

Scrutiny Panel

**Grand Jury Room, Town Hall
2 July 2013 at 6.00pm**

The Scrutiny Panel examine 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

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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 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
2 July 2013 at 6:00pm

Members

Chairman : Councillor Beverly Davies.
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Marcus Harrington.
Councillors Dave Harris, Jo Hayes, Gerard Oxford,
Kevin Bentley, Nick Cope, Peter Higgins and Mike Hogg.

Substitute Members : All members of the Council who are not Cabinet members
of members of this Panel.

Agenda - Part A

(open to the public including the media)

Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally brief and items 6 to 9 are standard items for which there may be no business to consider.

Pages

1. Welcome and Announcements

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched to silent;
- the audio-recording of meetings;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

2. Substitutions

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

3. Urgent Items

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any interests they may have in the items on the agenda. Councillors should consult Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 for full guidance on the registration and declaration of interests. However Councillors may wish to note the following:-

- Where a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, other pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the authority and he/she is present at a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, the Councillor must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest, whether or not such interest is registered on his/her register of Interests or if he/she has made a pending notification.
- If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting, he/she must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter at the meeting. The Councillor must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Where a Councillor has another pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting and where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgment of the public interest, the Councillor must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Failure to comply with the arrangements regarding disclosable pecuniary interests without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence, with a penalty of up to £5,000 and disqualification from office for up to 5 years.

5. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2013.

6. Have Your Say!

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

7. Decisions taken under special urgency provisions

To consider any Cabinet decisions taken under the special urgency provisions.

8. Referred items under the Call in Procedure

To consider any decisions taken under the Call in Procedure.

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. New Housing Arrangements Proposals

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See report from the Head of Commercial Services.

11. Work Programme

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See report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

12. Exclusion of the public

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).



Scrutiny Panel

2 July 2013

Item
10

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Gareth Mitchell 506972
Title	New Housing Arrangements Proposal		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

The Panel is invited to review the proposal and the draft Cabinet report relating to the New Housing Arrangements Project.

Following the recommendations of the Local Housing Review Project Board in 2012, a New Housing Arrangements Project was established to develop the proposal that would be put to the Council's Cabinet for agreement.

This review has reached the stage where a proposal for the future direction of the Council's housing functions can be put forward, with four main purposes:

1. To put in place new arrangements for the Council's housing functions which are fit for purpose to deliver the Council's future housing objectives.
2. To put in place more resilient and responsive governance between the Council and Colchester Borough Homes which supports the delivery of the opportunities set out in the Council's Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact (UCC FSR).
3. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR of a sustainable commercial services arm, by enabling Colchester Borough Homes to increase its range of housing services as a wholly-owned trading company of the Council
4. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR by supporting the delivery of the Universal Customer Environment.

The draft Cabinet report and proposal document are attached.

The draft report to Cabinet recommends the approval of the proposal.

Scrutiny Panel is asked to review and comment, so that this can be considered by the Cabinet on 10 July 2013.



Cabinet

Item

10 July 2013

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Gareth Mitchell 506972
Title	New Housing Arrangements Proposal		
Wards affected	All		

**This report concerns the proposal relating to the
New Housing Arrangements Project – *draft report for Scrutiny Panel.***

1. Decision Required

- 1.1 To approve the proposal to develop new housing arrangements for Colchester Borough Council and Colchester Borough Homes to work together to deliver housing services.
- 1.2 To delegate to the Chief Executive responsibility for the negotiation and agreement of a new Management Agreement with Colchester Borough Homes for a period of ten years, with an option to extend for a further five years following a satisfactory review at the seven year point.

2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 Colchester Borough Homes is a wholly-owned trading company of the Council which delivers the majority of the Council's legal landlord obligations. The performance of the company and delivery of the Council's tenant and housing stock management objectives are governed by a Management Agreement. This management agreement was renewed in 2008 and the current agreement expires in 2013.
- 2.2 This New Housing Arrangements proposal fulfils four main purposes:
 1. To put in place new arrangements for the Council's housing functions which are fit for purpose to deliver the Council's future housing objectives.
 2. To put in place more resilient and responsive governance between the Council and Colchester Borough Homes which supports the delivery of the opportunities set out in the Council's Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact (UCC FSR).
 3. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR of a sustainable commercial services arm, by enabling Colchester Borough Homes to increase its range of housing services as a wholly-owned trading company of the Council
 4. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR by supporting the delivery of the Universal Customer Environment.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative options would be not to approve the proposal or to ask for changes to be made to that proposal. In either scenario, the delivery of improvements shown at 2.2 could be delayed or not delivered.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Council decided to take the opportunity of the expiry of the Colchester Borough Homes management agreement in 2013 to review its housing management arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose for the next phase of change in local government and to ensure these aligned with the Council's housing objectives and aspirations. The Local Housing Review Project was set up to fulfil this purpose.
- 4.2 At the completion of the Local Housing Review Project, the Project Board agreed the following recommendations to the Council's Cabinet:
- That having considered the options work, that the Council should not proceed further with the option to outsource the majority of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services.
 - That the Council should progress the option to continue with its Arms Length Management Organisation, and that it should now focus its resources on assessing the functions and responsibilities of Colchester Borough Homes which are appropriate going forward in the context of current and future housing challenges. Such an assessment to integrate the approach of the Council's UCC FSR.
 - The option for an in-house service for the majority of the HRA services should only be considered further if the Cabinet does not accept that a remodelled Colchester Borough Homes can deliver on the Council's housing objectives within the financial envelope determined by the Council.
 - The Board recognises that a positive relationship between the Council and Colchester Borough Homes is critical to the successful delivery of HRA services, and that this will require consideration of the leadership and governance of HRA functions in any assessment going forward.
- 4.3 A New Housing Arrangements Project was then established to develop the specific arrangements that would be put to the Council's Cabinet for agreement.
- 4.4 This New Housing Arrangements Project has had sponsorship from the Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing, the Council's Executive and Strategic Directors, and the Chief Executive for Colchester Borough Homes. It has used a core project team, comprising service resources from both organisations, from January 2013 to May 2013 to develop these proposals.
- 4.5 The Executive Summary section of this proposal on page 2 provides an overview of the project and the proposals for the new housing arrangements.
- 4.6 The proposal was reviewed at the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 11 June 2013. The minutes are contained in the Supplementary Agenda.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The proposals are for the Council to:
- integrate all frontline housing customer contact into the Universal Customer Environment as set out in the UCC FSR
 - create a new housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure within Colchester Borough Homes to offer opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness
 - enable Colchester Borough Homes, the Council's primary arms-length trading company, to be more flexible and innovative with the responsive repairs programme in keeping with the commercial principles set out in the UCC FSR
 - explore opportunities to tackle empty homes and in the private rented sector to increase the supply of housing to meet local need
 - agree a new Management Agreement with Colchester Borough Homes to govern new working arrangements with the Council.

5.2 These are structured into four overarching opportunities:

- New Colchester Borough Homes governance arrangements.
- Integrated frontline housing customer experience, and new housing options and advice service.
- Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements.
- Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme.

5.3 Work has been ongoing in recent months to ensure the proposals align and that the opportunities in this proposal support the direction set out in the UCC FSR. The specific areas where this proposal supports the UCC FSR are:

- Delivery of the Universal Customer Environment
- Building a sustainable commercial services arm.

6. Strategic Plan References

6.1 The proposal contributes to the broad aim in the Strategic Plan 2012-15 of “Leading for the future” and the following priority areas:

- Providing more affordable homes across the borough
- Supporting more vulnerable groups.

7. Consultation

7.1 Council Tenants and Leaseholders, staff, and other Council services have played an important part in the development of this proposal. Please see section 5 of the proposal for more information. Unison has been consulted on the proposal.

8. Publicity Considerations

8.1 A communications plan has been developed as part of the proposal.

9. Financial implications

9.1 Section 10 of the document summarises the projected financial benefits arising from implementation of this proposal.

9.2 There are opportunities identified in this document where efficiency savings are anticipated following implementation, but unlike the Council’s Fundamental Service Review programme, this was not the primary purpose of this review process.

9.3 The proposal offers new opportunities for Colchester Borough Homes to fulfil the expectation of a trading company to trade and sell services to other clients, resulting in an income to the General Fund.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 The screening stage for an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, and is available [by clicking this link](#), or following this pathway from the homepage of www.colchester.gov.uk: Council and Democracy>Policies, Strategies and Performance>Equality and Diversity>Equality Impact Assessments>Strategic Policy and Regeneration> Housing> EqlA New Housing Arrangements.
- 10.2 This report is about the proposal at a strategic level, and whether the opportunities identified should be developed further. Subject to approval of the proposal, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as part of the implementation planning stage. These will be an integral part of any changes to services - an assessment of any potential direct or indirect discrimination needs to be made alongside specific proposals as they are developed.

11. Other Standard References

- 11.1 There are no specific Human Rights, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications at this point. As with Equality and Diversity above, the implications for these areas will be considered at the implementation stage.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 The high-level risks associated with this review have been identified in section 11 of the proposals.

Background Papers

The proposal and appendices are provided with this report. The Equality Impact Assessment screening document is available online (see 10.1) or in the Members' Room.



