

# Scrutiny Panel Meeting

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall, High Street,  
Colchester, CO1 1PJ  
Tuesday, 11 October 2022 at 18:00**

**The Scrutiny Panel** examines the policies and strategies from a borough-wide perspective and ensure the actions of the Cabinet accord with the Council's policies and budget. The Panel reviews corporate strategies that form the Council's Strategic Plan, Council partnerships and the Council's budgetary guidelines, and scrutinises Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decisions which have been called in.

# Information for Members of the Public

## Access to information and meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. You also have the right to see the agenda (the list of items to be discussed at a meeting), which is usually published five working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

Dates of the meetings are available here:

<https://colchester.cmis.uk.com/colchester/MeetingCalendar.aspx>.

Most meetings take place in public. This only changes when certain issues, for instance, commercially sensitive information or details concerning an individual are considered. At this point you will be told whether there are any issues to be discussed in private, if so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

## Have Your Say!

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## Scrutiny Panel – Terms of Reference

1. To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee under section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and in particular (but not limited to):

- (a) To review corporate strategies;
- (b) To ensure that actions of the Cabinet accord with the policies and budget of the Council;
- (c) To monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council, performance reporting and to make recommendations to the Cabinet particularly in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions;
- (d) To review the Council's spending proposals to the policy priorities and review progress towards achieving those priorities against the Strategic and Implementation Plans;
- (e) To review the financial performance of the Council and to make recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to financial outturns, revenue and capital expenditure monitors;
- (f) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Cabinet, the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Committee (in relation to decisions relating to off-street matters only) and the Colchester and Ipswich Joint Museums Committee which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
- (g) To review or scrutinise executive decisions made by Portfolio Holders and officers taking key decisions which have been made but not implemented referred to the Panel pursuant to the Call-In Procedure;
- (h) To monitor the effectiveness and application of the Call-In Procedure, to report on the number and reasons for Call-In and to make recommendations to the Council on any changes required to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the process;
- (i) To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of functions which are not the responsibility of the Cabinet;
- (j) At the request of the Cabinet, to make decisions about the priority of referrals made in the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet or creating difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business;

2. To fulfil all the functions of the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee ("the Committee") under the Police and Justice Act 2006 and in particular (but not limited to):

- (a) To review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of those functions by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions;
- (b) To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of those functions.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Scrutiny Panel**  
**Tuesday, 11 October 2022 at 18:00**

**The Scrutiny Panel Members are:**

Councillor Dennis Willetts  
Councillor Sue Lissimore  
Councillor Darius Laws  
Councillor Mike Lilley  
Councillor Sam McCarthy  
Councillor Lee Scordis  
Councillor Paul Smith

Chairman  
Deputy Chairman

**The Scrutiny Panel Substitute Members are:**

All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members or members of this Panel.

**AGENDA**  
**THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING**  
**(Part A - open to the public)**

**Please note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally dealt with briefly.**

**1 Welcome and Announcements**

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors and remind everyone to use microphones at all times when they are speaking. The Chairman will also explain action in the event of an emergency, mobile phones switched to silent, audio-recording of the meeting. Councillors who are members of the committee will introduce themselves.

**2 Substitutions**

Councillors will be asked to say if they are attending on behalf of a Committee member who is absent.

**3 Urgent Items**

The Chairman will announce if there is any item not on the published agenda which will be considered because it is urgent and will explain the reason for the urgency.

**4 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the agenda about which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the item or

participating in any vote upon the item, or any other pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest.

**5 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Councillors will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2022 are a correct record.

**Scrutiny Panel Minutes 5 July 2022**

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**6 Have Your Say!**

Members of the public may make representations to the meeting. This can be made in person at the meeting or, if you are unable to attend, via a written statement, to be read out by an officer. Each representation may be no longer than three minutes. Members of the public wishing for a statement to be read on their behalf may register for this by emailing a written copy of the representation (of no more than 500 words) to [democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk) by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting date.

**7 Decisions taken under special urgency provisions**

The Councillors will consider any decisions by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder which have been taken under Special Urgency provisions.

**8 Cabinet or Portfolio Holder Decisions called in for Review**

The Councillors will consider any Cabinet or Portfolio Holder decisions called in for review.

**9 Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members**

(a) To evaluate requests by members of the Panel for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

(b) To evaluate requests by other members of the Council for an item relevant to the Panel's functions to be considered.

***Members of the panel may use agenda item 'a' (all other members will use agenda item 'b') as the appropriate route for referring a 'local government matter' in the context of the Councillor Call for Action to the panel. Please refer to the panel's terms of reference for further procedural arrangements.***

**10 Review of Colchester Borough Homes Performance 2021/22**

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The purpose of this report is to give Panel the background to the Management Agreement set up with Colchester Borough Homes (CBH). A presentation from Colchester Borough Homes will be provided (see Appendix 1 for slides) regarding the years activities. Performance information contained within the Medium-Term

Delivery Plan is also provided to assist Members in any questions they may have regarding the performance during 2021/22.

**11 Briefing from Councillor Julie Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities**

A briefing from Councillor Julie Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, on work being carried out within her portfolio.

**12 Work Programme 2022-23**

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This report sets out the current Work Programme 2022-2023 for the Scrutiny Panel. This provides details of the reports that are scheduled for each meeting during the municipal year.

**13 Exclusion of the Public (Scrutiny)**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

**Part B**  
**(not open to the public including the press)**

# SCRUTINY PANEL

## 5 July 2022

*Present: -*

Councillor Laws, Councillor Lilley, Councillor Lissimore, Councillor McCarthy, Councillor Scordis, Councillor Smith, Councillor Willetts

*Substitutions: -*

*Also present: -*

Councillor Cory, Councillor Fox, Councillor King, Councillor Sunnucks, Councillor J. Young

### **353. Minutes of previous meeting**

*RESOLVED* that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2022 be approved as a correct record.

### **354. Have Your Say**

Mr Alan Short addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to request that an inquiry be carried out on Cabinet handling of the Council's dealings with Alumno regarding the proposed development scheme between Queen Street and FirstSite, Colchester. Mr Short stated that a review had been promised by Paul Dundas, as then-Leader of the Council, and Will Quince, MP for Colchester. Mr Short argued that Scrutiny Panel should conduct such an inquiry and review. Mr Short detailed a number of his concerns relating to the Alumno scheme, such as the lack of information regarding the decision taken to add student accommodation into the Local Plan, in a 2014 amendment, and no information given as to who made the decision. Another concern given was the attempt to stop access to the North end of the site by business owners whilst work was carried out, to be followed by only limited access being possible after that. Mr Short then noted the offering of the land for sale by the Council to Essex County Council, and his concern that briefings had shown little relation to the final content of the agreements signed over the site. Mr Short argued that a review needed to be carried out to ascertain what actions and decisions were taken, what went wrong and what lessons could be learned.

The Chairman addressed Mr Short's request, explaining that the Panel would need to decide whether the decisions taken were potentially contrary to the Budget or the Strategic Plan, if it was to agree to scrutinise this matter. Some of the issues raised appeared to fall under the Panel's remit for scrutiny work, although it was not yet clear that this was a suitable subject for the Panel to address. The Chairman explained that this request would be discussed within the meeting's item dedicated to the Panel's work programme and, if the Panel decided that a review would be likely to be of value to the Council, this could then be added to the work programme.

The Panel briefly discussed the conflict of interests which would likely arise for former members of Cabinet who now served upon the Scrutiny Panel, should the Panel decide to scrutinise this subject and the relating Cabinet actions and decisions.

Councillor Sunnucks attended and, with the permission of the Chairman, addressed the Scrutiny Panel to request that work be carried out to look at how Section 106 contributions from property developers could be maximised and better collected in the future. Councillor Sunnucks provided examples of inconsistencies in the approaches used in setting and collecting 106 contributions, including the obtaining of contributions towards County Council functions such as education provision. Councillor Sunnucks suggested that the Essex County Council guide on development be consulted, and a range of specific examples be selected from the planning applications dealt with by Colchester Borough Council to show how contributions were dealt with locally and how this might be improved.

The Chairman informed Councillor Sunnucks that requests by elected members (who were not Scrutiny Panel members) for the Scrutiny Panel to consider items related to its functions must first be submitted, in writing, to the Clerk of the Panel before they could be considered under Item 9(b) of the following meeting of the Panel. It was suggested that, should a member of the Panel wish to propose that the Panel consider this issue and add it to the agenda of a future meeting, this could be done under item 9(a) of this meeting. Councillor Paul Smith indicated his wish to do this.

### **355. Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members**

Councillor Paul Smith requested that the Scrutiny Panel table an item on its work programme to allow the Panel to scrutinise the setting and collection of Section 106 contributions from developers, and to consider potential ways to improve how these could be improved in the future. Panel members indicated that they wished to examine all types of s106 contributions, including those which were for County Council functions [which would be for the County Council to recommend] in order to identify any areas of concern.

*RESOLVED* that the Scrutiny Panel would direct that a report be prepared and brought to the Panel for consideration, to examine any issues, problems, collection rates and procedures relating to setting and collection of section 106 contributions from developers, and that this includes examination of the relevant guidance from Essex County Council and comparison of a range of planning applications received by Colchester Borough Council.

### **356. Council Tax Rebate**

The Chairman introduced the item as having been requested by Councillor Smith at the Panel's meeting held on 7 June 2022. Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, and Samantha Preston, Group Manager – Customer, presented the report and expressed their thanks to the officers who had drawn up the scheme to make rebate payments and roll it out. A high percentage of eligible people paying Council Tax via direct debits had received their rebates. Officers were now focussing



on identifying eligible Council Tax payers who did not use direct debits, and to use the options available to find ways to pay out the rebate. The discretionary payment scheme was explained, with details as to how it was and would be used.

The initial announcement of a Council Tax rebate was made in February, and it had been understood to be a challenging task to design and roll out a scheme for making rebate payments. The main challenge was that the Council Tax payment system had been designed to receive payments from the public, rather than to pay out funds. Officers had worked quickly to build this function into the system, then moving to identify eligible non-direct-debit payers of Council Tax and find appropriate ways to provide the rebate to them. An overview of this work was given, along with statistics relating to the percentages of claim rates by eligible Council Tax payers, with an estimated 8,000 residents to be contacted directly by officers to inform them as to how they can claim their rebate. The Panel was informed of the issues which had caused some eligible applicants to be rejected by the Government system, and the ways in which the Council was working to identify those who were in this situation and who were eligible to receive a rebate. Likewise, the Panel was informed of the Council's work to ensure that residents who were not able to engage online were not excluded and were informed of the ways in which they could receive their rebates. Work included direct contact and targeted communications aimed at reaching those who were hardest to contact.

