

18 March 2021

Report of	Assistant Director Place and Client Services	Author	Geoff Beales ☎ 506514
Title	Colchester Borough Homes Performance Targets 2021/22		
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the set of performance targets which Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) will be accountable to in 2021/22. This set of performance indicators was agreed with CBH as part of their Medium-Term Delivery Plan (MTDP) 2018 to 2022, which in turn forms part of their Management Agreement with the Council. This report is being brought to provide the Scrutiny Panel with greater detail on how the MTDP targets are set and the role they play in performance management of CBH.
- 1.2 The MTDP includes performance targets for each of the five years of the plan. These targets were agreed by the Council and are reviewed annually by CBH and the Council to determine whether they remain appropriate or whether any changes in the operating environment mean they should be amended.
- 1.3 The targets proposed for 2021/22 have been amended to reflect the challenges faced next year, with the exception of the target for accepted homelessness applications, which has been reviewed and replaced in light of operational experience of the third full year of working to the Homelessness Reduction Act and the effectiveness of the data provided by the KPI.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the draft performance targets for 2021/22, given as Appendix A.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Panel is also invited to make recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing on CBH performance management arrangements for 2021/22 and beyond.

3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 Scrutiny Panel provides part of the oversight of the performance of CBH. CBH is a wholly owned arm's length company of the Council and delivers the majority of the Council's housing functions, in particular those connected with the Council's housing stock and delivery of homelessness and housing advice services. As such CBH has a key role to play in contributing to the achievement of the Council's Strategic objectives.

- 3.2 The Scrutiny Panel, at its meeting on 6 August 2019, considered CBH's annual performance review against the targets set for 2018/19. At that meeting the Scrutiny Panel requested that it receive a further report setting out the proposed targets for 2020/21 and beyond. Due to timescales this year approval of the targets has already been given by the CBH Board and the Housing Portfolio Holder.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) is the Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO). CBH's delivery of services on behalf of the Council is governed by a management agreement which was agreed and signed in 2013. This was further extended by Cabinet in 2020 by 5 years to 2028. Integral to this management agreement is a five-year Medium-Term Delivery Plan (MTDP). This plan sets out the detailed outcomes and targets which the management agreement requires CBH to deliver against. The management agreement also has a Liaison Protocol and Performance Framework appended to it, which was last reviewed in February 2020.
- 4.2 The MTDP for 2018-2022 was developed jointly with CBH and the Council. As part of the development of the plan, the approach to setting performance targets was refined. The delivery plan now contains eight high-level performance indicators which provide a clearer focus and visibility of the service delivery required from CBH. Previous performance management arrangements were based around more than 20 detailed performance indicators and targets. CBH continue to share with Council officers a more detailed suite of performance data, the analysis and scrutiny of which forms part of the Liaison Protocol and Performance Framework under which the relationship with CBH is managed.
- 4.3 As well as taking a more focussed approach to key performance targets, the Council also agreed with CBH in 2017 that targets for each service area would be set for the five years of the MTDP.
- 4.4 When setting the targets, consideration was given to a number of factors, such as sector benchmarking data (where available – for example in customer satisfaction), the external operating environment, changes in demand and alignment with the Council's wider strategic objectives.
- 4.5 Three of CBH's performance indicators also form part of the Council's suite of corporate performance indicators, currently these are as follows:
- Rent collected from current tenants as a % of rent collectable plus arrears at the start of the year
 - Average number of days taken to re-let general needs properties
 - Homelessness applications, where a full duty has been accepted, as a % of homeless applications provided with a personal housing plan
- 4.6 The performance targets set in the MTDP mostly increase incrementally over the period of the plan but are reviewed annually by the Council and CBH to ensure they continue to deliver stretching targets. The performance targets for 2021/22 have been reviewed jointly by CBH and Council officers, and by CBH's Board, and have been amended taking into account levels of performance and the effect of the Covid 19 pandemic. (these are shown in Appendix A)

- 4.7 Covid 19 has had a significant impact on performance in 2020/21. It has affected our tenants and leaseholders and their ability to receive services such as repairs. It has affected the delivery of services through restrictions to accessing homes to carry out repairs, voids and delivering capital works to properties. Finally, it has affected contractor's capacity to deliver these works through sickness, furlough and supply chain issues.

