



Housing Scrutiny Committee 4 February 2025

Decisions

Agenda item 5. Quarterly Housing Performance Report

The Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Noted the Housing Service's results in operational delivery, health and safety and customer focus performance, plus the current pressures on service delivery and the impact this may have on reaching targets laid out in this report.
- ii. Noted the recent reports of damp, condensation and mould received by the service, and the measures being put in place to help combat DCM in tenant's homes.
- iii. Noted the update on the rent regulation project
- iv. Considered any further measures of performance that would be beneficial to be included in these reports, going forward.

Agenda item 6. HRA Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2025/26

The Executive Councillor for Housing

Referred the recommendations below to the Executive to:

- i. Recommend that full Council approve that council dwellings rents for all social rented and social shared ownership properties be increased in line with government guidelines, with an increase of 2.7%, being inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September 2024 of 1.7%, plus 1%. Rent increases will take effect from 1 April 2025. This equates to an average rent increase of £3.37 per week.

- ii. Recommend that full Council approve that affordable housing rents, inclusive of service charge, are also increased by 2.7% in line with the increase for social rents. This equates to an average rent increase of £5.06 per week.
- iii. Recommend that full Council approve that rents for affordable shared ownership properties are increased by RPI as at September 2024, 2.7% plus 0.5%, as allowed for in the lease requirements for these properties.
- iv. Recommend that full Council approve that garage and parking space charges for 2025/26 are increased by inflation at 2.7%, in line with dwelling rents, and approve changes in charges for parking permits, as set out at table 10 on page 28 of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- v. Recommend that full Council approve the proposed service charges for Housing Revenue Account services and facilities, as shown in Appendix D of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- vi. Recommend that full Council approve the proposed leasehold administration charges for 2025/26, as detailed in Appendix D of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- vii. Recommend that full Council approve that service charges continue to be recovered at full estimated cost, as detailed in Appendix D of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26, recognising that local authorities should endeavour to limit increases to inflation as measured by CPI at September 2024 (1.7%) plus 1%, wherever possible.
- viii. Recommend that full Council approve (with any amendments) the revenue savings, pressures and bids set out at Appendix F of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- ix. Recommend that full Council approve the resulting Housing Revenue Account revenue budget as summarised at table 5 on page 20 of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.

- x. Recommend that full Council approve the capital bid set out at Appendix F of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- xi. Recommend that full Council approve the updated Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown at Appendix E of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- xii. Recommend that full Council approve the proposed approach to financing the Housing Capital Investment Plan as set out at table 11 on page 31 of the attached Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Budget Setting Report 2025/26.
- xiii. Recommend that full Council approve the revised need to borrow over the life of the Business Plan, to sustain the proposed level of capital investment, which includes delivery of the 10 Year New Homes Programme.
- xiv. Recommend that full Council recognise that the constitution delegates Treasury Management to the Chief Finance Officer (Part 3, para 5.11), with Part 4F, C16 stating; 'All executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities'.
- xv. Recommend that full Council recognise that the decision to borrow significantly to build new homes impacts the council's ability to set-aside resource to redeem the HRA Self-Financing debt at the point at which the loan portfolio matures, resulting in a need to re-finance debt at the point of maturity.
- xvi. Recommend that full Council approve inclusion of a capital budget for Disabled Facilities Grant expenditure and associated grant income from 2025/26 onwards, based upon 2024/25 net grant awarded, with delegation to the Chief Finance Officer to approve an in year increase or decrease in this budget in any year, in direct relation to any increase or decrease in the capital grant funding available for this purpose, as received from Cambridgeshire County Council through the Better Care Fund.
- xvii. Recommend that full Council approval of delegation to the Chief Finance Officer, as Section 151 Officer, to determine the most

- appropriate use of any additional Disabled Facilities Grant funding, for the wider benefit of the Shared Home Improvement Agency.
- xviii. Recommend that full Council approve delegation to the Director of Communities to review and amend the level of fees charged by the Shared Home Improvement Agency for Disabled Facilities Grants and repair assistance grants, in line with any recommendations made by the Shared Home Improvement Agency Board.
 - xix. Recommend that full Council approve delegation to the relevant Director, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to draw down resource from the ear-marked revenue reserve or capital reserve for potential debt redemption or re-investment, for the purpose of open market land or property acquisition or new build housing development, should the need arise, in order to meet deadlines for the use of retained right to buy receipts or to facilitate future site redevelopment.
 - xx. Recommend that full Council approve delegation to the Chief Finance Officer to make any necessary technical amendments to detailed budgets in respect of recharges between the General Fund and the HRA.

Agenda item 7. Homelessness Prevention Grants

The Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing

- i. Approved the award of homelessness prevention grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2025-26, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

Agenda item 8. Cambs Home Improvement Agency (Cambs HIA) - works contractor procurement

The Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Board's decision to proceed with a procurement exercise for up to four years for the provision of two contracts, the first being for adapted bathrooms and kitchens and the second for the provision and installation of disability equipment.

- ii. Authorised Cambs Home Improvement Agency (on behalf of Cambridge City Council and its partners South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire district councils) to evaluate tenders and to award contracts to suitable bidders following a competitive tender evaluation process.

For more information please contact Democratic Services:

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