£318k had been allocated for discrete payments to those in need who were not eligible for rebates from the main scheme. The Council was determined that all funding provided to it would be used to assist those residents who were in need. The Panel considered whether it might be useful for it to make recommendations to Cabinet to encourage Cabinet to ensure that no eligible residents were missed and that measures be in place to ensure that all discretionary funding was used to support residents in need. The Portfolio Holder for Resources gave assurance that the Council was already proceeding in line with these suggested recommendations and taking every measure possible, with a last resort being the crediting of individuals' Council Tax accounts with the rebate amounts, where all other options of payment had not been possible. This approach had been approved and the formal policy relating to the Council's payment of rebates would be amended to show this as soon as possible. Priority was being given to help those who were already in receipt of financial support from the Council. The Scrutiny Panel judged that, in light of the assurances given by the Portfolio Holder, recommendations at this stage would be unnecessary, but that they might be merited to show the confidence and approval that the Panel had gained from the assurances given to it.

A Panel member asked how residents could be directed to apply for discretionary funding, including in cases where Council Tax banding of a property was considered to be in need of review, and was told that this information could be provided by officers following the meeting.

*RECOMMENDED* to CABINET that: -

- a) Cabinet acknowledges and continues to approve of the measures being used by officers to identify those eligible for Council Tax rebates and to pay out

these rebates, in line with the robust assurances provided to, and accepted by, the Scrutiny Panel

- b) Cabinet approves of the crediting of eligible Council Tax accounts, as a last resort and where other options for payment of a rebate have been exhausted

### **357. Year End April 2021 – March 2022 Performance Report Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Other Performance News**

Richard Block, Assistant Director (Corporate and Improvement), presented the item and explained the report's content and the use of key performance indicators [KPIs] by the Council. The Council's performance over the past year had continued to be affected by the Pandemic. Midyear performance information for 2022-23 would be brought to the Scrutiny Panel later in the year, with pre-decision scrutiny of the KPI targets for 2023-2024 to follow later again.

Councillor David King, Leader of the Council, explained that 2021-22 had been a difficult year, with a specific priority having been set as health and wellbeing, to ensure the maximisation of service delivery. The KPIs hardest hit by Covid-19 were highlighted.

A Panel member asked what powers the Council held to force developers to build affordable housing within their developments. The Panel noted that this could be covered later in the meeting when the Panel considered the draft Housing Strategy.

The Panel noted and discussed the ongoing issues relating to the time to relet council residential properties. The Assistant Director (Corporate and Improvement) agreed that the past year had been particularly difficult, in part because of Covid-related delays to the eviction process, which had led to the properties involved being more badly damaged by the tenants, increasing dilapidation and therefore requiring longer remedial works. It was suggested that this could be raised with Colchester Borough Homes when they next appeared before the Panel.

*RESOLVED* that the Panel noted the report's contents and were assured as to the explanations given for missed targets, with the exception of the target for building of affordable homes, which would be discussed in a different item.

### **358. Year End April 2021 to March 2022 Performance Report 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan**

Richard Block, Assistant Director (Corporate and Improvement), explained that this was the last year of the current Strategic Plan, and that a full final report on it would be given once it had concluded.

Concern was voiced by one Panel member that the Plan, and its Action Plan, were too large and covered every operation undertaken by the Council, rather than showing a prioritisation. Priorities were hard to discern, given the breadth of the Plan. It was accepted that there would need to be a large Strategic Plan and Action Plan, to represent the work done by the Council, and with Full Council deciding upon the Plan, it was argued that Scrutiny Panel views on content and performance were

important when setting and achieving targets. No recommendations were decided at this time, but the Chairman affirmed that the Panel would continue its monitoring and receive further progress reports.

*RESOLVED* that: -

- (a) Scrutiny Panel has confirmed satisfactory delivery against the Strategic Plan Action Plan and that the Council has made satisfactory progress in meeting its strategic goals
- (b) Scrutiny Panel will conduct its usual mid-year scrutiny of progress and its normal monitoring activities through the municipal year

### **359. Colchester's Housing Strategy 2022-27**

Councillor Julie Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, explained that it was a statutory duty for the Council to have a Strategy, which was being put in place for 2022 to 2027. This would give a vision for the future to provide access to safe and affordable housing, and to include content on private rental standards, neighbourhood improvements and health and wellbeing connotations.

Matt Sterling, Strategic Economic Growth Manager, gave a presentation on the content of the draft Strategy and explained that this would provide an overarching framework for other individual policies. The delivery plan for this Strategy was detailed and would include partnership working and Council contributions to the providing of housing by other organisations. Statistics were provided to show the extent of local needs and the demographics most in need. Key achievements were listed, including the 117 of 741 new homes built during 2020-21 being affordable housing.

Karen Paton, Housing Strategy Co-ordinator, informed the Panel of the updated evidence base and consultative work carried out to inform the Strategy. A project group had been used to examine views and evidence obtained. The draft Strategy had then been shared with officers, Colchester Borough Homes [CBH] and the Council's relevant partners. The Strategy had been drafted to align with national priorities. The Strategy's four key aims [Increased supply, Sustainability and Community Building, Improved Structure Standards, and Prevention of Homelessness] were outlined, with a separate strategy also to exist for tackling homelessness. The implementation and monitoring of the delivery plan was explained, with regular reporting to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities. The Strategy would be an organic, evolving document.

The Chairman explained that the Panel would look at the Strategy and offer views as to whether it was fit for purpose. Praise was given for the clear presentation and explanation of the key priorities and how the Strategy had been formed around them. Questions were asked as to how to supply the greatest amount of necessary housing for sale and whether funding would be provided to housing associations for affordable housing developments or purchases.

The Panel discussed evictions from private rental properties, caused by landlords selling up and a variety of other reasons. Officers were asked for estimates as to the numbers of applicants joining the housing waiting list, and whether reasons were given for their needs to apply for housing. A Panel member also asked if data existed as to how many applicants were from Ukraine. The Strategic Economic Growth Manager explained that it was hard to predict eviction levels in the private rental market. Council officers provided advice to local residents regarding the eviction process and as to how to register their housing need with the Council.

A Panel member noted that the average house price for Colchester was over £350k whilst the median income in Essex being around £27k, which made house buying unaffordable for many, thus increasing demand pressure on the rental market.

The 20% target for affordable housing as a percentage of new build properties was not met in 2020-21 and officers were asked how the Council would meet the updated target of 30%. The Strategic Economic Growth Manager outlined the range of different types of affordable housing schemes possible, with the Council striving to achieve a balance of the different types. The Council now routinely and successfully demanded that 30% of homes in new development be affordable housing. The four main avenues to increase affordable housing were to insist on it being included in developments (as planning gain), for the Council to build affordable housing itself, to buy stock (including homes sold under 'Right to Buy' provisions, and to work with non-profit deliverers (such as alms houses) to help them build more. A Panel member pushed for stronger wording than to 'seek' 30% of properties on new development to be affordable housing, and for the Council to examine why it does not achieve this 30% for all major developments. It was confirmed that the draft Strategy did call for 30% on all major developments, and that the Council sought this from all new major developments. Members discussed the instances where developers agreed to a set percentage of affordable housing, but later sought to reduce or remove requirements for affordable housing, on viability grounds. Assurance was given that the Council did its best, case by case, to hold developers to the requirement. Any request for variations to the requirement would need to be backed up by evidence to prove unviability.

The Panel discussed the possibility of prioritising local people to give them first chance to buy new affordable housing, before it is offered on the open market. The Portfolio Holder explained that, working with CBH, partnership schemes, the Council were looking at ways to offer new properties to local people first, such as the developments on sites formerly used for garages. A member highlighted a pilot trial, where an application for a village development had been granted subject to a local prioritisation scheme being tested when the properties were ready to be sold. Panel members suggested that the draft Strategy contain content that would lay out the Council's approach to prioritising sale of affordable housing to people with local connections or residency.

Caution was urged that affordable housing provision was just one part of developers' contributions to the local area and local authority. Some County Council members felt that the County Council's requests for section 106 contributions were often set at lower levels than they should be. Planning authorities such as the Council would

need to be mindful of the overall financial commitment levels applying to developers and balance the requirements set upon them.

A Panel member queried the lack of environmental content, such as regarding allotments, minimising carbon output from transport options/car use, and on finding more green spaces. The Strategic Economic Growth Manager gave assurance that this would be covered in the framework and detailed in the delivery plan.

The Panel discussed whether to make recommendations regarding strict enforcement of the requirement that 30% of each new development be affordable housing and regarding prioritisation of local people and those with local links when affordable housing was completed. The Portfolio Holder emphasised Cabinet's commitment to pursuing the 30% requirement, and the other options for providing affordable housing. As a partner in Gateway to Homechoice, the Council would continue to take a sensitive but firm approach to making best use of the existing stock of housing in the social rental market.

*RECOMMENDED* to CABINET that the Council retains a target that 30% of the properties to be built for any major development must be required to be affordable housing.

*RESOLVED* that the Panel directs officers to present reports to the Panel on: -

- (a) Collection of Section 106 developer contributions
- (b) Family/local affiliation in letting and/or sale of local affordable housing and Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy

### **360. Scrutiny Panel Annual Report**

Owen Howell, Democratic Services Officer, explained the purpose of this report and that the next Annual Report had been rescheduled to come to the Panel at its last meeting of the municipal year [rather than at the start of the next municipal year] so that this Panel could discuss and recommend it to Council, rather than wait until after elections, at which point membership of the Panel would likely change.

*RECOMMENDED* to COUNCIL that Council consider and approve Scrutiny Panel's Annual Report for 2021-22.

### **361. Haven Road Flooding**

Mr Nick Chilvers attended and addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to give his concerns regarding the flooding on Haven Road. On 27 March 2022 he had asked Cabinet about the flooding and for details on the Council's actions relating to solving this problem, receiving an answer that the Council was engaged in inter-agency work to remedy the habitual flooding. Flooding still remained an issue on what Mr Chilvers noted as being part of the informal circular route around Colchester. Councillor Andrew Ellis, then Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, had suggested that more information be provided on the Council's website, however this had not been added as yet. Mr Chilvers

advocated that this issue should not be left to local councillors and that the Council had a role as a champion for residents and as an information provider. Mr Chilvers gave his view that the report before the Panel was too complex and technical, that better presentation and explanation was needed, and that information should be advertised and circulated widely. Mr Chilvers asked whether the report was for information of full scrutiny, and advocated that Cabinet encourage all stakeholders to work together to remedy the ongoing problems.

The Chairman explained why the report had come to Scrutiny Panel, at the request of a Panel member, and that the report was an update on the partnership working underway to remedy the issue of flooding and an opportunity for the Panel to ascertain whether there was any value it could add by scrutinising the Council's approach. The information given did not suggest that any delays had been caused due to any lack of Council financial resource, or by extended decision-making.

Panel members described and discussed the membership of the Hythe Taskforce and its work. After one year of operation, complications had been found, such as the presence of fresh water flooding, with Distillery Lane and Bourne Pond contributing to the problem. Essex Highways and Anglian Water were suggested as responsible agents. Issues were then found with haphazard piping in place to deal with drainage. A Panel member urged all stakeholders to contribute to funding the solutions needed to these issues.

The results of a feasibility study relating to a possible temporary pump was still awaited. The Fire Authority had indicated that it was happy to have personnel on call to operate this as and when necessary.

Concern was raised by a Panel member that there was a lack of scrutiny of the Hythe Taskforce's work, and it was asked whether the funding pot for tackling Haven Road flooding could take section 106 funding contributions.