New Housing Arrangements Proposal



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2. Executive summary

This proposal document fulfils four main purposes:

1. To put in place new arrangements for the Council's housing functions which are fit for purpose to deliver the Council's future housing objectives.
2. To put in place more resilient and responsive governance between the Council and Colchester Borough Homes which supports the delivery of the opportunities set out in the Council's Fundamental Service Review of Customer Contact (UCC FSR).
3. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR of a sustainable commercial services arm, by enabling Colchester Borough Homes to increase its range of housing services as a wholly-owned trading company of the Council
4. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR by supporting the delivery of the Universal Customer Environment.

Opportunities are identified where efficiency savings are anticipated following implementation, but this was not a primary purpose of this review.

This proposal sets out proposals for the Council to:

- integrate all frontline housing customer contact into the Universal Customer Environment as set out in the UCC FSR
- create a new housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure within Colchester Borough Homes that offers opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness
- enable Colchester Borough Homes, the Council's primary arms-length trading company, to be more flexible and innovative with the responsive repairs programme in keeping with the commercial principles set out in the UCC FSR
- explore opportunities to tackle empty homes and in the private rented sector to increase the supply of housing to meet local need
- agree a new Management Agreement with Colchester Borough Homes to govern new working arrangements with the Council.

This proposal is structured into four overarching opportunities:

- New Colchester Borough Homes governance arrangements.
- Integrated frontline housing customer experience and new housing options and advice service.
- Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements.
- Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme.

This proposal aims to deliver the following benefits:

- Single point of contact for customers across the Council and Colchester Borough Homes and a new joined-up housing options and advice service that is cross tenure. Improvements in responsive repairs experience for tenants through greater innovation and flexibility.
- Improved housing solutions for customers through increased private rented sector supply.
- More effective governance arrangements for the Council and Colchester Borough Homes.
- Support for efficiency savings outlined in the UCC FSR through delivery of the Universal Customer Environment.
- Efficiencies will deliver £60,000 savings in 2014/15.

3. Introduction

The overarching aim of the New Housing Arrangements Project is to develop new arrangements for Colchester Borough Council (the Council) and Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) to work together to:

- ensure that housing customers receive excellent services
- invest in our housing stock and services across the borough
- identify opportunities where CBH may provide additional housing services.

The Council established its Arms Length Management Organisation as CBH in 2003. This was in response to the national Decent Homes agenda, in order to access Government funding for a programme of improvement works to its housing stock, and to embrace opportunities for greater tenant and leaseholder involvement in the delivery of housing management services in the borough.

CBH is a wholly-owned trading company of the Council which delivers the majority of the Council's legal Landlord obligations. This proposal contributes to the vision in the Council's UCC FSR of a sustainable commercial services arm by enabling CBH to increase its range of housing services as a wholly owned trading company of the Council.

The performance of this company and delivery of the Council's tenant and housing stock management objectives are governed by a Management Agreement. This management agreement was renewed in 2008 and the current agreement expires in August 2013.

In 2011 the Council decided to take the opportunity of the management agreement expiry to review its housing management arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose for the next phase of change in local government and to ensure these arrangements aligned with the Council's housing objectives and aspirations. The Local Housing Review Project was therefore established.

A Local Housing Review Project Board was established across both the Council and CBH and across political parties and included tenant representatives. The Project Board's role was to oversee the review, receive the work of the Project Team and make recommendations to Cabinet on the outcomes of the review.

A Tenant and Leaseholder Sounding Board was also established to ensure the voice of tenants and leaseholders was built into the review process.

Having established success criteria for the project and a set of delivery options for evaluation, the Project Board agreed that the following three delivery options for the Council's tenant and housing stock management services had the potential to meet the review success criteria:

1. **Arms Length Management Organisation.** This would mean keeping CBH or a similar organisation, although it may operate differently. For example, it might deliver more services or deliver them in different ways.
2. **Local Authority Management** This would mean the Council would bring the housing management and property services functions back in-house and manage the tenants and stock directly.
3. **Outsourcing** This would mean that outside organisations would apply through a tender process to manage the Council's housing stock and the Council would choose the best organisation to deliver the services under a contractual arrangement.

As part of the review process, a Local Government Association Peer Challenge team was invited to Colchester to review the progress with the Local Housing Review and challenge the process and work completed to date. As a direct result of this Peer Challenge, the Local Housing Review Project Board agreed the following recommendations:

- That having considered the options work, that the Council should not proceed further with the option to outsource the majority of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) services.
- That the Council should progress the option to continue with its Arms Length Management Organisation, and that it should now focus its resources on assessing the functions and responsibilities of CBH which are appropriate going forward in the context of current and future housing challenges. Such an assessment to integrate the approach of the Council's UCC FSR.
- The option for an in-house service for the majority of the HRA services should only be considered further if the Cabinet does not accept a remodelled CBH can deliver on the Council's housing objectives within the financial envelope determined by the Council.
- The Board recognises that a positive relationship between the Council and CBH is critical to the successful delivery of HRA services, and that this will require consideration of the leadership and governance of HRA functions in any assessment going forward.

Following these recommendations, the review phase of the project ended, and a New Housing Arrangements Project was established to develop the specific arrangements that would be put to the Council's Cabinet for agreement.

Following informal Cabinet discussions, the following scope was agreed for the New Housing Arrangements Project:

1. To integrate the customer contact processes within CBH into the Universal Customer Environment as set out in the UCC FSR. This is addressed in *section 7* of this proposal.
2. Explore the transfer of work around homelessness and housing options advice to CBH (*section 7*)
3. To give CBH more control over the housing repairs budgets (*section 8*)
4. Explore opportunities to intervene in the private rented market in order to increase the supply of available housing (*section 9*)
5. To revisit the existing procedures for the procurement of property-related housing contracts (*section 8*)
6. To explore the benefits of CBH working with the owners of empty homes in the borough to help bring their properties back into use (*section 9*)
7. To transfer the processes currently managed by the Council around Disabled Facilities Grants to CBH (*section 7*)
8. To revisit the arrangements for tenant and leaseholder involvement in the delivery of housing functions both for CBH and the Council (*section 6*).

The New Housing Arrangements Project has developed four opportunities that are set out in this Proposal:

- Integrated frontline housing customer experience and housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure.
- Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements.
- Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme.
- New CBH governance arrangements.

In parallel with the work on these opportunities, the Council was also developing the UCC FSR, which was formally agreed by Cabinet in November 2012. There are important connections between the two reviews, and so work has been ongoing in recent months to ensure the proposals align, and that the opportunities in this proposal support the direction set out in the UCC FSR.

The specific areas where this Proposal supports the UCC FSR are:

- Delivery of the Universal Customer Environment
- Building a sustainable commercial services arm.

4. New Housing Arrangements Project Structure

A New Housing Arrangements Project was established to develop the specific arrangements that would be put to the Council's Cabinet for agreement.

The Project team

The Project Team is a collaborative team from both the Council and CBH, reflecting the desire for a strong and positive relationship between the two organisations going forward.

The new arrangements and supporting documentation is designed to be developed by the two organisations together, reflecting the organisations' wish to build on a successful relationship. There is a project lead from each organisation ensuring that the direction and content of the project meets the need of both organisations. The Council representative is the Head of Commercial Services working alongside the Director of Housing from CBH. The project sponsors are the Council's Strategic Director, the Executive Director and the Chief Executive of CBH. The Project is overseen by the Portfolio Holder for Housing who has received regular briefings on the progress of the project.

The Project Leads direct the work of the new housing arrangements project team of Council and CBH officers. CBC officers include representation from all services involved in the provision of housing services, the management of CBH or services which may be impacted by the planned changes including human resources and communications. CBH representation includes the Directors' Management Team.

Development of the Opportunities

This has been facilitated by task and finish groups to develop the opportunities and has enabled a wider representation from officers with expertise in a particular area. The opportunities include:

- Integrated frontline housing customer experience and housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure.
- Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements.
- Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme.

A facilitated workshop was held to scope the new housing service and the associated frontline customer experience. This workshop was attended by a broad range of representatives from the Council and CBH with both strategic and front line expertise.

The development of new governance arrangements for CBH is being overseen by a project group of officers with expertise in this area. This group is appointing a legal advisor able to advise both parties with the aim of building a new management agreement between the two organisations.

5. Customer Impact

Current service provision

The Council's Fundamental Service Review of Housing Services was implemented in 2010-13, and delivered:

- A clear customer journey resulting in the fastest solution available with an effective triage service to channel customers to an effective solution at an early stage to prevent them from becoming in urgent need of housing. More enquiries are dealt with at the first point of contact.
- A multi-skilled team of advisors able to deal with any housing query that cannot be resolved at the frontline.
- A strong focus on the Council's strategic enabling role to deliver housing solutions.
- £450,000 of recurring revenue savings.

It also recognised the importance of a strong relationship between the Council and CBH and a vibrant, accessible private rented sector. The new housing arrangements proposal aims to build upon the progress made to date.

The CBH Fundamental Service Review has focused on remodelling services around customer access and excellence, whilst achieving annual savings of £520,000 by year 3 of the review. Key aims of the review were:

- Developing joint work within the community and enabling community and tenants to do more for themselves.
- Redesigning ways of working and empowering staff through training.
- Joining services with others to maximise productivity.

