

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**1 July 2013****Minute Extract****138. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2012/13 OUTTURN**
(Report CAB2494(HSG) refers)

The Committee noted that this Report had been considered by the Cabinet (Housing) Committee at its meeting held on 19 June 2013 where the recommendations had been agreed as set out.

During discussion, the Chief Finance Officer clarified that the report set out detailed outturn information for the agreed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2012/13, which had previously been scrutinised by Members. The Council's recently published Statement of Accounts for 2012/13 contained detailed comparisons to the previous year's budget. The Committee also noted that the HRA Business Plan was reviewed annually in the autumn. This would include projections of the potential impact from restrictions on future rent increases that were likely to be imposed by the Government's recent Comprehensive Spending Review. The Committee supported the early analysis of all aspects of the spending review so as to ensure its impact on programmes of work over the long term was minimised as far as possible.

The Assistant Director (Housing Services) responded to a number of questions with regard to the key service summary and capital programme variances. It was reported that it was expected that a stock condition survey of all properties would be completed in time to inform spending plans in the revised HRA Business Plan in the autumn.

With regard to the lower than expected spend in the New Council Homes Build budget, the Committee raised concerns that the lack of delivery of new housing schemes during the first year might have been due to officer capacity with the New Homes Team. However, the Chief Executive explained that these delays had been due to the extensive work undertaken during the previous 12 months on public consultation, procurement and planning work relating to development sites already identified. The Committee noted that the relevant Portfolio Holder would continue to review the delivery of new build schemes during subsequent years.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was agreed that as the outturn information in the report would not contain comparisons to previous years' HRA budgets, it would assist the Committee in undertaking their scrutiny role in future if the Portfolio Holder and the Assistant Director (Housing Services) arrange an informal briefing session on background information relating to the delivery of the Business Plan.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT COUNCIL BE ADVISED THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD NO ISSUES THAT IT WISHED TO DRAW TO ITS ATTENTION.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Leader have regard to the comments of the Committee as set out below:

- (i) That the Portfolio Holder ensure the early analysis of all aspects of the Government's recent Comprehensive Spending Review so to ensure its impact on programmes of work over the long term was minimised as far as possible.
- (ii) That the Leader review delivery of new build housing schemes, noting the lower than expected spend in the New Build budget for 2012/13.
- (iii) That the Portfolio Holder and the Assistant Director (Housing Services) arrange an informal briefing session on background information to assist the Committee in undertaking their scrutiny role with regard to HRA Business Plan delivery.