



# Housing and Health Committee

## Agenda

### Part One

Council Chamber - Town Hall

Wednesday, 7 January 2015 at 7.00 pm

#### **Membership (Quorum – 3)**

##### **Councillors**

Cllrs Carter (Chair), Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair), Baker, Mrs Henwood, Mrs Hones, Mrs Hubbard, Le-Surf, McCheyne, Parker and Tee

##### **Co-opted Members**

Members of Tenants Talkback

**Committee Co-ordinator:** Claire Hayden (01277 312741)

#### **Additional Information:**

##### **Substitutes**

The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Substitutes for quasi judicial Committees must be drawn from members who have received training in quasi-judicial decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial Committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

##### **Rights to attend and speak**

Any Member may attend any body to which these Procedure Rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the committee may speak at the meeting if they have given prior notification by no later than one working day before the meeting to the Chair and advised them of the substance of their proposed contribution.

The member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

## **Point of Order/Personal explanation/Point of Information**

### **8.3.14 Point of order**

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Chair will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Chair on the point of order will be final.

### **8.3.15 Personal explanation**

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

### **8.3.16 Point of Information or clarification**

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Chair. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Chair gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

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The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

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## Part I

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

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6	<b>Resource Room Development at Hutton Community Centre</b>	Hutton North	<b>43 - 48</b>
7	<b>Urgent Business</b> An item of business may only be considered where the Chair is of the opinion that, by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the Minutes, the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.		
8	<b>Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public</b>		

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Acting Chief Executive

Town Hall  
Brentwood, Essex  
24.12.2014

## Minutes

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### **Housing and Health Committee Wednesday, 5th November, 2014**

#### **Attendance**

Cllr Carter (Chair)	Cllr Le-Surf
Cllr Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair)	Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Baker	Cllr Parker
Cllr Mrs Hones	Cllr Tee
Cllr Mrs Hubbard	

#### **Substitute Present**

Cllr Hirst (substituting for Mrs Henwood)

#### **Also Present**

Maureen Montgomery	Co Optee (Tenants Talkback Representative)
Linda Skinner	Co Optee (Tenants Talkback Representative)

#### **Officers Present**

Keith Carter	Property Manager
Jo-Anne Ireland	Acting Chief Executive
Helen Gregory	Interim Head of Housing
Claire Hayden	Governance and Member Support Officer
Christopher Potter	Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services

#### **245. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs Henwood.

#### **246. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the Housing and Health Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **247. Performance Report**

The regular performance report was presented to the committee for monitoring.

In addition to the four main headline key performance indicators (KPI's) also reported was KPI's on the new repairs Contractors Waites, Living Space and Oakray Limited.

Importantly, also included is the Gas Servicing KPI for regular performance monitoring by the Committee.

We are pleased to report early signs of performance improvement as a result of the work being undertaken in the KPI workshops. A commentary was provided for each KPI in the body of the report.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Carter and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendation as set out in the report. A vote was taken by a show of hands. It was

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to agree:-

2.1 For Members to note the contents of the report.

## **248. Affordable Housing Strategy - update**

The report set out the next phases to develop the detail of the Affordable Housing Strategy and gives an overview of the discussions from the Member and Officer workshop held on 6 October 2014.

The Affordable Housing Strategy will provide a framework for the development of Affordable Housing for the residents of Brentwood; and to establish a specific priority of development opportunities for 2015/16 and beyond.

A Motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Carter and **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report.

An **AMENDMENT** to recommendation 2.2. was **MOVED** by Cllr Hirst and **SECONDED** by Cllr Tee, which was accepted by the Cllr Carter, who requested a further amendment.

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



- 2.1 That authority be granted to progress the detail of the Affordable Housing Strategy; and prepare a draft development programme for 2015/2016.**
- 2.2 That the Hallsford Bridge site be referred back to the Assets and Enterprise Committee *with a request from the Housing and Health Committee to sell and the proceeds be used for affordable housing within the Tipps Cross Ward, if land or sites are available.***

#### **249. Essex Landlords Accreditation Scheme**

Update on the Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme (ELAS), as previously discussed at Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (agenda item 7). To re-iterate the ELAS scheme has been setup to promote and encourage landlords of privately rented homes to manage their properties to a high standard. Local Authority involvement will help to achieve the best level of management and will enable effective engagement in terms of securing positive relationships to encourage improvement in local housing.

The Vice Chair and Acting Head of Housing attended the ELAS launch event on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at Kelvedon Park, Essex. The event demonstrated the benefits of an integrated county-wide approach to engagement between Local Authorities and the private rented sector.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report. A vote was taken by a show of hands. It was

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:-**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of Appendix A below [relating to legal questions arising out of the last meeting]; and to approve and confirm Brentwood joining the Essex Landlord Accreditation Scheme.**
- 2.2 The Committee is asked to approve the use of monies from the Homelessness Prevention Fund to cover related setup expenditure; to include such matters as marketing, press and postage. The amount requiring approval is no greater than £5,000 to cover related expenditure.**

## **250. Garage Development Sites**

The Council owns a range of garage sites across the borough which are underused and hard to let. Members agreed at Housing Committee in September that officers should identify the potential redevelopment of sites that provided an immediate opportunity for new affordable housing.

Three sites have been identified, that subject to surveys of utilities, provide opportunities for redevelopment. These sites will potentially provide twelve new homes at a cost of £1.64m.

The Committee are requested to agree to develop the individual scheme designs, seek outline planning approval for each site and consult local residents.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report.

