access raised by the Audit Commission in it's inspection of the benefits service in early 2010.</p> <p>Architects have been appointed to pursue the redesign of benefits reception area and have produced plans as part of a feasibility study to refurbish the existing reception area. Meetings with the architects have taken place and the receipt of costed options is currently awaited.</p> <p>The Avoidable Contact Working</p>



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			Party has yet to fully conclude its work around improvements to existing levels of poor telephone call signposting, although the data collection exercise for 2010/11 has recently commenced in a number of service areas.
		(ii) The agreement of funding and a programme of customer care improvement works, by 30 October 2010;	See progress in respect of Key Objective 2(g)(i) above.
	(h) To secure Level 2 ('Achieving') of the Equality Framework For Local Government, in respect of the Council's approach to securing equal life chances for all;	The implementation of agreed key recommendations arising from the informal Equality Peer Challenge to be undertaken in March 2010, by 31 March 2011;	<p>A comprehensive action plan has been developed arising from the informal Diversity Peer Challenge undertaken in March 2010. Significant progress has already been made against the action plan, although it is possible that not all relevant actions will have been completed by the end of the year. Progress is monitored by the Corporate Equality Working Group at each of its meetings, and will be reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel in December 2010.</p> <p>The achievement of Level 2 ('Achieving') of the Equality Framework For Local Government is subject to external assessment through a formal Diversity Peer Challenge process administered by Local Government Improvement and Development (formerly IDeA). The</p>

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			current cost of the Diversity Peer Challenge is £4,300, for which no specific budget provision currently exists. The Corporate Equality Working Group is currently considering how best to take this issue forward.
(3) To work with the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership to further reduce levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the district;	(a) To achieve a reduction in levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the district;	The achievement of a reduction in the level of overall crime of 2.5% for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	Data on crime levels presents a very mixed picture. Overall crime is up, but within that general picture there are wide variations in percentage terms (e.g. a 33% increase in assault without injury, but a 16% reduction in domestic burglary and a 23% reduction in millennium burglaries (breaking into houses to steal car keys and cars)). Overall vehicle crime is down, alongside a very small rise in anti-social behaviour. Continued increases in domestic violence is also a concern, although this may in part be due to the issue being a priority and victims being encouraged to report incidences.
	(b) To achieve an increased percentage of residents feeling confident about crime in the district;	The achievement of an increased percentage of residents feeling confident about crime in the district, as measured by National Indicator 17 (Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour) and National Indicator 21 (Dealing with concerns about Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime), by 31 March 2011;	Although reported incidences of anti-social behaviour have declined, public concern about it remains, especially given recent high profile reporting. Performance against National Indicators 17 and 21 is measured through Essex County Council's 'tracker' survey which is undertaken each October, and it is therefore not possible to report on these indicators at the present time.

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(4) To enable the provision of additional affordable housing in the district, and other initiatives to assist people unable to purchase a property on the open market;	(a) To consider the viability of the establishment of a Local Housing Company to purchase properties for let at market rents to nominees from the Council's Housing Register;	(i) The establishment of a Local Housing Company by 31 December 2010;	The Cabinet has considered a detailed feasibility study into the formation of a Local Housing Company, and has decided not to proceed with this initiative.
		(ii) The purchase of at least three properties by the Local Housing Company, by 31 March 2011;	No longer relevant. See Key Objective (4)(a)(i) above.
		(iii) The purchase of the target number of properties by the Local Housing Company, 31 March 2012;	No longer relevant. See Key Objective (4)(a)(i) above.
	(b) To provide Home Ownership Grants to enable Council tenants to purchase an open market property, thereby releasing a Council property to be let to an applicant on the Council's Housing Register;	The provision of at least six Home Ownership Grants of £28,000, by 31 March 2011;	Following a marketing exercise, twenty-six applications for grants were received and a shortlist of seven applicants was formulated in accordance with the agreed criteria (one additional grant was carried over from the 2009/10 budget). A reserve list has also been formulated. Five of the seven applicants have now found properties, and the grant documentation is being processed by the Director of Corporate Support Services.
	(c) To provide Social Housing Grant to one of the Council's Preferred Registered Social Landlord Partners, to fund the purchase of 5/7 two and/or three bedroomed houses on the open market for let at affordable rents;	The provision of social housing grant of up to £375,000 to one of the Council's Preferred Registered Social Landlord Partners, by 31 March 2011;	It has not been possible to initiate this project until October 2010. However, to ensure that the project proceeds, a consultant is in the process of being appointed to undertake the required tender exercise amongst the Council's

