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Housing Scrutiny Committee HousingCm/1 Thursday, 20 January 2022

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 January 2022

6.00 - 10.17 pm

Present: Councillors Bennett, Dalzell, Gawthrope Wood, Gilderdale, Lee, Pounds, Robertson, Sargeant and Sheil (Vice-Chair in the Chair).

Executive Councillor: Todd-Jones

Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives: Lulu Agate, Diane Best, Mandy Powell-Hardy, Diana Minns, Colin Stevens

Also present (virtually) Tenant Representative Christabella Amiteye

Officers:

Director of Enterprise and Sustainable Development: Fiona Bryant

Director of Neighborhoods and Communities: Jane Wilson

Assistant Head of Finance and Business Manager: Julia Hovells

Head of Housing Maintenance and Assets: Lynn Thomas

Head of Housing Development Agency: Claire Flowers

Asset Manager: Will Barfield

Housing Services Manager: James McWilliams

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O'Donnell

Interim Regeneration Project Manager: Gareth Basterfield

Committee Manager: Sarah Steed

Meeting Producer: Gary Clift

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

22/1/HSC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Bird; Councillor Sargeant attended as alternate.

Tenant Representative Christabella Amiteye attended the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams and did not therefore vote on any of the items.

22/2/HSC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Diana Minns	22/8/HSC	Personal: Was a tenant in Hanover Court.

Councillor Gilderdale	22/12/HSC	Prejudicial: Was an employee of 'It Takes a City'. Would not vote on the grant applications (13,14,15) made by It Takes a City.
Councillor Robertson	22/12/HSC	Prejudicial: Was a trustee of Cambridge Cyrenians. Would not vote on the grant applications (3 and 4) made by Cambridge Cyrenians.

22/3/HSC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22/4/HSC Public Questions

The Committee Manager read out a statement on behalf of a member of the public in relation to agenda item 22/8/HSC, the report on Hanover and Princess Courts and Kingsway Flats.

- i. It had been stated that tenants would have the option of moving out and then moving back in again. Asked if they would be able to move back to the same flat that tenants were being forced to leave.
- ii. If tenants were able to return to the same flat after redevelopment, what changes would have been made, for example the state of decor etc.
- iii. If the redevelopment went ahead and tenants were unable to be relocated locally, asked if they would be given the option of locating country-wide and given priority on other council lists, or was it Cambridge only. Asked if the council would pay removal costs to Cornwall for example.
- iv. Compensation money and removal costs had been promised, but no figures had been mentioned, or timescale for these payments to be made. Asked if tenants would have to make the initial outlay and then claim the money back. Stated that some tenants would not have enough money or savings to be able to do that.
- v. Asked the committee to note that Residents' meetings and coffee morning had been cancelled over the last few months due to covid. This meant that residents of Hanover and Princess Courts had not been able to come together to discuss their feelings, concerns or opinions on the redevelopment.

Councillor Porrer (Ward Councillor for Market Ward) made the following comments:

- i. Was supportive of agenda item 22/8/HSC Report on Hanover and Princess Courts and Kingsway Flats but noted that residents wanted clarity about what was going to happen and clear timescales.
- ii. Was supportive of the changes to the Lettings Policy as this gave more options to tenants and leaseholders at an earlier point in time.
- iii. Welcomed the Regeneration and Decant Support Officer role.
- iv. Noted paragraph 6.5 of the officer's report and would welcome more detail about the practicalities for example could tenants request to live in the same block as other tenants to retain community links.
- v. Asked for site visits to the new developments at Cromwell Road and Mill Road and to any other sites that tenants might be interested in.
- vi. Highlighted the importance of open space provision as part of residential development.
- vii. Noted that resident involvement would be key in the process and that everyone should be involved including those who were less confident with face-to-face meetings.

Diana Minns (Vice Chair Tenant Representative) made the following comments in response to the statement read out on behalf of the member of the public:

- i. Noted that big meetings had not been held as they only had a small community room and a lot of residents in Hanover and Princess Court were vulnerable.
- ii. Residents' coffee mornings had started again and had taken place outside in the summer and inside up until just before Christmas. None had taken place since due to the risks associated with the omicron covid variant.
- iii. Reminded tenants that they could always speak with any member of the Residents Association.

