

Minutes

Housing Committee Wednesday, 21st December, 2022

Attendance

Cllr White (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Davies
Cllr Mrs Pearson (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Mrs Hones
Cllr Mrs N Cuthbert	Cllr Kendall

Apologies

Cllr S Cloke
Cllr McLaren
Cllr Slade

Substitute Present

Cllr Fryd
Cllr Hossack
Cllr Poppy

Also Present

Cllr Barber
Cllr Sankey

Officers Present

Angela Abbott	- Corporate Manager - Housing Needs and Independent Living
Nicola Marsh	- Corporate Manager - Housing Estates
Paulette McAllister	- Programme Lead - Strategic Housing Development Programme
Julian Higson	- Interim Director - Housing
Claire Mayhew	- Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Carol Burton	- Corporate Manager - Technical Services

298. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr McLaren, with Cllr Poppy substituting, Cllr Slade with Cllr Hossack substituting and Cllr S Cloke with Cllr Fryd substituting.

299. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Housing Committee held on Tuesday 11th October were approved as a true record.

300. Chair's Update

The report began on page 11 and highlighted all the work the Housing Department have done since the last committee meeting.

301. Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance indicators are collected across all services in the Housing Department and help monitor how we are performing across a set list of key areas.

This report presents the proposed set Key Performance Indicators that officers intend to present at all future Housing committees.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Agree the recommended set of Key Performance Indicators be used as a basis for monitoring the Housing service and be presented at all future committees.

Agree that any amendments to the Key Performance Indicators presented, will be done in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Housing Committee and the Director of Housing.

302. Policy Schedule

This report was an update for members to note and presents the Policy Review Schedule to ensure that the Housing Department has the relevant Strategies and Policies in place in order to provide a clear framework of its responsibilities.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

303. Asbestos Management Policy

This report summarised progress since the last report to Committee on the 8th December 2020.

The updated Asbestos Policy, includes four new appendices which determines the urgency of remedial work actions following an Asbestos Management survey, or an Asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition survey and will be prioritised based on the material assessment score. This scoring matrix determines a priority order which summaries how the Council manages the risk and clarifies if an air monitoring test is required after remedial works are completed.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

To approve the Asbestos Policy

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the delivery of their Asbestos Management responsibilities, processes, and procedures and to comply with Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

304. Fire Management Policy

The current policy which was approved at Community, Health & Housing committee on 3 July 2018 (minute no.60) set out the proposals for a new Fire Safety Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department.

The Policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure the Council meets all of its statutory requirements including recent legislative changes which saw the creation of The Building Safety Bill and The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

Building Safety Bill has now received Royal Assent (28 April 2022). Following this, the various provisions are expected to come into force within two to 18 months after Royal Assent, dependent on the level of work involved.

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 legislation which is relevant only to multi[1]occupied residential buildings which are high rise buildings, buildings over 11 meters in height. This legislation will come into force on 23 January 2023.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Approve the Housing Fire Management Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a Fire Management Policy. Failure to have one will leave the Council in a vulnerable position should a fire occur

305. Lift and Lifting Equipment Policy

This report sets out the proposals for a new Lift and Lifting Equipment Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department. The Policy provides the council with the ability to effectively manage Lift and Lifting Equipment within all its residential blocks and individual properties where lifting equipment is present. The Policy also meets the Council's statutory requirement to have a Lift and Lifting Equipment Policy.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Approve the Lift and Lifting Equipment Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Housing Department has documentation to support the delivery of their Lift and Lifting Equipment responsibilities, processes, and procedures.

To ensure the Council complies with their legal obligations under LOLER and PUWER (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998).

306. Oil and Solid Fuel Policy

The report sets out the proposals for a new Oil and Solid Fuel Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department. The Policy provides the council with the ability to effectively manage Oil and Solid Fuel in its five tenanted properties. The Policy also meets the Council's statutory requirement to have an Oil and Solid Fuel Policy.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Approve the Oil and Solid Fuel Policy.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council must ensure it complies with all relevant legislation as a landlord. The policy and supporting procedures show the Council's commitment to fulfilling its duties to protect tenants and their visitors to its properties and physical assets by ensuring servicing and maintenance regimes are in place and comply with OFTEC (Oil Firing Technical Association) and HETAS (Heating Equipment Testing and Approvals Scheme) governing schemes.

307. Damp & Mould Update

This report provides an initial update on damp and mould issues in rented housing within the Brentwood Borough Council area, and the council's response(s) to date.

This item was for information only and no vote was required.

308. Rent Setting Policy 2023-2024

This report seeks the recommendations of the committee on the proposed rent and service charge levels for 2023/2024.

The recommendations will be considered by Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee when the final recommendation will be made as part of the budget setting process. The final decision will be made by Ordinary Council on 1st March 2023.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Increase rent in line with the national rent cap of 7% for Social and Affordable Housing Properties

Increase Shared Ownership and General Fund Property Rents in line with the national rent cap of 7%

To apply formula rent to all new tenancies from April 2023

To apply a 11.1% (CPI+1%) increase to all non-council tenant garage rents

To apply a 7% increase to all council tenant garage rents

To note that service charges have been reconciled and charges have been increased or decreased so they are brought in line with actual costs and that no increase will exceed CPI plus 1%.

Reasons for Recommendation

The recommendation is to follow government guidelines which proposes to increase rents by 7%, for 2023/24.

This increase to rents is a welcomed one for residents, however it will create a pressure on the HRA Business Plan.

The proposed increase will contribute to funding the current services provided as well supporting the development of the capital programme and housing development plans.

When considering the rent setting the following assumptions have been considered: • The financial viability of the HRA business plan • Provision for the repairs & maintenance capital programme • Development for new homes in the borough • Affordability for tenants • Investing in services to the tenant receives the best service delivery.

309. Fees & Charges

Fees and charges made by the Council for various services are reviewed on an annual basis by the relevant Committees relating to the services provided. Recommended amendments to the fees and charges are incorporated into the budget setting process to take effect from the following financial year.

Following a full discussion, Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

Members were asked to:

Agree to the proposed charges for 2022/23 as attached in Appendix A-D, subject to the annual budget setting process

310. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

311. Exclusion of the press and public

Cllr White **MOVED** and Cllr Pearson **SECONDED** that the public were excluded from Items 13, 14 and 15 on the grounds that it may disclose exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. This was approved by committee members.

312. Axis extra over inflation increase request

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr White and **SECONDED** by Cllr Pearson to agree the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED**.

313. Landlord Offer Harewood Road Regeneration

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

This item was for information only and no vote was required.

314. Strategic Housing Delivery Plan (SHDP)

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr White and **SECONDED** by Cllr Pearson to agree the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **CARRIED**.

The meeting concluded at 9:00pm.