A Panel member outlined the background of the Hythe Taskforce, which had been brought together by The Honourable Will Quince, MP for Colchester, who sat as the Chairman of the Taskforce. The Taskforce aimed to facilitate cooperation between the agents which had the funding and expertise needed to end the flooding. A Panel member suggested that Will Quince could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Panel to explain the situation and answer questions. One member argued that the Council still had a responsibility to solve the flooding, given its historic operation of a port at the Hythe, and its continued holding of land in the area. The Council had sold off its dredger many years ago, with a lack of dredging suggested by a member as contributing to localised flooding. The Panel discussed whether to recommend that Cabinet took a lead on identifying what action to take and were informed that, whilst the MP's office was not in a position to offer scrutiny of the Hythe Taskforce, Scrutiny Panel had some ability, within its terms of reference, to scrutinise functions outside of those which were the responsibility of Cabinet.

The Panel considered whether it believed that actions were proceeding at an acceptable pace, or whether a scrutiny process could be undertaken whereby the Panel received regular reports, to ensure progress was made. A suggestion was also made that the Council could potentially offer project management services to

assist the Taskforce, with the Panel making a recommendation to Cabinet to call for this to be offered. The Panel also discussed whether to recommend that Cabinet look to provide a temporary pump, however a consensus was reached that this was very unlikely to be agreed to, given the need for ongoing funding for its operation.

*RESOLVED* that Scrutiny Panel receive an update on the situation in around six-month's time.

*RECOMMENDED* to CABINET that Cabinet offers to provide the project management skills of the Council to assist the multi-agency Hythe Task Force in its work and in its efforts to identify and secure the funds necessary to resolve the flooding in the Haven Road area

### **362. Summary of previous Scrutiny Panel reviews into bus service provision**

The Chairman explained that this report was a review of previous Scrutiny Panel considerations of local bus service provision, and aimed to help the Panel assess whether a further review could add value.

Mr Nick Chilvers attended and addressed the Panel pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). The most recent review was described, with Mr Chilvers noting that only Panther Travel not participating [of the providers of local bus services]. Covid had hit bus services hard, and traffic jams at the Osborne Street bus station site had caused additional problems. Mr Chilvers asked if the Council was pushing for improvements and whether it had any power to ensure that proper bus services were provided, including for any new development on the site of Middlewick Ranges. Mr Chilvers urged Scrutiny panel to examine local sustainable transport as a wider subject.

The Panel considered whether it would be likely that local bus operators would participate in a third Scrutiny Panel review of bus provision, and whether the Panel could potentially make useful recommendations. Concern was raised by members that the Council had no powers over bus services and could not run its own services. It was accepted that sustainable transport was a vital issue for the Borough, but with very limited scope for the Panel to add value, it was argued by one member that the Panel should concentrate on issues where there was the potential for it to add value to the Council's actions or decision making. It was noted by another member that the Panel could examine whether the Local Plan and any associated Council policies or strategies were being carried out appropriately, including external plans and strategies for which the Council was a partner organisation, such as the Town Centre Masterplan.

The Panel considered whether it wished to recommend that Cabinet look at the issue of bus service provision, in the context of the major policies and strategies currently underway. Several members agreed that a larger-scale examination of the issues at play would be a significant job, but likely worth doing. One member of the Panel argued that there had been some success from past Scrutiny Panel reviews, albeit that there was little the Council could do to push for better bus services. Bus station provisions for Colchester was within the Town Centre Masterplan, which could come to the Panel for Scrutiny.

The Panel discussed possible ways to help increase bus usage, including deals, offers and a circular hopper bus system around central Colchester.

*RECOMMENDED* to CABINET that Cabinet conducts work to consider and examine the potential ways in which the Council can push for improved bus service provision through the Borough, and promote its use by the public, in the context of the Council's current and emerging strategic plans and policies.

### **363. Work Programme 2022-23**

Owen Howell, Democratic Services Officer, confirmed that additional items would be scheduled in for future meetings, in line with the resolutions laid down by the Panel during earlier agenda items at this meeting.

The Democratic Services Officer suggested that no additional items be added to the agenda for 16 August 2022, given the presence of two heavy items already on that agenda.

It was confirmed that, in line with the Panel's view that it would be too early in the year, the planned portfolio holder briefing for that meeting had been cancelled. The Officer emphasised that Scrutiny Panel members needed to set out what specific issues it wished to do in-depth scrutiny upon, with the relevant portfolio holder/holders in attendance, in order to allow officers to schedule these in for specific meetings.

The Panel directed that the following items be scheduled in to its work programme:

- Collection of Section 106 developer contributions
- Family/local affiliation in letting and/or sale of local affordable housing and Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy
- Scrutiny of a trial of local prioritisation for property purchasing [relating to a recent planning application]
- A further update on progress relating to the work of the Hythe Taskforce and remedial work to stop flooding on Haven Road
- The conducting of negotiations with Alumno [subject to Monitoring Officer's advice]

It was noted that the situation relating to Alumno was still ongoing and that this would almost certainly mean that any Scrutiny Panel examination of the topic would, at this point, need to be done in closed session. The Chairman argued that, as the Panel conducted its work on behalf of residents, it would not be good practice to conduct scrutiny behind closed doors. It was argued that this item should be included in the work programme provisionally, and be confirmed once open-session scrutiny was possible, without the danger of broaching commercially sensitive matters. It was suggested by the Chairman that the four items listed above could initially be reports to provide information so that the Panel could assess whether value could be gained by its consideration of them in greater depth at later meetings.



The Democratic Services Officer informed the Panel that he would seek officers' advice as to the scheduling of the extra items and then provisionally schedule these, in consultation with the Chairman and Lead Group Members.

A Panel member suggested that an additional item be tabled to examine air quality and measures to improve this. The Chairman counselled that this request should be formally made at the Panel's next meeting, under standard item 9(a) [Items requested by members of the Panel and other Members].

*RESOLVED* that the Scrutiny Panel: -

- (a) Approves its work programme and;
- (b) Directs the Panel's Clerk to work with officers to identify appropriate scheduling for the additional items requested by the Panel at this meeting, to be provisionally agreed with the Chairman and Lead Group Members.



11 October 2022

Report of	Assistant Director Place and Client Services	Author	Geoff Beales ☎ 506514
Title	Review of Colchester Borough Homes Performance 2021/22		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give Panel the background to the Management Agreement set up with Colchester Borough Homes (CBH). A presentation from Colchester Borough Homes will be provided (see Appendix 1 for slides) regarding the years activities. Performance information contained within the Medium-Term Delivery Plan is also provided to assist Members in any questions they may have regarding the performance during 2021/22.

## 2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Panel is invited to review the performance of Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) during 2021/22, having particular regard to the Performance Summary Information 2021/22 (see Appendix 2).
- 2.2 The Panel is also invited to make any recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities on CBH performance management arrangements for 2022/23 and beyond.

## 3. Reason for Scrutiny

- 3.1 CBH is a wholly owned arm's length company of the Council and delivers the majority of the Councils housing functions, in particular those connected with the Councils 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. It is therefore appropriate for Scrutiny Panel to review the performance on an annual basis.

## **4. Background Information**

- 4.1 The Council signed a ten-year Management Agreement with CBH in August 2013. In April 2014 following a review of the Councils Corporate and Financial Management functions, the Corporate Facilities Service was transferred to CBH. Following a further review in 2017 the Housing System Team transferred in June 2018. In November 2020 Cabinet agreed a five-year extension to the Management Agreement to August 2028.
- 4.2 The Management Agreement includes a Liaison Protocol which sets out how CBC and CBH will make decisions and how the Council will monitor performance. This includes a quarterly Principal Liaison meeting to monitor strategic, operational, financial and performance matters, including agreeing annual targets and reviewing progress against these, monitoring progress against the Medium-Term Delivery Plan, and overseeing the direction and implementation of the Asset Management Strategy and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. The Liaison Protocol also sets out the informal liaison arrangements between the Chief Executives of CBC and CBH and between the Chief Executive of CBH and “the Council’s Representative”.
- 4.3 CBC and CBH continue to work together to deliver financial planning, asset management and regulatory changes required following the introduction of the Housing Act the Homeless Reduction Act and the Social Housing White Paper.
- 4.4 The delivery of services continued throughout the pandemic and various lockdowns and as such some areas of performance continued to be affected by this in 2021/22. Covid 19 has had an impact on performance in 2021/22. 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 and supply chain issues.

## **5. Strategic Plan References**

- 5.1 The Better Colchester Strategic Plan 2020-23 sets out clearly the Councils priorities. The services and projects delivered by CBH contribute directly to the following areas and their goals:

### **Creating safe, healthy and active communities**

- Build on community strengths and assets
- Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people
- Provide opportunities for young people

### **Delivering homes for people who need them**

- Increase the number, quality and types of homes
- Prevent households from experiencing homelessness
- Improve existing Council homes to keep them in good repair and improve energy efficiency

### **Growing a better economy so everyone benefits**

- Enable economic recovery from Covid – 19 ensuring all residents benefit from growth
- Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses flourish

## **6. Consultation**

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

## **7. Publicity Considerations**

- 7.1 The Medium-Term Delivery Plan 2018-22 has been widely distributed which contains all performance information for 2020/21 and targets for 2021/22. A new Medium Term Delivery Plan for 2022-2027 has been agreed and performance targets for 2022/23 were agreed by Scrutiny Panel in February 2022.