The Head of the Housing Development Agency made the following comments:

- i. The questions raised by the member of the public would be addressed in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document which officers were putting together.
- ii. In response to Councillor Porrer:
 - a. The Lettings Policy hadn't been amended specifically to relocate tenants from Hanover and Princess Court and Kingsway Flats together but this was officer's intention where possible. Part of the next steps in the process would be to speak with residents to find

- out what they would like in terms of whether they had anywhere they would like to move to or move with a particular neighbour.
- b. It was also noted that although new schemes had been identified there may be other sites that residents might be interested in.
 - c. The points raised regarding the importance of open space provision had also been noted.

Re-Ordering Agenda

Under paragraph 4.2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chair used his discretion to alter the order of the agenda items. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the published agenda.

22/5/HSC Estates & Facilities Compliance Data

This item was Chaired by Diana Minns (Vice-Chair)

Matter for Decision

The report provided an update on the compliance-related activities delivered within the Estates and Facilities Team, including a summary on gas servicing, electrical testing and fire safety work.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Noted the Council's current position regarding Compliance, and the progress of ongoing associated works.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Interim Regeneration Project Manager (previously the Interim Risk and Compliance Manager, which was why he presented the report). The compliance data appendix was shared via Microsoft Teams as part of the officer presentation.

The Committee made the following comment in response to the report:

- i. Noted that access had been refused to two flats and that officers would need to use legal powers to gain access to make the properties safe.

The Interim Regeneration Officer confirmed that a legal process would be undertaken to gain access to the two flats who had refused access to ensure their properties were safe.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/6/HSC Procurement of Contractor(s) to Deliver Energy Efficiency Improvements and Works to Reduce Carbon Emissions From Council Housing

This item was Chaired by Diana Minns (Vice-Chair)

Matter for Decision

The Council commissioned a report in 2021 to establish a high-level cost estimate of how the Council could retrofit existing Council properties to be net zero carbon. This report sought approval for a pilot project to retrofit up to fifty Council properties to establish the actual cost and methodology of achieving net zero carbon in existing Council properties.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved the issue of tenders and authorised the Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities to award a contract(s) to a contractor(s) to deliver energy efficiency works and works to reduce carbon emissions from Council housing in 22/23 and 23/24, with an option to extend for one or more periods up to a maximum of two years.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Asset Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Asked what the implications of the report would be for leaseholders.
- ii. Pleased to note that 50 properties were going to be improved however noted that there was over 1000 council properties which needed to be improved as well as other stock in Cambridge.
- iii. Suggested the use of the Open Door residents' magazine, Cambridge Matters magazine and voluntary organisations such as Cambridge Carbon Footprint to encourage other people in the city to consider how they could retrofit their properties.
- iv. Asked what could be done to assist households on low incomes to retrofit their properties.
- v. Asked if there was any obligation to take on local contractors as part of the procurement process to retain knowledge locally.
- vi. Noted that access to properties would be the biggest challenge with this project. Noted that officers were planning a pilot in a particular area but asked if officers may take up other opportunities if they arose for example retrofitting an empty property.

The Asset Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Pilot studies would be undertaken looking at different archetypes as well as low rise one bed flats. It was proposed in the first instance to run a pilot with a council owned block of flats. Officers would work through any implications for a mixed tenure block of flats.
- ii. Officers would take advantage of any government funding to assist with retrofitting, but this was likely to only be available for council properties and not leasehold properties.
- iii. Officers were working with the Environmental Health Team to investigate whether grants could be offered to the private housing sector.
- iv. Officers would consider local contractors as a criterion within the procurement process, but it depended on the length of the contract and if it was a standard procurement or a call-off from a framework procurement.
- v. Officers hoped that residents in the chosen area would be interested to take part in the pilot scheme but if they weren't then officers would need to re-consider their approach.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/7/HSC HRA Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2022/23

Recommendations (part 1) a to l were chaired by Diana Minns (Vice Chair /Tenant Representative) and recommendations (part 2) m to z were chaired by Councillor Sheil

Matter for Decision

As part of the 2022/23 budget process, the range of assumptions upon which the HRA Business Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy were based, have been reviewed in light of the latest information available, culminating in the preparation of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

