



Value for money and technology plan 2018-22

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1. Introduction & purpose

Achieving value for money means finding the best possible balance between keeping costs low and quality high for our residents. For the purposes of this plan, value for money is the delivery and investment of cashable savings which we will be able to invest into delivering the best outcomes for our customers and communities. This value for money, technology & investment plan is a key element in developing a **smarter approach to the way we work**, which we have identified as an important factor in achieving our mission to deliver **great value services that make a difference**.

2. Strategic aims

CBH's overall ambition as set out in our Strategic Plan 2017-22 is to be the **trusted choice for local housing, property and community services**.

We plan to do this by **delivering services that are valued by our customers** and **servicing our communities**. Value for money will be one of three key areas which will be the measures of our success. Our other headline measures, customer satisfaction and positive outcomes in the community, will only be deliverable if we manage to achieve value for money in order invest savings and new income in our services.

The aims of this plan are therefore to:

- **To use technology to do things better**
- **To get the most for the money we spend.**

3. Our ambition by 2022

We are already a low cost organisation: in 2015/16 we had the lowest housing management costs, the lowest overheads and the third lowest repair and void costs per property in the Eastern region. Our challenge over the next 5 years will be to achieve savings, efficiencies and additional income that will allow us to invest in our services **for the benefit of our residents, potential new business partners and staff**. Our aim is that by focusing on value for money, investment and technology we will maintain **costs per property in the lowest 25% in the Eastern region** between now and 2022.

To deliver this we will need to demonstrate that:

- **We use technology to work better**
- **We provide high quality, cost-effective services**

4. How we will achieve our aim

We plan to achieve our aim of maintaining the cost per unit at or below current levels by:

- **Investing for the benefit of customers and communities**
- **Using technology to work smarter**
- **Basing decisions on business intelligence**
- **Directing resources to where they are needed most**
- **Ensuring our processes are efficient**
- **Supporting a culture of high performance and continuous improvement.**

5. How we will measure progress

We will monitor progress via the Value for Money, Technology and Investment Action Plan which accompanies this document.

In addition, we will track a number of indicators which will help us to monitor whether we are on track to remain a low cost provider whilst investing in service quality:

- **Cost per property**
- **% staff satisfied with how CBH supports them in the technology they use**
- **£ cashable savings achieved.**

6. Monitoring delivery

The Head of Finance and Head of ICT & Business Intelligence will be responsible for the action plan and will report progress and actions to Board on a quarterly basis via the Strategic Plan Assurance Report.

The Director of Business Improvement will present the reviewed plan to the Board annually.

The Head of Finance will be responsible for maintaining a log to record savings achieved and will report progress quarterly to the Corporate Management Team.

Unlike our Registered Provider counterparts, we are not required to report on value for money to the social housing regulator. We are, however, committed to undertaking regular review and assessment as best practice, and will provide a summary assessment based on HouseMark results to Colchester Borough Council on an annual basis.

7. References

HouseMark final report 2016-17.

8. Related documents

The CBH Strategic Plan 2017-22 gives overall direction to this plan.

The CBH Medium Term Delivery Plan 2018-22 sets out how we will deliver services on behalf of Colchester Borough Council to fulfil our management agreement obligations. This plan will guide us and help us to demonstrate how we are able to continue to deliver our obligations as a low-cost, high value provider.

The CBH Business Development Plan shapes how we will invest in income generation and create revenue which we can reinvest in the business.

The CBH Customer Plan guide how we need to invest in improving our services for customers.

The CBH People Plan sets out how we will invest in our staff to ensure they are supported to deliver maximum value for money for our income.

The CBH Community Plan sets out how we will invest in delivering our services to make a difference in the community in line with our social purpose.

The CBH Leadership Plan sets out how the Board and management of the company will be supported to set and follow the strategic direction of the company, including ensuring our stewardship of finances and making prudent investment decisions.