Reviewing the homelessness target

- 4.8 The Council's duties in respect of homelessness changed considerably with the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018. To reflect these new duties, the homelessness performance indicator for CBH was re-defined in 2020/21. The indicator expressed in its current format as a percentage figure is complicated and difficult to understand. (see Appendix B)
- 4.9 It was therefore proposed that for 2021/22 homelessness has no target and is reported by the provision of 3 key metrics: full duty homelessness acceptances, homelessness preventions and homelessness relief. These figures, presented over a period of time, will highlight trends and overall demand for the service, and provide a measure of how successful the service has been in preventing or relieving homelessness. Reporting in this way will also allow comparisons to be made with other local authorities and with the regional average. (Prevention is described as providing people with ways and means to address their housing and other needs to avoid homelessness. Whereas relief is action taken to resolve homelessness). Appendix C shows these metrics in their new format – narrative will also be provided to put these into perspective.

5. Strategic Plan References

- 5.1 The services and projects delivered by CBH contribute directly to the Strategic Plan 2021-2023 priority areas:
- **Responding to the Climate Emergency**
 - Reduce carbon emissions to help achieve a zero-carbon footprint for Council services for 2030
 - Environment and sustainability imbedded in all Council decision making and the adaption and recovery from Covid-19
 - **Tackling the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people**
 - Support people to live in healthy homes that meet their needs
 - **Increase the number, quality and types of homes**
 - Improve existing Council homes to keep them in good repair and improve energy efficiency
 - Continue to improve and modernise available housing for older people
 - **Prevent households from experiencing homelessness**
 - Work with partners to deliver the 2020-23 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan
 - Intervene early to prevent homelessness and work in partnership with other organisations to sustain people's accommodation
 - Tackle rough sleeping in the Borough

- **Enable economic recovery from Covid 19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth**
 - Ensure our Borough becomes stronger post Covid 19 by supporting businesses to recover, adapt and build resilience
 - Develop opportunities to ensure the new economy is greener, sustainable and more resilient
- **Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester help businesses to flourish**
 - Encourage green technologies and innovative solutions to the Climate Emergency
 - Maximise the social value benefits derived from third party contracts
 - Ensure the Councils assets continue to contribute to economic growth and opportunity

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The performance information and monitoring framework was developed in conjunction with CBH Board Members, Council Officers and the Portfolio Holder for Housing, as part of its development, it was subject to scrutiny by tenant and leaseholder representatives.

7. Publicity Considerations

- 7.1 The MTDP 2018-22 has been widely distributed which contains all performance information for 2018/19, 2019/20 and targets for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

8. Standard References

- 8.1 Having considered equality, diversity and human rights; financial, health, well-being and community safety, health and safety and risk management, there are no significant matters in this report. However, CBH's success in meeting their delivery plan targets will positively impact all these areas, benefitting parts of our more vulnerable communities, aligned with planned financial management of the HRA.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – Colchester Borough Homes Performance Targets 2021-22.

Appendix B – Current measurement for homelessness 2020/21

Appendix C – New proposed measurement for homelessness KPI

Appendix A Colchester Borough Homes Performance Targets 2021-22

Customer satisfaction %

This is a combined, weighted measure of satisfaction with responsive repairs in-house & contractor, newly let properties, capital works, adaptations, gas repairs and servicing, customer service centre, complaints and antisocial behaviour. Overall volumes for satisfaction data are low for 2020/21 due to a combination of Covid-19 disruption and changeover of ICT systems. For gas servicing/repairs and complaints, 2019/20 data has been substituted for indicative purposes due to no data being collected during 2020/21.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	New	New	89.3	91	92
Result	New	87.4	92.8	93.6% (Q3)	

Repairs completed on time %

The repairs service has undergone significant disruption during 2020/21 due to Covid. Due to the nature of the work a higher proportion will be complete in time.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	96.75	97	97.25	97.5	97.75
Result	98.0	98.3	97.81	TBC	