The HRA Budget-Setting Report provides an overview of the review of the key assumptions. It sets out the key parameters for the detailed recommendations and final budget proposals and is the basis for the finalisation of the 2022/23 budgets.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved that council dwellings rents for all social rented properties be increased by inflation of 3.1%, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September 2021, plus 1%, resulting in rent increases of 4.1%, with effect from 4 April 2022. This equates to an average rent increase of £4.21 per week.
- ii. Approved that affordable rents (inclusive of service charge) are reviewed in line with rent legislation, to ensure that the rents charged are no more than 80% of market rent, with rents for existing tenants increased by no more than inflation of 3.1%, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September 2021, plus 1%, resulting in rent increases of up to 4.1%. Local policy is to cap affordable rents (inclusive of all service charges) at the Local Housing Allowance level, which would usually result in rent variations in line with any changes notified to the authority in this level if these result in a lower than 4.1% increase. As the Local Housing Allowance was increased significantly in late March 2020, affordable rent increases will be capped at 4.1% from April 2022, which is still well below the 2022/23 Local Housing Allowances levels.

- iii. Approved that rents for shared ownership properties are reviewed and amended from April 2022, in line with the specific requirements within the lease for each property.
- iv. Approved that garage and parking space charges for 2022/23 be increased by inflation at 2% in line with the level of inflation incorporated into the HRA as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy process, and that charges for parking permits are reviewed, with any resulting charges summarised in Section 3 of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- v. Approved the proposed service charges for Housing Revenue Account services and facilities, as shown in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- vi. Approved the proposed leasehold administration charges for 2022/23, as detailed in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- vii. Approved that caretaking, building cleaning, window cleaning, estate services, grounds maintenance, temporary housing premises and utilities, sheltered scheme premises and utilities, digital television aerial, gas maintenance, door entry systems, lifts, electrical and mechanical maintenance, flat cleaning, third party services, specialist equipment and catering charges continue to be recovered at full cost, as detailed in Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report, recognising that local authorities should endeavour to limit increases to inflation as measured by CPI at September 2021 (3.1%) plus 1%, wherever possible.
- viii. Approved the updated HRA Rent Setting Policy, included at Appendix M to the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- ix. Approved with any amendments, the Revised Budget identified in Section 4 and Appendix D (1) of the HRA Budget Setting Report, which reflects a net reduction in the use of HRA reserves for 2021/22 of £262,870.
- x. Approved with any amendments, any Non-Cash Limit items identified in Section 4 of the HRA Budget Setting Report or shown in Appendix D (2) of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- xi. Approved with any amendments, any Savings, Increased Income, Unavoidable Revenue Bids, Reduced Income Proposals and Bids, as shown in Appendix D (2) of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- xii. Approved the resulting Housing Revenue Account revenue budget as summarised in the Housing Revenue Account Summary Forecast

2021/22 to 2026/27 shown in Appendix J of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

The Executive Councillor recommended to Council to:

- xiii. Approve the revised need to borrow over the 30-year life of the business plan, with the first instance of this anticipated to be in 2022/23, to sustain the proposed level of investment, which includes earmarking funding for delivery of a net 1,000 new homes over a 10-year timeframe.
- xiv. Recognise that the constitution delegates Treasury Management to the Head of Finance (Part 3, para 5.11), with Part 4F, C16 stating: 'All executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the Head of Finance, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities'.
- xv. Recognise that any decision to borrow further will impact the authority's ability to set-aside resource to redeem 25% of the value of the housing debt by the point at which the loan portfolio matures, with the approach to this to be reviewed before further borrowing commences.
- xvi. Approve capital bids, as detailed in Appendix D (3) and Appendix E of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- xvii. Approve the latest Decent Homes and Other HRA Stock Investment Programme to include reduced expenditure for wall structure and fire safety works and re-phasing of other elements of the programme into later years, as detailed in Appendix E of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- xviii. Approve the latest budget sums, profiling and associated financing for all new build schemes, including revised scheme budgets for Colville III, Fen Road, Ditton Fields, Aragon Close, Sackville Close and Borrowdale based upon the latest cost information from the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) and a reduction in unit numbers at Aylesborough Close, as detailed in Appendices E and H, and summarised in Appendix K, of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- xix. Approve the allocation of funds from the budget earmarked for the delivery of 1,000 net new homes to allow buy back of leasehold dwellings and relocation of tenants from Princess and Hanover Court over the next two years, in advance of a final recommendation for the future of the estate which will be presented once the options appraisal and consultation work has been concluded.