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	(d) To assess the development potential of difficult-to-let garage sites with vacancies in excess of 20% (and no waiting list), and the number of additional homes that could be provided on each site;	The assessment of the residential development potential of difficult-to-let garage sites, by 31 March 2011;	preferred housing association partners.  Since it is not currently viable for the Council to undertake the development of affordable housing itself, due to the negative financial effect on the General Fund, this Key Objective has not been progressed as a priority. However, difficult-to-let garage sites continue to be assessed for development potential, in readiness for such time as it is viable for the Council to develop affordable housing.
(5) To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, through the development and implementation of appropriate initiatives;	(a) To retain car parking charges for 2010/10 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year;	The retention of car parking charges for 2010/11 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year;	The retention of car parking charges for 2010/11 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year, remains the current policy of the Council. It is anticipated that this policy will remain in place.
	(b) To continue to pay undisputed local supplier invoices within twenty days;	The achievement of the payment of 97% of undisputed invoices within thirty days as measured by Local Performance Indicator 13, and undisputed local supplier invoices within twenty days, by 31 March 2011;	Current performance remains high, and cumulative performance against LPI 13 (thirty days) to the end of the second quarter of the year was 98%. Second quarter performance in respect of the payment of local supplier invoices within twenty days was 92%, which fell from 93% in the first quarter of the year.
	(c) To better publicise the contracts or opportunities available for the	The expansion of the information available on the Council's website	A business breakfast event to promote opportunities for engaging in

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	supply of goods and services to the Council;	about forthcoming contacts, and to hold an event for local businesses to promote opportunities for the supply of goods and services to the Council, by 31 March 2011;	<p>business with the Council was held at Loughton College in June 2010. A number of other business events have subsequently been held in partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.</p> <p>Revisions have been made to the Council's website in order to better publicise the contracts and opportunities available for the supply of goods and services to the authority, and further improvements will be undertaken throughout the remainder of the year.</p>
	(d) To continue with measures designed to assist those in housing need to cope with the impacts of the recession;	The provision of at least two mortgage rescues, by 31 March 2011;	To date, six mortgage rescues have been undertaken in partnership with Moat Housing, which is one of the highest numbers in the East of England. However, none of these have been completed in the current year, although there is a further mortgage rescue in progress which, if it proceeds to completion, should be completed this year. One of the difficulties is that the maximum property value to be eligible under the Mortgage Rescue Scheme is £200,000, which is relatively low in the District.
	(e) To continue to work towards the future development of key retail sites in the district, in particular the St. John's Road area of Epping,	The completion of consultation in respect of the Development Brief for the St. John's Road area of Epping, and the agreement of the	The Council and Essex County Council have continued to work with consultants to explore initial potential development options

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	and to consult upon and agree a Development Brief for the St. John's Road area;	Development Brief by 31 March 2011;	for the St. John's Road area of Epping. Members will approve the consultation document, and consultation on the viable options is due to commence in early 2011.
	(f) To introduce other measures to lessen the impacts of the economic recession, which various panels of the Council, or the Local Strategic Partnership, have supported;	(i) The reporting on a regular basis, of the Council's achievements in mitigating the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses;	<p>Reporting measures so far identified, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• business engagement events delivered to address subjects of importance to the business community (e.g. understanding business rates, accessing council contracts etc);;</li> <li>• sharing of information with businesses/business networks on funding, training opportunities etc;</li> <li>• press releases reporting on business events; and</li> <li>• the Council's 'Business Champion' (the Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder) communicating more strongly to the business community.</li> </ul> <p>These measures are being taken forward by the Head of Planning and Economic Development.</p>
		(ii) The Local Strategic Partnership to review the nature and extent of the local impact of the economic recession through its 'Credit Crunch' Task and Finish Panel,	The Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) 'Credit Crunch' Task and Finish Panel has completed and reported on its work. A number of future priorities have emerged from