An AMENDMENT to recommendation 2.5 was MOVED by Cllr Hirst, which was accepted by the Cllr Carter. A vote was taken by a show of hands. It was

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** to agree:-

- 2.1 Seek outline planning approval for development of three homes at Magdalen Gardens CM13 1RL**
- 2.2 Seek outline planning approval for development of six homes of Fawters Close CM13 2SY**
- 2.3 Seek outline planning approval for development of three homes at Fielding Way CM13 1JN**
- 2.4 Incur fees up to £120,000 funded from this year's HRA capital budget to prepare outline planning application for three sites.**
- 2.5 Incur additional fees *up to* £90,000 to develop detailed designs and tender documentation if outline planning is granted.**
- 2.6 To undertake procurement to appoint a suitable developer/partner to deliver each scheme.**

**251. Appointment of Consultant to undertake Option Appraisal on Procurement of a Choice Based Lettings system**

The Council currently operates a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) System to advertise all properties that are available for letting.

The current service has been provided by Locata (Housing Services) Limited since 1st June 2007. The contract is due to expire in June 2015.

The Council needs to begin to plan the procurement process in order to re-tender the contract.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report. A vote was taken by a show of hands. It was

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to:-**

**2.1 To appoint Cameron Consulting (UK) Limited to undertake and complete the soft market testing exercise in advance of Choice Based Lettings Contract with Locata expiring in June 2015 upon the terms and conditions set out in the Agreement negotiated by the Consortium on behalf of the Council and attached in Appendix A to this report.**

**252. Fees and 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.

A Motion was MOVED by Cllr Carter and SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Davies to receive the recommendations as set out in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and in accordance with Rule 9.2 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chair exercised his casting vote and the MOTION was **CARRIED**.

**2.1 Members agree to freeze the proposed Fees and Charges at 2014/15 levels as outlined within the report, which will then be incorporated within the 2015/16 Budget.**

**2.2 That a further report be presented to this Committee providing details of the outcome of the planned review of the current**

**charging policies, which will then inform the 2016/17 charging levels.**

**253. Urgent Business**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**254. Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

Not applicable.

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**7 January 2015**

**Housing & Health Committee**

**Performance Report**

**Report of:** *Helen Gregory, Acting Head of Housing Services*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 In addition to the standard performance information this report recommends the implementation of a modernisation programme of the Housing department over the next 12 months. The modernisation programme – Getting our house in order - will be extensive and involve an improvement plan for each service area (excluding Sheltered Housing). Staff will be attending workshops in December 2014 to discuss the programme. Regular updates will be provided in future Committee meetings.
- 1.2 The report also updates Committee on the final stage of the Repairs review to review the Office/client side of the Repairs team and provide a permanent solution for the Property Manager role. It is proposed to recruit a Property Manager on a 12 month fixed contract; while we complete the modernisation programme. To mitigate the interim risk an internal 6 /12 fixed term, Team Leader secondment is recommended. This will be funded from savings elsewhere in the Property team structure.
- 1.3 Officers are researching opportunities for shared services with other local authorities. As part of this Thurrock Council will be providing assistance with the Repairs, leasehold and caretaker services review.
- 1.4 The performance update is supplemented with information on Complaints as requested by Cllr Ross Carter.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to monitor the performance information submitted within the report.**
- 2.2 The Committee is requested to note the implementation of the housing modernisation programme and the future direction of travel. That the committee approves the deletion of a vacant surveyor post.**
- 2.3 The Committee approves the commissioning of Thurrock Council to assist with reviews of Repairs, leasehold management and caretaking.**
- 2.4 That Committee grants approval to increase the responsibilities in an existing Property team role to create a Secondment (6/12 month) opportunity for a Team Leader post for internal recruitment.**
- 2.5 That the Committee notes the impact of recommendations 2.4 & 2.5 is a saving on the HRA of £12,500 p.a.**
- 2.6 That the Committee approves officers to explore possible opportunities with other neighbouring local authorities to work to develop its Property team and achieve a cost effective service delivery.**

## **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The Housing department has prioritised performance improvement since July 2014; notably with the introduction of the KPI workshops held with Staff and Managers. This is beginning to produce improvements in performance. However there are a number of key areas that require a complete review including:**

- identifying skill gaps in staff knowledge and responsibilities
- developing /streamlining process and updating policies and procedures, Service Standards
- ensuring compliance with the national regulatory standards and best practice.

Within the Housing team there is evidence of lack of a performance culture, under utilised IT systems causing over reliance on manual systems; outdated staff knowledge base which has contributed to poor customer service.

- 3.2 The KPI workshops are working well with front line staff being encouraged to share ideas for improvement and enhancing communication with colleagues within the department. However, it is evident that some of the issues are endemic and will not be resolved by KPI workshops alone. Therefore, due to the scale and nature of the improvements required, a complete modernisation programme needs to be implemented to improve culture, performance and customer service in the Housing department over the next 12 months.
- 3.3 We now also need to complete the final review of the Repairs service. Following the successful outsourcing of the comprehensive maintenance contracts in June 2014, the size and structure of the Housing Property team needs to be downsized to fit the reduced workload; to meet the requirements of the new service.
- 3.4 The Property Manager role has been covered by a consultant as an interim manager to bed in the new contracts, to assist the team to adapt to the new method of working and new performance management requirements.
- 3.5 The use of a consultant has provided necessary experience and guidance to take the service forward, but the additional cost is unsustainable in the medium term. The proposals are set out in Section 4.8 – 4.12.

#### 4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

##### Performance information

- 4.1 The table below outlines performance information up to 8 December 2014; we are currently in mid cycle of Q3. Members should note the information is likely to change at the end of Q 3 (31 December 2014) and will be reported to March 2015 Committee.