- xx. Approve the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown in Appendix K of the HRA Budget-Setting Report.
- xxi. Approve the inclusion of Disabled Facilities Grant expenditure and associated grant income from 2022/23 onwards, based upon 2021/22 net grant received, with delegation to the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to approve an in year increase or decrease in the budget for disabled facilities grants in any year, in direct relation to any increase or decrease in the capital grant funding for this purpose, as received from the County Council through the Better Care Fund.
- xxii. Approve delegation to the Head of Finance, 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.
- xxiii. Approve delegation to the Strategic Director 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 decisions made by the Shared Home Improvement Agency Board.
- xxiv. Approve delegation to the Strategic Director to review, agree and enter into a revised Shared Home Improvement Agency Shared Service Agreement, in line with recommendations made by the Shared Home Improvement Agency Board.
- xxv. Approve delegation to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to draw down resource from the ear-marked reserves 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.
- xxvi. Approve delegation to the Head of Finance, as Section 151 Officer, to make any necessary technical amendments to detailed budgets in respect of recharges between the General Fund and the HRA, with any change in impact for the HRA to be incorporated as part of the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy in September 2022.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Assistant Head of Finance and Business Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Noted the budget had been drawn up in challenging times. The work of the HRA was dependent on rental income, and that rents were proposed to be increased. Tenants had benefitted from a reduction in rents however this had put improvement works, which were dependent on rental income behind. The HRA could not support net zero carbon initiatives across the whole of the housing stock. Central government needed to provide resources to do this. 96% of the housing stock were at decent homes standard and the council was working towards 100% of the stock being decent homes standard.
- ii. Asked if rents had to increase to off-set shortfalls in rental income from the Mill Road and Cromwell Road developments.
- iii. Noted inflation assumptions had been built into the HRA as best as officers could from the autumn's numbers however there had been a marked increase. Asked what assurance could be given to manage inflation increases.
- iv. Felt the Council was in a holding pattern as new housing developments were dependent upon receipt of Homes England funding.
- v. The isolation of elderly residents was a problem and the council could not wait for the internal scoping work study (as set out in the Labour amendment to the fourth bullet point in recommendation 1.3 on page 2-3 of the Liberal Democrat Amendment document) to be undertaken.
- vi. Noted reference to a decarbonisation fund but this was not set out in any document.
- vii. Asked how much CO2 the council's housing stock was putting into the atmosphere.

The Assistant Head of Finance and Business Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Rent increases were not linked in any way to delays in rental income from the Mill Road and Cromwell Road development. However if rents were not increased, then savings would have to be made elsewhere and difficult decisions would need to be taken about where to reduce expenditure. Rent levels had always been set in accordance with government guidelines. Rent increases meant the council could continue

to deliver a programme of investment and would for example cover the retrofit pilot project.

- vi. Recognised that inflation was proving a challenge. Had built an additional 1.7% inflation in as part of the budget process, over and above the estimate of 2% rise in inflation in the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy. These funds would be held centrally and allocated to areas as required to fulfil contractual commitments. This would be reviewed again as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Councillor Dalzell introduced the Liberal Democrat Amendment to the 2022/23 Housing Revenue Budget.

Councillor Robertson proposed an amendment to the fourth bullet point in recommendation 1.3 on page 2-3 of the Liberal Democrat Amendment document. (deleted text ~~struckthrough~~, additional text underlined.)

A proposal for internal scoping work, including the Independent Living Service and Communities Service, alongside the assessment of external provision, to inform an analysis of the services provided to older residents (not just council tenants) experiencing isolation and to assess community needs. This analysis may include recommending a future revenue bid for to include a revenue bid of £21,580 in 2022/23 and £43,160 in 2023/24 to fund an 18-month fixed term a Community Inclusion Officer from October 2022. They would ~~will~~ work across the sheltered housing portfolio and with older tenants in our general needs housing, to support residents, to improve connectivity between sheltered schemes and other residents and to reduce loneliness and social isolation. The new post would ~~will~~ supplement the existing Independent Living Service.