Current customer information

The Council and CBH jointly commissioned a tenant satisfaction survey in 2010 using the National Housing Federation and their STATUS survey. The survey sought the views of both tenants and leaseholders.

The survey found that a large majority (78%) of tenants believed that CBH is providing a good housing service. Tenant satisfaction with overall services had increased since the previous survey.

The survey showed that certain groups were more satisfied than other groups. Older tenants (60+), retired tenants, long term tenants (for more than 21 years) and disabled tenants were generally more satisfied than younger tenants (under 35s), families, working tenants and unemployed tenants. Many of these patterns, such as increasing satisfaction with age, are similar to those found by other landlords who used the STATUS survey and follow national trends.

Customer satisfaction with the repairs services

The repairs service enjoys a high rate of tenant satisfaction with a 96.22% satisfaction rate for 2012/13. This is based upon the return of 4249 post-repair survey returns, a 26.6% response rate.

This is second quartile performance for customer satisfaction under Housemark Benchmarking for 2012/13.

Further information on CBH performance can be found in *Appendix D: Current performance of Colchester Borough Homes*.

Customer satisfaction with current housing advice and homelessness services

Current performance by the Housing Options team is above the target set of 68%. The end of year outturn was 89%. It is based on a customer satisfaction survey given to those customers who have been interviewed by a Housing Options Advisor.

Customer engagement with the review

The Sounding Board

In March 2012 a Tenant Sounding Board was formed to provide tenant views on the initial housing review.

The members of the Sounding Board were recruited from the Tenant and Leaseholder Consultative Committee. This group had received training from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service and had acquired some of the skills and knowledge that would be necessary to contribute to the Local Housing Review. To build the group's capacity they participated in a number of workshops that allowed them an overview of the delivery options that were being considered, self-financing for the Housing Revenue Account and the Project Board's Success Criteria.

An independent Tenant Adviser was appointed to ensure that the information given to the group was objective and that the group was appropriately supported in their role.

The Tenant Sounding Board evaluated the success criteria for the review. In addition, an e-survey was sent to tenants and leaseholders. The Sounding Board was interviewed by the peer challenge team as part of the review process. More details about the involvement of the Sounding Board in the Review can be found at *Appendix A: The Local Housing Review*.

Seeking the views of tenants

A short survey was sent out in the April 2013 edition of Housing News and Views.

Although the response rate was disappointing, the customers who responded were in favour of continuing the relationship with CBH and gave their support to CBH developing further services.

23 responses were received to the survey. The majority (21 tenants) supported the proposal to continue the ALMO arrangements with CBH. 17 responses supported the proposal for CBH to offer additional services identified by the Council.

Tenant consultation on the proposal

To supplement the survey, a consultation workshop on the proposal is being arranged for tenant and leaseholder representatives. The results of this consultation will be available prior to the presentation of the proposal at Cabinet.

6. Opportunity- New Colchester Borough Homes Governance Arrangements

Summary

The overarching aim of the New Housing Arrangements Project is to develop new arrangements for the Council and CBH working together to:

- Ensure that housing customers receive excellent service.
- Invest in our housing stock and services across the borough.
- Identify opportunities where CBH may provide additional housing services.

This opportunity will provide the organisational framework for CBH to be resilient for the future.

New governance arrangements are being developed to support delivery of these objectives. The milestones for these arrangements will need to follow the development of the opportunities, to ensure any flexibilities needed can be included in the management agreement and other documents.

Further information on the current arrangements with CBH can be found in *Appendix B: The Current ALMO Arrangements*

Developing new arrangements

New arrangements will be developed to ensure that the Council and CBH can deliver strategic objectives in the future. These will include:

- New management agreement which supports the delivery of the opportunities identified in this proposal
- New Memorandum and Articles for CBH which ensures the flexibility to explore the opportunities in the proposal
- Arrangements to ensure the Council and CBH work together to deliver both organisations' strategic priorities, including development and agreement of an annual delivery plan
- Mechanisms for liaison between the organisations to ensure that both organisations share available expertise
- A mechanism for the Council to consult and engage with its tenants.

As part of the New Housing Arrangements Project the CBH Board has commenced a review of their internal governance arrangements. The aim of the review is to ensure that the Board and Sub-Committee structure is fit for future purpose. The review is reflecting upon best practice to ensure that CBH has the right governance structure and skills to give strategic leadership and sound risk management. The review is timetabled to complete in-line with the overall New Housing Arrangements Project.

The first recommendations made by the review of the Board by CBH, and in line with best practice, are as follows:

- That the Board should be made up of twelve Board members (currently fifteen). Four will be nominees from CBC, four will be residents, and four will be independent members (currently six, six and three respectively).
- The new Chairman will be chosen following a selection process and external advert. The Chairman will be one of the twelve Board members.
- Terms of office will be introduced for Board members. A term will be for up to three years, with the opportunity for renewal twice subject to Board approval up to a presumed maximum of nine years. The Chairman will have a term of up to three years, with the opportunity for renewable once up to a maximum of six years.
- CBH, with residents, is currently reviewing the resident scrutiny function. The aim of the review is to enhance resident scrutiny and engagement.

Proposals

- Develop a new management agreement which ensures there is both flexibility for CBH to deliver new services but also sets out the Council's approval and controls in this process.
- The management agreement will be for a term of ten years, with an option to extend for a further five years following a satisfactory review at the seven-year point. The Management Agreement will set out a clear link between the performance of CBH and the renewal of the management agreement.
- A structure for the agreement and monitoring of an Annual Delivery Plan and the length of that delivery plan which is aligned with the new freedoms and flexibilities.
- The Council will be clear on the developing agent role it sees for CBH in delivering new build Council housing.
- A structure is established which enables the Council to engage directly with tenants and leaseholders.
- A new CBH Board structure is agreed
- The Management Agreement includes the necessary and relevant delegations to enable CBH to perform functions on behalf of the Council.
- The Council's arrangements for the intelligent client role are clearly stated.
- The Council's role in specific CBH appointments is set out within the management agreement.
- Liaison arrangements for Council and CBH senior managers are set out in the management agreement and reflect best practice.
- Consideration is given to the benefits and opportunities from CBH seeking Registered Provider status

What do the changes mean for customers?

Both organisations will have certainty for the period of the Management Agreement depending on continuing good performance. This will allow the development of further customer services.

The Management Agreement will be flexible enough to allow CBH to develop new services for the customer (as detailed in sections 7-9) with the resulting customer impacts.

A structure will be established which enables the Council to engage directly with tenants and leaseholders when it needs to. This will enable the Council to obtain customer insight and ascertain the impact of the continuing CBH arrangements.

7. Opportunity - Integrated frontline housing customer experience and housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure

Summary

This opportunity proposes that a new housing service is created to deliver a housing options and advice service that is cross-tenure.

The frontline customer contact would be aligned with Universal Customer Environment (UCE) principles. This will provide one initial point of contact for customers of both organisations, resulting in a simpler route for housing enquiries. There will be efficiencies in dealing with and responding to customer contacts. The range of services available will enable a high level of customer contacts to be resolved at the initial conversation. Business support will be redefined to align with the review of Professional Support Units under the UCC FSR.

There will be a new housing service to provide cross-tenure housing advice. CBH will develop a service to provide a mix of specialist and generic advisors to deal with tenancy issues from across the sector and provide homelessness services.

This arrangement will provide a joined-up housing service. In addition, the efficiencies and service developments realised from the Housing FSR will be maintained by keeping the housing options team located together. The benefits of the FSR will be available for all housing customers. The customer will benefit from a more resilient, flexible service from a mixed team of housing experts.

CBH may be able to offer additional services to help manage customer demand such as a lettings agency. There are opportunities for behaviour change and focused services which CBH as an established trading partner could deliver.

Building up the proposal

A workshop was held for staff teams involved in providing housing services.

The teams agreed that priorities for a housing service should include:

- Integrated Council and CBH customer services
- Increase resilience by building a team with a greater range of housing knowledge
- Train staff to ensure they are the right people with the right attitude
- Increase supply of housing to offer a range of housing solutions
- Make the best use of the private rented sector
- Develop the capacity for customer self-serve through the provision of information.

The proposed new housing service detailed below and in Opportunity 9: *Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme* incorporates these priorities.

Proposal

The proposal is to transfer the Housing Options and Homelessness service from the Council to CBH. This would enable CBH to provide a holistic housing service including advice on all housing options, assess homelessness, provide temporary accommodation managed by CBH, along with the existing tenant management, repairs, property and management services provided by CBH in many cases.

The frontline customer contact would be aligned. The vision is to create a Universal Customer Environment which enables:

- our staff to deliver customer excellence as determined by our customers, not us.
- positive behaviour change amongst our residents to reduce demand on our resources and make a better place.
- a significant channel shift to empower our customer to self-serve when and where it is appropriate.
- efficient service delivery which helps anxious and frustrated customers and avoids waste.
- a high standard of complex case management for our most vulnerable customers in an appropriate face to face environment.
- a more efficient and effective customer journey to make life simple for our customers.
- a commercial philosophy to evolve that secures organisational resilience and service delivery.

All customer enquires will be managed in a universal way, in one environment where customers will have their enquiries resolved without the need to hand them on to other service areas of the council.