## **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 none which are significant to the matters in this report.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Presentation Slides

Appendix 2 –Performance Information 2021/22





# Colchester Borough Homes Performance 2021-22

Presented by Dirk Paterson, Board Chair  
and Philip Sullivan, Chief Executive

Scrutiny Panel  
11 October 2022

#WE  
ARE  
CBH



NUMBER OF GENERAL  
NEEDS PROPERTIES



NUMBER OF SHELTERED  
TENANT PROPERTIES



NUMBER OF  
LEASEHOLDERS



NUMBER OF HOMES LET  
TO NEW TENANTS



NUMBER OF MUTUAL  
EXCHANGES WHICH TOOK PLACE

## RESIDENT PROFILE



LEAD TENANTS  
ARE FROM BAME  
COMMUNITY



LEAD TENANTS  
ARE WOMEN



LEAD TENANTS  
HAVE A KNOWN  
DISABILITY



LEAD TENANTS  
ARE OVER 60

# CBH AT A GLANCE





85%\*

SATISFACTION  
WITH THE SERVICE  
PROVIDED



84%\*

SATISFACTION WITH  
QUALITY OF HOME



98.84%

OF RENT  
COLLECTED



98.44%

SATISFACTION WITH OUR  
LETTING SERVICE



30.96  
DAYS

AVERAGE NUMBER  
OF DAYS TAKEN TO  
RE-LET EMPTY HOMES



98%

OF REPAIRS COMPLETE  
AT FIRST VISIT



£100.82

AVERAGE WEEKLY RENT\* FOR  
GENERAL NEEDS PROPERTIES



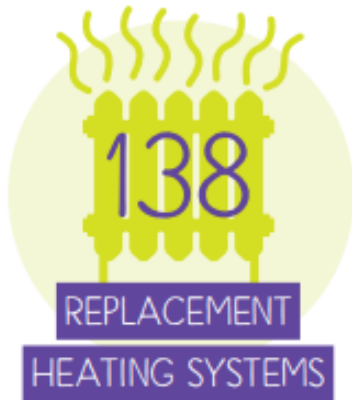
AVERAGE CALL  
WAIT TIME  
24.8 SECONDS



86.67%

PEOPLE SATISFIED  
WITH SERVICE RECEIVED  
FROM ANTISOCIAL  
BEHAVIOUR TEAM

# OUR PERFORMANCE



KEEPING HOMES SAFE:  
TENANCIES MUST  
HAVE AN ELECTRICAL  
TEST EVERY 5 YEARS,  
AND A GAS SAFETY  
CHECK ANNUALLY

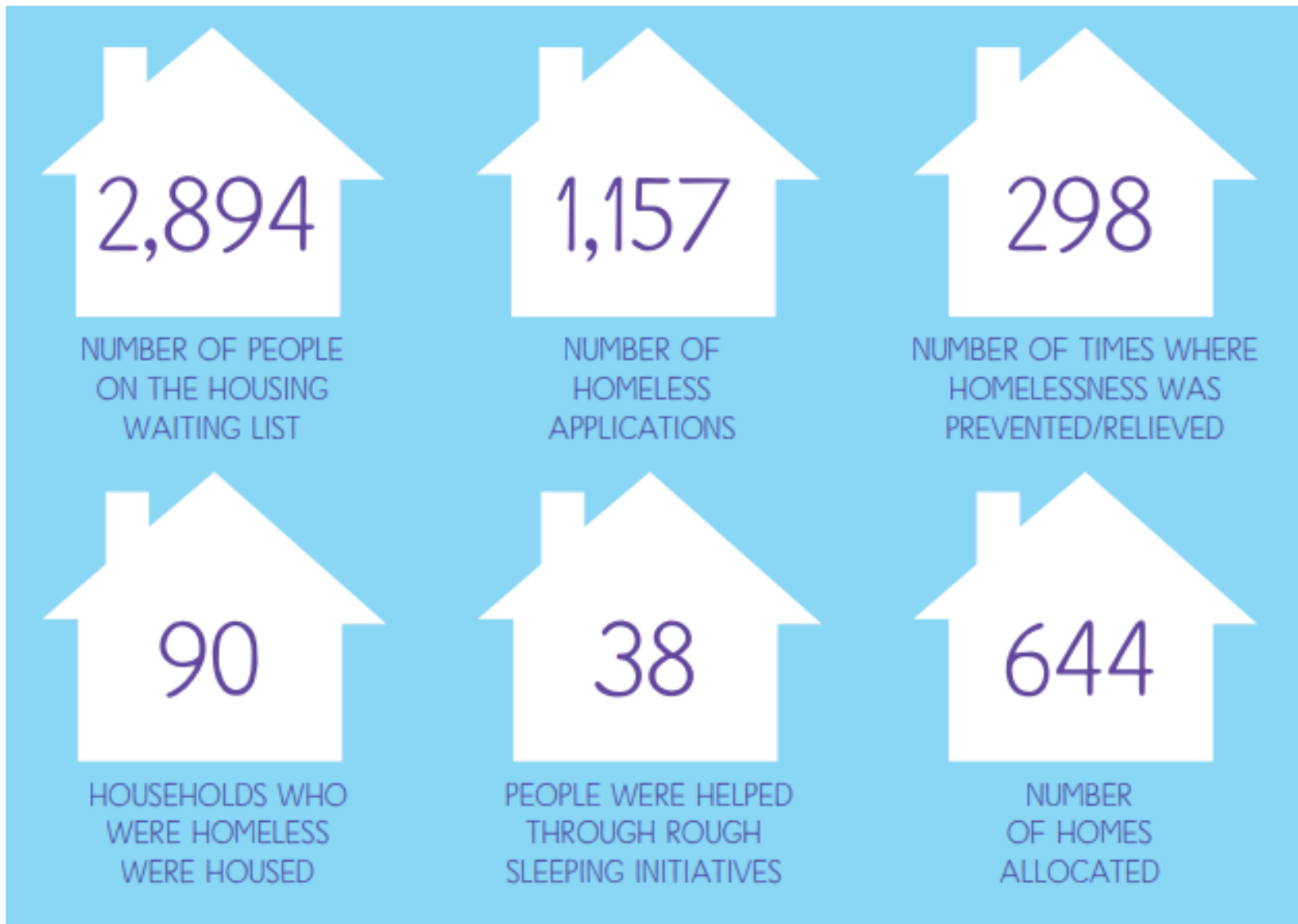
# PROVIDING QUALITY HOMES





# CBH KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22 – Covid Recovery





The team have worked hard to successfully prevent and relieve homelessness in the face of a rising rental market, cost of living crisis and reduction in Universal Credit payments



Extra help was provided to households facing homelessness via a Top Up Fund from the Government



Ensured that everyone we had a legal duty to accommodate was provided with good quality accommodation



57% reduction in rough sleeper numbers over the last year



Provided the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) which allows for us to accommodate rough sleepers during the winter weather. 17 people accommodated over winter.

# PROVIDING HOUSING SOLUTIONS



**"Noticeboards are effective – but only if they are updated regularly"**

We have improved our use of noticeboards and they now provide important information about home safety.



**"We reviewed the website and found it difficult to find information"**

We are updating our website so that it is more accessible and includes information that residents need most.

**"Hybrid meetings were hard to hear and see people within the face-to-face venue"**

We sourced a new webcam along with a microphone and speaker to achieve a better experience and switched to Zoom for a better experience for everyone.



**"I want to get more involved but I'm not sure how"**

We reviewed the website and found it difficult to find information. We are updating our website so that it is more accessible and includes information that residents need most.



**"When workmen attend homes for repair and they need new parts and must revisit, this is frustrating as we are not kept up to date. Could this be flagged up please?"**

We are reviewing this process through repairs meetings and plan to review with contractors. Work will be carried out to improve this area.



# LISTENING AND ACTING ON RESIDENTS' VIEWS

During 2021-22 CBH has been proactively preparing for:

- ☐ The Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act, both of which received Royal Assent in April 2022.
- ☐ The new Building Safety Regulator within the Health & Safety Executive introduced by the Building Safety Act 2022.
- ☐ The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations that make alarms mandatory on 1 October 2022.
- ☐ The Social Housing Regulation Bill introduced into Parliament in June 2022. This will bring about a significant change in the way that social housing landlords are regulated, including the introduction of proactive “consumer” regulation and inspections.

# PERFORMANCE AND BENCHMARKING 2020-21



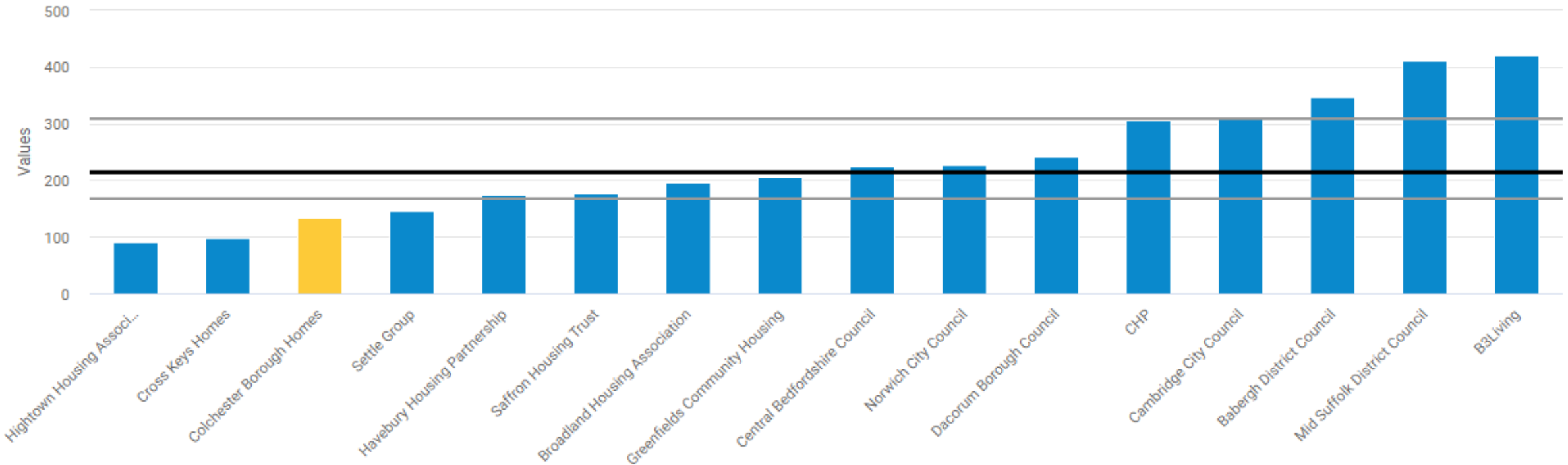
1. Responsive repairs
2. Voids and lettings
3. Rent arrears and collection
4. Tenancy management
5. Resident engagement
6. *Customer Services*
7. Neighbourhood management
8. *Community investment*



# VOIDS PERFORMANCE AND BENCHMARKING 2020-21



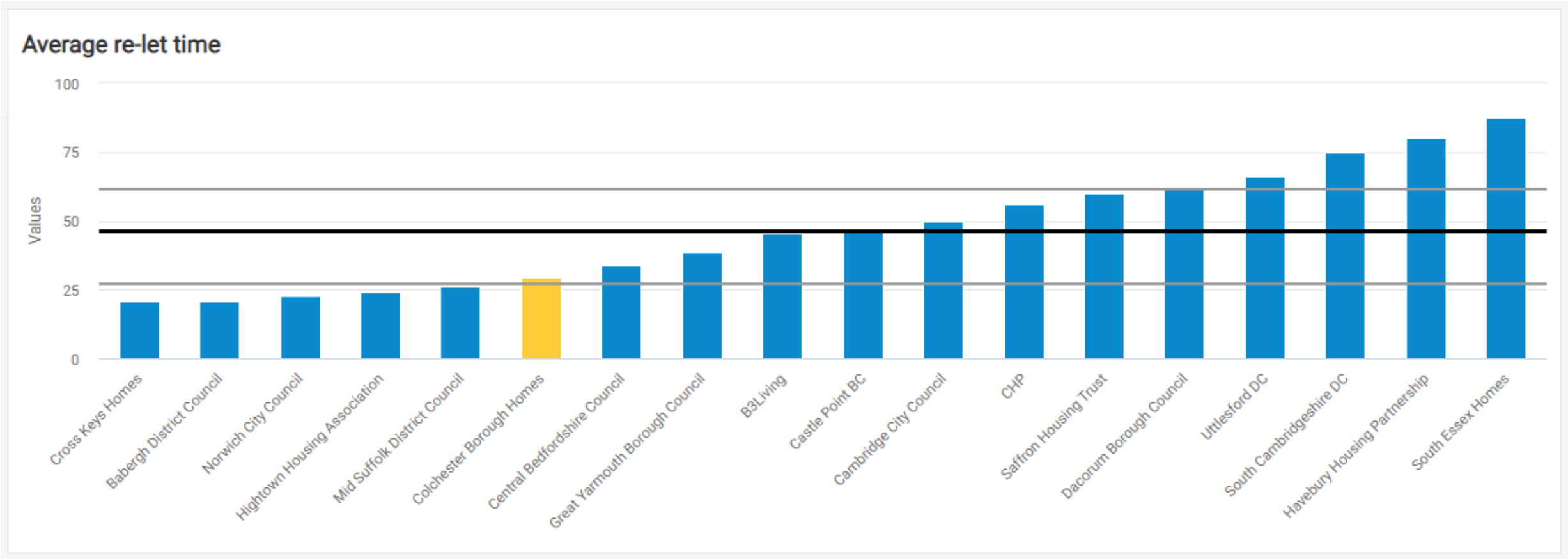
Total CPP of void works (service provision)