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		<p>and to assess the range of support services available to local communities and businesses, identify gaps and initiatives to respond, on an ongoing basis;</p>	<p>the work of the Task and Finish Panel around issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opportunities for improved access to external funding;</li> <li>• support for programmes to maximise access to Future Jobs support in the district;</li> <li>• identifying further opportunities for joining up existing support in the district;</li> <li>• the impact of advice-giving services such as Citizen's Advice Bureaux;</li> <li>• opportunities to support volunteering capacity in the District;</li> <li>• the growth of 'Credit Unions' in the District;</li> <li>• the role of the Council's 'Business Champion' and opportunities for developing the role; and</li> <li>• the development of a new economic development strategy in full consultation with key partners.</li> </ul> <p>The LSPs Sustainable Communities Theme Group is taking these issues forward, and continues to work to provide and look to enhance engagement with key partners and identify key strategic objectives to support on-going work in relation to the local impact of the economic recession.</p>

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<p>(6) To deliver a sound Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework;</p>	<p>(a) To publish an issues and options consultation for the Core Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• options for urban extensions to Harlow to contribute to Regional Spatial Strategy targets, which are generally in line with Policy HA1;</li> <li>• options for the distribution of new housing elsewhere in the district to meet the Council's housing targets identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy;</li> <li>• options for new employment land to meet Regional Spatial Strategy targets;</li> <li>• options to deal with any other issues raised in the Sustainable Community Strategy which have spatial implications;</li> </ul>	<p>The publication of an issues and options consultation for the Core Strategy by 1 September 2010;</p>	<p>The Coalition Government has abolished Regional Spatial Strategies and associated housing and employment targets, although an application for a judicial review has been sought by a property developer in respect of this decision.</p> <p>The emphasis of the new Government has been directed towards 'localism', full details of which are due to emerge in the Decentralisation and Localism Bill to be published in December 2010. This very significant change calls into question the principle of extensions to Harlow, and places the onus entirely on the Council to establish new housing targets, based on community engagement. A communications strategy has been developed to address this latter point in detail, and a revised timetable for the preparation of the Core Strategy is being prepared. It is anticipated that the Issues and Options stage (Stage 2) of the consultation for the Core Strategy will take place in Summer 2011.</p> <p>Stage 1 of the Core Strategy (visioning exercise) consultation was launched in November 2010.</p>
	<p>(b) To establish formal arrangements to achieve co-ordinated working on the Core Strategies for the East</p>	<p>The establishment of formal arrangements for co-ordinated working with East Hertfordshire and Harlow</p>	<p>See Key Objective 6(a) above. Regional targets for housing growth have been abolished. Harlow</p>



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	Hertfordshire, Epping Forest and Harlow Districts;	District Councils by 31 December 2010;	District Council is pursuing a growth and regeneration agenda, but this Council and East Hertfordshire District Council still have to make decisions on whether urban extensions are acceptable in the changed political and planning climate. A joint member/Chief Executive meeting had been proposed for early 2011, to address relevant issues before any decisions can be made about the need for formal working arrangements.
	(c) To seek a joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning, to pursue the amendment or deletion of the 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document;	The holding of a joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning by 20 April 2010;	The 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document, was revoked by the Minister for Decentralisation on 6 July 2010.
	(d) To continue to deliver further permanent accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers as required by the Direction of the Minister for Housing and Planning in 2007, through the provision of thirty-four pitches (net) or until any subsequent agreement is reached with the Government;	The meeting of any agreed targets for the provision of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches following the joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning, by 31 March 2011;	See Key Objective 6(c) above. The regional target for the provision of thirty-four additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches by 2011, was also abolished as part of the revocation of the 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) in July 2010.  The Council is continuing to consider applications for new pitches in the light of relevant local plan policies.