Key Performance Indicator	Quarter Target	Q1	Q2	Q3 (up to 8 Dec 2014)	Commentary
Average re let times for LA Housing	23 days	32.67 days	28 days	25.45 days	This KPI continues to improve as a direct result of the KPI workshop.
% rent Collection (annual target)	99.70%	98.42%	98.39 %	100.29 %	Following a meeting with House mark; we have been advised that the formula used to calculate this KPI is incorrect – we are pleased to report the new formula used has achieved top quartile performance.
% rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the rent roll	1.95%	1.63%	1.65%	1.69%	This KPI continues to achieve top quartile performance.
No. of households living in temporary accommodation	29	45	42	49	This KPI has increased and continues to be a challenge to manage; with the continued demands of preventing homelessness.



4.2 We are pleased to report performance generally continues to improve; Staff have been working hard in the KPI workshops and improved focus on performance.

The performance on the additional KPIs is as follows:

Key Performance Indicator	Quarter Target		Q2	Nov 14
Customer Satisfaction	95%	Wates	92%	97%
		Oakray	97%	96%
Urgent Repairs completed on (3 day) target	99%	Wates	84.35%	95.8%
		Oakray	94.7%	95.8%
Appointments kept	100%	Wates	98%	98.6%
		Oakray	98%	98.6%
Gas Servicing	100%	Oakray	99.5%	99.6%

4.3 Performance generally is continuing to improve. The exception is Oakray's customer satisfaction. This is partly because there have been more system failures in November and a few residents have been unhappy that the new system cannot be fitted within two days. The typical turn around is five working days. This is to verify the need to replace the system rather than repair and to measure for, supply and fit the new system.

Gas servicing is still under 100% at 99.6%. We are about to seek magistrate intervention on four homes where access has been continually denied.

### Complaints Performance information

4.4 The table below outlines the number of complaints received during Q1 and Q2 and a brief commentary on the type of complaint.

<b>QUARTER 1</b>				
<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 1	4	Temporary Accommodation	Temporary Accommodation Storage	Not Upheld
		Estate Management	Garage cleared in error	Upheld
		Sheltered Housing/Repairs	Emergency access and redecoration	Partially Upheld
		Estate Management	Service failures following fire	Upheld

<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 2	2	Sheltered Housing/Repairs	Emergency access and redecoration	Not Upheld
		Estate Management	Service failures following fire	Upheld

<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 3	2	Sheltered Housing/Repairs	Emergency access and redecoration	Not Upheld
		Estate Management	Service failures following fire	Upheld

<b>QUARTER 2</b>				
<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 1	2	Estate Management	Rent Payment Missing	Upheld
		Allocations	Staff attitude and poor customer service	Partially Upheld

<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 2	0			

<b>Stage</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Type of Complaint</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
STAGE 3	0			

4.5 The number of stage one complaints received during Quarter 2 has reduced by 50%. All complaints received during Quarter 2 have been resolved at stage 1. This is an improvement compared to Quarter 1; in Quarter 1 we received two stage 2 complaints and 2 stage 3 complaints. There has been a focus in the housing team to prioritize complaints; importantly learning lessons from complaints to help to improve service delivery. .

#### 4.6 **Getting Our House in Order – Modernisation programme**

There have been significant service improvements over the last six months; however these reviews have been piecemeal and reactive to poor performing KPI's rather than a holistic approach which will set priorities, increase productivity, identify skills gaps to direct training, improve communication and motivation and ultimately develop a performance management culture. The service reviews will take place over the next twelve months and will result in a reshaping of the management and team structures.

4.7 The modernisation programme will include the following areas Repairs, Income management, Leasehold management, Service Charges, Care taking Homelessness and Housing Advice. All of the reviews will have a focus in providing excellent customer service. If Members are interested in further information on the programme the Acting HoS will arrange a meeting for members.

4.8 Because the scope of the programme is extensive; it is recommended to appoint Thurrock Council, on a consultancy basis, to assist with reviews of leaseholder and caretaker services at a cost of £5,000 per month. It is considered the arrangement with Thurrock will provide better value than seeking external consultancy services.

#### Repairs review

4.9 The Head of Housing and the Interim Property Manager have reviewed the demands of strategic and operational delivery. It is clear that the current establishment can now be reduced as the contract has been in operation for 6 months. Contract monitoring arrangements, have been working well; performance KPI's are achieving above or close to target and customer feedback has been positive so far.

- 4.10 The interim Property Manager is due to leave at the end of January 2015. Recruitment to role is essential as quickly as possible, to minimise the risk of service failure within the team. There is capacity within the team and officers are reviewing the team balance as part of the recruitment to the role. Part of this review includes considering shared services with other local authorities. The current consultant will be retained part time while recruitment takes place.
- 4.11 As an interim measure, it is proposed to create a team leader post from within the current surveying team. This responsibility will be additional to one of the current Surveyor / Technician roles and will result in an increase in the salary of up to £10,000 p.a. depending which officer is offered the role following interview. This post will be for a six month period to assist with day to day operational decision making in the absence of the Property Manager and while the new recruit settles in.
- 4.12 There is some capacity within the team which is likely to increase as the current maintenance contracts mature and performance management is imbedded. The Housing modernisation programme will be considering how best to shape the future Property team to provide an efficient and effective service alongside the other services within Housing.
- 4.13 It is proposed to immediately delete one surveyor post that is currently unfilled generating a saving of £37,500. The savings for the post deletion will be offset by the extra cost of the Team Leader. This will generate an overall saving of £27,500 p.a.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 To keep members informed of the key performance levels within the Housing service to enable Members to monitor our performance.
- 5.2 The service improvements proposed in the 'Getting our house in order initiative' will improve service and value for money for residents and stakeholders.
- 5.3 The future shape of the Property Service team needs to align with current service demands and officers are reviewing both the service and staffing levels to ensure they align with current needs. This will be part of the Getting our house in order initiative.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Workshops are being planned to inform all housing Staff of the Modernisation programme; and the changes proposed in the final stage of the Repairs review on the 17 December 2014.
- 6.2 Formal consultation will take place with Repairs staff that are directly impacted by re-structure of the Repairs team. We will consult with Midland HR for legal advice on the correct consultation required with Staff and Trade Unions to ensure we are compliant with good practice.
- 6.3 Regular feedback on Performance information is provided at Residents' Talkback meetings to enable Residents to scrutinise our performance. In addition performance is published in the Annual Report to all Residents.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