# HOUSEMARK



# RE-LET TIME PERFORMANCE AND BENCHMARKING 2020-21

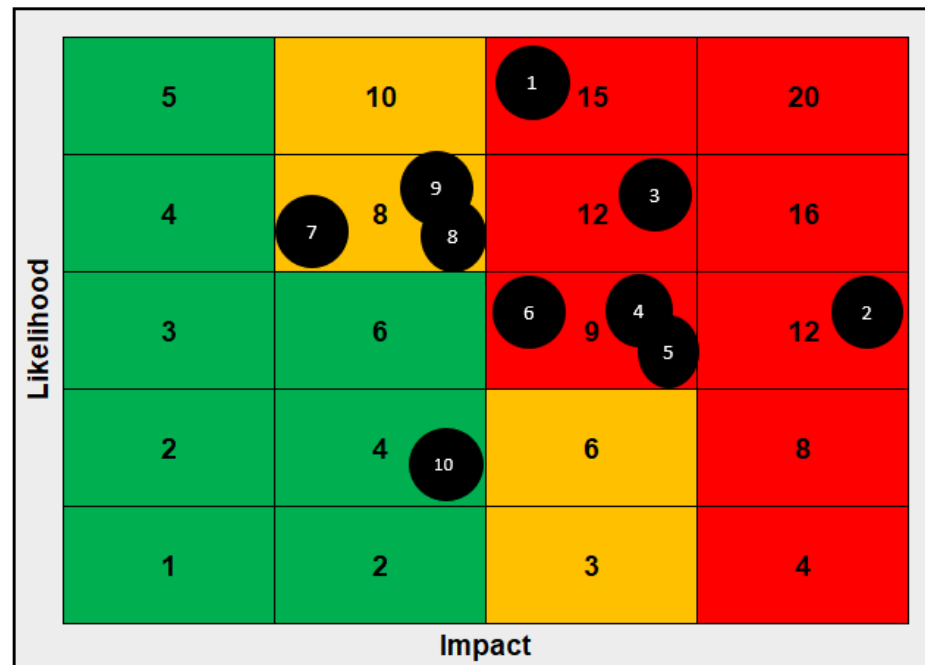


# CBH VALUE FOR MONEY



Function	TCPP CBH	TCPP median	CPP saving	Aggregate saving
Responsive repairs	£354.40	£565.87	£211.47	£1,231,813
Void works	£209.17	£257.86	£48.69	£283,620
Housing management	£243.82	£388.59	£144.77	£843,285
Cyclical works	£212.21	£319.45	£107.24	£624,673
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,019.60</b>	<b>£1,531.77</b>	<b>£512.17</b>	<b>£2,983,391</b>

Summary savings table: *Eastern peer group 2020-21*



Risk position	Risk No.	Risk	Risk Type
1	ST11	Tenants quality of life reduced	Impact of Innovation
2	ST06	Major health and safety failure	Compliance / H&S
3	ST03	Inability to attract and retain good quality people and contractors leading to service or governance failures	Quality of Service
4	ST05	Significant data failure or breach	Compliance / H&S
5	ST02	Lack of long term financial stability	Finance
6	ST10	Material deterioration in key stakeholder relationships	Impact of Innovation
7	ST01	Failure to deliver against expectations	Reputational
8	ST04	Breach of regulation, in particular the Consumer Standards	Compliance / H&S
9	ST08	Failure to maximise the use of technology including the negative effect on data quality	Quality of Service
10	ST07	Failure to meet the annual targets in order to reach Carbon Zero by 2050	Compliance / H&S

# STRATEGIC RISK MAP



# SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES





# DELIVERY OF 100 HOMES





Elfreda House



Military Road

# DEVELOPING NEW HOMES





# REDUCING CARBON IMPACT



Justin King



Karen Smout



Dirk Paterson



Fiona Marshall



Nicola Davey



CBH Board continued to strengthen in 2021/22  
Broad range of skills and expertise  
Oversight and assurance on risk, finances and performance  
Maintained close connection with CBC



Kayleigh Rippingale



Rhys Smithson



Ray Sharp



Philip Sullivan



Lyn Barton

# STRONG GOVERNANCE



## CHALLENGES:

- Rapidly evolving compliance and regulatory environment
- Impact of cost-of-living crisis – increases pressure on services and performance
- Recruitment and retention
- Pressure on local housing demand

## AREAS FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE:

- Overall customer satisfaction
- Empty property re let times
- Delivery of the capital programme

# CHALLENGES & IMPROVEMENTS

- New Management Agreement to 2028
- New Strategic Plan 2022-2027 launched
- ALMO 20 year anniversary in 2023
- Tackling the challenges
- More joint working with CBC
- Remaining at the heart of the Community
- Looking forward to the next chapter and to working with our closest partner, CBC.



# ANY QUESTIONS



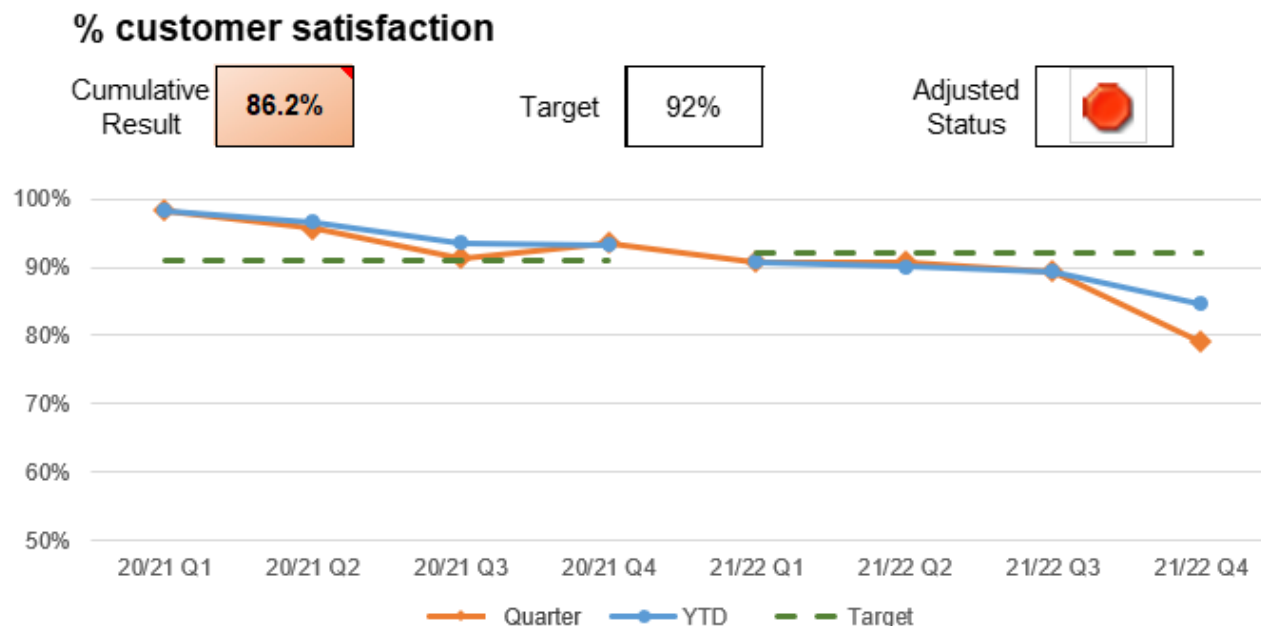


# Colchester Borough Homes

## Medium Term Delivery Plan Performance Report 2021/22

Scrutiny Panel – October 2022

- Our Medium-Term Delivery Plan 2018-22 sets out the framework for delivery and monitoring of services we provide on behalf of Colchester Borough Council. We deliver a wide range of high-quality, low-cost services, including tenancy and property management for the Council's tenants and leaseholders, the housing options service, management of the Borough's public buildings and delivery of new projects.
- Our aim is to deliver great services that make a difference and be the trusted choice for local housing, property and community services.
- We achieve this by delivering services that are valued by our customers and by serving our communities. To do this we will continue to focus on customer satisfaction, value for money and positive outcomes in the community, and we have a number of other plans in place alongside this plan which set out how we will develop as an organisation to support the services we deliver for the Council.

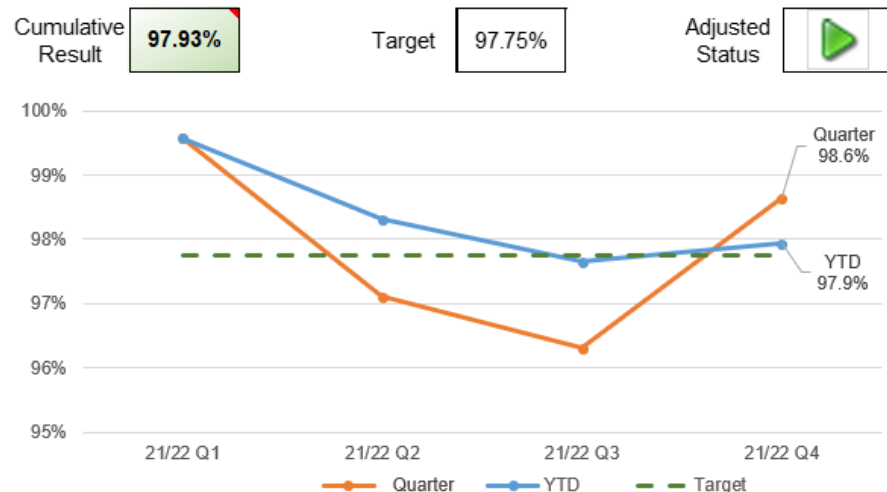


[Housemark - The Future In Focus](#)

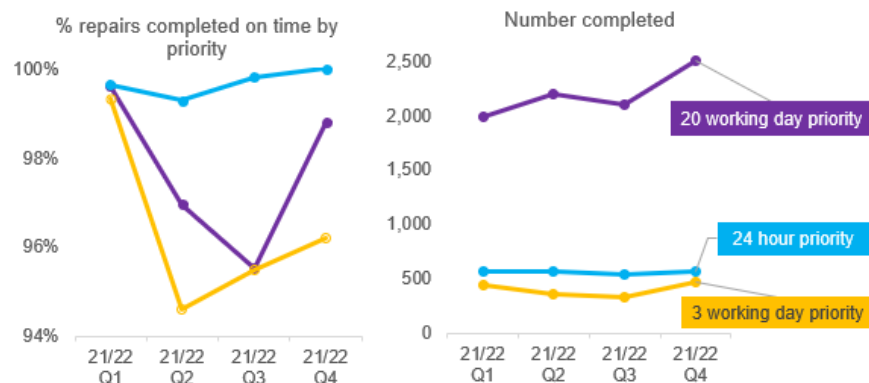
- This is a combined, weighted measure of satisfaction with responsive repairs in-house and contractor, newly let properties, capital works, adaptations, gas repairs and servicing, customer service centre, complaints and antisocial behaviour.
- Our benchmark within Housemark shows national trends. It notes that after a small boost in perception satisfaction during the winter median satisfaction results fell to 83%.
- This is an indication of the challenges being faced during the year to deliver a positive customer experience.
- This measure will no longer be reported within the MTDP as of April 2022. It will be replaced with “% *customer satisfaction with latest repair*.” Satisfaction with repairs is a key driver to overall customer satisfaction.