Homelessness and housing options

In response to the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, during 2019/20 and 2020/21 we monitored the percentage of households for whom a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) was issued; where the actions outlined in the PHP did not result in prevention or relief of homelessness and a full homelessness duty was owed.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	New	New	20%	30%	N/A
Result	New	27.8%	29.9%	33.2% (Q3)	

For 2021/22, we will monitor the number of households where full duty has been accepted, the number of homelessness preventions and the number of households where homelessness was relieved. As this is a demand-led service which is largely driven by external factors such as the economic landscape and the availability of affordable housing, these indicators will not have targets attached. Context such as the number of applicants and number of households in temporary accommodation will support these measures.

	Homelessness acceptances	Homelessness prevention	Homelessness relief
Latest result	139 (Q3 YTD)	128 (Q3 YTD)	87 (Q3 YTD)

Capital program elements completed on time %

Progress against the capital programme delivery schedule agreed at the start of the year has been hampered by Covid restrictions and in particular by refusals by tenants concerned about works taking place in their homes. As a result of current restrictions, and a growing reluctance from tenants to allow access to their homes, we have experienced a 16% reduction in the number of completions over the last quarter and now estimate a maximum of 80% completion is achievable against the 2020/21 target of 96%. Given the likelihood of potential prolonged restrictions well into 2021/22 we estimate a similar trend and feel that an achievable but stretching target for 21/22 will be 85% of capital elements completed. It is expected that the completion rate will be slow to start as restrictions are gradually lifted nationally.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	New	95	95.5	96	85 (previously 96.5)
Result	75.4	66.3	96.1	55.7% (Q3)	

Rent collection %

Government figures show local government Housing Revenue Accounts lost a combined £165.8m in income between April and December 2020, mostly in the form of rent arrears. As the full effects of the pandemic have yet to be felt both in terms of tenant's incomes and on the limitations on evictions for rent arrears, 2021/22 is likely to present an even more challenging and unpredictable picture. HouseMark is forecasting that by the end of March 2021, the average landlord will have arrears 33% higher than they would have been without the pandemic.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	98.5	98	98	98.2	98 (previously 98.5)
Result	99.9	99	99.1	97.0 (Q3)	

Average days to re-let general needs properties

Empty property performance has been affected by Government guidance (Covid-19) for working in empty homes. From March to September performance figures are excluded. Restrictions remain in place impacting on performance such as trade supplies, work force absence and leaving properties idle to reduce spread of infection. The number of properties available to re let has declined significantly (No) which impacts on average times. We recommend a revised target of 25 days.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	25	25	25	24.75	25 days (previously 24.75)
Result	24.7	26.8	24.3	25.5 (Q3 only due to Covid)	

Corporate facilities repairs completed on time %

Difficulties in accessing corporate facilities due to Covid restrictions significantly affected performance in Q1 and Q2, although during Q3 performance returned to expected levels. Given the uncertainty of Covid restrictions we recommend a revised target of 90% for 2021/22.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	New	75	90	90	90 (previously 95)
Result	63.1	95.5	91.0	87.0 (Q3)	

Gas compliance %

Our gas contractor has experienced some difficulties in gaining access to homes, due to fear of spread of Covid infection. The guidance clarified that Health & Safety servicing remains an essential service. The performance of the gas contractor has been exceptional this year to maintain high levels of compliance.