Improving service delivery will meet the Council's commitment to service improvements and will also enhance the efficiency of the service. Increasing the number of headline PIs regularly published and analysed will improve the openness of governance.

## **8. Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive.**

**Tel & Email 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 There is an immediate need to reduce the cost of the consultant interim manager and to redefine the strategic management of the housing maintenance service. The short term appointment of a Team Leader at a cost of up to £10,000 will provide day to day operational decision making.
- 8.2 A saving of £37,500 will be achieved by the deletion of a vacant surveyor post.
- 8.3 These two changes to the structure provide an overall benefit of £27,500 p.a.
- 8.4 It is anticipated that the consultancy work that Thurrock Council will be undertaking on leaseholder and caretaker services will cost £15,000. This cost will be met from savings in the HRA.
- 8.5 The overall impact of these recommendations on the HRA is :

<b>Item</b>	<b>Impact £</b>
Deletion 1 x Surveyor	- 37,500
Team Leader allowance	+ 10,000
Thurrock Council consultancy fee	+ 15,000
<b>Net saving</b>	<b>-12,500</b>

**Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Chris Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk**

8.6 None at this stage.

**9. Background Papers**

None.

**10. Appendices to this report**

None .

**Report Author Contact Details:**

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**Telephone:** 01277 312540

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**7 January 2015**

## **Housing & Health Committee**

### **Rent Setting**

**Report of:** *Helen Gregory, Head of Housing Services*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks the recommendations of the Housing and Health Committee on the proposed new rent levels for 2015/16. The recommendations will be considered by the Finance and Resource Committee on the 11 February 2015 when the final recommendation will be made as part of the budget process; the final decision will be made by Full Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Members agree to increase Rent to CPI plus 1% from April 2015.
- 2.2 Members agree to freeze the proposed Services Charges at 2014/15 levels as outlined within the report, which will then be incorporated within the 2015/16 Budget, and that a further report be presented to this Committee providing details of the outcome of the planned review of the current charging policies, which will then inform the 2016/17 charging levels.
- 2.3 Members agree to applying the formula rent all new tenancies from April 2015/16.
- 2.4 Members comments are sought to consider increasing the rent for tenant households earning £60k and above.

### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The method of setting rents has changed the government has produced Guidance on Rents for Social Housing May 2014 [Guidance on Rents for Social Housing](#).
- 3.2 From April 2015, the guidance re rent increases has changed and it now recommends the use of CPI plus 1% for all properties; based on September CPI this would equate to a rent increase of 2.2% for 2015/16.
- 3.4 For background the recent average rent increases have been:
- 2013/14 3.99%
  - 2014/15 5.90%

### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 This is a change from the existing rent setting policy of using Retail Price Index (RPI) plus 0.5% plus £2 to move to convergence to a target rent.
- 4.2 Formula rents are replacing target rents; and are calculated using a pre-set formula which incorporates local housing values, local earnings of residents average rents and the number of bedrooms to each property.
- 4.3 Landlords are encouraged to re-let vacant properties at the formula rent. Landlords have the added option of being able to charge a 5% margin (10% for sheltered housing) above formula rent and remain within the guidelines – but only on new tenancies.
- 4.4 There is also a provision in the new government guidelines to charge a higher affordable rent on tenants households earning an income £60k and above.
- 4.5 The average rent increase using CPI plus 1% will be 2.2% - this will mean an average rent increase of £2.01 per resident. As a comparison if RPI were still being used the average increase would £4.02 per resident.



- 4.6 Having modelled a Rent Freeze for 2015/16 early indications are that this will create a deficit in the HRA for 2015/16 of some £190,290.00. If we follow the recommended 2.2% increase then the HRA indicates a potential surplus of £72,930.00.
- 4.7 Historically, the Council has increased fees and charges in line with inflation (currently projected at 2% per annum). This is to reflect that the costs of running the service will rise by approx 2%, and therefore we try and maintain Service Charges, fees and charges at the same level. There is therefore a risk that there will be an implicit cost to a freeze since it will not keep pace with the inflationary cost increases, however this cannot be quantified or confirmed until such time as the review of the current charging policies has been undertaken.
- 4.8 The table below shows the annual income to the HRA based on the different increases, it also shows the difference between the proposed increased and the government guidance of 2.2%.

	RPI (2.8%)	CPI (2.2%)	0%	2%
Annual Income	(12,397,900)	(12,227,860)	(11,964,640)	(12,203,930)
Difference (Gain)/Loss	(170,040)	0	263,220	23,930

- 4.9 Taking account the above annual income, the proposed (Surplus)/Deficit for the HRA's MTFP are:

	15/16
RPI (2.8%)	(242,970)
CPI (2.2%)	(72,930)
0%	190,290
2%	(49,000)

- 4.10 Therefore, a rent freeze would result in the HRA making a deficit in 15/16 onwards and therefore, the current proposed capital program would have to be revisited, this deficit would also mean the council would not meet its commitment to repay back the self financing debt it borrowed in 2012/13.