Customer Advisors will be skilled-up to respond to all key service enquiries across the Council. They will work as one team, across the Council and CBH, to provide a comprehensive service to all residents and customers of the borough responding to enquiries via all key channels of communication (face to face, telephony or online). Customers will receive the service they require at the first point of contact rather than be signposted from the Council to CBH and vice versa, so improving the customer experience and their satisfaction.

By bringing the two customer service teams together this will create some efficiencies in the medium term as Advisors become multi skilled and multi tasked. 10 advisors and two team leaders will move from CBH into the Universal Customer Environment. The timing of the integration of the two customer service teams will be aligned to when the Council's face-to-face services (currently in Angel Court) are planned to move into the town centre library in November 2013.

The business support function will be redefined to align with the review of Professional Support Units under the UCC FSR, the intention of which is to bring together the range of Professional Support functions across the Council to both realise efficiency savings and provide the associated resilience and sustainability that comes from a single team. The review of the Council's current Professional Support Units is underway, and it is proposed that the implementation plan matches the implementation timescales of the UCC FSR, with recruitment to the new structure being completed by October/November 2013.

The proposal is to transfer to CBH the specific support roles associated with the service functions that are also proposed to move across to CBH. CBH currently procure support from the existing Housing Professional Support Unit which is managed through a Service Level Agreement. This proposal would mean the transfer of between six and eight full-time equivalent staff to CBH.

Included within the proposal to move the Professional Support Unit support is the administration of Disabled Facilities Grant work and also the assessment of energy performance certificates.

This arrangement would provide a joined-up housing service. In addition, the efficiencies and service developments achieved by the Housing FSR will be maintained by keeping the housing options team located together. One manager and 14.5 full-time equivalents will move to CBH. The customer will benefit from a more resilient, flexible service from a team of housing experts.

Once the detailed arrangements have been confirmed, the cost of providing for tenants and leaseholder customer contact will be met from the Housing Revenue Account as is currently the case.

The UCC FSR identified potential savings which included efficiencies in the housing options function. This proposal recognises that the potential to realise these savings for the Council may be lost. At the same time, this is balanced by the potential efficiencies from moving customer service staff from CBH into the Universal Customer Environment.

The potential to deliver the savings identified in the UCC FSR business case will need to be reviewed when the detailed implementation plan for the new housing arrangements is available.

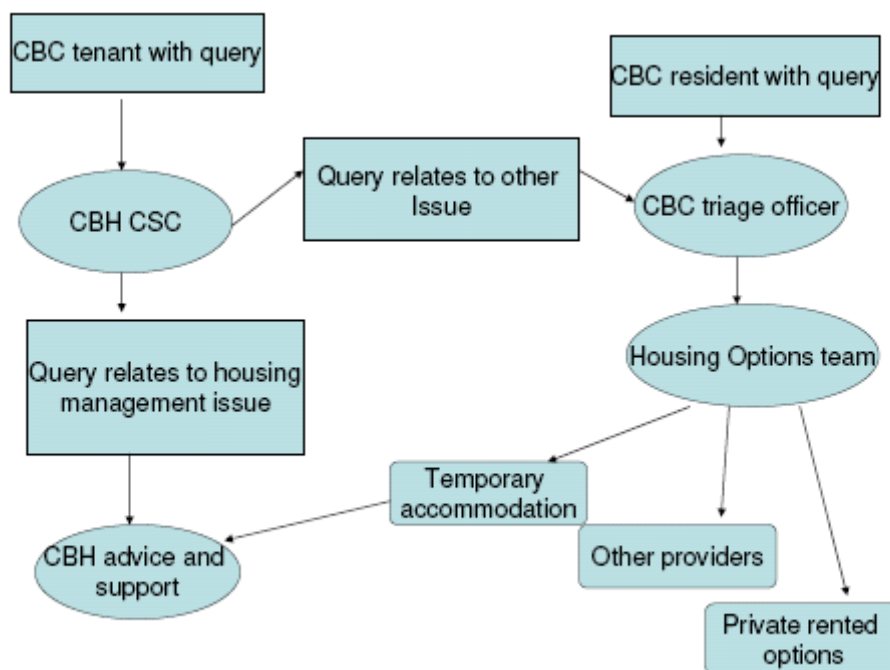
Customer Impact

Housing services will be gathered at one point of contact. This builds on the successes of the Housing FSR where real benefits were seen from bringing teams together. This service will provide advice to customers in all tenures including Council tenants, tenants of other social landlords and private landlords. One service will be able to provide a broad range of services and advice with fewer hand-offs between organisations and officers.

The Greenstead Community Housing Office will remain open to offer face-to-face housing services as a community hub. This local office is well used by local residents, and will provide an accessible focus for local services.

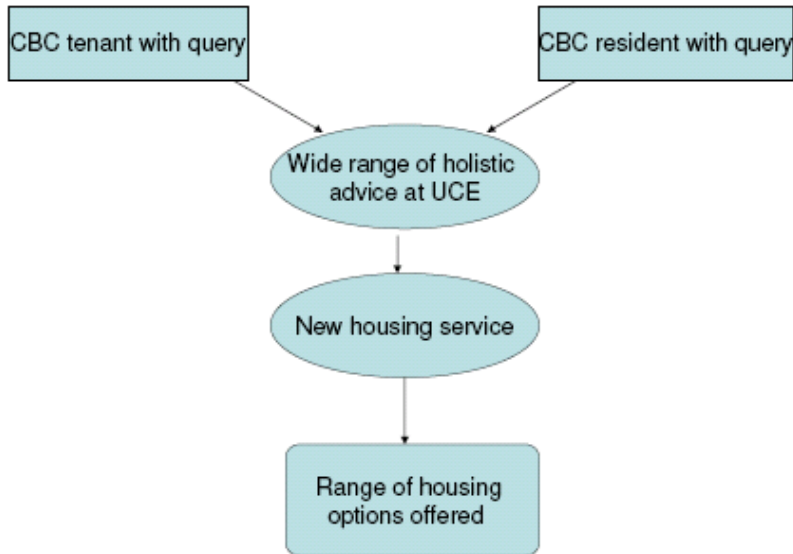
This approach will build on the success of the Housing FSR which brought together teams who give advice on housing issues. The new service will be a continuation of this streamlining. It provides a platform for the development of self-serve.

Diagram of current customer journeys



This diagram shows that to resolve the customers' queries, hand-offs between organisations may occur. There may be confusion amongst tenants about who to contact resulting in referrals between the two organisations.

Proposed customer journey



The provision of an integrated frontline housing customer experience will result in fewer referrals between organisations.

Managing future demand

As a wholly-owned trading company of the Council delivering landlord services, CBH is better able to deliver additional services and to explore commercial opportunities such as a private lettings agency. The UCC FSR has identified behaviour change as an important strand going forward to manage demand. A flexible commercial organisation may be able to offer more innovative solutions to change customer behaviour and demand.

The service's strategic aim will be to place people into the private rented sector as a preferred option, avoiding the homelessness route by active early intervention to prevent homelessness. These opportunities are explored further in section 9: *Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme*

8. Opportunity- Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements

Summary

This opportunity proposes that a new streamlined flexible management process for the responsive repairs budgets is implemented.

Responsive repairs are usually carried out in a responsive manner on a day to day basis and are generally of low value this also includes responding to emergency situations. Examples could include attending to leaks or broken doors. This arrangement also includes the works carried out to make properties ready for occupancy by new tenants at the end of an existing tenancy.

There will be more flexibility to manage the budget against service demand in a reactive manner. CBH will have more control and can be more entrepreneurial within the scope of the Management Agreement. If there is any variance in budget, an agreement between the Council and CBH will make provision for re-investment or re-imburement within CBH repair budgets. This provides an incentive to CBH to make efficiencies and savings.

There are no implementation costs or IT provision needed for this opportunity. It will provide benefits of a streamlined process for delivery of the repairs service, along with an increased opportunity for efficient delivery of the service for customers.

The risks regarding demand and expenditure will be managed directly by CBH, with overall responsibility for policy and budget being maintained by the Council.

Performance management will ensure that current high levels of customer satisfaction continue.

Proposal

The budget is made up of the items detailed below.

Table - current repairs and maintenance budget

	£000s
Day-to-day repairs	2,000
Voids	800
Servicing contracts	300
Fencing	150
Garages	100
Revenues contract management	98
Sub-total Responsive repairs	3,448
Management fee for Capital works	1,100
Total	4,548

This opportunity enables CBH, the Council's primary arms-length trading company, to be more flexible and innovative with the responsive repairs programme, which aligns with the commercial principles set out in the UCC FSR.

The fee base for managing the capital works elements of the investment programme is included above and contributes to the overall flexibility offered in the opportunity. For the 2013/14 programme this totals around £1.1 million. This represents the costs of "managing" the Capital works elements of the investment programme.

In a similar approach to that adopted with the revenue repair budgets, this will enable CBH to allocate staff resources more flexibly to reflect Council and tenant priorities in the programme. Performance management arrangements will ensure that current high levels of customer satisfaction continue.

Managing the risks involved in the opportunity

One of the benefits of the opportunity is to transfer some of the risk involved in running the responsive repairs service from the Council to CBH in return for increased flexibility. CBH will be allowed to build up a reserve to a previously agreed level to allow them to deal with surpluses or deficits.