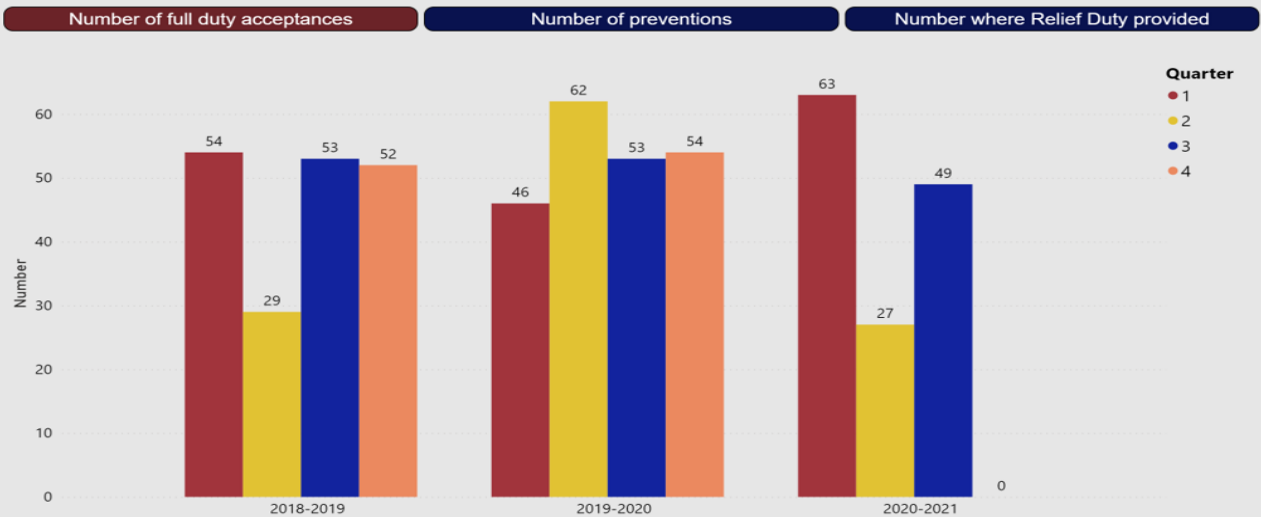
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Target	100	100	100	100	100
Result	100	100	100	100 (Q3)	

Appendix B – current measurement for Homelessness 2020/21

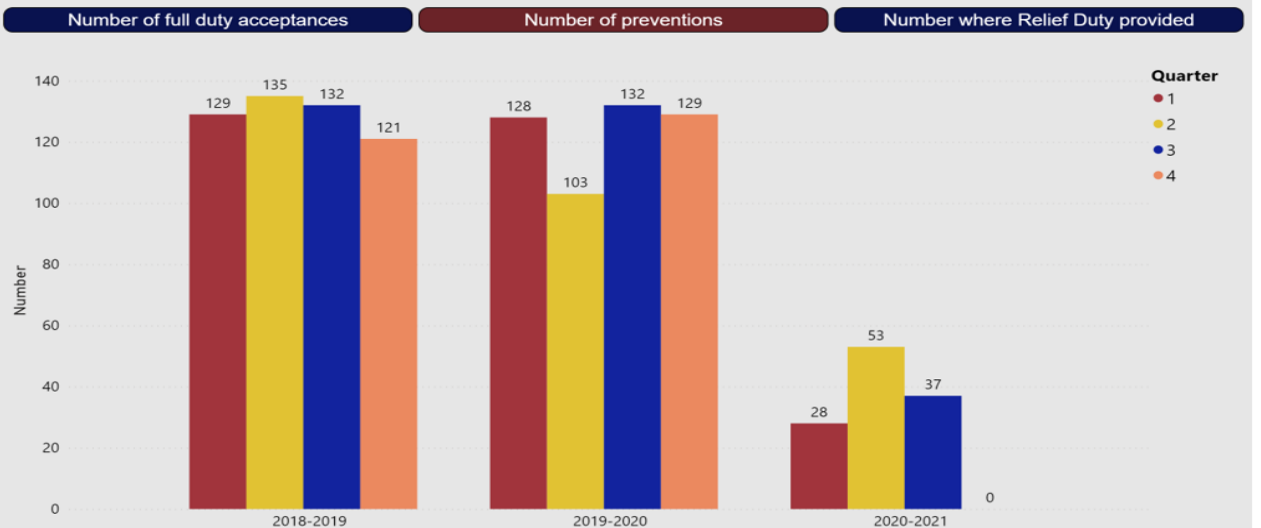


Appendix C – New measurement for Homelessness

KPI K1H3 Homelessness Duty Owed



KPI K1H3 Homelessness Duty Owed



KPI K1H3 Homelessness Duty Owed