- 4.11 A 2% increase would bring the HRA into a surplus in 2015/16 and the council would meet its commitment to repay the first loan due for the self financing settlement and the proposed capital program can be funded. However, the 2% increase does mean that the surplus for the HRA in 2016/17 is rather volatile as it is so low £49,000.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The recommendation will be to follow the guideline 2.2% increase. Rent increases are necessary in order to keep pace with maintenance and major improvements to our housing stock. More importantly the HRA has a £64m debt and we must ensure we have sufficient funds are set aside each year to repay this debt.

- 5.2 The following assumptions have been taken into account when considering the Rent Setting for 2015/16:

- The financial viability of the HRA business plan
- Delivering a repairs capital programme of £3m for 2015/16
- Budget provision for repayment of HRA self financing £1.5 m
- Development fund for new homes £500k
- No allowance has been made for growth bids
- Affordability for tenants

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 A meeting was held with Tenants Talk back group on the 25 November 2014 to discuss the proposed rent setting for 2015/16. In principle Tenants Talkback group agreed to rent setting at CPI plus 1%; tenants recognized the need to continue to invest in the homes and services.

- 6.2 In addition there was an acknowledgement that the CPI increase was a slight reduction compared to RPI formula previously used to set rents.

- 6.3 This reduction is timely; at a time when Tenants are concerned about affordability issues with the on set of Universal credit in 2015/16.

- 6.4 Tenants feedback on the Council's ability to charge higher rent to households earning £60k and above was mixed:

- A good idea – but what if a tenants circumstances changed i.e. they lost their job? What would happen then?
- How will the Council identify tenants who are earning the higher incomes? Will the costs outweigh the benefits?

## **7. Reference to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 The Council has a legal obligation to produce a balance HRA budget and to set the Housing Rent levels for 2015/16.

## **8. Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 The impact of changes to the rent levels are outlined in the report. The recommendation of a 2.2% increase will provide an anticipated surplus on the account for 2015/16.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.2 None.

## **9. Background Papers**

None.

## **10. Appendices to this report**

None.

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Helen Gregory, Acting Head of Housing Services

**Telephone:** 01277 312540

**E mail:** helen.gregory@brentwood.gov.uk



**7 January 2015**

## **Housing and Health Committee**

### **Armed Forces Community Covenant**

**Report of:** *Helen Gregory, Acting Head of Housing Service*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 As part of the recent review of the Council's Allocation policy additional preference/exemption was awarded to members of the Armed Forces and their families in regard to the Local Connection criteria. These groups are exempt from having to demonstrate a local connection and are able to join the housing waiting list.
- 1.2 However, having reviewed other Local Authorities' Allocations Policies it has demonstrated that we need to consider providing additional support to members of the Armed Forces community by publishing a supplementary document alongside the Council's Allocation Policy.
- 1.3 The supplementary document, in the short term will address the immediate housing issues members of the Armed Forces community face, while in the long term further consideration can be made in a commitment to an Armed Forces Community Covenant.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That approval is given to Option 3 to develop a tailored Housing Advice Service aimed to address the needs of the Armed Forces Community.**

### **3. Introduction and Background**

3.1 Local authorities and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to work together to establish a community covenant in their area to;

- Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community, raise understanding and awareness among the public of issues that affect the Armed Forces community
- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life
- Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community and encourage other forms of engagement

3.2 The key issues relevant and important to service leavers and their families when leaving military service are;

- Integration into civilian communities
- Housing, including access into affordable housing
- Overcoming barriers to home ownership
- Home adaptations
- Education
- Debt advice
- Accessing benefits
- Leisure facilities
- Healthcare provision
- Employment
- Public transport

3.3 Housing is a primary concern for some service leavers and their families, who when they leave the service, lose their military accommodation or in other cases while not in military accommodation may have had to move to other areas to complete their service. In some cases they may have had to move several times preventing them from establishing settled roots in any one area, and therefore wish to return to an area where they had or currently have a local connection or to engage with other services, or simply choose to move to a particular area simply by choice, some examples may include;

- Family
- Friends
- Specialist medical support

- Employment
- Education

- 3.4 Due to the specialist and mobile nature of their work members of the Armed Forces can be placed at considerable disadvantage when trying to access social or affordable housing. This is particularly relevant if Local Authorities bear significant weight in applying their Local Connection criteria to applicants. In some cases this could result in Local Authorities refusing to accept service leavers onto housing registers if they fail to meet particular local connection criteria, particularly where some service leavers have been required to move to several different areas during the course of their service.
- 3.5 As a result of the problems service leavers encountered when leaving active service the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued guidance to Local Authorities in England in June 2012. This advised of the new statutory provisions that mean that, where an application for housing is made within 5 years of discharge, members of the Armed Forces, former service personnel, bereaved spouses and civil partners and serving or former members of the reserve forces cannot be prevented from accessing social housing waiting lists or other affordable housing on local connection grounds. In addition, certain categories of people must be awarded 'additional preference'. The guidance also encouraged local authorities to strongly consider the needs of the Armed Forces community when framing their allocation policies. Some Local Authorities have already used the discretion available to them to address disadvantages faced by members of the Armed Forces community.
- 3.6 In February 2014, Lord Ashcroft published the 'Veterans' Transition Review which examined the transition of Armed Forces personnel from their military careers to civilian life at the end of their service. As part of this independent review, the policies and provision for service leavers in areas including education, training, employment, health, housing, welfare and finance were considered and recommendations made upon with a broad conclusion underlining the importance of the supply of information for service leavers to make a successful transition. The Government in response outlined how it will improve the experience of service personnel and their families moving into civilian life. Local Authorities and Armed Forces personnel are encouraged to work together to establish a community covenant in their relevant area in order to promote and encourage integration and increase awareness among the public of issues affecting their community.