Document control sheet

Title	Value for Money & Technology plan					
File location	https://colchbh.sharepoint.com/sites/fnc/corpdoc/PolDevLib/CBH Value for Money & Technology plan 2018-22.docx					
Consultation	Summary of consultees which took place in July & August 2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester Borough Council • Staff • Board • Finance and Audit Committee (in particular the Technology aspect of the plan) October 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate management team • ICT & Business Intelligence management team 					
Approved	Board 01/12/2019					
Next review	01/12/2020					
Circulation method	SharePoint, website					
Equality Impact Assessment	Required	Yes	Latest	01/02/2018	Review due	[EqIA Review Due (Full)]

Document amendment history

Version	Type	Date	Notes
1.0	New	April 2018	New plan agreed by Board
1.1	Minor amends	Dec 2018	Amendments by Brian Richardson, Interim Director of Business Improvement. Cashable savings progress KPI added.
1.2	Minor amends	Dec 2019	Refocused action plan on technology aspects to incorporate previously separate Technology Plan. Changes to progress



Version	Type	Date	Notes
			KPI for staff satisfaction with technology and £ reinvested KPI removed







Value for money, technology & investment action plan



- Completed
- In progress/on target
- Cancelled / on hold
- Unlikely to achieve target
- Not started/behind schedule/below target




Focus	Actions/projects/workstreams	Lead	Due by	Success measure	Progress	Notes
Investing for the benefit of customers and the community	Embed the new Performance Management Framework (Corporate Scorecard)	Business Intelligence & Service Improvement Manager	April 2018	Low cost per property Increasing customer satisfaction.		Balanced scorecards introduced per team, along with Performance Exception report reviewed by CMT on a monthly basis. Launched April 2019 but under ongoing continuous improvement / development. Further embedding needed needs to be used on a regular basis by managers, e.g. in 1-1s.
	Prioritise & earmark specific	Head of Finance	Sept 2018	£ Invested		All CMT to have a wish list of service enhancements (both internal and external) with a business case template to be



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	investment projects and how they will be funded from efficiencies		Oct 2020	Resident feedback / compliments		completed. Panel to be set up to consist of key Service Heads. Need to formalise this area, especially around ICT investment. Review template and confirm authorisation levels.
	Investigate the emergence of social value reporting and consider options for reporting to Corporate Management Team, the Board, and publicly	Head of Finance	March 2019	£x of social value compared to cost of service provision (e.g. £4 of social value for every £1 of overhead)		HACT social value measure developed for Community Plan – working group to develop. Measures to be refined and reported to CMT. Investigating social value for contract procurement. Social value included in Northgate contract.
Using technology to work smarter	Produce a Technology Plan covering the	Service Development Manager	March 2018	Plan approved		Plan produced & agreed by Corporate Management Team November 2018. Actions incorporated into VfM, Technology & Investment Plan in 2019 Annual Review. VfM

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	investment, resources, training and organisational structure required					plan refocused on technology so separate plan no longer required.
	Improve integration between systems and keep number of systems to a minimum	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence/Housing Systems Business Partner	April 2021	Reduction in number of discrete systems in place		Project Aurora on track to deliver integrated system. Automation & integration of O365 to be explored. Review of other systems (e.g. Assure) to be planned.
	Ensure processes are in place to support strategic alignment of	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	April 2020	Work plan & work request /approval process reflects strategic priorities		Cross-team work plan in place aligned with strategic priorities. Decision-making strategic ICT group in place to ensure requests are appropriately prioritised. Mechanism to be developed to ensure best solution is used for each scenario.



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	ICT requests & projects					Work request forms to be developed to incorporate strategic priorities and business cases where required.
	Ensure support is adequately resourced & structured	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	Sept 2020	% satisfied with CBH/CBC ICT support (we have baseline figures)		<p>New post of Head of ICT & Business Intelligence created in senior management review 2019. Organisational structure to be reviewed starting 2019/20.</p> <p>HouseMark shows spend on ICT very low compared to peers – decisions to be made re investment in ICT resources.</p> <p>Resource & budget planning in progress to support project Aurora – budgets agreed for 2020/21.</p>
	Provide support to vulnerable customers via technology	Older Persons Services Manager	April 2021	Number of residents with access to supporting technology		<p>WiFi access made available in all sheltered schemes from Q3 2019/20.</p> <p>Helpline, Telecare, alarm services, smart home devices etc. to be considered in future if appropriate budget available.</p>




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	Agree an approach to minimum IT skill expectations for new and existing staff	Corporate Management Team	Dec 2020	Agreed approach in place		Capacity for ICT competency framework to be explored as part of Aurora/Programme 2020.
	Improve access to data whilst mobile working	IT & Support Manager/Housing Systems Business Partner	April 2021	% staff who say access to data while mobile is having a significant/critical effect on their productivity (currently 58%)		<p>New housing management system will include mobile working solution and provide online/offline access to data.</p> <p>Issues remain re connectivity of mobile network via EE across the borough – high number of blackspots.</p> <p>Improved handsets for next roll-out – a number of problematic EE Hawks have now been replaced.</p>





