

CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE

31 January 2018

Attendance:

Councillors:

Horrill (Chairman) (P)

Brook (P)

Miller (P)

Other invited Councillors:

Berry

Scott (P)

Elks (P)

Tait (P)

TACT representatives:

Mrs M Gill (P)

Mr M Fawcitt (P)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Bell

1. **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Councillor Scott declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to him being a Council tenant. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, he remained in the room and spoke under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate in all matters related to the Council house rents.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 22 November 2017, be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

David Chafe spoke regarding Reports CAB2976(HSG) and his comments are summarised under the relevant minute below.

4. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2018/19 BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN**

(Report CAB3016(HSG) refers)

The Chairman stated that this matter had been considered at The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 January 2018 (Report OS192 refers) where Members had commended the contents of the Report and the work of the Housing Team. In addition, the contents of the current Report were broadly the same as the budget options report presented to this Committee at its previous meeting (Report CAB2986(HSG) refers).

The Head of Housing Finance introduced the Report and drew Members' attention to the emerging issues set out in Paragraphs 10.15 to 10.20.

The Head of Housing Finance and Corporate Head of Housing responded to Members' queries and comments on a range of matters, as summarised below:

- Expenditure on kitchen and bathroom renewal – the Head of Housing Finance advised that the Council had caught up with the backlog of outstanding improvements. The aim was to continue to replace kitchens every 20 years and bathrooms as required, rather than a programme to replace every 30 years;
- Loft conversions/extensions – the Head of Housing Finance confirmed that although no specific budget has been allocated from 2019/20 onwards, future proposals would be assessed on a case by case basis.
- Bailey Close – the scheme had been delayed for reasons previously reported and was now predicted to be completed in summer 2018.
- The Valley – the tender process was underway and it was hoped development would commence end 2018/start 2019. Members noted this would be a substantial development taking place over a few years and communication with local residents was of vital importance. The Corporate Head of Housing agreed that an officer be dedicated within the New Homes Team to act as single point of contact and communications for this scheme.
- Alterations in Homelessness budget (Appendix 1 of Report) – the Head of Housing Finance believed this was probably due to changes in internal accounting but would clarify and advise Members accordingly.
- Proposed review of garage use/rents – the Corporate Head of Housing confirmed the intention that this would not impact on any future proposals to use garage land for new build purposes. It would include matters such as consideration of future use for storage purposes and involve tenants for their views.
- Possible withdrawal of floating support services by the County Council – the Corporate Head of Housing confirmed that discussions were underway and the possibilities of partnership working would be fully considered.
- Alterations in Mechanical & Electrical Services (Major Repairs budget – Appendix 3) – the Head of Housing Finance agreed to clarify the reasons for this change and advise Members accordingly.
- Concern regarding a specific example of a tenant being unable to afford the housing association rents at a new Kings Barton house and the

importance of ensuring affordable rents were truly affordable. The Chairman emphasised that the Council had successfully housed tenants at a number of new Council house schemes recently, for example at Hilliers Way.

On behalf of TACT, Mrs Gill confirmed their support for the contents of the Report.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RECOMMENDED:

TO CABINET:

1. That garage rents are increased to £10.32 per week for council house tenants, £13.50 for private garage tenants and leaseholders and £15.60 for City Centre garages with effect from 2 April 2018, the increases broadly in line with RPI of 3.9% as at September 2017.

2. That the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Strategic Director (Resources), Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, be given delegated authority to make adjustments within the overall Maintenance, Improvement and Renewal programme as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, including the flexibility to substitute projects and re-balance expenditure within and between the different elements/schemes in order to meet operational needs, changing priorities and commitment targets, with any changes being reported to Committee at the earliest opportunity.

TO CABINET AND COUNCIL:

4. That the 2018/19 Housing Revenue Account budget and the final forecasts for 2017/18 as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report be approved.

5. That the HRA Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendices 3 and 4 to this report be approved.

6. That the proposed funding for the HRA Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix 5, including the borrowing required for 2017/18, be approved. Also, that Members approve the use of funding previously set aside for the Government Right to Buy Levy towards the new build programme until such time as any new policy announcements are made.

7. That the Council commences a programme of transferring garages from the HRA to the General Fund from April 2018 over a period

of four years, the consideration for each garage site to be determined by independent valuers.

8. That authority be given to incur capital expenditure of £7.401m for the Maintenance, Improvement and Renewal programme as detailed in the report and Appendix 3 to the report, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 6.4 (noting that within this, for any schemes in excess of £100,000 a financial appraisal will be approved in accordance with the scheme of delegations).

9. That the HRA Business Plan operating account extract as detailed in Appendix 6 is noted and that forecast working balances are approved.

5. **PARKING ENFORCEMENT ON HOUSING LAND**
(Report CAB2976(HSG) refers)

The Corporate Head of Housing introduced the Report and emphasised that the purpose of the proposals was to assist Council tenants to be able to access parking spaces allocated for their dwellings but which were currently being used at times by non-residents.

During public participation, David Chafe raised a number of detailed queries regarding which sections of land would be included within the new proposals,

The Corporate Head of Housing responded that in general it would include land associated with Council housing schemes that was not designated highway land. He noted the more detailed and specific questions in relation to Thurmond Crescent for further investigation.

The Corporate Head of Housing responded to Members' questions and comments as summarised below:

- It was confirmed that there would be ongoing discussions with the Parking Team regarding current and proposed residents' parking restrictions in these areas;
- The importance of involving local Ward Councillors at an early stage, and before local residents were contacted, was emphasised.
- Of the 16 sites listed in Appendix 1, there were currently a total of 204 parking bays and it was hoping that this could be increased to 321 parking spaces with new line designation. However, it would still not be possible to offer one parking space per dwelling and the importance of emphasising this point to residents was raised.
- The 16 sites were those that had been identified as experiencing particular difficulties at the moment, but it could be possible to expand to include other schemes at a later date if appropriate.

On behalf of TACT, Mrs Gill confirmed their support for the scheme.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposal to consult with residents on the introduction of permit parking at the 16 locations identified at Appendix 1 be approved.

2. That where residents are in favour of parking enforcement, consultation be undertaken with the emergency services and other statutory consultees (e.g. GPs, carers and other service providers who undertake home visits).

3. That the Corporate Head of Housing, in consultation with the Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services, be authorised to obtain an off-street TMO for those estates where consultation responses are positive; and to undertake works to ensure that the estates have appropriately marked bays and compliant signage.

4. That the Legal Services Manager be authorised to make any orders as required and advertise them in accordance with regulations.

5. That no charge be made to residents for parking enforcement. This will be reviewed after the first year of operation.

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.00pm.

Chairman