# Customer Satisfaction

## % repairs completed on time



- Measures the number of repairs complete by our direct labour team and contractors within timescale.
- On average 1,052 repairs were completed each month.
- We complete around 170 non-urgent repairs per 1,000 properties a month. The sector average is 182.

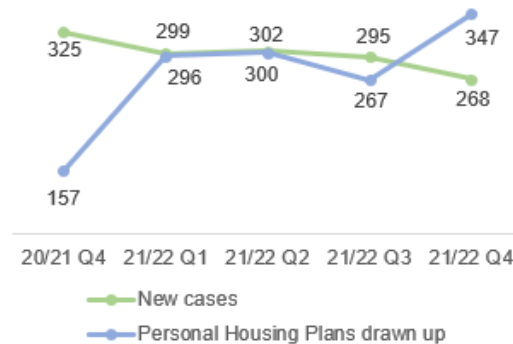
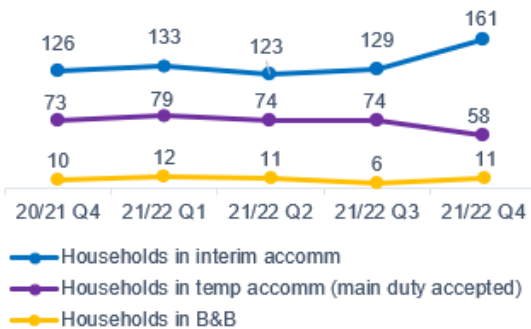
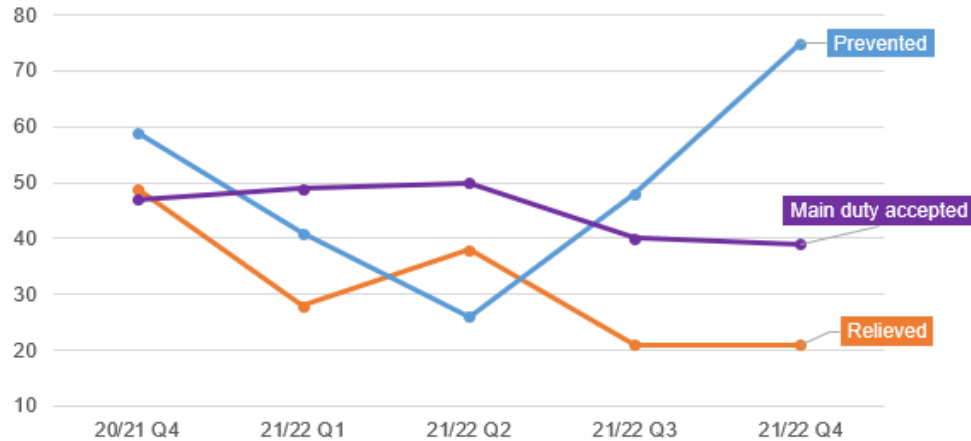


# Repairs completed on time



## Homelessness monitoring

Number of households where homelessness has been prevented, relieved or a main duty has been accepted in the period.

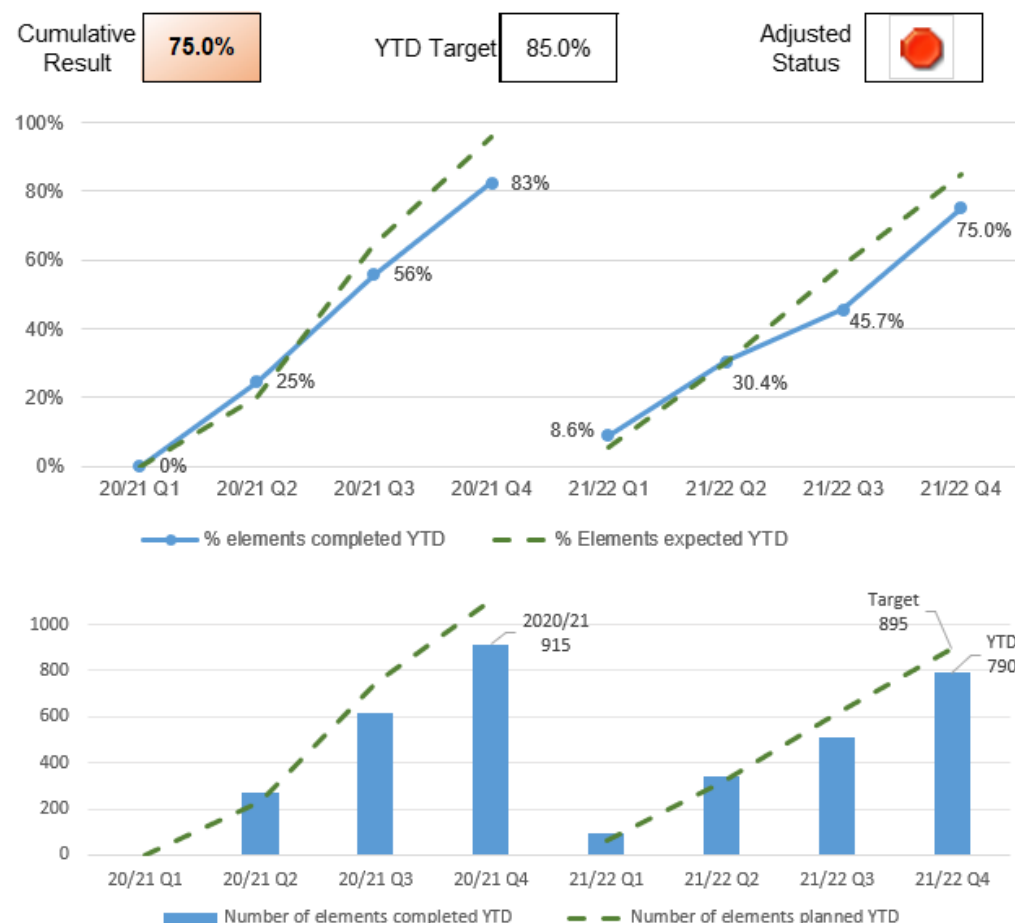


- Key measures are tracked in line with requirements from DLUH\*
- Comparison of numbers in temporary accommodation is measured as % of population for benchmarking purposes.
- Data is compared nationally on [Statutory homelessness in England: 2021-22 infographic \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

\*DLUH – Department of Levelling up, Communities & Housing

# Housing Options


## % capital program elements completed on time

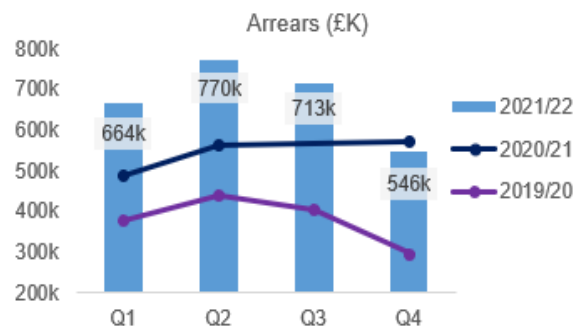
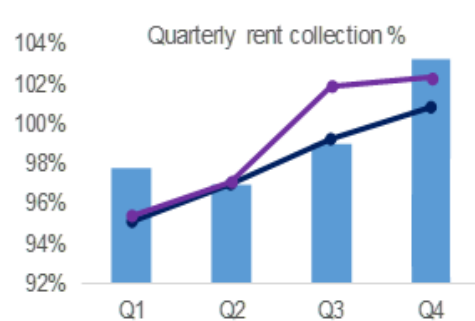
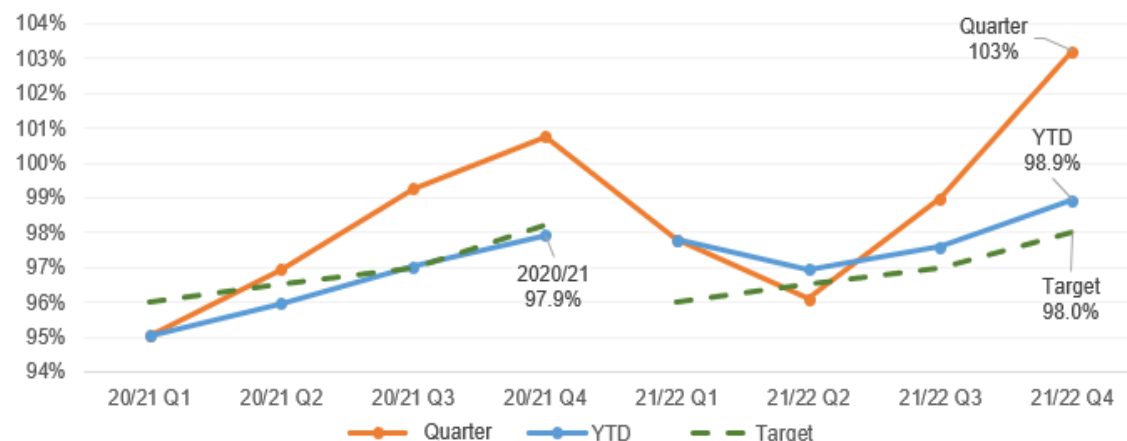


- Progress against the capital program delivery schedule is agreed with the Council at the start of each year when budgets are set.
- Covid restrictions, restrictions of resources and supplies and refusals from tenants have led to reduced expectation of completion of the program.
- Procurement issues hindered reaching target.
- Procurement issues, material and labour shortages are persisting.