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	External review of WiFi/connection speed and how we use it	IT & Support Manager		Review complete and recommendations implemented		Joint review of Gosbecks connectivity completed with CBC. Upgraded connection rolled out at Greenstead office and sheltered scheme.
	Put in place electronic form filling, e.g. from tenants' homes	IT & Support Manager/Housing Systems Business Partner	April 2021	Number of paperless processes available from tenants' homes		Electronic signatures adopted for lettings team Internal processes use electronic signatures New Northgate system will facilitate more mobile working from tenants' homes as well as enabling online transactions via tenant portal. Further reductions in need for electronic signatures in progress, e.g. moving annual leave authorisation process on to iTrent HR system.
	Use technology for	IT & Support Manager	Sept 2021	Number of SharePoint		A number of project and meetings sites now in use, e.g. CBH/CBC Liaison meetings, Project Aurora, Programme 2020. More to come.



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	better collaboration			sites, project sites in place		
	Use technology to support communication and cross-company working (e.g. SharePoint, messaging)	IT & Support Manager	April 2021	Consistent messaging/telephony solution % staff using Yammer, Instant Messaging etc.		Skype training provided to staff. MITEL App being trialled Awaiting clarity from CBC on future direction, e.g. Mitel vs Skype, Microsoft Teams. 225 staff signed up to Yammer (as of October 2019), but usage has dropped off. Options for reinvigorating to be reviewed.
	External review of how we use SharePoint	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	Sept 2020	Review complete & recommendations implemented		Mazars audit planned for early 2020.



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	Harmonise SharePoint working practices (file saving, file access, how staff work on documents, Apps, Forms)	IT & Support Manager	Sept 2020	Add question to ICT survey?	▶	Number of improvements planned/in progress to how we work in SharePoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout of SharePoint New Experience • Review of site structure • Document intelligence – improved use of data for tagging, search, storage etc. Support provided to staff via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff training via external provider • Team presentations • Drop-ins • 1-1 training
	Review to ensure all technology/hardware provided is adequate for all job roles	IT & Support Manager	Sept 2020	% staff happy with how CBH supports them with technology	▶	To be aligned with Project Aurora as it will enable more mobile working and different devices may be needed to current. Leasing equipment rather than purchase being considered – CBC currently assessing options. Hardware provided should be linked to job role requirements, and any access to work needs - process to be agreed



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						EE Hawk being replaced as needed
	Use technology to improve the Board/Committee experience for Board Members.	IT & Support Manager / Head of HR & Governance	April 2020	% Board satisfaction with process		Paperless processes in place – new Board Assurance Officer to assess issues/satisfaction.
	Use technology to negate travel, such as Skype and teleconferencing	IT & Support Manager	Sept 2021	% of staff who spend 2 hours or more a week in face to face meetings (currently 43%)		<p>Workflow and mobile working via project Aurora will reduce the need for travel.</p> <p>Meeting rooms equipped with screens.</p> <p>Review if to equip all meeting rooms with phones where network points available – use of mobiles, TV and speaker system instead</p> <p>Exploring boosters for improved phone signal within Rowan House.</p>




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	Use technology to ensure the right level of performance information at each level	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	Sept 2020	Progress against solution for management information down to individual dashboards		Improved online reporting functionality/dashboards in new housing system. Need to consider best options to link up different data sets using additional reporting tools.
	Facilitate real-time access to performance data	Head of Finance/Housing Systems Business Partner	Sept 2020	% KPIs with real time access		Northgate Housing system will provide quasi-real time information.
	Improve access to data and forms through IT	Housing Systems Business Partner	Sept 2020	Direct access in place for Housing Management systems reporting		Business Intelligence team to have access to reporting tool in new housing management system.