The proposal is that CBH will be able to build up reserves from any efficiency in the revenues repairs budgets up to a level to be agreed by the Council and CBH. CBH will also be able to use existing reserves to address any deficits in the revenues repair program in any year up to a limit specified by the Council.

The initial suggestion is that any overall underspend up to £100k would be available to CBH to build this reserve and that the total reserve at any time should not be more than £200k. Any surpluses exceeding these limits would trigger a joint decision between the Council representative and CBH on how the surplus was to be handled.

Possible scenarios concerning this opportunity are detailed below:

1. *Savings are made by CBH*

If savings had been made against the budget as a result of reductions in the cost of service delivery, these savings up to the agreed limit will be available to CBH to hold as a surplus against future losses or pressures. This will be available in the first instance to balance the overall budget transferred.

2. *Costs of delivery of the repairs service go up.*

The revenue budgets being transferred can be influenced in year by demand for works or cost of service delivery. If the expenditure in-year exceeds the available budget because of demand in one of the budget streams, CBH would be expected to look across all of the budgets transferred to balance the overall position.

This could comprise:

- Capitalisation of qualifying expenditure.
- Use of balances or additional expenditure.
- Policy review / change.

If this was not possible as each budget was affected by demand-led pressures, CBH would need to use built-up reserves to cover the additional costs.

3. The Council decides a change in revenues repairs policy or program resulting in increased costs.

In these circumstances, any increased costs would be likely to be addressed by an increased budget position from the Council.

Contract procurement

There are currently a number of contracts held between the Council and third party contractors delivering some aspects of these services. These contracts are currently administered on behalf of the Council by CBH, and to maximise efficiency and avoid duplication in roles these contracts (excluding gas servicing) will in future be held directly between CBH and any Contractor(s). The Gas Servicing Contract is excluded, because as a landlord there are specific liabilities that fall to the Council as a landlord. These changes will occur at the ending of the current contractual arrangements to mitigate against any contractual risks arising from this process of migration.

The budget setting process for future years should be driven by, and aligned to, the HRA business plan.

What do the changes mean for customers?

There will be more flexibility to manage the budget against service demand in a reactive manner. CBH will have more control and can be more entrepreneurial within the scope of the Management Agreement. This will enable needs to be met more effectively to support the growing demands for the services and expectations of customers. The benefits for tenants and leaseholders realised from the CBH FSR will continue.

One of the outcomes from the CBH FSR was the implementation of “Optitime” repairs management system to manage customer appointments and reduce time taken for repairs. This implementation has resulted in the following:

- No increase in average cost of repairs despite increases in fuel and materials.
- Reduction in sub-contracted works.
- Without Optitime the disposal of the Depot site at Gosbecks Road to enable the delivery of a new supermarket and associated revenue stream to the Council could not have been considered.

Customer experience has improved, and the 2012/2013 performance figures for the repairs service show:

- 96% Customer Satisfaction.
- 99% Appointments made and kept.
- 83% Right first time.
- 98% Repairs completed within timescale.

Not only will this opportunity best equip CBH to improve on the current service delivery, it will enable it to respond in the most effective manner to the pressures of increasing expectation and demand.

CBH already engages with tenants in the delivery of these service areas and the outcome of the opportunity will be for tenants to be more directly involved in service development and delivery through:

- Directly influencing service direction.
- Directly influencing budget choices within the migrated budgets.
- Matching service standards to budgets.

Using the flexibility that this opportunity represents, CBH would be able to more specifically direct the functions delivered through the identified revenue streams to empower tenants and leaseholders, and to focus the services to more readily influence their local environment and the work of the wider area teams through, for example, estate-based area budgets.

CBH through its direct labour organisation would be free to offer training and support to provide the opportunity to empower tenants to carry out more work for themselves.

Subject to meeting the overall budget requirements and discharging the Council's obligations as the landlord, CBH would be able to work with tenants to reprioritise work carried under the identified budget streams to more readily achieve the stated tenant aspiration to carry out more repairs more quickly.

9. Opportunity - Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme

Summary

This opportunity looks at the potential for CBH to offer services to the private housing sector, including to private landlords and owners of empty private homes.

This will reposition the Council and CBH in the private housing market as a provider of strategically and commercially focused services.

These opportunities represent a new area for both the Council and CBH, and are therefore presented in outline. Following the implementation of the other opportunities in the proposal, these opportunities will be developed for implementation.

There are high levels of housing need in the borough. 4,485 households were registered for housing (31 March 2013), with 708 affordable homes becoming available for letting during the year.

There is a need for additional housing solutions for households in housing need. In addition, there is the opportunity for the Council to discharge its homelessness duty by finding a household a private sector let. In 2012/13 the Council accepted a duty under the homelessness legislation to 251 households.

Work with the Private Sector and empty homes owners following the Council's Housing FSR

Benefits arising from the Council establishing a position in the private sector were identified as part of the Council's Housing FSR. These include the potential to raise standards and increase the range of housing options available for customers in housing need, and to identify private sector properties for use to prevent homelessness.

Since the FSR, the Council has completed work in the private sector to:

- Increase information to landlords on standards and the benefits of working with the Council through targeted information and landlords' forums.
- Carry out a pilot study looking at the most effective way to bring empty homes back into use
- Develop an empty homes action plan
- Develop a strategy to raise standards of Homes in Multiple Occupation.

There were some further opportunities to work with the private market identified as part of the Housing FSR including establishing a lettings agency, and opportunities to lease properties for use as temporary accommodation.

These opportunities proved difficult for the Council itself to deliver because of a lack of experience in this area. CBH, as an organisation providing landlord services, has the experience to develop these opportunities. These opportunities in addition to others are considered below.

Working with owners of empty homes

As part of the implementation programme, we will explore the potential for CBH to offer a service to owners of empty homes to include tracking down owners and offering advice to encourage owners to bring homes back into use. The possibility for CBH to administer the loans which the Council targets at owners of empty homes will be evaluated.

The Council is currently considering whether to use the powers under Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs). An EDMO is in effect a 'compulsory leasing order', and allows the Council to take over the management of an empty home and rent it to a tenant of the Council's choosing. To apply for an EDMO, the Council would need to show that a managing agent is in place. CBH, as an organisation delivering landlord services, is ideally placed to offer this service.

Recently there have been opportunities to bid for grants to bring empty homes back into use. CBH would provide a mechanism to bid for this additional funding.

Working with private sector landlords

As part of implementation, we will be exploring services to landlords in the private sector which CBH could offer. These opportunities also represent an opportunity to generate income and offer a commercially-focused service.

Developing a lettings agency would represent a natural extension of CBH's current business as an organisation providing landlord services. In addition, CBH has some commercially aware board members who have direct experience of these areas. The lettings agency would aim to raise the standards of private sector management generally. Services could include:

- Training for landlords to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Provision of an advisory service through the housing options team to ensure landlords follow correct legal process.
- Provision of pre-tenancy training to tenants to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Communications to landlords including activities such as landlord forums.

The lettings agency could be able to secure supply for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households or to prevent homelessness.

The anti-social behaviour service is now provided by CBH and so knowledge of landlords, tenants and any hotspots can be aligned.

Implementation

These opportunities are directly relevant to the commercial opportunities which are now being developed as the UCC FSR implementation gets underway. A full feasibility study has not been undertaken at this stage.

It is proposed that as part of the development of the commercial arm of the Council, these opportunities can be fully scoped. The scoping will include:

- Opportunities to develop sources of income through CBH delivering a surplus on trading opportunities identified such as services to landlords including a lettings agency.
- Opportunities to bring empty properties back into use including through accessing Government grant.
- An assessment of services which could be provided by each organisation.

Surpluses earned by CBH from trading opportunities could be used for reinvestment in other Council housing priorities. For example, in Southend the ALMO will use surpluses generated from repairs services trading to set-up a lettings agency.

The timescale for the development of the proposal will depend on the UCC FSR implementation; we will start developing the business plan and proposals for implementation in January 2014.

10. Financial Implications

This proposal document fulfils four main purposes:

1. To put in place new arrangements for the Council's housing functions which are fit for purpose to deliver the Council's future housing objectives.
2. To put in place more resilient and responsive governance between the Council and CBH which supports the delivery of the opportunities set out in the Council's UCC FSR.
3. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR of a sustainable commercial services arm, by enabling CBH to increase its range of housing services as a wholly-owned trading company of the Council
4. To contribute to the vision in the UCC FSR by supporting the delivery of the Universal Customer Environment.

The specific areas where this proposal supports the UCC FSR are:

- Delivery of the Universal Customer Environment
- Building a sustainable commercial services arm.

There are opportunities identified in this document where efficiency savings are anticipated following implementation, but this was not the primary purpose of this review process.

In addition, this proposal offers the potential for CBH to fulfil the expectation of a trading company to trade and sell services to other clients, resulting in an income to the General Fund. It is important to ensure that pressures are not increased on the general fund through the recharging structures. This is considered in more detail below.

These opportunities must be considered in light of savings already achieved through the Fundamental Service Reviews of both Housing and CBH.