The amendment was approved by 9 votes in favour, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

The Chair decided that the recommendations highlighted in the Liberal Democrat Group (LD) amendment (as amended) should be voted on and recorded separately:

The following vote was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

LD1.3(i). A proposal to specifically earmark any net underspend in revenue repair budgets, capital decent homes budgets and capital other spend on own stock budgets from the financial year 2021/22 onwards, after allowing for any requested carry forwards, with the resource set-aside for investment in improving the energy efficiency of our existing housing

stock. Any resulting resource will be incorporated into delivery plans as soon as is practical after being ear-marked, to ensure that any available funding is directed into helping to meet net zero carbon targets across the housing portfolio. Over the last 5 years, this would have given rise to an ear-marked fund of in excess of £3.5 million.

The amendment was lost by 3 votes in favour to 6 against.

The following vote was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

LD1.3(ii). A proposal that if a Social Housing De-Carbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 grant bid for approximately £783,000 is successful, that delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance to both recognise the grant income in 2022/23 and to increase the energy investment budget by the same sum to allow additional properties to receive the much-needed investment in 2022/23, or at the earliest delivery opportunity.

The amendment was lost by 3 votes in favour to 6 against.

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns.

LD1.3(iii). A proposal to include a revenue bid of £12,000 in 2022/23 to employ resource to undertake a project to allow the estimated carbon footprint of the housing stock to be measured and to put in place a robust structure to facilitate reporting the carbon impact of any future investment proposals. This will provide an estimated baseline and will enable improved evaluation of future investment proposals.

The amendment was lost by 3 votes in favour to 8 against with 1 abstention..

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns.

LG1.3(iv). A proposal for internal scoping work, including the Independent Living Service and Communities Service, alongside the assessment of external provision, to inform an analysis of the services provided to older residents (not just council tenants) experiencing isolation and to assess community needs. This analysis may include recommending a future revenue bid for a Community Inclusion Officer. They would work across the sheltered housing portfolio and with older tenants in our general needs housing, to support residents, to improve connectivity between sheltered schemes and other residents and to reduce loneliness and

social isolation. The new post would supplement the existing Independent Living Service.

The amendment was carried by 9 votes in favour to 1 against with 4 abstentions.

Councillor Bennett introduced the Green and Independent Group Amendment to the 2022/23 Housing Revenue Budget.

Councillor Robertson proposed an amendment to the Green and Independent Group Amendment proposed third bullet point in recommendation 1.3 on page 3 of the Green and Independent Amendment document. (deleted text ~~struckthrough~~, additional text underlined.)

A proposal to request officers to include in the Transformation Programme some workshops of councillors and stakeholders, such as tenant and leaseholder representatives, set up a small volunteer cross party working group to work on a short, focussed overview of the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Setting Reports and the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Setting Reports, which could summarise and communicate information more effectively such as by:

~~Popular ways to do this include:~~

- Use of key questions
- Graphical presentation
- Key performance indicators
- Benchmarking

This would facilitate more effective scrutiny by all councillors and clearer communication to city residents.

A cost figure is not provided for this recommendation because the HRA's accounting function already produces a very full range of high quality key performance indicator reports and benchmarking. The proposed new overview report would be ~~is~~ an introductory guided tour that assists users to engage with the main report and put it in context.

Councillor Bennett accepted Councillor Robertson's amendment to the Green and Independent Group recommendation 1.3(iii) and agreed to withdraw the Green and Independent Group recommendation 1.3(iv) following a commitment from the Executive Councillor to provide the information requested in recommendation 1.3(iv) as far as it was possible within existing resources.

The Chair decided that the recommendations highlighted in the Green and Independent Group (GI) amendment (as amended) should be voted on and recorded separately:

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns.

GI1.3(i). A proposal to include a revenue bid of £40,000 to fund a project to explore alternative housing delivery options, with a focus on the delivery of smaller homes, such as:

POD homes for retention in the HRA and the potential for conversion of existing unused office and retail space into residential accommodation:
and

Delivery models that include smaller self-contained accommodation on co-living principles to provide safe, affordable, sociable and sustainable living space.