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	Ensure offices are enabled for smarter working	IT & Support Manager	March 2020	All office spaces Wi-Fi enabled & with hot desk capability		All spaces WiFi enabled. Further rollout of hotdesking equipment planned for Greenstead Local Housing Office.
	Increase automated processing	Senior Management Team	Sept 2021	Number of processes automated		A number of processes using Microsoft Flow, e.g. electronic purchase orders, asset management raising orders/authorising.
	Improve website functionality for residents and staff	IT & Support Manager/Housing Systems Business Partner	July 2021	Number of processes available online		New website launched April 2019. Improved tenant alterations & repairs functionality. Customer & contractor portals will be available via new HMS.
	Promote staff self-service using technology	CMT	Sept 2020	Number of helpdesk tickets raised where FAQ/online		Password resets, tips & tricks on Yammer Regular SharePoint updates Drop-in & 1-1 sessions for SharePoint

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				guide available.		ITrent for HR processes, e.g. sickness, expenses. Annual leave managed via system from January 2020.
	Compliance with GDPR requirements	Head of HR & Governance	Sept 2020	Data file management processes in place to manage compliance		GDPR action plan in progress. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data cleansing in housing management system • Awareness & training • Appointment of joint Data Protection Officer for CBC and CBH • Data asset register on Flowz system – further work to be done • Agreements in place with suppliers & partners • Privacy Impact Assessments.
	SharePoint Implementation - focus on Security (Internal Audit)	IT & Support Manager	March 2020	Audit sign – off No breaches reported to ICO		Audit planned with Mazars for December 2019

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	Advisory Audit?)					
Basing decisions on business intelligence	Creating synergies between Business Intelligence, Customer Insight, Service Improvement & ICT teams	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	April 2020	Service Plan developed with % Completion		New posts of Director of Business Improvement and Head of ICT & Business Intelligence created. Organisational structure to be reviewed starting 2019/20 to maximise synergies.
	Use best practice from housing sector and beyond to improve services	CMT	March 2020	Number of processes reviewed using evidence of best practice		HouseMark 18/19 results to be used to identify high performing organisations. Consider participation in HouseMark voids group. Best practice guides (e.g. HQN) to be considered.

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						Service reviews to support evidence-based process reviews.
	Develop and Implement approach to Cost/benefit assessments, business cases	Head of Finance	Sept 2018	Number of cost/benefit assessments & business cases		Needs to be developed for all non-budgeted activities (especially Service Improvement initiatives)
	Developing productivity measures, KPIs / scorecards	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	March 2021	Intelligence based business decisions, performance focused organisational culture		Balanced scorecards in place – further development and embedding needed. ICT & Business Intelligence review will have structure to support better generation & use of business intelligence to drive process improvement. Link to People and Leadership plans

Focus	Actions/projects/workstreams	Lead	Due by	Success measure	Progress	Notes
Directing resources to where they are needed most	Use benchmarking strategically	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	March 2019	Areas of focus identified & aligned with strategic priorities & investment plan		<p>Actions to be identified from HouseMark 18/19 results.</p> <p>How we report Corporate Scorecard, rolling year targets, using model for annual £/Property target</p>
	Clear direction from CBC and target driven Medium Term Delivery Plan	Corporate Management Team	March 2020	MTDP Targets		<p>Target-driven Medium Term Delivery Plan in place, along with new reporting format. Positive feedback on streamlined approach.</p>
	Future Proofing the accommodation needs of CBH (and CBC)	Corporate Management Team	2020	Desk occupation rate/accommo- dation costs/alternati- ve solutions		<p>Utilisation surveys completed pre and post the working smarter project which shows Rowan House has enough hotdesks available if GLHO or Gosbecks were closed. More space required if all satellite offices were closed.</p>

Focus	Actions/projects/workstreams	Lead	Due by	Success measure	Progress	Notes
	Review of drop-in areas in Library, GLHO, Gosbecks and Sheltered offices	Head of ICT & Business Intelligence	March 2020	Most cost effective use of office resource which meets staff requirements		Hotdesk areas are just as quick to connect, charge and work. No further review required.
Ensuring our processes are efficient	How to capture, report and communicate VFM & Return on Investment	Head of Finance	Sept 2018	£ target for each service/company wide		Reviewed Vfm activities at 2018 Away Day and implemented quarterly progress reviews with Heads of Service.
Supporting a culture of high performance and	Training and development to promote a Value for Money culture within CBH	Director of Business Improvement & Head of Finance	March 2022	Part of Induction and recruitment process, PADS, reporting etc.		Staff think in a VFM way.

Focus	Actions/projects/ workstreams	Lead	Due by	Success measure	Progress	Notes
continuous improvement				£ cashable savings achieved pa		