

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – September 2022

Action Plan – 2022/23

Key recommendations:

1. Focus on city status. Use this as an opportunity to galvanise partners, improve the Borough's economic and cultural strength and raise the voice of Colchester;
2. Get a firmer grip on the capital programme – manage all risks and improve your planning to ensure you have appropriate strategic finance, programme and project capacity and the resources to deliver;
3. Co-design a compelling and longer-term place-based narrative/city vision to define Colchester for the future;
4. Strengthen your political and officer 'leaders of place' roles and look beyond Colchester – map your anchor institutions, partners and stakeholders;
5. Review your priorities and projects and refocus on delivering 'Brilliant Business As Usual' and strengthen your corporate resources;
6. Strongly consider whether changing your election cycle will help you achieve your goals, ambitions and deliver improved services for Colchester's communities;
7. Better define with your staff what 'hybrid working' means for CBC and provide a clear definition. Also, clarify how the new CBC values will be designed and embedded, communicating to staff how these define the Council and will help achieve Colchester's ambition; and
8. Commission an independent review of Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd, and its subsidiaries, also undertake an internal review of Colchester Borough Homes to assess whether the companies are realising the benefits they were established to deliver.

Recommendation:	Plans/Achievements	Lead Officer	Target Completion Date
<p>1. Focus on city status. Use this as an opportunity to galvanise partners, improve the Borough's economic and cultural strength and raise the voice of Colchester.</p>	<p>Working Group and meetings commenced 9/09/2022. Three strands to the City Status Programme identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic – Award of City Status on 23 November 2022 and possible Royal visit, governance arrangements, branding, signage and comms. • Year of Celebration – Commencing 1 January 2023. Focusing on Heritage and cultural events already happening + Big Siege Event and establish a clear marketing strategy. • Legacy and longer-term place making – A year of meeting and listening to our partners/ local businesses/ Town & Parish Councils/ Uni/ schools/ residents to find out what City Status means to them and what they need from it. 	<p>Andrew Weavers Comms – Laura Hardisty</p> <p>Lucie Breadman/ Cllr Pam Cox Comms – Laura Hardisty</p> <p>Lindsay Barker</p>	<p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p>
<p>2. Get a firmer grip on the capital programme – manage all risks and improve your planning to ensure you have appropriate</p>	<p>Full review of Capital Programme including:</p> <p>Update: A working squad of key individuals has been assembled to review the Capital Programme. Monthly meetings commenced in November. A</p>	<p>Lucie Breadman/ Gary Reid</p>	<p>31/03/2023</p>

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	<p>strategic finance, programme and project capacity and the resources to deliver.</p>	<p><i>squad action plan is being used to monitor progress and task completion.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moratorium on new schemes unless agreed by Senior Board/Leadership as essential and unavoidable. <p>Update – to discuss at Senior Leadership Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Board and Leadership to consider fortnightly reports on the capital programme <p>Update – will commence end of January 23, verbal updates till then</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a cadre of project managers across the Council family <p>Action: <i>Put in place a new strengthened Programme Management Officer complete with a cadre of project managers. A better resourced corporate Project Management Office (PMO) would enable the Council to improve the rigour of its monitoring and provide strategic oversight across all projects and programmes.</i></p> <p>Update – to discuss at SLB in light of recruitment freeze.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of all current projects against Cost, Delivery and Time 	<p>Lucie Breadman</p> <p>Richard Block</p> <p>Gary Reid</p>	<p>31 January</p> <p>31 January</p> <p>31 January</p>