# Capital program elements completed on time

## % rent collected from current tenants (of rent due)

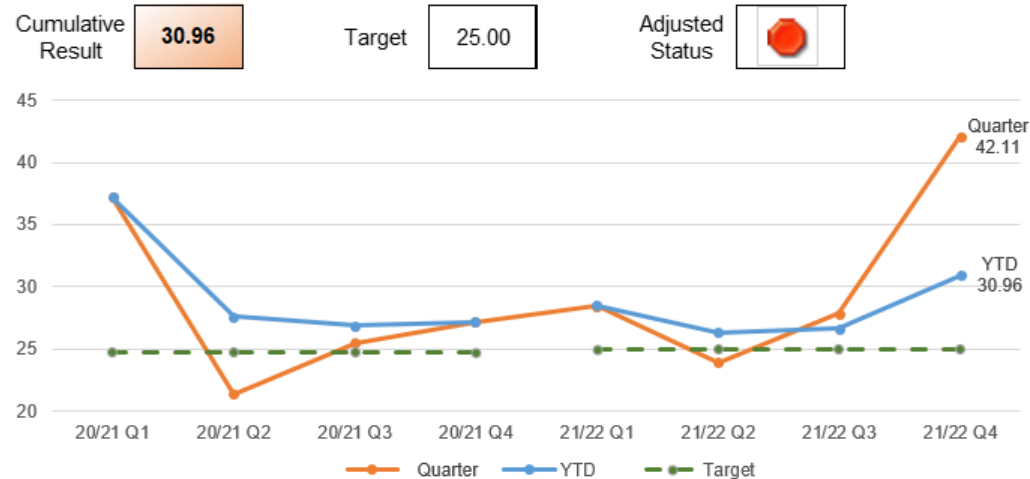
Cumulative Result **98.9%** YTD Target 98.0% Adjusted Status 



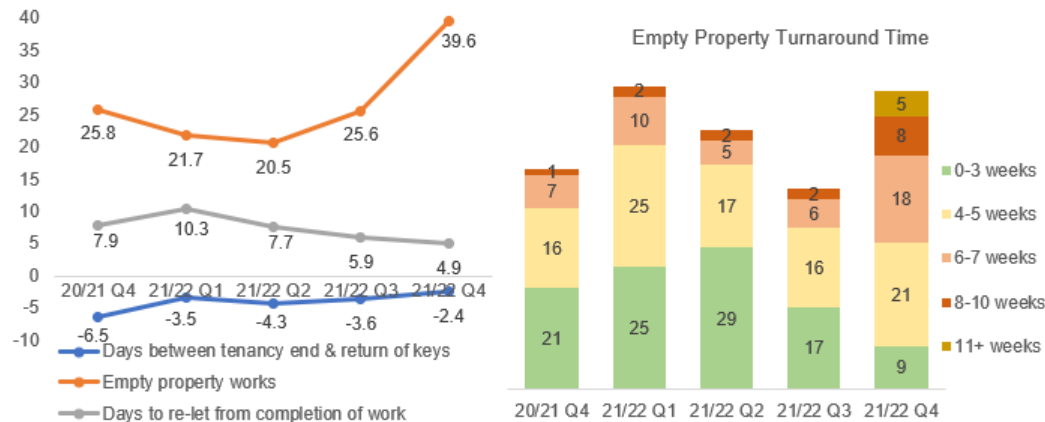
- Measures rent collected as a % of the rent due.
- Collection has been restricted through County Court backlogs and eviction ban.
- Cost of living increase and transition of welfare benefits to Universal Credit impacts our ability to collect rent.

# Rent Collection

## Days to relet general needs properties (incl capital works, excl structural)



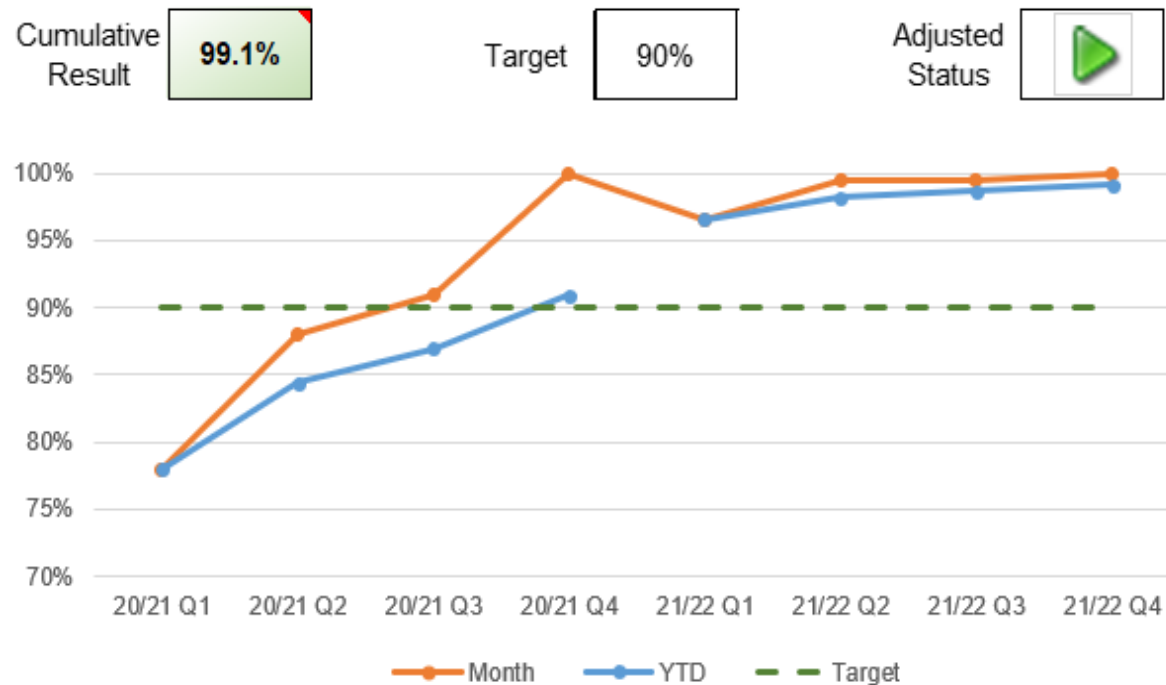
- The number of properties becoming available to relet has reduced significantly which impacts on average completion times.
- The poor condition that properties are left in leads to increased clearance time and costs (fumigation, environmental considerations).



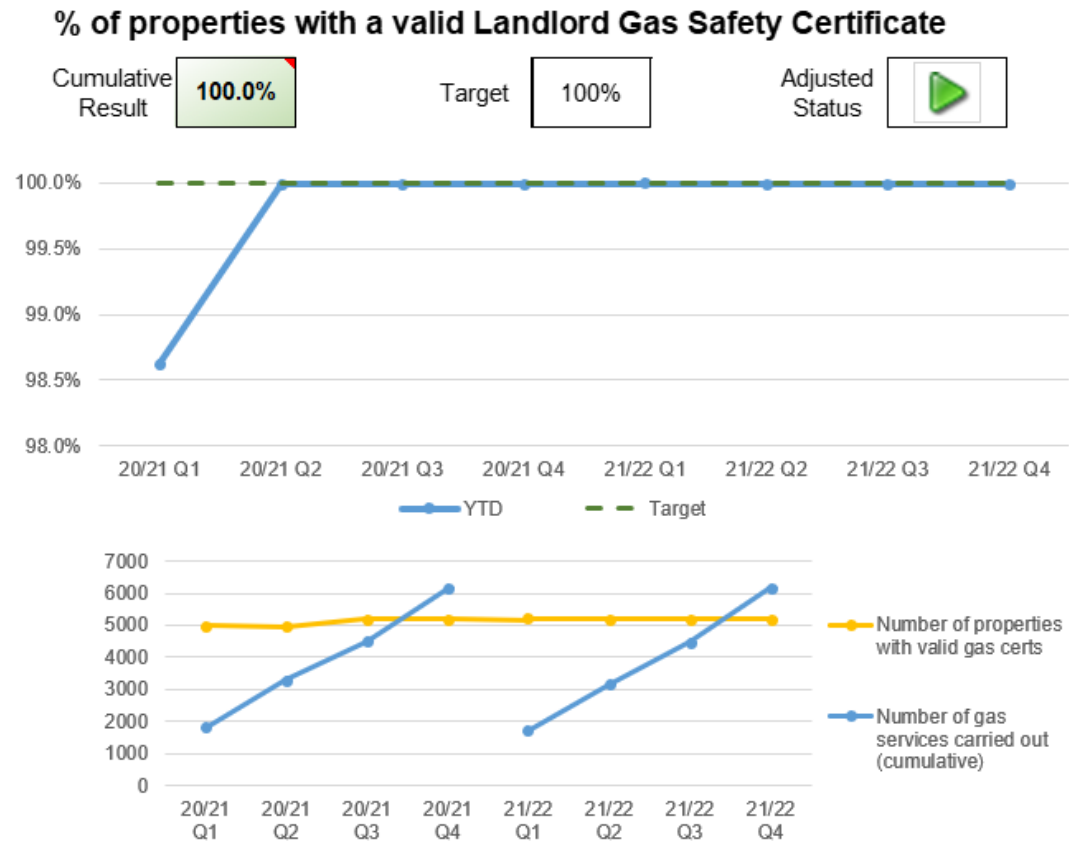
# Average days to relet general needs properties

## % repairs to corporate properties completed on time

Reporting on in-house repairs only, not contractor jobs



- Measures repairs raised completed within timescales.
- New facilities have been added to Corporate Facilities' portfolio, such as the Northern Gateway Sports Park.



- This indicator measures the gas contractor's outcome in delivering gas servicing.
- It includes work to access homes where tenants are reluctant to permit entry.
- A compliance framework is now more developed and, in the future, will be reported as part of a compliance dashboard.

11 October 2022

Report of	Assistant Director – Corporate and Improvement Services	Author	Owen Howell ☎ 282518
Title	Work Programme 2022-23		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the current Work Programme 2022-2023 for the Scrutiny Panel. This provides details of the reports that are scheduled for each meeting during the municipal year.

## 2. Action Required

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to consider and approve the contents of the Work Programme for 2022-2023, or request amendments, additions and/or deletions.

## 3. Background Information

- 3.1 The Panel's work programme evolves as the Municipal Year progresses and items of business are commenced and concluded. At each meeting the opportunity is taken for the work programme to be reviewed and, if necessary, amended according to current circumstances. The draft work programme for 2022-23 is appended to this report. This contains the items which are reviewed each year by the Panel.
- 3.2 The Forward Plan of Key Decisions is included as part of the work programme for the Scrutiny Panel, and this is included an **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023-34 has been deferred until 13 December 2022, to allow for a public consultation to conclude and the results to be analysed.
- 3.4 The Budget Strategy for 2023-24 has been deferred to 8 November 2022, to accommodate additional work being carried out on the Strategy.
- 3.5 The update on the projects within the Town Deal is now able to be scheduled, with Government confirming its funding for these. This will now come to the Panel on 8 November 2022.

## 4. Standard References

- 4.1 There are no particular references to publicity or consultation considerations, or financial, equality, diversity, human rights, community safety, health and safety, environmental and sustainability or risk management implications.