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			<p>Discussions with some long-term residents on tolerated sites, and with planning agents about other unauthorised pitches, has encouraged the submission of some applications.</p> <p>The Coalition Government has indicated that it will be publishing new guidance on pitch provision and that, in the meantime, the targets in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) can be used, although these would not be binding on any Council. The GTAA for Essex, which was published in November 2009, gives a target of 32.4 additional pitches by 2013. The issue of future pitch provision will be addressed in the Core Strategy and subsequent DPDs.</p>
(7) To improve the performance of the Benefits Service;	(a) To improve performance in respect of the processing of new benefit claims, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 16;	The processing of new benefit claims within an average of twenty-five days, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 16 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	<p>Cumulative performance against Local Performance Indicator 16 to the end of the second quarter of the year is 24.95 days.</p> <p>Performance was adversely affected by the number of changes that normally occur at the start of the financial year and therefore showed longer processing times. However, since May, performance has improved and is on target for the year. Performance for July to September averaged 19.94 days.</p>

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			<p>The caseload has remained at just under 9400 for the second quarter of the year, which compares to a caseload of 8861 for the same period in 2009/10. The number of documents requiring processing also continues to increase at 23,710 for the quarter, compared to 17,769 for the same period last year.</p> <p>Methods of speeding up new claims processing times continue to be explored, and the Action Plan produced following the inspection of the Benefits Service by the Audit Commission (see Key Objective 7(c)), is being implemented.</p>

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	(b) To improve performance in respect of the processing of changes of circumstance, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 17;	The processing of changes of circumstance within an average of eight days, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 17 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	<p>Cumulative performance against Local Performance Indicator 17 to the end of the second quarter of the year is 9.39 days.</p> <p>Performance was adversely affected by the number of changes that normally occur at the start of the financial year and therefore showed longer processing times. However, since May, performance has improved and is on target for the year. Performance for July to September averaged 8.17 days.</p> <p>Methods of speeding up processing times continue to be explored, and the Action Plan produced following the inspection of the Benefits Service by the Audit Commission (see Key Objective 7(c)), is being implemented.</p>
	(c) To implement the agreed key recommendations arising from the Benefits service inspection undertaken in January 2010;	The agreement and implementation of the key recommendations arising from the Benefits service inspection, within timescales to be agreed with the Audit Commission;	Following the Benefits service inspection, a Post Inspection Action Plan was developed to address the recommendations of the Audit Commission, progress against which is monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee. The Action Plan was last considered by the Committee at its meeting on 15 November 2010, and there is currently no significant slippage in terms of progress. This is reflected in improved performance for claims processing. See also Key Objectives

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			2(g) and 7(a) above.
(8) To further improve the Council's corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people as part of Essex County Council's Children's Trust arrangements;	(a) To ensure that all appropriate members and officers of the Council are appropriately trained and aware of safeguarding responsibilities;	The introduction and completion of a programme of staff training in respect of safeguarding responsibilities, at levels relative to individual roles and responsibilities, by 31 March 2011;	A whole staff audit is nearing completion, which will identify staff already trained in Safeguarding and their further training needs, other staff requiring training, and various levels of training required. Some Directorates have already encouraged staff to undertake Level 1 online training, which is to soon be available on iTrain, the Council's e-learning platform launched during October 2010.
	(b) To ensure that members and officers are confident in dealing with safeguarding concerns;	(i) The introduction and completion of a programme of member training in respect of safeguarding responsibilities, by 31 March 2011;	A member training session in respect of safeguarding responsibilities was due to be held during September 2010, but was cancelled due to a lack of participants. It is planned to provide two amalgamated Level 1 Safeguarding courses for staff and members by March 31 2011.
		(ii) The achievement of improved corporate 'buy-in' to Child Protection and Safeguarding arrangements, by 31 March 2011;	Two Directorates have been proactive in responding to the need to improve safeguarding across the Council, and have already encouraged staff to pursue training.
		(iii) The improved dissemination of information in respect of corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people throughout directorates;	Representatives from all Directorates have been nominated to the Corporate Safeguarding Working Group, including officers with responsibility for adult safeguarding. Service area procedures in respect of child protection have been