This could include shared communal facilities such as laundry rooms, guest rooms, co working space and social meeting space which could also be available to the wider community.

The project has been conceived with the particular needs of young key workers and care leavers in mind but could be adapted to suit more diverse groups of residents.

The project will cover market research, feasibility work, site identification, a review of vacant office and retail space in the city and liaison with planning.

The amendment was lost by 2 votes in favour to 10 against and 2 abstentions.

Recommendation GI1.3(ii) was contingent on recommendation GI1.3(i) as this amendment was lost recommendation GI1.3(ii) fell.

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns.

GI1.3(iii). A proposal to request officers to include in the Transformation Programme some workshops of councillors and stakeholders, such as tenant and leaseholder representatives, to work on a short, focussed overview of the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Setting Reports and the

General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Setting Reports, which could summarise and communicate information more effectively such as by:

- Use of key questions
- Graphical presentation
- Key performance indicators
- Benchmarking

This would facilitate more effective scrutiny by all councillors and clearer communication to city residents.

A cost figure is not provided for this recommendation because the HRA's accounting function already produces a very full range of high quality key performance indicator reports and benchmarking. The proposed new overview report would be an introductory guided tour that assists users to engage with the main report and put it in context.

The amendment was carried by 13 votes in favour to 0 against and 1 abstentions.

The following vote was chaired by Diana Minns.

The Committee resolved by 12 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations a - l of the budget proposal including the Liberal Democrat Group recommendation (as amended) 1.4(iv) and the Green and Independent Group recommendation (as amended) 1.3(iii).

The following vote was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

The Committee resolved by 7 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations m - z of the budget proposal.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/8/HSC Report on Hanover and Princess Courts and Kingsway Flats

This item was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

Matter for Decision

At Housing Scrutiny Committee on 23rd September 2021 it was noted that the programme of review of estates would be carried forward including survey work and consultation with residents to include Hanover and Princess Courts and Kingsway Flats.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Noted the progress made to date towards identifying the most favourable improvement route for the Hanover and Princess Courts and Kingsway flats and the outcome of the initial consultation exercises.
- ii. Approved commencement of a consultation process for Hanover and Princess Court residents including redevelopment and refurbishment options.
- iii. Approved a decant process with immediate effect in advance of a decision on the future of Hanover and Princess Courts including deviation from the Lettings Policy position that those decanting are given emergency housing status when the required vacant possession date is within 12 months.
- iv. Delegated authority to the Head of Housing to amend the Local Lettings Plans for the Mill Road and Cromwell Road developments to allow for direct lets for residents interested in moving from Hanover and Princess Courts.
- v. Approved with immediate effect the purchase of the leasehold interest of flats in Hanover and Princess Courts and the issue of Home Loss and Disturbance payments to qualifying Council tenants and Basic Loss and Disturbance payments to qualifying leaseholders affected by the potential redevelopment
- vi. Approved the development of a project plan for appraisal work on Hanover and Princess Courts and a management plan for Kingsway including the development of plans for communication and engagement with residents and owners and associated parties.
- vii. Noted the required adjustments to the HRA Business Plan, adjustments to the works budgets and recognition of the phased rent loss that would be anticipated due to vacating flats at Hanover and Princess Courts.
- viii. Approved the amendment to the Lettings Policy detailed at 6.13 and Appendix C of the officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of the Housing Development Agency.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Asked how many units were proposed to be provided if the development went ahead.
- ii. Asked if the refurbishment option was chosen whether the scale of the refurbishment would require tenants to decant in any event.
- iii. Thanked Officers for the work carried out as part of the consultation and welcomed officer's comments about trying to maintain tenant's community links.
- iv. Wanted residents to be reassured that a full and thorough consultation would be undertaken.
- v. Noted that a working group had been set up between key officers in the Housing Development Agency and the Vice Chair Tenant Representative and the Leaseholder representative and they were meeting almost fortnightly to ensure that there was the best consultation carried out.
- vi. Asked if information about the consultation could be included in the residents 'Open Door' magazine.

