

COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 2 FEBRUARY 2022

REPORT BY: COUNCILLOR JESSOP (CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSING BOARD)

At its meeting on 1 January 2022 the Housing Board considered a report of the Borough Treasurer and Housing Services manager considering the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Financial Model including the revised 2021/22 budget and the 2022/23 budget including recommendations on rent levels for next year.

It also provides updates for members on the latest information with regard to policy changes that impact directly on local authority housing finance services.

BUSINESS PLAN FINANCIAL MODEL UPDATE AND COUNCIL DWELLING RENTS 2022/2023

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Housing Board recommend to Council that:

- **The revised HRA Business Plan Financial Model extract (Appendix A) and associated 2021/22 Revised Budget and 2022/23 Budget (Appendix B) is agreed.**
- **That Council Dwelling rents increase by CPI (3.1% @sept 2021) plus 1% .The Council is setting it's rents according to the five year policy programme as detailed in the new national rent policy introduced in February 2019.**

The rent for all garages is increased in line with inflation, as agreed in the Garage Renewal strategy.

PART I MINUTES OF THE HOUSING BOARD

Consideration was given to a report by the Borough Treasurer and Housing Service Manager regarding recommendation to full Council the Housing Revenue Account (GRA) Business Plan Financial Model including the revised 2021/22 budget and the 2022/23 budget including recommendations on rent levels for next year.

Officers advised Members of some changes to figures shown in Appendix B and circulated an amendment. They also wished to adjust the wording in paragraph 5.4 to remove the distinction between older style and new style garages in terms of rent increase.

In answer to a Members question Officers explained that the figure for heating upgrades was for normal upgrades and not heat pumps.

Members were advised that the Other Income shown in Appendix A included court costs, alarms, water, management fees from tenants and eligible service charges to hostels and sheltered schemes.

Members were advised that following site condition surveys, the priority was to upgrade electrics. Additional energy efficiency works will be carried out during major repairs, and the budget will change as new programmes come on stream.

In answer to a Members question, Officers advised that data is being collated to identify suitable properties for retro fitting of solar panels for which grants might be available and that the programme of insulating had been carried out previously.

Members were advised that assessments now covered the whole building including roofworks, and works were undertaken in one visit which makes it more cost effective.

Officers explained that property stock is rated as Good Fair or Poor, which helps to identify the budget required for the Capital Scheme. Poor does not mean that the property is sub standard, just that there maybe more than two issues requiring attention.

Members were advised that most asbestos surveys and removals have been completed, and the budget is more for when issues are discovered during general maintenance and repair.

Officers explained that the heading Estate Capital in Appendix D was a generic heading.

A Member wished to thank Officers for an excellent report which showed how tenants were being cared for and there were improvements for all through heating updates, new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors and most importantly disabled adaptations.

RESOLVED: That the Housing Board recommended to Council that:

- The revised HRA Business Plan Financial Model extract (Appendix A) and associated 2021/22 Revised Budget and 2022/23 Budget (Appendix B) be agreed.

- That Council Dwelling rents increase by CPI (3.1% @sept 2021) plus 1% .The Council is setting it's rents according to the five year policy programme as detailed in the new national rent policy introduced in February 2019.
- The rent for all garages be increased in line with inflation, as agreed in the Garage Renewal strategy.