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	(c) To continue to liaise with the West Essex Children's Trust Board via the Epping Forest Children's Partnership, and to review arrangements at a local level in line with Essex-wide developments;	The implementation of an appropriate initiative promoting safeguarding arrangements via the display of posters and leaflets, by 31 March 2011;	reviewed in the Housing Directorate and the Community Services Team.  Following publication of Essex County Council's Ofsted inspection (August 2010) which reported arrangements for safeguarding children as still 'Unsatisfactory', the County Council has revised its arrangements in respect of services for children and young people, and new arrangements are currently being implemented. There are only two services that will continue to receive committed funding, Safeguarding Children and Young People and Services for Looked After Children. The Essex Children's Trust structure has been slightly streamlined in an effort to improve services and governance arrangements.
(9) To achieve the level of savings identified within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy;	(a) To develop savings projects and an overall strategy for the achievement of the level of savings identified within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy;	The consideration of progress on the identified savings projects and the overall strategy, by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee, by 30 June 2010;	The outturn for 2009/10 showed an underspend, with savings being greater than planned. Reports have been made to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee during 2010/11, to update members on savings and the Council's overall financial position.
	(b) To achieve efficiency savings of £600,000 for 2011/12;	(i) The submission of reports to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee, on the progress of identified savings projects, on a regular	See Key Objective (9)(a) above. Reports have been made to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee during 2010/11, to update members

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		basis;	on savings and the Council's overall financial position.
		(ii) The achievement of the savings target for 2011/12, as measured by National Indicator 179 (Value For Money Gains);	<p>The Department for Communities and Local Government advised local authorities in October 2010, that the collection and submission of data for National Indicator 179 had ceased with immediate effect, alongside the requirement to include efficiency data on Council Tax bills and leaflets, which was previously sourced from information collected for NI 179.</p> <p>Management Board has considered the Council's future performance monitoring arrangements in view of the abolition of the National Indicator set, and it is intended to continue to monitor and report performance against each of the Key Performance Indicators for 2010/11 (including NI 179) for the remainder of the year. See Key Objective 2(b).</p>
	(c) To assess and determine the longer term future of the leisure management contract, to include contract extension negotiations or arrangements for re-tendering the contract,	The completion of the assessment and determination of the future of the leisure management contract by 31 March 2011;	This work is well underway, with the Council already having agreed to two of the key components in respect of capital investments at Loughton and Ongar Leisure Centres. The process is on time for the deadline to be met.
	(d) To identify the most appropriate and viable future method of delivering the Council's Arts Service, to ensure future delivery of the service across the district	The investigation of alternative methods of delivery of the Council's Arts Service, and the successful implementation of new or revised arrangements, by 31 March 2011;	Alternative options for delivery of the Council's Arts Service have fully investigated, and has included attendance at specific conferences and meetings with Arts and Cultural

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			<p>Trusts. However the potential costs of arranging TUPE transfers and negotiating pension schemes for staff prevents a viable outsourcing option. Further work has been undertaken into the potential for savings on support services and overheads, but it has been discovered that this is not possible without a complete re-structure. Therefore, the best option appears to be reducing the project budget for Arts delivery, with a net saving of £35,000.</p>
	<p>(e) To identify and develop mutually beneficial partnerships with external organisations;</p>	<p>The consideration of opportunities for joint working or the provision of shared services, by 31 March 2011;</p>	<p>The Council has engaged in a number of studies into county-wide shared service arrangements which have been largely inconclusive.</p> <p>The feasibility of entering into arrangements for a joint building control service with Harlow and Uttlesford District Council's has been investigated, but led to the conclusion that there were too many financial risks to the Council in partnering with these authorities, who were running high deficits in their ringfenced building control accounts.</p> <p>The Council remains open to actively exploring shared service opportunities where these can be demonstrated to be in the authority's best interest, and/or where the Council's expertise can be sold to others.</p>



Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			Following satisfactory performance during an initial three-month trial period, the Council continues to perform an insurance claim handling service for Uttlesford District Council.
(10) To continue the improvement in the benefit the Council receives from its investment in information and communications technology;	(a) To complete the server virtualisation project, to achieve energy cost savings and the enhancement of business continuity and resilience arrangements;	The completion of the transfer from existing to virtual servers by 31 March 2011;	The server virtualisation project is progressing well, and should be completed before 31 March 2011.
	(b) To increase the use of the corporate document management system in order to improve administrative processes;	The implementation of the corporate document management system within the Local Land Charges Section and the Housing Directorate by 31 March 2011;	The completion of these projects is on-target. It is anticipated that the implementation of the corporate document management system within the Local Land Charges Section and the Housing Directorate will be completed by 31 March 2011;
	(c) To rationalise and consolidate relevant property databases in order to improve administrative processes;	The achievement of reduction in the number of property databases by 31 March 2011;	Further work has been undertaken in order to eliminate mismatches in data, and the targeted reduction in the number of property databases should be achieved by the end of the year.