Table - savings from CBC and CBH Fundamental Service Reviews

Year	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	Savings £000s (recurring)				
CBC	150	450	450	450	450
CBH	-	300	410	520	520
New Housing Arrangements proposal	-	-	-	-	60
Total	150	750	860	970	1030

As demonstrated above, both the Council and CBH have delivered significant efficiency savings in the Council's housing functions in recent years. Therefore there are fewer opportunities for cashable savings, but there are opportunities to streamline processes and improve services for customers.

Further information on current financial arrangements can be found in *Appendix C: Current financial arrangements*

Opportunity – Housing options and advice service integrated with the Housing Management service

There will be predicted general fund savings to be identified as part of the implementation plan, as efficiencies in the use of private sector accommodation are realised to prevent bed and breakfast placements and enable more effective use of temporary accommodation.

Prevention of homelessness has been identified as a pilot under the behaviour change theme of the UCC FSR. CBH will be able to work with the behaviour change methodologies to realise efficiencies. These efficiencies will be modelled as part of the implementation plan.

These efficiencies must be balanced against possible costs of the change, such as Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (known as TUPE) costs which arise when staff are transferred between organisations. These costs involve individual consultations with those staff transferring, along with a need for HR expertise from both organisations. A review of accommodation will be completed as part of the development of the implementation programme.

Opportunity - Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements

This opportunity has zero cost with no costs for implementation nor any IT costs. It represents a flexibility achieved by looking at a new way of working and changed processes. This will result in the potential for the delivery of additional services within the same budget.

It will provide benefits of a streamlined process for delivery of the repairs service along with an increased opportunity for efficient delivery of the service for customers.

The risks regarding demand and expenditure will be managed directly by CBH with overall responsibility for policy and budget being maintained by CBC.

Opportunity - Proactive empty homes and private rented sector programme

These opportunities represent the chance for income generation for CBH and the Council by selling services to private landlords and for efficiency savings through greater supply of housing in the private rented sector. These opportunities need to be thoroughly tested, with scoping to include possible costs and savings.

11. Risks

There are three strategic risks identified at this stage, although the Project Team will continue to identify risks throughout implementation. An initial risk register has been developed.

A specific risk register will be developed for implementation, with both organisations existing strategic and operational risk registers being incorporated.

A review of the governance arrangements between the Council and CBH is currently underway.

The Council retains ultimate financial control and risk in all opportunity scenarios. Council direction is ensured through different channels, for example by an agreed Delivery Plan, shareholder control, the right to amend services, and policy and strategic direction is set by the Council.

The strategic risks are:

1. Implementation

The degree of change within the organisation is such that services may find it difficult to find the capacity to support implementation. There will be an impact upon services such as HR teams in both the Council and CBH.

In addition, specific resources will need to be focused on ensuring service delivery during a period of change.

These additional needs are being considered as part of the implementation planning process.

2. Financial

The costs and savings are based upon a series of assumptions. Changes are therefore anticipated as the implementation work gets underway.

Any commercial proposals which may be able to realise an income will be the subject of an individual proposal and risk assessment.

3. Alignment with the UCC FSR

It has been recognised all through the project that timescales between the New Housing Arrangements Project and the implementation of the UCC FSR will need to be aligned. Objectives and outcomes need to be congruent to ensure that opportunities are deliverable.

To mitigate these risks, there has been representation on the New Housing Arrangements Project Board from the UCC FSR implementation team. In addition, the UCC FSR Lead has taken a Sponsor role on the New Housing Arrangements Project.

12. Communication and engagement

Communication and engagement has been central in developing the opportunities in the proposal. A communications plan was developed at the beginning, overseen by the Project Team.

There has been a programme of communication with:

- Staff through briefings, involvement on the Project Team and task and finish groups looking at the opportunities.
- Tenants through the initial involvement of the Sounding Board, and articles in the tenants' magazine. In addition, their views were sought through a survey.
- Councillors have been kept updated by a monthly e-mail update. In addition, CBH have sent out the same information in their monthly bulletin to Councillors.
- CBH Board members have been updated monthly, along with focused Board meetings on the proposals.

Communication and engagement will continue throughout implementation.

13. Implementation

Implementation of the opportunities will need co-ordination and engagement from both organisations. It is proposed to continue the current Project Team to oversee implementation. The current team has joint leads from the Council and CBH to ensure a synergy between the organisations, and the team will continue to be supported by Project Sponsors.

The Project Team will also consider the further opportunities represented by the development of a proposal around services to private sector landlords and owners of empty homes.

This proposal will be supported by a new management agreement between the Council and CBH. This is currently being developed for agreement in August 2013 when the current agreement expires.

Proposed timetable for implementation:

Opportunity	Start of implementation	Milestone for delivery
New management agreement	Currently being developed	Completion by August 2013
Integrated frontline customer experience	Upon resolution of Universal Customer Environment, currently June 2013 to start project	November 2013 for completion of Universal Customer Environment project
Housing advice and support service integrated with the Housing Management service	Upon agreement of implementation plan	October 2013
Streamlined housing repairs budget arrangements	New management agreement and Memorandum and Articles for CBH	Transfer of budget responsibilities by October 2013
Pro-active empty homes and private rented sector programme	Start of project definition work in early 2014 to take advantage of commercial expertise through the UCC FSR	Autumn 2014

14. Next steps

If the proposal is approved by the Cabinet, the next stages are to:

- agree a full implementation plan.
- complete a review of the budgets and finances involved including the HRA and General Fund.
- review service level agreements existing between the Council and CBH.
- review available accommodation and future needs to facilitate the opportunities.
- review staff terms and conditions offered by both organisations to ensure that benefits are matched where possible.
- review current CBH governance arrangements including composition of the Board.
- continue to develop and agree a new management agreement which will support both organisations to deliver the opportunities.
- facilitate tenant consultation and scrutiny on the proposed management agreement.

The implementation will be co-ordinated by the New Housing Arrangements Project Team, with continuing direction from the current project sponsors.

15. Appendices

- A: The Local Housing Review
- B: Current Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) arrangements
- C: Current financial arrangements
- D. Current performance of CBH

Appendix A - Background to the Local Housing Review

The Council decided to take the opportunity of the expiry of the Colchester Borough Homes management agreement in 2013 to review its housing management arrangements to ensure they were fit for purpose for the next phase of change in local government and to ensure these arrangements aligned with the Council's housing objectives and aspirations. A Project Board was established to oversee the review, receive the work of the Project Team and make recommendations to Cabinet on the outcomes of the review.

The Project Board members were the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety, Chair of CBH, Chief Executives of CBH and the Council, members of CBH board including 2 tenant representatives and a member from all political groups at the Council. The project sponsor for this group was Ian Vipond, Executive Director. The Project Board were supported by a Project Team consisting of Council and CBH officers. Their role was to provide the Project Board with detailed information to enable an informed recommendation to be made.

The Project Board were keen to involve tenants, so in March 2012 a Tenant Sounding Board was engaged. This group were introduced to the historical and current political context for housing and familiarised with the self-financing reforms and the impact these would have nationally and locally, but in particular what opportunities this offered for the Council. They were advised that their role was not that of decision makers but to influence and inform.

An independent Tenant Adviser was procured to ensure that the information given to the group was an objective overview of the current themes.

Developing the success criteria for the review

Success criteria were developed for the review in order to identify success criteria to judge possible models of delivery against. The following success criteria represented the priority deliverables of the review and were used as a measure against possible delivery models to see how or if they could meet each criterion.

Table 1 – Local Housing Review success Criteria

Critical Success Criteria	
Category	Success Criteria
	Attain a high quality and sustainable housing stock
	Develop / Increase the affordable housing base
Customer	Provide more effective housing solutions, for example homelessness, housing options, private sector
Customer	Be committed to and deliver good quality customer service
Customer	Meet housing needs of customers
Customer	Empower communities, build community capacity and provide incentives for self sufficiency and independence
Customer	Build engaged, mixed communities

Critical Success Criteria	
Service	Be efficient, offer value for money and make best use of resources
Service	Gain the involvement of tenants in delivery
	Work with partners to increase housing supply
	Use financial freedoms to develop and deliver a sustainable financial business plan which has no detrimental effect on the council's overall finances
	Access external resources, funds and grants
	Minimise financial risk/exposure and maintain Council's access to low-cost borrowing

The Tenant Sounding Board was asked to comment and evaluate the Success Criteria. The Sounding Board concluded that attaining a high quality and sustainable housing stock was a natural progression that flowed from achieving the objectives of the other criteria.

An e-survey was sent to tenants who subscribe to the Council via e-mail. Their feedback broadly concurred with the thoughts of the Sounding Board.

Initial identification of options

In February 2012 the Project Board considered an initial list of seven options for housing delivery. These were:

- ALMO
- Local Authority management
- Outsourcing
- Conventional stock transfer to a housing association
- Stock transfer to a community and council owned organisation
- Community-based local company
- Tenant management organisation.

The Project Board agreed that the following three options had the potential to meet the success criteria:

4. **Arms length management organisation.** This would mean keeping Colchester Borough Homes or a similar organisation, although it may operate differently. For example, it might deliver more services or deliver them in different ways.
5. **Local Authority management** This would mean the Council would manage the tenants and stock directly.
6. **Outsourcing** This would mean that outside organisations would apply through a tender process to manage the Council's housing and the Council would choose the best organisation to deliver the services under a contractual arrangement. The services could be supplied by one or more provider. Potential providers may include private companies and housing associations. This would not involve transferring the stock.