## **5. Strategic Plan References**

- 4.1 Scrutiny and challenge is integral to the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 priorities and direction for the Borough as set out under the strategic themes of:
- [Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability](#)
  - [Creating safe, healthy and active communities](#)
  - [Delivering homes for people who need them](#)
  - [Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits](#)
  - [Celebrating our heritage and culture](#)
- 4.2 The Council recognises that effective local government relies on establishing and maintaining the public's confidence, and that setting high standards of self-governance provides a clear and demonstrable lead. Effective governance underpins the implementation and application of all aspects of the Council's work.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Scrutiny Panel Work Programme, 2022-23

Appendix B – Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 1 August – 30 November 2022



**Work Programme for 2022/23**

<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting – 7 June 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 1 June 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Town Deal Reporting</li> <li>2. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting – 5 July 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 30 June 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council's disbursement of rebate payments on Council Tax</li> <li>2. Year End 2021/22 Performance Report and Strategic Plan Action Plan</li> <li>3. Housing Strategy</li> <li>4. Annual Scrutiny Report</li> <li>5. Briefing note on Hythe Flooding</li> <li>6. Recap report on previous Scrutiny Panel reviews of local bus services</li> <li>7. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<del>Scrutiny Panel meeting – 16 August 2022 Meeting cancelled for lack of business</del>
<del>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 11 August 2022</del>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>1. Economic Strategy</del></li> <li><del>2. Town Deal projects update</del></li> <li><del>3. Portfolio Holder Briefing</del> <b>Cancelled at request of the Panel</b></li> <li>4. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel (Crime and Disorder Committee) - 13 September 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 8 September 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee)</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel – 11 October 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's Briefing – 6 October 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Briefing from Cllr Julie Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</li> <li><del>2. Economic Growth Strategy</del> <b>Deferred</b></li> <li>3. Review of Colchester Borough Homes: 2021-22 Performance, and discussion of Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2023-24</li> <li><del>4. Local Council Tax Support – Year 2023/24</del> <b>Deferred to 13 December 2022</b></li> <li><del>5. Budget Strategy for 2023-24</del> <b>Deferred to 8 November 2022</b></li> <li>6. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>

<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting - 8 November 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 3 November 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Portfolio Holder Briefing/s - Panel to specify issue and Portfolio</li> <li>2. Budget Strategy for 2023-24</li> <li>3. Update on Town Deal projects' progress</li> <li>4. Family/local affiliation in letting and/or sale of local affordable housing and Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy</li> <li>5. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting - 13 December 2022</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 8 December 2022</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Portfolio Holder Briefing - Panel to specify issue and Portfolio</li> <li>7. Half Year 2022-23 Performance Report &amp; Strategic Plan Action Plan progress</li> <li>8. Local Council Tax Support – Year 2023/24</li> <li>9. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting - 24 January 2023</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 19 January 2023</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Briefing by Portfolio Holder for Resources [focus on Budget 2023-24]</li> <li>2. 2023-24 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Forecast and Treasury Management Investment Strategy</li> <li>3. Housing Revenue Accounts Estimate and Housing Investment Programme</li> <li>4. Town Deal projects progress report</li> <li>5. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel - 14 February 2023</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 9 February 2023</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Briefing by Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage</li> <li>2. Reports from Arts Organisations (Mercury, The Arts Centre, FirstSite)</li> <li>3. Corporate Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2022-23</li> <li>4. Work Programme 2022-23</li> </ol>
<b>Scrutiny Panel meeting– 14 March 2023</b>
<b>Scrutiny Panel Chairman's briefing – 9 March 2023</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Portfolio Holder Briefing/s - Panel to specify issue and Portfolio</li> <li>2. Collection of Section 106 developer contributions</li> <li>3. Scrutiny Panel Annual Report</li> </ol>

**Items still to schedule, when possible:**

- Council negotiations with Alumno [Monitoring Officer advice is that this will only be able to be scrutinised in open session once the current ongoing legal situation is resolved regarding the Queen Street site]

- Planning trial of local prioritisation for property purchasing [relating to a recent planning application] [Officer advice is that this is at an early stage and is likely to need to wait until 2023-24 to be ready for meaningful scrutiny of scheme and outcomes]
- Town Deal projects update; was due to come before Scrutiny Panel on 16 August 2022 but delayed due to awaiting central government confirmation of funding awards necessary for projects to proceed.
- Draft Economic Strategy. Was due to come before Scrutiny Panel on 16 August 2022 and then 11 October 2022 but delayed.



# COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS 1 October 2022 – 31 January 2023

During the period from 1 October 2022 – 31 January 2023\* Colchester Borough Council intends to take 'Key Decisions' on the issues set out in the following pages. Key Decisions relate to those executive decisions which are likely to either:

- result in the Council spending or saving money in excess of £500,000; or
- have a significant impact on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the Borough of Colchester.

This Forward Plan should be seen as an outline of the proposed decisions and it will be updated on a monthly basis. Any questions on specific issues included on the Plan should be addressed to the contact name specified in the Plan. General queries about the Plan itself should be made to Democratic Services (01206) 507832 or email [democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk)

The Council invites members of the public to attend any of the meetings at which these decisions will be discussed and the documents listed on the Plan and any other documents relevant to each decision which may be submitted to the decision taker can be viewed free of charge although there will be a postage and photocopying charge for any copies made. *All decisions will be available for inspection on the Council's website, [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)*

If you wish to request details of documents regarding the 'Key Decisions' outlined in this Plan please contact the individual officer identified.

If you wish to make comments or representations regarding the 'Key Decisions' outlined in this Plan please submit them, in writing, to the Contact Officer highlighted two working days before the date of the decision (as indicated in the brackets in the date of decision column). This will enable your views to be considered by the decision taker. Details of the decision makers are correct at the time of publication.

Contact details for the Council's various service departments are incorporated at the end of this plan.

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If you need help with reading or understanding this document please telephone (01206) 282222 or textphone users dial 18001 followed by the full number that you wish to call and we will try to provide a reading service, translation or other formats you may need.

\*The Forward Plan also shows decisions which fall before the period covered by the Plan but which have not been taken at the time of the publication of the Plan.

<b>KEY DECISION REQUIRED</b>	<b>DOES DECISION INCLUDE EXEMPT INFORMATION (or information defined by the Government as Confidential)</b>	<b>DATE OF DECISION or PERIOD DECISION TO BE TAKEN</b>	<b>DECISION MAKER (title and name, including Cabinet, portfolio holders and officers) – details of decision makers correct at time of publication</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED OR TO BE SUBMITTED TO DECISION TAKER TO CONSIDER (and from where they are available)</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS FROM WHICH DOCUMENTS CAN BE OBTAINED (name of the authors of the reports)</b>
<b>Approval to complete the purchase of land/property at 'The Centre' Greenstead from Notting Hill Genesis, using funding received via the Estates Regeneration Fund</b>	No	September 2022	Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Mark Cory  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Daniel Barton Greenstead and Youth (Town Deal) Projects Manager 01206 282912: Daniel.Barton@colchester.gov.uk
<b>Award of Contract for External Painting to Council owned residential stock</b>	Yes	September 2022	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Julie Young.  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 <a href="mailto:geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk">geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk</a>



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<b>Award of Contract for Acquisitions Refurbishment Programme</b>	Yes	September 2022	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Julie Young.  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 <a href="mailto:geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk">geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Creation of a new Solar PV Park and Micro Grid</b>	Yes	7 September 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Andrew Tyrrell Client and Business Manager <a href="mailto:andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk">andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk</a>

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<b>Financial Assistance Policy– Healthy Homes</b>	No	7 September 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report Financial Assistance Policy	Jon Parsons, Healthy Homes Manager <a href="mailto:Jon.parsons@colchester.gov.uk">Jon.parsons@colchester.gov.uk</a> 07813 363042
<b>Award of Corporate Fuel Contract</b>	No	7 September 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Rosa Tanfield Group Manager Neighbourhood Services <a href="mailto:rosa.tanfield@colchester.gov.uk">rosa.tanfield@colchester.gov.uk</a> 07976 794597

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<b>Award of the Contract for the Construction of the Renewable Heat Network Energy Centre and at the Northern Gateway</b>	Yes	12 October 2022	<p>Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)</p> <p>Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk</p>	Cabinet report	<p>Andrew Tyrrell Client and Business Manager <a href="mailto:andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk">andrew.tyrrell@colchester.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Colchester's Economic Strategy 2022-2025</b>	No	12 October 2022	<p>Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)</p> <p>Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk</p>	Cabinet report Draft Strategy document	<p>Karen Turnbull Economic Development Officer 01206 282915 <a href="mailto:karen.turnbull@colchester.gov.uk">karen.turnbull@colchester.gov.uk</a></p>

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<b>2023-24 Budget Strategy Update and Transformation Proposals</b>	No	12 October 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Paul Cook Head of Finance <a href="mailto:paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk">paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Sale of land at Northern Gateway, Colchester</b>	Yes	12 October 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Mandy Jones Assistant Director, Place and Client Services <a href="mailto:mandy.jones@colchester.gov.uk">mandy.jones@colchester.gov.uk</a> 01206 282501

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<b>Award of Contract for Unadopted Roads within Council Housing Estates – HIP Programme</b>	Yes	October 2022	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Julie Young.  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 <a href="mailto:geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk">geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Award of Contract for Voids works contract</b>	Yes	October 2022	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Julie Young.  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 <a href="mailto:geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk">geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk</a>

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<b>2023-24 Budget Update and Fees and Charges</b>	No	16 November 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report Schedule of draft fees and charges	Paul Cook Head of Finance <a href="mailto:paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk">paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Officer Pay Policy Statement 2023-24</b>	No	16 November 2022	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report Draft Officer Pay Policy Statement 2023-24	Jess Douglas Strategic People and Performance Manager <a href="mailto:Jessica.douglas@colchester.gov.uk">Jessica.douglas@colchester.gov.uk</a> 01206 282239

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<b>Local Council Tax Support Scheme</b>	No	16 November 2022 or 25 January 2023	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report, draft Scheme	Sam Preston Group Manager, Customer <a href="mailto:Samantha.preston@colchester.gov.uk">Samantha.preston@colchester.gov.uk</a> 07966237492
<b>Housing Revenue Account Fees and Charges 2023 – 2024</b>  To agree the Housing Revenue Account fees and charges for 2023-2024	No	December 2022	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Julie Young.  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Portfolio Holder report, including schedule of charges	Geoff Beales Client Services Manager 01206 506514 <a href="mailto:geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk">geoff.beales@colchester.gov.uk</a>



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<b>2023-24 Budget, Council Tax and Medium Term Financial Forecast</b>	No	25 January 2023	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Paul Cook Head of Finance <a href="mailto:paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk">paul.cookx@colchester.gov.uk</a>
<b>Housing Revenue Estimates 2023-24</b>	No	25 January 2023	Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)  Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk	Cabinet report	Darren Brown Finance Manager 01206 282891 <a href="mailto:darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk">darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk</a>

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Housing Investment Programme 2023-24	No	25 January 2023	<p>Cabinet (Cllrs King, Cory, Cox, Fox, Goss, Luxford Vaughan, Nissen, J. Young)</p> <p>Please contact via Democratic Services (01206) 507832 email: democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk</p>	Cabinet report	<p>Darren Brown Finance Manager 01206 282891 <a href="mailto:darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk">darren.brown@colchester.gov.uk</a></p>

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