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(11) To continue to increase the Council's recycling performance;	(a) To improve performance in respect of the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting, as measured by National Indicator 192;	The achievement of target performance of 58% for National Indicator 192 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is 61.25%.  Performance remains strong, with recycling levels in excess of 60%. The recycling system is now settled, with a marked reduction in resident concern and complaint. It is anticipated that the 58% target for the year will be met, although this will in significant part depend upon the degree of fall-off in the collection of garden waste over the autumn and winter months of 2010/11.
	(b) To complete the assessment and provision of recycling facilities, so that all flats and similar communal buildings, where owner/manager consent for introduction exists, can benefit from appropriate recycling facilities;	The completion of the assessment and implementation of recycling facilities at flats and similar communal buildings, by 31 March 2011;	The completion of the assessment and implementation of recycling facilities at flats and similar communal buildings, is on target to be achieved by 31 March 2011.
		The achievement of an improvement in public satisfaction with the Council's waste and recycling services, by 31 March 2011;	The level of resident concern and complaint with the Council's waste and recycling services has fallen significantly. However, there remain resident concerns around access to a second garden wheeled bin, which may impact upon satisfaction ratings. It is felt that, now the system has settled, it should remain unaltered to increase public confidence and this will hopefully bear fruit in future satisfaction surveys.
(12) To review the Council's commercial landholdings in	(a) To agree a timetable and programme for the relocation or	(i) Further to the agreement of the Cabinet to the principle of	It is anticipated that a planning application to develop a retail park of

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
<p>order to coordinate competing land use proposals, to fulfil the authority's operational requirements and achieve value for money.</p>	<p>termination of current uses of the Council's depot site at Langston Road, Loughton, with a view to better utilising the asset either through development (in partnership or otherwise) or sale;</p>	<p>relocating the Council's services from Langston Road to a new site in Oakwood Hill, and the relocation of the Council's Museum Store to its vacant unit at the Brooker Road Industrial Estate in Waltham Abbey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of a cost benefit analysis and budgetary cost for the construction of new depot facilities at Oakwood Hill, and the agreement of capital financing by 31 March 2011;</li> <li>• the design, tendering and construction of a new depot facility at Oakwood Hill by 31 March 2011;</li> <li>• the relocation of identified services to the Oakwood Hill site by 31 March 2011;</li> <li>• the agreement of the future depot location of the Council's waste management contractor, in conjunction with the letting of a new waste management contract in either 2012 or 2014;</li> <li>• the issue of Notice to Quit to the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) in respect of the current occupation of the</li> </ul>	<p>approximately 90,000 square feet plus mezzanine, will be submitted in December 2010 or January 2011. The services required to be relocated from the Council's depot site at Langston Road have been identified.</p> <p>Consultants have been engaged to undertake project programming in respect of the Langston Road redevelopment, and the development of a new depot at Oakwood Hill. The Council's property at 148 Brooker Road, Waltham Abbey has been identified and secured in order to relocate the existing Museum Store.</p> <p>The Director of Environment and Street Scene is preparing a specification of service requirements to form the basis of a planning application in respect of a temporary depot facility at North Weald Airfield, in connection with the Waste Management Contract.</p> <p>The Women's Royal Voluntary Service served Notice to Quit on the Council in April 2010, which expires in January 2011. In practice the WRVS has already physically vacated the site.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		Langston Road site by the WRVS, in accordance with lease terms, by 31 March 2011;	
		(ii) The development of a strategy for the development or sale of the Langston Road site when vacant, by 31 March 2011.	At its meeting in October 2010, the Cabinet indicated its preference at this time for a joint development to maximise income.