At the March 2012 Cabinet meeting, the Cabinet agreed these initial delivery models for further consideration by the Project Board.

Providing challenge to the models - the peer review

A Peer Challenge was carried out lead by the Local Government Association in July 2012. The Peer Challenge team held discussion sessions with a range of people from the Council, CBH, external organisations and members of the Tenant and Leaseholder Sounding Board.

The Peer Challenge advice led to the following recommendations to the Project Board in August 2012 that:

- having considered the options work, the Council should not proceed further with the option to outsource the majority of the HRA services.
- the Council should progress the option to continue with its ALMO, and that it should now focus its resources on assessing the functions and responsibilities of its ALMO which are appropriate going forward in the context of current and future housing challenges. Such an assessment to integrate the approach of the Council's UCC FSR.
- the option for an in-house service for the majority of the HRA services should only be considered further if the Cabinet does not accept that a remodelled ALMO (which could include new services or exclude services it currently delivers depending on the assessment work) cannot deliver on the Council's housing objectives within the financial envelope determined by the Council.
- the Board recognises that a positive relationship between the Council and CBH is critical to the successful delivery of HRA services, and that will require consideration of the leadership and governance of HRA functions in any assessment going forward.

All of the recommendations were agreed by the Project Board. The conclusion of the review provided the mandate for the New Housing Arrangements Project to be set up to deliver a new management agreement and to look at assessing the opportunities for the ALMO.

Appendix B - The current Arms Length Management (ALMO) arrangements

The Council currently owns 7,117 properties (6,161 social rented, and 956 leasehold). The Council is the landlord of the properties, and tenants which are managed via a Management Agreement with its ALMO, Colchester Borough Homes.

The ALMO was primarily established in 2003 to take advantage of the Government's Decent Homes funding programme. Some £35.1 million was secured through this route and was used to achieve 'decency' across the housing stock by December 2011.

The Management Agreement was established in August 2003 and extended for a period of 5 years in 2008. A deed of variation was applied from October 2008 which bought the managing of contracts for property services back in-house. The Management Agreement between the Council and CBH expires in August 2013 and there is a need to establish arrangements for the management of the Council's homes and tenants beyond this date.

Current Governance arrangements of CBH

CBH is governed by a Board responsible for the direction and control of the organisation.

Core functions of the Board include:

- a. Ensuring that the organisation:
 - operates within the law
 - operates according to its rules and procedures
 - meets the standards laid down by the Housing Inspectorate and other regulatory bodies.
- b. Establishing business and financial objectives.
- c. Protecting the assets of the organisation.
- d. Recognising its duty to tenants, staff, applicants and other service-users.
- e. Developing, operating and regularly reviewing policies designed to achieve these objectives.
- f. Approving each year's budget, exercising financial management and managing responsibility both financial and non-financial risks.
- g. Overseeing and exercising control over the organisation's work and services.
- h. Delegating authority to and monitoring the work of sub-committees and staff.
- i. Being responsible for employing staff to carry out the work of the organisation and setting their terms and conditions.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Chair is appointed by the Board for a term of one year at the meeting immediately following the AGM. The Council has the power to appoint six people as Council Board Members.

The Council has always chosen to appoint borough councillors, but this is not required by the Articles of Association. As Company Directors, the role of Council Board Members is to:

- act within powers in accordance with the company's constitution and to use those powers only for the purposes for which they were conferred
- promote the success of the company for the benefit of its members
- exercise independent judgement
- exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
- avoid conflicts of interest
- not accept benefits from third parties
- declare an interest in a proposed transaction or arrangement.

Currently the CBH Board has 14 members made up of three independents, six tenants and leaseholders, and six nominees from the Council.

Other committees

There are three sub-committees reporting to the Board. These are: Finance and Audit, Human Resources, and Performance Review. Each sub-committee consists of five Board members.

Additionally a Tenant and Leaseholder Consultative Committee review and commission reports.

The Performance Review sub-committee receives reports of activities from a range of service-specific focus groups.

Appendix C - Current Financial Arrangements

The budgets for the housing functions are split across the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and form part of its Commercial, Communities and Professional service areas.

Background to the General Fund

The housing functions accounted for within the General Fund are those that do not relate to the day-to-day landlord activities of a housing authority. Included are those housing functions that a Council would undertake even if it no longer owned its Council stock. Examples of these functions are Homeless administration, a Housing advisory service, Private Sector housing, Strategic Policy, Street Lighting and Dog Wardens. These functions are funded in the same way as all other non-housing services provided by the Council, such as Council Tax, Fees and Charges and Government Grant.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Councils which own their housing stock must keep an HRA under statutory legislation, with schedule 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 specifying the debit and credit items to be recorded. These statutory provisions reflect the Government's policy that the HRA is not a separate fund, but a ring-fenced account of certain defined transactions within the Council's General Fund. It should primarily be a landlord account, containing the income and expenditure arising from a housing authority's landlord functions.

The HRA is primarily funded from the rental and service charge income from Council tenants. The statutory ring-fence ensures that tenants' rents are only used to pay for services provided as a landlord function, and not to subsidise those services provided to the community as a whole from Council Tax.

Functions/activities that are included within a Council's HRA are:

- Policy and Management: A share of strategic management costs; Setting of rent levels, service charges, and other charges; Administration of the Right to Buy; Tenant consultation; Option appraisals; ALMO Liaison.
- General Tenancy Management: Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery; Service Charge Collection and Recovery; Void and re-let management; Lettings and allocations of HRA properties only (work on non HRA properties should be charged to the General Fund); Management of Repairs; Anti-social Behaviour; General advice on tenancy matters; Tenancy support; Sheltered housing management; Community and resident involvement.
- Repair and Maintenance: Responsive Maintenance; Planned and Cyclical Maintenance; Rechargeable repairs.
- General Estate Management: Communal Cleaning, Heating and Lighting; Grounds Maintenance; Community Centres and Play Areas; Neighbourhood Wardens and CCTV.

Background to HRA Reform

Up until April 2012, Council Housing finance was supported through the HRA Subsidy system. This was a redistributive system based on a notional HRA for each authority and had been in operation for more than 20 years.

Under the subsidy system, income from tenants' rents and Right To Buy sales was collected centrally, and in return Councils were paid allowances for management, maintenance and major repairs. In principle, this redistributed funds to Councils that would have been unable to meet costs through rental income such as interest payments on their debt. However, over time these allowances had not kept pace with increases in rental income, which had led to a steady withdrawal of resources from the national housing system. It was acknowledged that the national HRA subsidy system was in surplus and so this situation represented a redirection of resources from local authorities into central Government.

The Government issued proposals to abolish the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system, and replace it with a new system of HRA self-financing. In return for reallocating housing debt, Councils would be able to retain all future rental income from their housing stock to deliver the capital investment needs of their stock and continue to deliver quality services to tenants. With the abolition of the subsidy system, it would lead to more resources being held at a local level, and give Councils more certainty with which to plan for the future.

Legislation (through the Localism Act) has introduced HRA Reform. In preparation for these reforms, a 30-year asset management strategy and HRA business plan has been developed.

Outcomes from HRA Reform

The introduction of HRA Reform has provided the biggest opportunity for Council Housing finance in decades. The benefits and opportunities arising from the proposals can be summarised as follows;

- The retention of all future rental income locally
- A substantial increase in capital investment to the Council's housing stock and services, enabling the Decent Homes standard to be maintained in the long-term
- Significant additional resources/ borrowing headroom for the provision of new affordable housing
- More certainty and stability in long-term planning
- Enhanced local decision-making
- Greater local accountability
- Although significantly increasing the Council's debt position initially, the ability to repay all HRA debt within the life of the business plan
- Secures the long-term financial viability of the Council's HRA, alongside enhancing the quality of homes and services provided to its tenants.

The position of the Housing Revenue Account at Colchester

The Council has developed a 30-year business plan model which demonstrates that the Council's HRA is viable in the long-term, and has the ability to repay all debt over the life of the plan. This is a very sound base to build on, especially given that Colchester has no backlog of decent homes work, has stock in reasonable condition, and has borrowing headroom to enable further investment to be undertaken if desired.

The current 30-year HRA Business Plan shows;

- There is no decent homes backlog at any point in the plan
- The Council has the ability to meet all the stock investment needs within the Asset Management Strategy as they arise
- A fully funded 30-year Asset Management Strategy
- Significant borrowing headroom (around £16million at April 2012) for further investment/new build etc
- The ability to repay all HRA debt within 30 years
- The HRA is sustainable long-term and the Business Plan is viable.

As at 31 March 2012, the Council had uncommitted HRA balances of £3million, and there is currently borrowing headroom available in every year of the 30-year HRA.

Governance of the HRA

Every January, Cabinet agrees for the forthcoming financial year.

- the HRA Revenue budget
- Housing Investment Programme (HIP)
- the management fee paid to CBH

These set out the proposed rent increase, other income budgets and proposed expenditure budgets. The Housing Investment Programme report sets out the proposed capital investment programme for the forthcoming year, and also provides information on the investment requirements for the medium term which is derived from the Council's asset management systems.