The Head of Housing Development Agency said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The options appraisal work would look at how many units could be provided on site if the development went ahead.
- ii. A significant level of refurbishment meant it was highly likely that residents would have to move out. However, this would be looked at as part of the options appraisal work.
- iii. Work would continue with the consultation working group to discuss next steps in the process.
- iv. Would include information about the proposals and consultation in the 'Open Door' residents magazine.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/9/HSC Update on New Build Council Housing Delivery

This item was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

Matter for Decision

This report provided an update on the housing development programme.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Noted the continued progress on the delivery of the approved housing programme.
- ii. Noted the updated 2021 Sustainable Housing Design Guide, to include the recommendations approved in January's 2021 Housing Scrutiny Committee meeting and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' National Design Standards.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Housing Development Agency.

The Committee made the following comment in response to the report:

- i. Queried the colour of properties built as part of the regeneration programme as thought properties which were black on the outside absorbed 20% more heat than lighter coloured houses.

The Head of Housing Development said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Confirmed would liaise with the Tenant Representative outside of the meeting regarding the colour of properties built as part of the redevelopment programme as did not believe that any of the new council housing developments contained properties which were black.

- ii. Confirmed that there was a requirement to build homes to M42 standard and that 5% of homes would be accessible homes.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/10/HSC Cambridge City Caravan Site Licensing Policy

This item was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

Matter for Decision

The report set out how the Council would carry out its statutory responsibilities for caravan site licensing, inspection, fit and proper person determination enforcement and fee setting.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved the adoption of the proposed Cambridge City Caravan Site Licensing & Fee Policy as attached in Appendix A to the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Health Manager.

The Committee thanked Officers for the clarity of the report.

The Committee resolved by 8 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/11/HSC Approval of the ‘Streets to Home service’ budget

This item was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

Matter for Decision

In a partnership arrangement with Cambridgeshire County Council, the City Council wishes to commission a single service that will assist rough sleepers to quickly move from the streets into accommodation.

The ‘streets-to-home’ service is expected to commence in April 2022 and will be commissioned by combining funds from the County Council’s housing-related support budget with City Council funding formerly made to enable the annual homelessness prevention grant bid round.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved the City Council financial contribution as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the Officer’s report.
- ii. Delegated to the Head of Housing the authority to endorse the award of the contract to the winning bidder.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer’s report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Housing Services Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Asked when the contract to the winning bidder would be announced.
- ii. Noted that there were people with complex needs who lived on the streets, but that resident’s perception was that the council weren’t doing anything to support them. Felt that residents weren’t aware of good ways to support homeless people for example through Cambridge Street Aid.

The Housing Services Manager said the following in response to Members’ questions:

- i. Officers expected to announce the winning contractor by the end of January 2022. Would look into doing a press release.

- ii. Officers were looking into better ways to advise people how they could support homeless people. Would look into the number of press releases.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

22/12/HSC Homelessness Prevention Grants to Agencies 2022-23 and proposed associated reallocation of funding

This item was chaired by Councillor Sheil.

Matter for Decision

This report outlined grant funding to organisations providing homelessness prevention services. It provided an overview of the process, eligibility criteria and budget in Section 3 of the Officer's report and Appendix 1 detailed the applications received with recommendations for 2022-23 awards.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing

- i. Approved that from 2022-23 onwards, homelessness prevention grants are funded from the annual homelessness prevention grant award the Council receives from central government.
- ii. Approved the award of homelessness prevention grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2022-23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.
- iii. Approved that from 2022-23 onwards the budget formerly used to fund homelessness prevention grants will instead be used to fund the new Streets-to-Home service and the additional staff roles that were created within the housing advice service in 2018 in response to the additional statutory duties enshrined in the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Housing Services Manager.

The Committee asked how the funding referred to in paragraph 3.9 of the officer's report would be used.

The Housing Services Manager said the Central Government Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding which would not be spent on the City Council's Local Grants to Agencies would be spent on a range of services to prevent homelessness.

The Committee resolved:

- unanimously to endorse recommendation 2.1.
- unanimously to endorse recommendation 2.2 (excluding grants 3,4,13,14,15 in Appendix 1).
- by 8 votes to 0 to endorse recommendation 2.2 in relation to grants 3 and 4
- by 8 votes to 0 to endorse recommendation 2.2 in relation to grants 13, 14, 15.
- unanimously to endorse recommendation 2.3.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 10.17 pm

CHAIR

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