- 3.7 There are currently 117 active members of the British Legion within the Borough, which include serving members, former members and families of the Armed Forces.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 In summary there are three available options that need to be given consideration;

##### Option 1

Give consideration to signing up to the Essex Community Covenant with a separate Borough Specific action plan. This option is a longer term plan as this will require;

- Corporate staffing resource commitment
- Buy in from the Leader, Deputy Leader, Senior Councillors, Leader of the Opposition
- Commitment from Senior Management/Officers
- Commitment for staffing resources from other departments, i.e. benefits, housing, community services
- Engagement with all other agencies/organisations

##### Option 2

Give consideration to developing a Borough Specific Community Covenant with a separate action plan. This option is a longer term plan as this will require;

- Corporate staffing resource commitment
- Buy in from the Leader, Deputy Leader, Senior Councillors, Leader of the Opposition
- Commitment from Senior Management/Officers
- Commitment for staffing resources from other departments, i.e. benefits, housing, community services
- Engagement with all other agencies/organisations

##### Option 3

Give consideration to developing a Housing Needs & Prevention Service that is tailored to the needs of Armed Service Personnel and their families. This option would enable an immediate service provision and develop Housing Needs Strategy to address the needs of the Armed Forces Community as part of enhancement to current Allocations Policy.



Buy in from Leader, Deputy Leader, Senior Councillors, Leader of Opposition  
Commitment from Senior Management/Officers  
Commitment for housing staff resource  
Engagement with other departments, i.e. benefits, community services  
Engagement with all other agencies/organisations

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

5.1 Members are requested to approve Option 3 as a short term measure which will enable immediate service provision to members of the Armed Forces and their families. This will include;

Additional priority to be given to members of the Armed Forces and their families in respect of the current Allocations Policy;

- 5 years backdating of a housing application to increase points entitlement
- Exception to the financial restrictions in relation to any compensation given for injury or disability
- Exception to ANY financial restrictions to members of the Armed Forces or families.

To develop a specialised Housing Advice pathway approach for members of the Armed Forces;

- Identify Armed Forces champion within Housing Needs to lead on project
- Identify training opportunities for housing staff, for example; cultural issues relating to members of the ex-service personnel community, barriers to integration, domestic violence and post traumatic stress disorder
- To engage and develop a service Level agreement in respect of Employment Services, Access to Benefits, Schools, Education, GP/Health Services
- To identify Voluntary Agencies/Charities in the Borough
- Create dedicated website page relating to the Armed Forces and create links to other agencies
- Create a specialised housing advice and useful pathway/information links handbook

5.2 This will then provide the opportunity to develop a longer term strategy towards implementation of the Community Covenant.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken to date.
- 6.2 A consultation will take place as part of the implementation of the Housing Pathway Advice Service, guide & website.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 Manage our housing differently to recognise council housing as a valuable and limited resource to those in greatest need

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 The cost of producing the Housing Pathway handbook will be approximately £500 which will be met from existing resources within the HRA.

### **Legal Implications**

**Name & Title: Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer and Head of Support Services**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.2 None

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 Allocation of Housing (Qualification criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012 SI2012/1869  
Localism Act 2011 (Effective June 2012)  
Code of guidance on the Allocation of Accommodation (June 2012)

- 9. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

## **10. Appendices to this report**

Appendix A - Current Authority Service Provision

**Report Author Contact Details:**

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Current Local Authority provision (Allocations Policy)

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Local connection</b> (exception)	<b>Finance</b> (exception)	<b>Priority</b>
Brentwood BC	<p>(a) You have served in the HM forces or having been honourably discharged in the previous 3 years</p> <p>(b) You are the bereaved spouse or civil partner of a member of the armed forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of your spouse or partner.</p> <p>(c) You are a serving or former member of the reserve forces who needs to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of your service.</p>	None	<p>(i) Members of the armed forces and former service personnel, where the application is made within 5 years of discharge.</p> <p>(ii) Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the armed forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner</p> <p>(iii) Serving or former members of the reserve forces who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result</p> <p>Additional 15 points</p>
Chelmsford CC	(a) If they are currently in the armed forces, this residence requirement can apply either to the period prior to them entering the armed forces or where they have lived as a result of their employment	None	Under review
Epping DC	<p>(a) Members of the armed forces and former service personnel, where the application is made within 5 years of discharge.</p> <p>(b) Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the regular forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of their spouse or</p>	<p>(a) Any lump sums received, as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service by either, members of the armed forces, former service personnel, bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the regular</p>	<p>Band A</p> <p>(i) Any member of the armed forces, or former service personnel, or serving or former members of the reserve forces who joins the Council's housing register, are given priority above all other applicants within band A, where they are</p>