Cabinet also receive an updated 30-year HRA model, which indicates the ability to service the Council's borrowing which has increased under HRA Reform, the ability to meet the investment needs of the housing stock to maintain the decency standard and also to show the potential for investment in other areas.

The Cabinet agrees the management fee paid to CBH from the Council's HRA. This pays for CBH's operational costs including employees, accommodation, services bought-in from the Council via Service Level Agreements (such as Legal, HR, Payroll, Accountancy), and delivers the services the Council has contracted CBH to deliver on its behalf under the management agreement.

Any surplus/deficit that arises each year from the management fee is retained by CBH, and will either increase or decrease their level of reserves.

In addition, CBH directly manage a number of HRA budgets on behalf of the Council. These are referred to as “delegated budgets”, and do not form part of the annual management fee. These include services such as grounds maintenance, contract cleaning, sheltered housing running costs etc. These services are intrinsically linked to the landlord functions which CBH provide on behalf of the Council, and so CBH is best placed to manage them. Any surplus/deficit that arises each year from delegated budgets is retained by the Council, and will either increase or decrease the HRA balance.

Finally, there are a range of retained budgets that are accounted for within the Council’s HRA, such as ICT, insurance for the housing stock, a share of the Council’s corporate costs, such as Corporate and Democratic core costs, strategic management costs, corporate management and support service costs etc, and capital financing costs associated with HRA debt.

Service Level Agreements

Service Level Agreements demonstrate the possible inter-relationship between the HRA and General Fund. The Council provides funding to CBH via the management fee (HRA), whereby CBH then pay the Council (General Fund) for the services it buys-in. Therefore, the HRA pays for services provided by the rest of the Council and therefore the HRA includes a cost for those services that support HRA functions.

The Council also pays CBH for additional functions that have been taken on, which are outside the Management Agreement through an Service Level Agreement.

Service Level Arrangements are currently arranged with relevant departments. Each Service will negotiate terms, monitor the arrangements and renegotiate on their expiry. These Service Level Arrangements are renewed yearly.

Recharging

When the Council moves services out of the organisation, ‘stranded’ costs can be left behind. A way to mitigate these needs to be found by, for example, Service Level Agreements, where CBH could buy-in support services from the Council to replace the recharge to the HRA. In addition, management structures in the Council are currently being reviewed as part of UCC FSR implementation.

Therefore, it is not possible at this stage of the review to quantify the financial impact on recharges arising from the proposals, but the aim will be to ensure there is no detrimental effect to the Council’s General Fund finances.

Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform Act has wide ranging impacts, many affecting tenants, particularly those in receipt of benefit payments.

The changes that begin to come into effect from April 2013 include a total household benefit cap of £500 per week, under-occupancy reductions for social housing tenants of working age of their housing credit and an intention to see housing benefit rolled up in the universal credit which will be paid directly to tenants as opposed to landlords.

These changes are predicted to have a significant impact on income collection and arrears management.

Appendix D - Current Performance of Colchester Borough Homes

CBH Annual Delivery Plan

The Annual Delivery Plan is developed by CBH and identifies the priorities of the organisation for the coming year linking in with the Council's Strategic Plan and Housing Strategy.

The CBH Annual Delivery Plan contains a set of performance indicators that reflect tenant involvement and empowerment, home, tenancy, neighbourhood and community and value for money.

Performance monitoring- Property services

The Operational Site Meeting (OSM) occurs monthly and looks at the performance of property services against the set key performance indicators.

The group is chaired by the Council's Service Manager and attended by CBC and CBH officers. In addition there are sub-group reports on voids, responsive and gas servicing, health and safety and structural issues and separate core group meetings held for the major contracts with external contractors.

Performance monitoring - Housing Management

CBH provide performance monitoring information for the Council's performance monitoring process. This information is reviewed quarterly.

Current performance against key indicators can be seen below. This shows CBH performance compared to other ALMOs in the benchmarking organisation, Housemark.

Club	NEW HOUSEMARK NATIONAL CLUB			
Filter	All organisations in club			
	2012/13 CBH Result	2012/13 Upper Quartile Performance	CBH Quartile Position 2011-12	CBH Quartile Position 2012-13
HMPI 30 - Average time taken to answer inbound telephone calls (in seconds) ¹	29	10	3rd	3 rd
HMPI 60c - Percentage of tenants on whom the landlord has diversity information – ethnicity- new indicator	96.9%	97%	2nd	1 st
HMPI 90 - Average end-to-end time for all reactive repairs	6.93	6.01	3 rd	2 nd
BV185 - Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	98.85%	99.38%	3rd	2 nd

HMPI 102 - Percentage of residents satisfied with the most recent repair (when surveyed in accordance with the organisation's own survey format)	96.22%	97%	1 st	2 nd
G15C0 - Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	100%	4th	1 st
NI 158 - Percentage of homes that are non-decent at the end of the period	0%	0%	1 st	1 st
HMPI 210 - Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed ² (excluding arrears b/f)	100.05%	100.25%	2 nd	2 nd
HMPI 330 - Former tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit ³	1.43%	0.52%	2 nd	3 rd
HMPI 190 - Percentage of closed ASB cases that were resolved – New indicator	93.29%	97.31%	4th	2 nd
GNPI 36 - Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets only) – General Needs only	17.8	17.1	2 nd	2 nd
Responsive repairs ⁴ Void Works per property	Not available	Not available	2 nd	Not available
Housing management cost per property ⁵	Not available	Not available	1 st	Not available
Overheads ⁶	Not available	Not available	1 st	Not available

Notes:

- *The number of organisations included in the separate benchmarks varies and also the number of organisations providing data for each indicator varies.*
- *The benchmarked position is at a point in time only and will change when organisations enter data which could affect CBH's Quartile position, this could be positive or negative.*

¹ Average time taken to answer calls. Although performance has remained third quartile, there has been improvement from 48 seconds in Q1 to 29 seconds at year end.

² Total amount of monies collected as a percentage of the total amount of rent charged during the year. This total of monies includes sums collected towards arrears. Total does not include brought forward arrears.

³ Delivered by CBC under a service level agreement on CBH's behalf.

⁴ Benchmarking information is not available yet for 2012/13. For 2011-12 cost per property was £590.61. Upper quartile performance was £556.56

⁵ Benchmarking information is not available yet for 2012/13. For 2011-12 cost per property was £253.57 exceeding Upper quartile performance which was £267.47.

⁶ Benchmarking information is not available yet for 2012/13. For 2011-12 this totalled 17% revenue costs exceeding Upper quartile performance of 22.16%.



Scrutiny Panel

2 July 2013

Item
11

Report of	Assistant Chief Executive	Author	Robert Judd
Title	Work Programme 2013-14		Tel. 282274
Wards affected	Not applicable		

1. Action Required

1.1 The Panel is asked to consider and comment on the 2013-14 Work Programme.

2. Reason for Action

2.1 This function forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference in the Constitution.

3. Work Programme changes

3.1 Following agreement by the Panel on 11 June 2013, the review of the New Housing Arrangements Proposal was scheduled for the extra meeting on 2 July 2013.

3.2 Following notification from officers of the intention to pre-scrutinise the Portfolio Holder decision 'To Close the Abbots Activity Centre', this item has been added to the meeting on the 23 July 2013.

3.3 Therefore, to avoid too many substantial items going to one meeting, the final overview of the firstsite project has been rescheduled from the 23 July 2013 to the next meeting on 20 August 2013.

Meeting date / agenda items and relevant portfolio
11 June 2013 1. 2012-13 Year-end Performance Report and SPAP (Leader / Hd.Community) 2. 2012-13 Revenue Expenditure Monitoring Report 3. 2012-13 Capital Expenditure Monitoring Report
2 July 2013 (extra) 1. New Housing Arrangements (Housing / Hd. Of Commercial) deferred from 11 June 2013
23 July 2013 1. Pre-scrutinise the Portfolio Holder decision 'To Close the Abbots Activity Centre' (Community and Leisure) 2. Budget Strategy, Timetable and MTFF (Leader / Business and Resources) 3. Annual Report on Treasury Management (Business and Resources)
20 August 2013 1. firstsite project: Final Overview (I Vipond, Executive Director) 2. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – June 3. 2013-14 Financial Monitor, period April – June

<p>10 September 2013</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safer Colchester Partnership (Crime and Disorder Committee) (Planning and Community Safety)
<p>29 October 2013</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial & Corporate Management FSR - Pre Cabinet scrutiny of Business Case
<p>12 November 2013</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Localising Council Tax Support (follow-up on 2012-13 implementation review) 2. 2013-14 Revenue Monitor, period April – September 3. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – September
<p>10 December 2013</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treasury Management – Half yearly update
<p>28 January 2014</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2014/15 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and MTF (Pre-scrutiny of Cabinet Decision (Leader) 2. 2013-14 6-monthly Performance report and SPAP (Leader / Communities and Leisure) 3. Treasury Management Investment Strategy
<p>11 February 2014</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2013-14 Capital Monitor, period April – December 2. 2013-14 Revenue Monitor, period April – December
<p>18 March 2014</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colchester Community Stadium Limited review (last review 20-Mar-2012)(Leader)