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	<p><i>Update: This piece of work has started and will include recommendations of what remains, is deferred and what is removed from the Capital Programme.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and development of a new asset strategy <p>To include new ways of managing (and potential disposal of non-investment/operational assets) as well as high level investment and disinvestment options of commercial space. Will also take into account future development, eco growth, CC&S and regeneration programme (acquisitions).</p> <p><i>Update: A working squad of key individuals has been assembled to assist with the strategy development.</i></p> <p><i>Strategy is being tendered Jan 2023 and will need to account for budget challenges, Council strategies and priorities and will be shaped through officer and member involvement. Full strategy developed for June 2023, but work will run parallel to this) and will involve:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Further sweating of our assets, looking at disposal where possible (where lease and other restrictions allow and loss of income is accounted for), potential for changes of</i> 	Mandy Jones	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial findings presented to Senior Board on 23 November 2022 – Update – will be 8th December update Monthly Working Group Meetings commencing 28 November – Update - done 		
3.	Co-design a compelling and longer-term place-based narrative/city vision to define Colchester for the future.	See City Status – Legacy above and work is also underway to develop a new strategic plan - for adoption in February 2023	Lindsay Barker	31/12/2023
4.	Strengthen your political and officer ‘leaders of place’ roles and look beyond Colchester – map your anchor institutions, partners and stakeholders.	<p>This has been added as a standing item for consideration and discussion at each Senior Leadership Board meeting.</p> <p>A full analysis and map of stakeholders will also be undertaken.</p>	Senior Leadership Board	31/01/2023
5.	Review your priorities and projects and refocus on delivering ‘Brilliant Business As Usual’ and strengthen your corporate resources.	<p>New Strategic Plan to be developed with prioritised delivery plan and a “golden rope” to capacity.</p> <p>Define Brilliant Business as usual through reviewing service provision and ensure this is appropriate for a modern green city and is deliverable with the resources available.</p>	Richard Block	High level strategic objectives defined and considered by

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		<p>Review all projects and prioritise against the following tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery against new strategic plan and delivery plan objectives • Support for refined “Brilliant Business as Usual” services • Available capacity to deliver <p>Develop a business case for strengthened Corporate Services and deliver by consolidation of services.</p>		<p>Cabinet 24/1/2023</p> <p>Delivery plan developed by 31/03/23</p> <p>Business case developed and implemented by 31/03/2023</p>
6.	Strongly consider whether changing your election cycle will help you achieve your goals, ambitions and deliver improved services for Colchester’s communities.	Full Council Motion to explore the alternative electoral arrangements, whether as now or 'All Up', or a variation. The Council will set up a cross party working group to explore all options with findings to be presented to Full Council in February. Council can then review findings collectively and discuss next steps forward.	Andrew Weavers	Full council motion considered by 1/12/2022
7.	Better define with your staff what ‘hybrid working’ means for CBC and provide a clear definition. Also, clarify how the new CBC values will be designed and embedded, communicating to staff how these define the Council and	<p>Hybrid working guidance incorporated into the Rowan House Hub guidance which has been co-authored by the Rowan House working group comprising 24 representatives across all services.</p> <p>Final draft guidance has been published as part of a wider consultation exercise. All staff have had the opportunity to feed in. Guidance will be launched by end of November.</p>	Jess Douglas	Hybrid Guidance – 30/11/2022

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	will help achieve Colchester's ambition.	<p>An Organisation Development plan has been produced which incorporates the CBC purpose, values work. This was discussed at the November Senior Leadership Board meeting.</p> <p>The SUN Group has been tasked by the CEX to engage colleagues in their services and discuss the new values.</p> <p>Following the Management Conference, a manager working group will work together on a plan to launch and embed the values, team purposes across CBC through a communications and engagement programme.</p>		31/3/2023
8.	Commission an independent review of Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd, and its subsidiaries, also undertake an internal review of Colchester Borough Homes to assess whether the companies are realising the benefits they were established to deliver.	<p>Reviews have been commissioned. CCHL Risk assessment report received, CIPFA full review commissioned.</p> <p>CBH Risk assessment to report back mid January 2023.</p> <p>CCHL Annual Report for both the Risk Assessment and the CCHL Peer Review.</p>	Lindsay Barker	<p>CCHL review 30/1/2023</p> <p>CBH review 31/03/2023</p>