	<p>partner</p> <p>(c) Spouses and children (including step-children) of existing or former armed forces personnel, provided that one of their family members (as defined by Section 113 of the Housing Act 1985) has lived within the district for at least 3 continuous years immediately prior to the date of registration.</p> <p>(d) Serving or former members of the Reserved forces who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service where the application is made within 5 years of discharge</p>	<p>forces, or serving or former members of the reserve forces, will be disregarded.</p>	<p>assessed by the Council's medical advisor as suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service, where the application is made within 5 years of discharge.</p> <p>(ii) Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil Partner and the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.</p> <p>Band C</p> <p>(i) Any member of the armed forces or former service personnel, or serving or former members of the reserve forces who have no housing need, and the application is made within 5 years of discharge</p> <p>(ii) Spouses and children (including step-children) of existing and former armed forces personnel (where the application is made within 5 years of discharge) seeking accommodation in their own</p>
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			right, provided that one of their family members (as defined by Section 113 of the Housing Act 1985) has lived within the District for at least 3 years immediately prior to the date of application.
Basildon DC	(a) Veterans making an application within 5 years of discharge will not be disqualified on residence grounds if they do not meet the 5 year residence rule	(a) Any financial compensation that has been received due to injury sustained on active service is disregarded from any financial assessment	(i) Veterans making an application within one year of leaving the armed forces will be entitled to have their application backdated up to a maximum of 10 years  (ii) Members of the armed forces who meet the criteria for a Reasonable Preference because of their circumstances are awarded an extra priority (moving from band 3 to band 2 on the waiting list)
Uttlesford DC	(a) Applicants who are serving members of the regular forces or who have served in the regular forces or who have served in the regular forces or been honourably discharged, if the application is made within 5 years of their date of discharge. (b) Applicants who have recently ceased or will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the ministry of defence following the death of that persons spouse or civil partner where, the spouse or civil partner has served in the	(i) Any lump sums received as compensation for injury or disability sustained on active service by either, members of the Armed forces, former service personnel, bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the regular forces, or serving or former members of the reserve forces, will be disregarded from this criterion	(i) Applicants are considered to be in tied accommodation if the occupation of their home is essential for the performance of their duties as an employee. (This includes applicants who are accommodated in the HM forces) Band E  (ii) Members of the armed forces, who are in urgent housing need who fall within one or more the following criteria, will be placed in one band higher than their housing need. (Serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to

	<p>regular forces and their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service</p> <p>(c) Is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service and the application is made within 5 years of discharge</p>		<p>the person's service. Formerly served in the regular forces or was honourably discharged where the application was made within 5 years of their date of discharge. Has recently ceased or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of that persons spouse or civil partner who has served in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service or is serving or has served in the reserve forces and is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the persons service (draft – under review 2015)</p>
<p>Gateway to Homechoice – Maldon, Colchester</p>	<p>(a) Former members of the armed forces</p> <p>(b) Serving members of the armed forces who need to move because of serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service</p> <p>(c) Bereaved spouses, partners and civil partners of members of the armed forces, leaving services family accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner</p>	<p>(i) Members of the armed forces, who have received a lump sum payment as compensation for an injury or disability sustained during active service, will not be subject to reduced preference on grounds of significant resources.</p>	<p>(i) Applicants in tied accommodation will be placed in Band E. They will be moved to Band C if (i) they are six months away from retirement or (ii) they have received a legally binding notice asking them to leave their accommodation.</p> <p>(ii) Applicants who are armed forces/reserve forces personnel or bereaved spouses/civil partners of the armed forces</p>



	(d) Serving or former members of the reserve forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.		personnel, and who meet points (i) or (ii) above, will be prioritized within their band.

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**7 January 2015**

**Housing & Health Committee**

**Resource Room Development at Hutton Community Centre**

**Report of:** *Helen Gregory, Acting Head of Housing Services*

**Wards Affected:** *Hutton North*

**This report is:** *Public*

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 It had been suggested by resident groups that a community resource could be developed and be based at the Hutton Community Centre.
- 1.2 The report of the Hutton Community Centre Task and Finish Group to Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 28 October 2014 made reference to a plan put forward to possibly utilise the former cellar for a Housing lead project to create a community advice facility.
- 1.3 The suggested plan was to use the former cellar once it was refurbished as a drop in centre for residents to use computers and speak with volunteers about a number of issues. These would include and not restricted to making universal credit online application, choice based lettings bids, job applications and using the internet in general.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Committee is asked to recognise the contribution that Tenant Talkback members make improving council services**
- 2.2 The Strategic Asset Manager reviews the possibility of providing a resident resource area within the Town Hall.**
- 2.3 Consider the funding support to Family Mosaic to operate a free drop in service at the community centre.**

### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 28 October 2014 requested that Housing Committee consider the costs of developing the former cellar at the Hutton Community Centre into a resource for tenants and community regarding council services.
- 3.2 Since the community centre reopened residents have been able to visit and use computer facilities in the office/resource room for their needs and staff assisted them with online applications for choice based lettings bids etc.
- 3.3 This has not been widely publicised because of the limited size of the room and considerations of confidentiality. Tenant Talkback agreed to make a contribution of £500 per year for the use of the facilities and this is being monitored and will be reviewed at the end of the year.
- 3.4 The suggestion put forward was for consideration of funding the refurbishment of the former cellar including if possible the installation of a window as only two skylights provide any natural light in the room.
- 3.5 The issue was discussed at Tenant Talkback on 28 October and 25 November 2014 where the chair suggested that the Locally Determined Community Housing Budget for tenant lead environmental improvements could perhaps be used to fund the refurbishments.
- 3.6 The Community Centre Facilities Officer, is a council tenant and a member of Tenant Talkback, informed the meeting that the centre had applications from two local nurseries to lease facilities and a willingness to fund refurbishments to meet their needs. Tenant Talkback understood of the need for the centre to be run commercially. They accepted that there was likely to be greater consideration of the commercial need to the continued success of the community centre.
- 3.7 The resident plan had been to use the larger room, which would provide more facilities and not tie up the computers used by the centre staff enabling them to deal with confidential matters. Residents would volunteer to assist people and have some training on various issues around welfare reform etc. The likely frequency of service would be twice a week.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The issues to consider are the commercial viability of the community centre against a local voluntary assistance service where there is currently no analysis of need and want.
- 4.2 There is a need to consider the costs of refurbishment of this room, expansion of broadband facilities, computer and furniture, plus the ongoing license fee for the use.
- 4.3 The use of untrained or partly trained volunteers to provide advice, is admirable and where possible should be supported. It does raise concerns that the areas such as welfare reform is best suited to professionally trained staff providing that support and advice.
- 4.4 As there is no specific analysis about possible take up of a service, no costings have been obtained regarding the refurbishment and fixtures and fittings.
- 4.5 Tenant Talkback had suggested that funds from the Locally Determined Community Housing Budget could be used. However this would mean the possibility of already submitted estate based improvement bids being deferred to help fund the refurbishments.
- 4.6 At the 25 November 2014 Tenant Talkback meeting the possible usage of the resource room was unknown. It was discussed that consideration for two nurseries may be possible once the Town Hall is refurbished.
- 4.7 Family Mosaic offers a free drop in advice service to Brentwood residents at Dodd Road Community Church every Wednesday between 10:30 – 13:00. They are interested in trialling a similar service at the community centre initially on a monthly basis to ascertain demand. They have fully trained staff to provide a range of advice and support with debt, benefits, housing advice and helping people into work.
- 4.8 They have free use of the Doddinghurst Road Community Church and do not have the funds to rent facilities and have been seeking our assistance in assisting in the financing of a trial from the Community Centre.
- 4.9 It has been suggested that a license fee to a community/charitable group of £10 per hour could be charged. As they would be looking at providing a drop in session for approximately 2½ hours per month which would equate to £300 per year. This could increase with demand for more frequent sessions.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note the work of residents groups and Tenant Talkback in proposing a community resource and to volunteer to undergo training and provide advice and support to other residents.
- 5.2 While there is no analysis of potential demand consider Family Mosaic's request for financial assistance to run a drop in service from the centre.
- 5.3 Tenant Talkback are keen to have a resource facility for their use and residents and are keen to explore the possibility of having this based at the Town Hall. Therefore the Strategic Asset Manager be asked to evaluate if there is a possibility of providing an area for Tenant Talkback members that can provide help and assistance to residents over and above that provided by service departments.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 As previously stated this proposed project has been discussed at Tenant Talkback and referred to in the Hutton Community Centre Task and Finish Group.
- 6.2 Family Mosaic representatives have met with the Interim Head of Housing Services and the Principal Officer Tenancy Services. They have visited the community centre and discussed their operation and needs to the Community Facilities Officer.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 Localism: we believe that through bringing communities together and working effectively in collaboration with a range of groups and organisations we can better ensure the future wellbeing of our Borough. We will work with local businesses, community groups and voluntary sector to develop projects that will enhance and support the local community.
- 7.2 Housing, Health and Wellbeing: current legislative reforms will lead to significant changes to the way the council supports people in housing need and in receipt of state benefits. We will develop different ways of working, both in the way we deliver services and with the voluntary sector, to make sure that the more vulnerable residents in Brentwood are protected and help goes to those in need of it.

## 8. Implications

### Financial Implications

**Name & Title:** Jo-Anne Ireland, Acting Chief Executive

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312712 / jo-anne.ireland@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 Possible cost of funding the license fee for Family Mosaic to use the community centre initially would be in the region of £300 in the first year and this would be met through existing HRA budget. This could rise if demand is proven.

### Legal Implications

**Name & Title:** Christopher Potter, Monitoring Officer and Corporate Support Services

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312860 / christopher.potter@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.2 None

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 The possible need to entering into a licensing agreement with Family Mosaic.

- 8.4 Consideration of an area within the Town Hall for Tenant Talkback members to use.

## 9. Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 9.1 None

## 10. Appendices to this report

None

### Report Author Contact Details:

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## **Members Interests**

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

## **Housing and Health Committee Terms of Reference**

### **General Powers of Committees**

This scheme of delegation sets out the functions of the Council to be discharged by its Committees and Sub- Committees and includes the terms of reference of statutory and non statutory bodies set up by the Council.

Each committee or sub committee will have the following general powers and duties:

- (a) To carry out the duties and powers of the Council within current legislation;
- (b) To comply with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations;
- (c) To operate within the budget allocated to the committee by the Council.
- (d) To guide the Council in setting its policy objectives and priorities including new initiatives, and where appropriate make recommendations to Council
- (e) To develop, approve and monitor the relevant policies and strategies relating to the Terms of Reference of the Committee;
- (f) To secure satisfactory standards of service provision and improvement, including monitoring of contracts, Service Level Agreements and partnership arrangements;
- (g) To consider and approve relevant service plans;
- (h) To determine fees and charges relevant to the Committee;

### **Housing and Health Committee**

The functions within the remit of the Housing Committee are set out below

- 1) Affordable housing
- 2) Housing strategy and investment programme
- 3) The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- 4) Housing standards, homelessness, homelessness prevention and advice
- 5) Housing needs assessment

- 6) Housing benefit - welfare aspects
  - 7) Private sector housing and administration of housing grants
  - 8) Tenancy Management and landlord functions
  - 9) Environmental Health
  - 10) Environmental nuisance and pollution controls
  - 11) Other miscellaneous powers enforced by Environmental Health
  - 12) Food safety and health and safety
1. To make recommendations to Finance and Resources on the setting of rents for Council homes.